

No. 58

DECEMBER, 1962

Price 4d.

"O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL."



THE MAGAZINE OF —
St. Nicholas Church, Marston

ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH — OLD MARSTON

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

Parish Worker : Miss O. J. Lodge, The Flat, 15 Mill Lane, Old Marston.

Churchwardens : Dr. C. W. Carter, Eaglesfield, Jack Straws Lane, Oxford.
Tel. : Oxford 41167.

Mr. B. G. Oliver, 13 Jack Straw's Lane, Oxford.
Tel. : Oxford 47997.

Organist : Mrs. E. A. Garner, "Barn Gates," 31 Oxford Rd., Old Marston.
Tel. : 41888.

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 : 11 a.m. in Hall.

Morning Prayer : 11 a.m.

Senior Catechism : 10.0 a.m., Sunday. (Hall).

Evensong : 6.30 p.m.

Saints' Days : Holy Communion as announced.

Holy Baptism : Fourth Sunday of the month at 3.0 p.m. unless otherwise announced. Notice must be given.

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

CHURCH ORGANISATIONS AND MEETINGS :

(As the covers are printed in advance you are advised to consult the Notice Board in the Church Porch, in case of alteration of times).

Mothers' Union : Alternate Wednesday afternoons (2.45 p.m.), and Evenings (7.45 p.m.).

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

Men's Forum : Monthly on Wednesdays at 8 p.m., as announced.

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

Senior Catechism : (Boys and Girls, 11—13 years), 10 a.m., Sundays.

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

Girl Guides : Tuesdays, 7.0 p.m.

Cubs : Mondays, 6.15 p.m. in Hall.

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

WEEKDAY SERVICES :

Matins — 7.15 a.m. (Daily except Saturdays)

Evensong — 5.15 p.m. (Daily except Saturdays)

Holy Communion — Wednesday, 7.15 a.m. (in place of Matins)

THE COVER PICTURE depicts the Marston Chalice, reflecting on its bowl the spires of the University, the factory chimneys of Cowley, and homes with T.V. Masts—all symbolic of the life of our village. The design is by Mr. Brian Cairns.

PARISH CALENDAR — DECEMBER

- Dec. 2. **ADVENT SUNDAY**
 9.30 a.m. **PARISH COMMUNION.**
 Re-dedication of St. Nicholas Fellowship.
 Followed by Coffee in the Church Hall.
 3.00 p.m. Children's St. Nicholas-tide Service.
 6.30 p.m. Evensong.
- „ 5. Wednesday. 7.15 a.m. Holy Communion.
- „ 6. Thursday. **ST. NICHOLAS' DAY. PATRONAL FESTIVAL**
 7.15 a.m. Holy Communion.
 7.45 p.m. **DEDICATION OF GALLERY BY THE LORD BISHOP OF OXFORD.**
 Followed by "At Home" in the Church Hall.
- „ 9. **2nd SUNDAY IN ADVENT**
 8.00 a.m. Holy Communion.
 11.0 a.m. Matins.
 3.00 p.m. Holy Baptism.
 6.30 p.m. Evensong.
- „ 10. Monday. 7.45 p.m. Meeting of Parochial Church Council.
- „ 11. Tuesday. 7.15 p.m. Annual General Meeting of W.I.
- „ 12. Wednesday. 7.15 a.m. Holy Communion.
 7.45 p.m. Women's Meeting. "A Christmas Anthology" in Church Hall by the Marston Players.
- „ 14. Friday. 10.30 a.m. Holy Communion.
- „ 16. **3rd SUNDAY IN ADVENT. STUDY GROUP WEEK**
 8.00 a.m. Holy Communion.
 9.30 a.m. **FAMILY COMMUNION.**
 11.0 a.m. Matins.
 6.30 p.m. Evensong. Church Parade for Brownies, Cubs, Guides and Scouts. All young people specially invited.
- „ 19. Wednesday. 7.15 a.m. Holy Communion.
- „ 21. Friday. Festival of St. Thomas.
 7.15 a.m. Holy Communion.
- „ 23. **4th SUNDAY IN ADVENT**
 8.00 a.m. Holy Communion.
 11.0 a.m. Matins.
 3.00 p.m. Holy Baptism.
 6.30 p.m. **CAROL AND CANDLE SERVICE.**
- „ 24. **Monday. EVE OF CHRISTMAS**
 11.30 p.m. **HOLY COMMUNION.**
- „ 25. **Tuesday. CHRISTMAS DAY**
 8 a.m. and Noon. Holy Communion.
 11.0 a.m. Family Matins.

My Dear Friends

ADVENT SUNDAY — December 2nd, 1962

9.30 a.m. **HOLY COMMUNION AND RE-DEDICATION SERVICE FOR MEMBERS OF ST. NICHOLAS FELLOWSHIP.**

I do look forward to seeing you and your family at this service. Please note that this will be the **only** service on Advent Sunday morning. There may be some who for certain reasons are not members of the Fellowship. Nevertheless we hope you will still come and join with us as a Parish Family at this service. I shall be preaching, and our celebrant will be the

Rev. John Cowdrey, Chaplain of St. Edmund's Hall, who has been such a wonderful help during the year. There will be light refreshments for all in the Church Hall after the service.

3 p.m. St. Nicholas-tide Children's Gift Service

We ask all children in the parish to bring gifts of toys, chocolate, or sweets which will be sent to the Church of England Children's Home for distribution at Christmastide. A special request is made for gifts for the young teenager, and older child, as they are often forgotten at such times. Parents will be most welcome at the service.

6.30 p.m. Evensong and Sermon

PATRONAL FESTIVAL

Saint Nicholas' Day. December 6th, 1962

7.15 a.m. Parish Communion

Do please make a special effort to join with us at Holy Communion on this wonderful day, when we gather to give thanks to God for all His blessings, and to pray for the parish needs, and witness in the world.

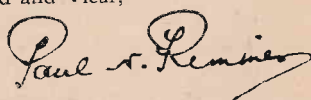
**7.30 p.m. Festal Evensong and Dedication of the New Gallery
by the Lord Bishop of Oxford**

At this thrilling service we shall be gathering for the dedication of the New Gallery given by Mrs. Harlow, in memory of her husband our former Warden, Professor Vincent Harlow. Not only will it be a privilege to welcome our Diocesan Bishop, but also to thank God for this wonderful gift, which will be a permanent and living tribute to the life of one of Marston's most distinguished parishioners.

**PLEASE COME IN GOOD TIME TO THE FESTIVAL SERVICES
AS THIS WILL HELP ENORMOUSLY WITH THE PROBLEM OF
SEATING.**

May I wish you the strength that comes from a new beginning at Advent, and a sense of Wonder and Joy that springs from the Christmas Message.

Your sincere friend and Vicar,



HOLY BAPTISM

- Oct. 28. Kathleen Sarah Bryan, 7 Cherwell Park Caravan Site.
Hugh George Cannon, 25 Stratfield Road, Kidlington.
Jane Carolyn Oliver, 24 Arlington Drive.
Graham Roberts, 20 Cavendish Drive.
Nov. 11. Alan Roy Clifton, 16 Mulcaster Avenue, Kidlington.

IN MEMORIAM

- Nov. 3. Fred Furber. Aged 76.
" 12. Rose Eleanor Duester. Aged 91.

COLLECTIONS AND COMMUNICANTS

		£	s.	d.	Communicants
Oct. 7.	Trinity XVI	52	10	1	68
" 14.	Trinity XVII	26	14	6	26
" 18.	St. Luke's Day				
" 21.	Trinity XVIII	31	17	2	67
" 28.	Trinity XIX	25	7	0	34
	Total No. of Week-day Communicants				50

SUNDAY SCHOOL

ADVENT SUNDAY : 2nd December.

There will be no morning Sunday School, but instead the Children will be invited to the St. Nicholas-tide Gift Service at 3 p.m. Good toys which are brought to this Service will be given to the Church of England Children's Society Homes.

The Senior Catechism will be encouraged to come to the 9.30 a.m. Family Communion on that day.

CHRISTMAS PARTY

This will be on Saturday, 5th January, 1963, when all children will be invited.

Kindergarten and Nursery	3 p.m. to 5.30 p.m. with Tea at 3.45 p.m.
Juniors	4.45 to 6.45 p.m. with Tea at 5.30 p.m.

Entertainment for all at 4.45 p.m.

A LATE COMMUNION SERVICE :

We have been asked if the monthly Communion Service at 10.30 a.m. could be changed from the first to the SECOND Friday in the month at the same time. This we gladly do. Will all those who wish to attend please note that it will be on **December 14th at 10.30 a.m.**

There will be opportunity for all who desire to receive the Laying on of Hands at this service.

BULBS FOR THE CHURCHYARD :

Through the kindness of many donors, it has been possible to purchase some 500 bulbs, including aconites, miniature daffodils, purple and yellow croci. Mr. Jones, the County Horticultural Adviser, who is a regular worshipper with his family at our services, has been a tremendous help in not only planting the bulbs, but also in advising where they should go. We are most grateful to him, and also to Professor Dodds, who gave advice about the selection of the bulbs, and loaned a bulb planter—a tool that is now seldom seen on the market.

MOTHERS' UNION :

The M.U. will not be holding its usual meeting on the 4th Wednesday of the month but all members will be attending the Christmas Anthology at the Open Meeting on Wednesday, 12th December.

On November 14th the Rev. Harold Best spoke to an Open Meeting for the women of the parish on "Coventry Cathedral," and his talk was illustrated by coloured transparencies, kindly loaned by Mrs. Barnsley.

Mr. Best is not only Vicar of Dorchester, but a qualified architect, and gave a critical appreciation of the Cathedral from an experienced point of view.

It was a great pity that some of our younger wives were not there, and it is hoped that they will make a special effort to come to the Christmas Anthology.

MEN'S FORUM :

One or two eyebrows were raised at the sight of the notice announcing that an R.C. Franciscan monk, Father Benedict Cullen, was to speak at our last Men's Forum on the topic of "The Vatican Council 1962" Fr. Cullen is a historian and philosopher, and at present reading for a D.Phil at the University, and his visit to the Men's Forum was tremendously appreciated. After a lucid introduction he answered many questions on varied topics of Roman practice and organisation, and the vote of thanks voiced by Mr. Wren summed up the appreciation of all at his coming.

THE YOUTH FELLOWSHIP :

"Witches and Devils" Party — "Meet Jenny Wren" (a delightful party and twist session at Longacre at the invitation of Mr. & Mrs. Wren and Jenny), a discussion on the "Christian attitude to sex," and another on "the meaning of worship" — all these things have come within the sphere of the Y.F. activities. Days are crowded and it hasn't been possible to fix dates for our job of work, although the distemping of the Church Hall has been suggested as a likely one. The Corporate Communion and Discussions have been fairly well attended, and many people have commented on how good it is to see so many young folk at Evensong.

DR. BARNARDO HOUSE TO HOUSE COLLECTION :

Mrs. Bangs thanks all collectors and donors for their help and support in collecting the sum of £21 1s. 9d. almost £3 more than last year.

Individual collections:— Miss Lodge and the Youth Fellowship, £5 18s. 5. Mrs. Cox, £3 5s. 0d. Mrs. Maund, £1 2s. 6d. Mrs. Holmes, £1 9s. 3d. Mrs. Hilditch, £2 10s. 3d. Mrs. Walton, £2 10s. 2d. Miss M. Marsh, £2 2s. 2d. Mr. and Mrs. Bangs, £2 4s. 0d.

NEWS WANTED :

No reports have been sent in this month by Bellringers, Choir, Scouts, Cubs and Girl Guides but perhaps a full programme has caused this lapse!

BROWNIES :

Congratulations to Jill Aries, Penny Cooper, Helen Doman, Elaine Johnston and Rosalind Starmer Smith on gaining their First Aid Badge.

A big "Thank-you" to Mrs. Sullivan for her help in teaching the Brownies to qualify for this badge.

Congratulations too to Janice Weston on gaining the First Class Badge, and to Mrs. Aries on receiving her Warrant as Tawny Owl.

Brown Owl.

THE MARSTON PLAYERS :

What an excellent beginning to the Players! The Oxford Mail gave "The Women must have their Way" an encouraging write-up, and all who attended either of the two performances must have realised just how much work went into their production. And what a refreshing experience it is to see live local theatre in these days of T.V. and the 17 inch screen!

We look forward to future productions from this keen group, and offer our hearty congratulations on this their first public performance.

THE CHURCHYARD :

"Vicar, did you read in the paper what the Parish Council said about the state of the Churchyard?" Yes, we did read all about it, although we hoped that that Parish Council knows the name of its Parish Church, and that the error in referring to it as "St. Andrew's" was not theirs! Mr. Maund has done stalwart work on the front of the churchyard (what a pity no one mentioned this!). But the rear of the churchyard did look rather like a battlefield, and was unfortunately cut—the week after the judges had been to judge the Tidiest Village Competition.

At any rate the remarks of the Parish Council have drawn attention to the fact that the Churchyard is a parochial responsibility.

No matter how many resolutions are passed about the Churchyard, no matter how many letters are written, the problem of the Churchyard resolves itself into the question "Am I prepared to roll up my sleeves and take a hand in getting it smart again?" There are always ten people with useful comments, to one person with his coat off!

Sickles and rakes are available. Where are the volunteers?

"Your Churchyard needs you!" (with apologies to Lord Kitchener).



A NEW CAROL

Specially written for Home Words—

by

James F. Cotton

To the tune of *While shepherds watch'd...*

LET every heart rejoice to-day
And cast all care aside;
The Holy Child to Mary born,
Will grace and peace provide.

Though lowly at His birth He lay,
To-day He reigns above;
The Mighty Saviour offers all
The comfort of His love.

No sin or sorrow can prevail
Where Jesus rules the heart;
But joy and gladness, light and life,
His Spirit doth impart.

So lift your voice in heart-felt praise
And in God's Truth abide;
Give glory, honour to our King
At this, His Christmas-tide.

The Cash-Register v. The Crib

ALREADY the posters have gone up: *X Shopping days to Christmas*. Each year they go up earlier. The Christmas buying spree gets under way these days by November and in a few weeks we shall be told that all spending records have been broken. They always are.

For long past the Church as a whole has set its face against the over-commercialisation of Christmas with little outward sign of success.

Probably there will not be any until Christian folk take it upon themselves as individuals to bring home personally to their neighbours that there is more to Christmas than a carnival for cash-registers.

Not that we should boycott present-buying or forgo our Christmas dinner.

Our duty is to keep a sense of proportion. When we buy gifts for our family and friends (as we should, to show our love for them) we must always remember why we do it—as a token of God's supreme Gift to us, His Only Son, because He first loved us.

As our children, clutching their toys, gather round the Crib in our parish church they may wonder whether as a baby the King of kings lying in a cattle byre had any toys. Certainly not like ours. But all He sought of the world was the humble and contrite heart of mankind.

As for ourselves, we may reflect that there is in reality far more significance to Christmas even than the Crib. For the Nativity led to Calvary, and the crucifixion would have been meaningless without the Resurrection.

The Birth of Our Lord is not something we commemorate as an isolated event, but as part of the indivisible pattern of God's manifestation of Himself to the world.

It is this that raises the Xmas of the cash-registers and the money-changers into the Christmas of Redemption.—w. s.

Detail from Botticelli's
Mystic Nativity
—Courtesy National Gallery



HOW does the average Christian of 40 or 50 react when he is suddenly—and often ruthlessly—thrown out of work?

In these days such a tragedy can frequently happen and leave a trail of bitterness and despair. Firms amalgamate, are taken over, or simply close down. Good, middle-aged men and women, with long years of loyal service behind them, must pull up their roots and start afresh.

We read recently of an executive of 55 whose firm dismissed him from a top-level job. He wrote *three thousand* letters, applying for work. But nobody wanted him. Imagine the anguish of that man as the letters of rejection water-falled on his door-mat.

He must have had some inner reserve to go on seeking after the first *hundred* employers had turned him down. Perhaps the sympathy of his wife and children as he returned from yet another hopeless interview gave him new courage to try again. Perhaps he was blessed with good friends, and had confided his troubles to an acquaintance—although he might have found such a confidence embarrassing, since if the friend is well-situated his Christian intentions all too often tend to be sympathetic rather than practical.

To many an unemployed man the inner reserve that has sustained him is his belief in God. Indeed, unemployment often reawakens faith, which from easy living may have become dormant. It is not only a time of reflection and penitence, but also of thankfulness to God that he still has his health, his loved ones, and the prayers of his friends.

Humility replaces the early confidence that he can get as good a job

as he had before. His pride, the product of years of hard work and experience, would not at first accept a lower or even an equal salary.

Gradually he accepts the harsh reality that he will have to work for much less money. "Keeping up appearances" becomes secondary to keeping the wolf from the door. Disillusionment is always at hand, but inevitably the Divine Will is nearer at hand.

At last there comes the offer of a job of sorts—£500 a year less, no pension rights, and the liability of dismissal at any time. But the prospect of regular work, and a cheque at the end of every month, fills his heart with thankfulness to God.

"A fat lot of good his faith has done him," the man in the street will retort.

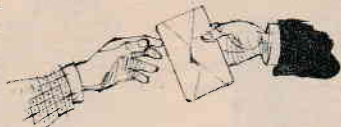
And yet—and yet . . . whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth.

After all, Christ did not promise us wealth. (*Lay not up for yourselves treasure on earth . . .*) He promised the Christian his reward in heaven.

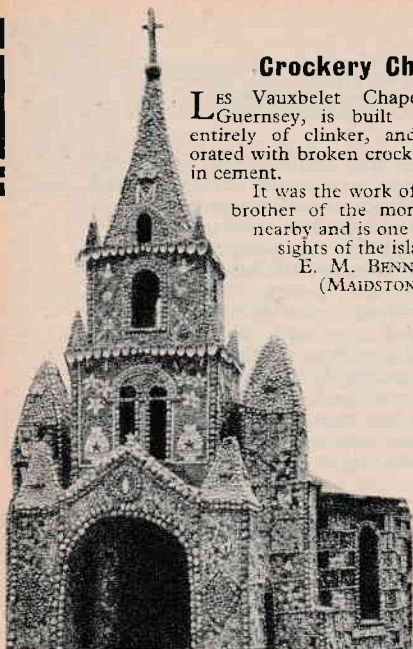
He did not offer those who follow Him an easy life in this world, either (although the Psalmist could claim: *Once I was young and now I am old, but never have I seen the righteous man begging his bread.*)

The Christian knows that riches do not lie in personal possessions any more than happiness is measured by a bank balance—in fact, we have been warned that *it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God.*

We brought nothing into this world and it is certain that we can carry nothing out. We are entitled to ask that our daily bread shall be provided for us. Our necessities. But not our luxuries.



If I lose my job



Crockery Church

LES Vauxbelet Chapel, in Guernsey, is built almost entirely of clinker, and decorated with broken crockery set in cement.

It was the work of a lay brother of the monastery nearby and is one of the sights of the island.—

E. M. BENNETT
(MAIDSTONE).

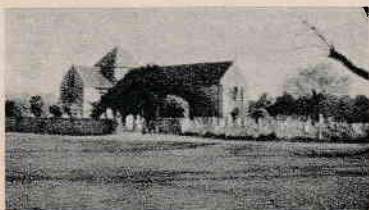
The Hudd

BEHIND the organ in the church of Pinchbeck, near Spalding, Lincolnshire is a sentry-box-like object called a *hudd*.

It is described in records of 1725 as "a shade of wood for the minister to stand in when he buryeth the corpse," and in bad weather was carried into the churchyard so that he could officiate in comparative comfort—which the mourners could not share.—M. L. ROBINSON (LOCKINGTON, DRIFFIELD).

From Michael (11)

ST. Mary's Church (Portchester) is a typical example of Norman architecture with its rounded arches and window tops. It stands in the grounds of Portchester Castle which was itself built by the Normans.—MICHAEL GASTON, AGED 11 (HORNDÉAN, HANTS.). ▼



Church Notes . .

Labour of Love

ST. Mary Magdalene's Church, Pontywaith, in the Rhondda Valley, which has recently been given its first banner and processional cross, has a unique mosaic sanctuary floor. Llandaff Diocesan coat-of-arms is beautifully featured.

Much of the work was voluntary and necessitated by subsidence. This, together with the complete renovation of every pew in the church, amounts to a considerable stewardship of talent.—

J. H. COX (VICAR).



Scout's Window

THE 1st Streat-ham Hill Boy Scout Group have their own Scout stained glass window, of modern type, at St. Thomas's Church, Balham, S.W. It was dedicated on Sunday, June 3 last year.—R. W. W. WHITE (SCOUT-MASTER).

Link with Crusades

STYDD Church, Ribchester, in the Ribble Valley, is one of the oldest in Lancashire.

Records show that the Knight Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem built a church there in about 1136, as part of a monastery occupied by soldier-monks for 200 years till it was dissolved after the Crusades. Nothing now remains of the monastery but the tiny chapel, which transferred to the parish of St. Wilfred's, Ribchester, in 1545.

The south door (dated 1200) leads to a stone-flagged nave, with oak screen and panelled pulpit, complete with cone-shaped sounding board.—CYRIL R. ROWSON (HUYTON).

... and Views



Heavenly Twins

WILLINGALE Spain and Willingale Doe in Essex are probably the villages of rival Norman knights and their two churches are still in one churchyard.

Willingale Spain (foreground) has patches of red Roman tiles and its walls stand much as the Normans built them. The chancel was renovated about 500 years ago. Willingale Doe (background) retains the capital of a piscina pillar from Norman times, now set in the 14th-century wall of the nave.

Willingale Doe, with 15th-century tower, is 20 feet bigger than Willingale Spain.—R. S. TULLY (EAST HAM). ▼



Wonderful Walker

AFAMOUS curate, the Rev. Robert Walker ("Wonderful Walker"), is immortalised by Wordsworth in his sonnet, "Seathwaite Chapel."

First at Buttermere, in the Lake District, he received a stipend of £1 a year, a shirt, and wooden shoes and later spent over 66 years as curate in the remote hamlet of Seathwaite by the river Duddon. There he was allowed £5 a year and a cottage.

Wordsworth wrote of him—... a Gospel Teacher
Whose good works formed an endless retinue:

*A Pastor such as Chaucer's verse portrays;
Such as the heaven-taught skill of Herbert drew*

And tender Goldsmith crowned with deathless praise.

Walker and his wife died in their 93rd year, in 1802, and their tombstone is well preserved in the churchyard of Seathwaite.—ARTHUR LUMAN (WESTMINSTER).

96—and still ringing



MR. Robert Fisher, of East Meon, Hants., aged 96—81 years a chorister and 72 years a bell ringer.

This year he went with other bell-ringers on a tour which entailed ringing at seven churches in one day, including the cathedrals of Winchester and Portsmouth.

He was responsible for the single tolling of the bell at East Meon church to mark the death of Queen Victoria and has seen the induction of 12 vicars.—K. J. ROLLS (GUILDFORD).

Charity Loaves

ABRICK and stone-slab table stands in the porch of St. Peter and St. Paul at Eye, Suffolk. It was put there to provide a place for the distribution of charity loaves, and dates from the seventeenth century. It is believed to be unique.

The church tower is over 100 ft. high and has been called "one of the wonders of Suffolk." Among its contents are a screen with fourteen figure-paintings of kings and saints.—JOHN HARTLEY (LITTLE ABINGTON, CAMBS.). ▼





Outside the first mission school.

After the Monsoon—the Burra Din

LET me tell you about the best *Burra Din* of all, my most memorable Christmas Day in India . . .

When we moved our big high school for European children from Bombay to the hills some hundred miles away we found that our new school had become almost a village in itself, with its four boarding houses, its hospital, chapel, dining halls, and bungalows for the staff.

Near the gateway too, were the houses for the Indian workers, gardeners, sweepers, washermen and women, motor drivers, cooks, house servants, and whatnot—about fifty all told.

It was decided that a small school for the workers' children should be built with palm-leaf matting walls and tiled roof.

A teacher was recommended—a good Christian, and a most conscientious worker—well-liked by all the employees, Christian and Hindu alike.

The opening of the school was a tremendous occasion; our high school chaplain dedicated it, and our choirboys sang a hymn. How proud the servants were! It was *their own school*. As for us, we saw with satisfaction twenty or more boys and girls gathered every day to sit on mats learning to read and write—

and above all, hearing the Gospel . . .

Well, in the fullness of time the monsoon broke, as monsoons must, and one sad morning the mission school-master stood at our door to tell us that the little school's roof had collapsed.

But after a few quenched moments enthusiasm ran high again. Our blood was up. After all, the beams and the tiles were still there: a new and stronger school should be built.

We had a sale of work. Friends at home sent cash too, and steadily a stone mission school rose on the site of the old one.

By Christmas time the building was finished.

The Indian name for Christmas Day is *Burra Din*, the Great Day, and this Christmas Day was indeed a *Burra Din* for children and their parents.

Every child had a present, and sweets and oranges; they recited to the whole company of parents and friends who were packed into the little room; the high school staff and children came down from the big school to watch the mission school boys run races under a blazing sun. It was a time of joy and thanksgiving.

MARY CARTER

No room . . .



IN the inn yard all was bustle and noise, with travellers arriving, animals being led away, servants calling to each other. At the doorway the innkeeper was talking to a man of poor appearance who held by the bridle a small donkey upon which sat a tired woman:

"You see how it is . . . What can I do? The only empty room there is was ordered many days ago by my lord Nicodemus, and I dare not offend him! Of course, if he should fail to come. . ."

Even as the innkeeper spoke there came an imperious hail: "Make way there for my lord and lady!" Nicodemus and his wife had arrived.

As he turned to lead the way the innkeeper's eyes met those of the

quailed, but persisted bravely: "She may well need the help of another woman before morning."

My lord's lady drew herself up, and with flashing eyes settled the matter. "How dare you suggest that I should act as midwife to a peasant woman!"

On her bed that night the Lady Rachel lay awake a long time. For the sight of the woman on the donkey had brought back that day, years ago, when her own baby had been born—and had died almost in the same moment. In bitterness of heart she fell into uneasy sleep.

And in her sleep she dreamed. Of a child's voice wailing through the inn: "Let me in!" And of the reply from behind every door: "No room, no room!" She herself was braced against a door—the door of her heart. She heard the child's footsteps receding, and in quick revulsion of feeling flung wide the door, crying: "Come in, please come in!"

But it was too late. The child had gone. She broke into sobs, and still sobbing awoke.

Her thoughts returned to the woman in the stable. What was happening there? Her own child had had every care, yet she had lost him. And

A Christmas story

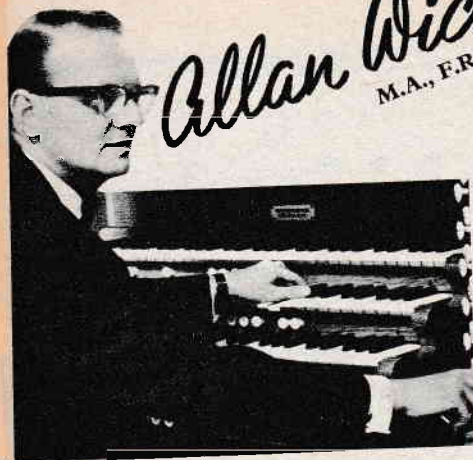
by

JENNIE AUSTERBERRY

woman on the donkey. He hesitated, then faced his lord once more. "If you please, sir," he faltered, "this poor woman has just arrived with her husband and I can offer them nothing but the stable. As you see, sir, she is in no fit state for privation, and I thought—well—it occurred to me . . . perhaps, of your generosity, to sleep there with her husband—I would make you comfortable—and let her have your bed in your wife's room . . .?"

Before Nicodemus's wrath he

(Continued on page 186)



Allan Wicks
M.A., F.R.C.O.

Organist of Ca

which nowadays is an enormous anthem—for a diocesan choirs festival. Now no diocesan choirs festival could get anywhere near that piece today.

Ed.: So that in that way there has certainly been a decline?

Wicks: Yes. But on the other hand I think we have to realise something much more important: in 60 years we have come away from the idea of Church music representing a cosy kind of bourgeois religion. And two wars have taught us something more effective than the complacency epitomised by Parry and to some extent Stanford, to say nothing of our present-day writers of hymn-anthems. In that respect I think the work in parish churches has improved immeasurably.

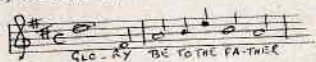
Ed.: But you would still regard the standard of parish music as lower than it used to be?

Wicks: Not necessarily. Technically, yes. You see, in the old days people used to do terrific things, but I think they did them for the wrong reasons.

Ed.: Talking of hymn-anthems, why do you suppose so many parish

THE EDITOR: As organist of Canterbury Cathedral, the "Mother Church" of the Anglican communion, you obviously have choral resources beyond the reach of most parish churches.

Wicks: That's probably true, but it is no reflection on the parishes, because after all they are the backbone of the Church whereas the cathedrals are, as it were, the luxuries.



Ed.: How do you feel musical standards in the parish churches have changed over, say, the past ten years?

Wicks: Probably over the past ten years there has been some change—but it would be better to choose a much longer period. Sixty years, for example.

Ed.: And in that time?

Wicks: You will find two very marked changes. One is a terrific decline in technical efficiency throughout the whole field of Church music.

Ed.: Technical efficiency?

Wicks: Yes. For example; something like 40 to 50 years ago Bairstow wrote *Blessed City* which we ourselves find a tough enough piece to sing. He wrote it for a deanery festival in Bradford. And about 60 or 70 years ago Parry wrote *Hear My Words*—

... and in the first of a series of talks with **THE EDITOR** asks:

Why bother

churches confine themselves to them? A question of choral resources?

Wicks: I suppose that is the answer. Choirs tend to pick an anthem that on the face of it seems technically easy.

Ed.: It only seems so?

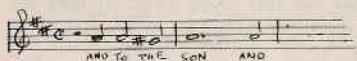
Wicks: Yes. The result often is to choose something that is poor musically and in reality isn't all that easy after all—because if a thing isn't intrinsically very good it has to be



given an absolutely dazzling performance to persuade anyone it has got anything in it at all.

Ed.: And in reality that is doing things the hard way?

Wicks: Yes. The point is that even today far too many of our choirs try to do things they shouldn't be bothering with at all. And that brings us to something very basic—that the whole question of worship is indivisible.



Ed.: In other words, no part of the service is more or less important than another?

Wicks: Exactly. And, what is more important than mere technical efficiency, there are signs in the Church today that musicians and the clergy are beginning to realise that the first need is for communication between them.

Ed.: In what sense, in particular?

Wicks: Well, for example, the prelude to many of our church services was too often a bell ringing in one key, the organ playing in another, and in the distance the vestry prayer being sung in a third key. The congregation had to sit and endure polytonality

musician isn't simply to produce an anthem once a week but to concentrate on seeing that the whole pattern of worship is in accord with what the parson wants, and is presented well.

Ed.: That surely brings us back to choral resources?

Wicks: I don't think that is as important as many of us believe.

Ed.: Of course, most parish church choirs consist of people who are not in any sense professional musicians, and possibly not even trained singers, but are able to put in at most perhaps one evening's practice a week.

Wicks: Yes, but I don't think it matters what your resources are. What does matter is how you make use of them. You may have a full choir—sopranos, tenors, altos and basses. Or three trebles and one bass, whose voice was jolly good 50 years ago. This doesn't matter, because the *shape* of the liturgy is the same. The *detail* can be varied.

Ed.: In either case they need not be confined to hymn-anthems?



Wicks: I would have thought an anthem is the last thing you need to bother about. There are other things so much more important. For instance—let's face it—the psalms are extremely difficult to sing, unless you have a trained choir to sing them, if you rely on Anglican chants or plain-song. Plainsong is very beautiful when it is done by a choir and congregation who are used to it. But I don't think English folk on the whole have the temperament for it. I like it now and then—but only as a foil for other things.

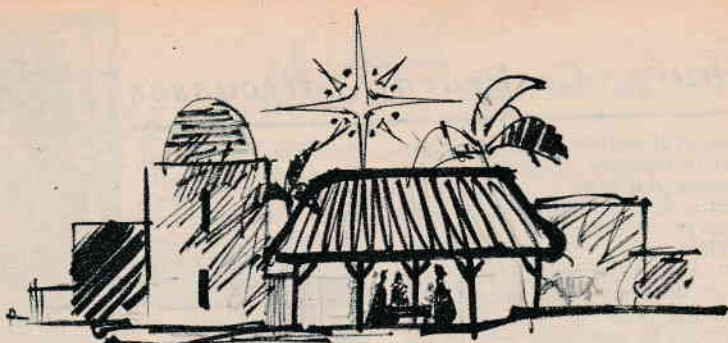
Next: New ways with the Psalms

with Hymn-Anthems?

in a very cruel form as their introduction to worship.

Ed.: I can recall that sort of thing!

Wicks: Fortunately, television and radio have led us to demand a much higher standard of skill in "presentation," so to speak, and that is a considerable advance. We understand better now that the job of a church



(Continued from page 183)

this poor woman, even now in travail . . .

She rose from bed, drew her cloak around her, and went out. Out to the stable.

A light burned there, and by its flicker she could see a newborn baby lying beside his mother who was wrapping him in bands of cloth. The husband, with clumsy though gentle hands, was trying to help.

Rachel ran forward. "Please let me help," she cried.

The man stood up and made room for her. "You are so kind," smiled the tired young mother. Then: "Joseph has put clean straw in the manger. Would you lay my child there for me?"

Rachel picked up the baby and held the tiny body close to hers for a moment. Then, with her free hand, she unwound her shawl of fine linen from her head, spread it over the straw, and tucked the baby snugly in.

"May God bless you," said the young mother. "When my child is older I shall tell him you were the very first to help him. We shall not forget."

Out in the open again the cold night breeze stirred Rachel's hair. But she did not heed it. In the moment when she had held the baby in the stable her heart had grown warm again for the first time in many years. The bitterness within her had melted away.

Is your name STEPHEN?

YOU will remember how good King Wenceslas looked out on the Feast of Stephen—that is on Boxing Day, December 26th.

The Stephen in whose honour this feast is kept was the first Christian martyr. In the 6th and 7th chapters of the Acts of the Apostles you can read the full story of how his enemies gave him a mockery of a trial, and then stoned him to death, for no better reason than that he believed in, and followed, Jesus Christ.

The name Stephen means "a crown." For that reason, perhaps, it was at one time a favourite name among the royalty of Europe.

We had one King Stephen of England—a weak man who did what his barons told him to do. Under

his rule England was a very unsettled, unhappy country. But King Stephen of Hungary was a much stronger man, who took a leading part in the conversion of his country to Christianity.

Do you know those negro minstrel songs like "The Old Folks at Home," "Old Black Joe," and "My Old Kentucky Home"? Though we associate them with black people, and negro minstrel concert parties, they were composed by a white man, the American song writer Stephen Collins Foster. Mainly a self-taught musician, these songs made him famous.

Commander Sir Stephen King-Hall is well known both as a writer and a broadcaster.

G. E. DIGGLE

. . . ADVENT

THE four weeks before Christmas are called the season of Advent—which is the time when we prepare for the Coming of the Lord. When any important event is to happen, it is always necessary to get ready for it beforehand. In Advent, we try to do this by getting rid of anything that is bad in our lives, and by putting in its place something that is good.

If you look at the collect for Advent Sunday, you will see that we pray that we may cast away the works of darkness and put upon us the armour of light. When St. Paul wrote his letters to his friends, he sometimes compared the Christian life to a race; for runners in a race would prepare for it by casting off everything that hindered them, or laying aside every weight so that they could run more easily.

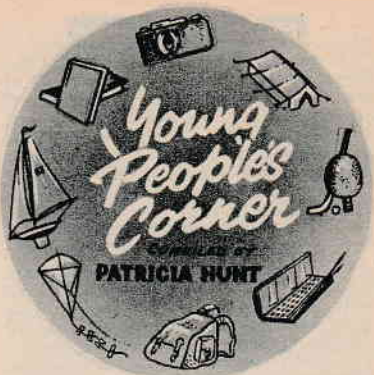
Sometimes St. Paul compared the Christian life to a battle. No doubt he had seen soldiers putting on their armour for battle, and in Ephesians, Chap. 6, he talks about the shield of faith, the breastplate of righteousness, and the sword of the spirit. If you look at verses 11-17 in that chapter, you see the sort of armour the Christian soldier should wear.

So we must get ready for Christmas, like Greek runners, casting off the bad things, or like Roman soldiers, putting on Christian armour, and so we shall make our lives more fit for the Lord Jesus to enter in.

. . . CHRISTMAS TREES

A new idea. At the Protestant Social Centre in Geneva, the young people found a new way of collecting money for a charity. They asked every family to give ten centimes (about 2d.) for every candle lit on their Christmas trees. This, they said, was so that "the light may shine further" by the money given to the charity.

This idea could be copied and the money given to the missionary societies, so that the light of the Gospel may shine further out into the world. Put your missionary box by your tree; it will help you to remember that it was only because Christ came at the first Christmas that the light began to shine in the world at all.



. & MISSIONARIES

What do Missionaries do? A lot of people still think of missionaries as people who do nothing but preach—preferably standing under a palm tree! This idea is entirely wrong, although, of

Prayer Book Puzzle

How many Creeds do you know and where would you find them in the Prayer Book? (Answer on page 190)

course, preaching is part of their work. Christianity is concerned with the *whole* of life—homes and surroundings, food and health, education, recreation, the relationship of people with people, and the relationship of people with God.

Missionaries almost always have a profession, just like everyone else: they are teachers, doctors, priests, nurses, agriculturists, accountants, dispensers, welfare workers, and so on. But they try to put Jesus Christ first in their lives and are prepared to witness to Him, and to pass on their faith to others

NOTE TO CONTRIBUTORS

The Editor is always pleased to consider contributions, but owing to increasing pressure on space—

Articles (wherever possible accompanied by pictures) should not exceed 500-600 words.

Fiction must not be longer than 800 words.

Letters, Church Notes etc. should aim at 100 words or so.

MSS should be accompanied by s.a.c. for return if unsuitable.

MONDAY—Washing

Strong winds sometimes whip out the threads of overstitching at the ends of sheets. This may be prevented, if when the sheets are new a run of, say, twelve inches or so is made through the overstitching at each end. Easy to do on the sewing-machine—and helps for repeated washings.—MRS. A. G. GREEN (HUDDERSFIELD).

TUESDAY—Sewing

Don't throw away faded old cushion covers. Sew tapes on the corners, each side of the openings, and use for tying round the waist. On wash-days use for popping the pegs in when hanging out the clothes. "Bedroom days", use for popping in all your dusters, brushes etc. They never get lost this way!—MISS R. E. FROST (DUDLEY).

WEDNESDAY—Nursing

For years I have suffered from cramp in legs and feet and on the doctor's advice now have a small hard cushion (15 x 7 inches) at the foot of my bed (the 7-inch upward) and the bedclothes *untucked* particularly at the foot of the bed side.

I do not suffer from cramp now, but recently I bought a new blanket and tucked it in at the foot—and immediately got cramp again.—G. J. (CHELTENHAM).

THURSDAY—Cooking

When important to gauge the exact amount of fat, I have found that half an inch (which can be marked out on the *wrapped* packet, using a ruler or tape measure) is the equivalent of one ounce. In making pastry—if not wanted to taste too fatty, and yet still be "short"—three parts of margarine and one part pure lard is ideal. This is particularly advantageous for elderly people.—Miss B. L. HORTON (GT. YARMOUTH).

A tip for the Christmas tree

To make fluffy snowballs to decorate your Christmas tree try this! Pour a small cupful of soap powder or detergent into a bowl, add a little water and whip to the consistency of stiff meringue.

Mould into shapes, and place to dry thoroughly, until they harden. With sprigs of holly, glittery ornaments, coloured shells etc. pressed into them whilst they are still moist they will make novel ornaments. A piece of coloured string threaded through, just before



FRIDAY—Household

Vinegar and **honey** mixed in equal parts will stop a throat cough.

No discoloration will follow a knock or blow if a piece of old, clean **linen** is steeped in **vinegar** and tied loosely over the place.

Spots of **paint** on windows or mirrors can easily be removed by dabbing with hot, neat **vinegar**.

Furred kettles: Put two teaspoonsful of borax into a kettle of boiling water; boil for fifteen minutes, and the fur will loosen. Throw away the water and residue, and thoroughly cleanse the kettle by boiling fresh water in it.—MRS. C. GIBBONS (STOCKPORT).

SATURDAY—Children

Some children do not like iced fruit cakes for birthdays. I have devised an alternative—a train cake!

Lay a large swiss roll on a plate. Cut one miniature roll into four pieces and skewer in place to form "wheels" (with cocktail sticks). Cut another miniature roll in half and skewer on top for "funnels". Pipe the child's name on the sides in icing, and place candles in the funnels.

Do not throw away old hats, dresses or blouses. An amusing party game can be made by cramming such "dressing up items" into a large bag and passing round. One who holds the bag when the music stops has to wear the item of clothing next on top. The game continues until all the clothing is used, the children love it!—MRS. J. BICHENOUGH, (LONDON, S.E.12).

they harden, makes a hanger for them to be tied to the tree.

This "snow" may also be used, before hardening to pat lightly on the branches, or window panes, and for adding a touch of frost to leaves, cones and twigs. To give a touch of colour, simply add a drop of food colouring to the mixture before whipping.

These soap shapes may be used time and time again, if packed away with the other Christmas decorations.

MARION HURST

By ERIC HARDY, F.Z.S.

AFTER I had been lecturing recently on my nature studies in the Holy Land, a member of my audience said: "I never thought of Palestine as a land of flowers: I always considered it to be a barren, stony place, a sort of desert."

For much of the year most of Palestine is a rather dusty grey landscape—during the long summer drought—but from the middle of winter till spring it is replete with exquisite wild flowers.

Out of a collection or "herbarium" of over a thousand wild flowers I obtained in the Holy Land, and named with the assistance of the professor of botany at Jerusalem University, quite half of them were collected during the summer drought.

I have literally waded knee-deep through acres of flowers around Capernaum, on the Carmel and in the plain of Jezreel.

There is, however, considerable misunderstanding about many of the flowers mentioned in our English translation of the Scriptures. Although the Bible refers to the "lilies of the field," the term is a generalisation, for the original chroniclers were not botanists.

Palestine has very few native lilies apart from the Madonna, *Lilium candidum*, which I have seen on the southern bluff of Carmel. This is very rare in the wild and in danger of extinction.

The reference in St. Matthew is to the general expanse of spring flowers—anemones, poppies, single yellow chrysanthemums, narcissi, pink cyclamens, purple grape-hyacinths, vernal squills, blue fleur-de-lis, irises and so on. The "lily work" on Solomon's Temple, mentioned in 1st Kings, was modelled upon the lotus of Egypt or the water-lilies of Lake Huleh.



CHRISTMAS is blossom-time in the Holy Land

FLOWERS that Jesus knew

Nor does the Biblical word "rose" (Isaiah 35, 1) signify a true rose, although the wild white Lebanon rose still grows in many parts of the northern hills and our garden roses came from the ancient Damask rose. The Hebrew origin, *chabatz elath*, and the Septuagint Greek, signify merely a bulbous plant.

The desert blossoms in autumn with the rose-pink meadow-saffron or Colchicum, which may well be the flower referred to in Isaiah. The "Rose of Sharon" was certainly not a true rose.

Solomon may have imported and cultivated a true garden rose, but rose-culture as we know it was introduced into Syria in the time of Alexander the Great.

Are You Out of Sorts?

THE references below can be found in Combe Martin Parish Church in Devon:

If you have the blues read the 27th Psalm;

If your pocket book is empty read the 37th Psalm;

If people seem unkind read the 15th chapter of John;

If you are discouraged in your work read the 126th Psalm;

If you are out of sorts read the 12th chapter of Hebrews;

If you lose confidence in men read the 13th chapter of 1 Corinthians;

If you can't have your own way, keep silent and read 3rd chapter of James.

Walsall.

VERNON E. COLEMAN

Seven Wives

AT Wookey, near Wells, Somerset, Stephen Weare, the parish clerk, was buried on May 20 1680.

PLOUGHMAN'S ROD & RULER'S FOOT

YOUR correspondent who referred recently to the origin of the measurement known as a rod has, I feel, overlooked the much earlier derivation—the Saxon ox-goad for a full team of eight oxen.

This is understood to have been the length of the stick which the driver used to guide the leading oxen at the end of the furrow and seems to have been associated with the early definition of the acre as the area of rectangular plots of ground of fixed dimension.

In Anglo-Saxon times it was the area of a piece of land one furlong in length and one-tenth of a furlong in width, the width thus being equal to four rods. The area of the acre has apparently not altered since Anglo-Saxon times.

The foot measure is thought to have been originally the length of the human foot. With the extension of trading, some individual's (probably the ruler's) foot became standard. The earlier measure used in Britain was the Roman foot, equal to almost



He married SEVEN wives:—

1. Elizabeth Colbourne on May 8 1626.
2. Hannah Saimon on Nov. 18 1630.
3. Katheren ? died Nov. 28 1652.
4. Gartred Blinman m. April 14 1653.
5. Jane Collier Dec. 20 1668.
6. Mary Lane, Feb. 26 1672; and
7. Joan Ford, Feb. 7 1678 (who survived him).

Wedmore. (Mrs.) B. M. PEARCE.

11·65 English inches.

It has been recorded that after their day's work was done oxen were stalled, in full-yoke or half-yoke, so as to grow accustomed to each other not only in work but in eating and sleeping. There was also an idea that oxen should always stand with their faces to the east and the sun-rise.

E. R. GRAINGER
(Chief Inspector of Weights
and Measures, Norfolk)

Answer

—to the "Creed" puzzle (*Young People's Page*).

A Creed is a short summary of the essentials of the Christian faith. In the Book of Common Prayer you will find:—

The Apostles' Creed—in both Morning Prayer (Mattins) and Evening Prayer (Evensong);

The Nicene Creed—in the service of Holy Communion;

The Athanasian Creed—after Evening Prayer, under the heading of "At Morning Prayer"—*Quicumque vult.*



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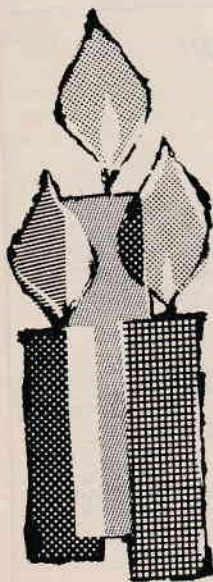
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