

May 1963

O ALL YE WORKS OF THE LORD, BLESS YE THE LORD !



THE MAGAZINE OF —
St. Nicholas Church, Marston

ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH — OLD MARSTON

Vicar : Rev. Paul N. Rimmer, M.A., 11 Elsfield 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.

PARISH COMMUNION : 9.30 a.m. on 3rd Sunday of month.

Matins : 11 a.m.

Evensong : 6.30 p.m.

Saints' Days : Holy Communion — 7.15 a.m.

Holy Baptism : Second and Fourth Sundays of the month at 3 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).

Children's Instruction : Senior Catechism : Sundays 10 a.m. in Church Hall.

Kindergarten and Junior : Sundays 11 a.m. in Church Hall.

Nursery : Sundays 11 a.m. in the Village Hall.

Mothers' Union : Every fourth Wednesday of the month at 2.45 p.m. in the Church Hall.

Men's Forum : As announced.

Youth Fellowship : First Sunday : Holy Communion and Breakfast .

Third Sunday : After Evensong.

Friday : 7.30 p.m. in Church Hall.

Brownies : Wednesdays at 5.30 p.m. in Church Hall.

Girl Guides : Tuesdays at 7.00 p.m. in Church Hall.

Cubs : Mondays at 6.15 p.m. in Church Hall.

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

CHURCH PARADE : Once each quarter.

WEEKDAY SERVICES :

Matins — 7. 15 a.m. (Daily except Saturdays)

Evensong — 5.30 p.m. (Daily except Saturdays)

Holy Communion — Wednesdays and Saints Days at 7.15 a.m. (in place of Matins).

Holy Communion — 10.30 a.m. every second Friday in the month (with Service of "Laying on of hands.").

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 parish. The design is by Mr. Brian Cairns.

PARISH CALENDAR : MAY

- May 1. Wednesday. SS. PHILIP & JAMES, A.A. & M.M.
7.15 a.m. Holy Communion.
- " 4. Saturday. Opening of Scout Hut, 3 p.m.
- " 5. **EASTER III**
8 a.m. and Noon. Holy Communion (Y.F. Breakfast).
11.0 a.m. Matins.
6.30 p.m. Evensong.
- " 6. Monday. 7.45 p.m. Meeting of Parochial Church Council.
- " 8. Wednesday. 7.15 a.m. Holy Communion.
- " 10. Friday. 10.30 a.m. Holy Communion (with Laying on of Hands for those who desire it).
- " 12. **EASTER IV**
8.00 a.m. Holy Communion.
11.0 a.m. Matins.
3.00 p.m. Holy Baptism.
6.30 p.m. Evensong.
- " 15. Wednesday. 7.15 a.m. Holy Communion.
Mothers' Union Festival at Maidenhead.
- " 19. **ROGATION SUNDAY**
8.00 a.m. Holy Communion.
9.30 a.m. FAMILY COMMUNION.
11.0 a.m. Matins.
6.30 p.m. Evensong.
- " 22. Wednesday. 7.15 a.m. Holy Communion.
2.45 p.m. Mothers' Union Annual General Meeting.
Service in Church and Enrolment.
- " 23. Thursday. **ASCENSION DAY**
7.15 a.m. Holy Communion.
- " 26. **SUNDAY AFTER ASCENSION DAY**
Commonwealth Youth Sunday
8.00 a.m. Holy Communion.
11.0 a.m. Matins.
3.00 p.m. Holy Baptism.
6.30 p.m. Evensong. Rev. C. H. G. Davey, Vicar of Faringdon.
Special Service for all Young People. Church Parade.
- " 29. Wednesday. 7.15 a.m. Holy Communion.

HOLY BAPTISM

- Mar. 24. Julie Elizabeth Lambourne, 2 Cotswold Crescent.
Andrew Graham Cooper, 60 Cherwell Drive.
Geoffrey Duncan Brown, 87 Oxford Road.
Elaine Marie Sanders, 22 Headley Way.
Paul Leslie Greenough, 12 Edgeway Road, New Marston.

HOLY MATRIMONY

- Mar. 31. Roger Keith Elkins and Helen Patricia Venn.
Trevor Arnold Woodward and Patricia Ann Dean.

COLLECTIONS AND COMMUNICANTS

	£	s.	d.	Communicants
Lent I	42	2	0	72
Lent II	32	7	2	20
Lent III	26	4	4	57
Lent IV	29	9	9	42
Lent V. Passion Sunday	28	15	0	30
Total Number of week-day Communicants — 68				

ALTAR FLOWER ROTA

- May 5. The Misses Warburton.
12. Mrs. J. Harley.
19. Miss O. Lodge.
26. Mrs. B. Oliver.

My Dear Friends,

First of all may I thank you all for the generous Easter Gift that you have given me. This Easter marked four happy years spent in Marston. They have been packed and interesting years. One is conscious of much that has been left untouched, but it is good to be able to serve in a parish which is noted for its friendliness, and where one is backed by such loyal fellow-workers.

This year's Annual General Meeting was well attended, and after a review of the year I took the opportunity of pointing out what I felt has been a revolution in Parish Strategy of which we are gradually becoming aware. With the large area of housing that has grown up in Marston, the Church building is now "on the fringe." This is good in one way, because for the majority of people worship now means "coming apart" to be with Jesus. But it also means that whereas in times past people looked to the Church building as the natural focal centre of parish life, now we are realising that the Church is not a **building** but Christian people—the body of Christ in the Community. It is Tom, Dick and Harry and their families in Oxford Road, Mortimer Drive and Haynes Road. We gather in the building to meet with our fellow Christians at worship, to receive God's grace and strength in Word and Sacrament. Then we go out into the world—as the Church, chatting our Christianity over the garden wall, living it out in good neighbourliness, taking it with us into all our activities at work, on the Council, and in the activities of the Village Hall.

The 12th century old Church is still the "Power House," but like the Christians of the early days, we are the Church of the Dispersion—pinpoints of light dotted all over the parish, bearing witness to Jesus, the Light of the World.

As I write this letter, two members of our parish, Mrs. Harlow and Mrs. Barnsley are in the Holy Land. How wonderful to have been in Jerusalem for Easter Day! No doubt they will have much to tell us not only about the Holy Land, but also about the troubled political situation there at this time.

My family and I managed three days in Wales immediately after Easter, staying at Dolgellau, and looking across onto Cader Idris. The mountain was covered with mist until the morning we left, but how beautiful this part of Wales is, with its mountains, lakes and estuaries. Harlech Castle, even on a wet and misty day, is a magnificent structure, dominating the headland. No wonder the Welshmen of our parish are so proud of the land of their fathers!

With sincere wishes,

Paul R. Remington

VESTRY OF THE PARISH OF MARSTON, OXFORD

At the meeting held on Monday, April 1st, 1963, at 7.30 p.m. in the Church Hall the following elections were made :—

Vicar's Warden — Dr. C. W. Carter.

People's Warden — Mr. B. G. Oliver.

ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING

At the meeting held in the Church Hall on April 1st, 1963, at 7.45 p.m. the following elections were made :—

Parochial Church Council. Mrs. Barnsley, Mr. Bellingham, Mr. Brown, Mr. Cardy, Mr. Casterton, Mr. Day, Mr. Dunkley, Mrs. Garner, Dr. Harley, Mrs. Harlow, Dr. Heatley, Mrs. Holmes, Mr. Jenkins, Mr. L. C. Jennings, Mr. C. P. Jennings, Miss Lodge, Mr. Marsh, Mr. Maund, Mr. Porter, Mrs. Rimmer, Mrs. Smith, Mr. H. Starmer-Smith, Mr. J. Starmer-Smith, Mr. Sleightholm, Mrs. Vernede, Miss Warburton, Miss E. Warburton, Mr. Webb, Mr. Yates.

Representatives to the Diocesan Council and ex-officio member of the P.C.C. Mrs. Carter.

Representatives to the R.D.C. Mrs. Barnsley, Mr. Cardy, Mr. Day, Mr. Dunkley, Mr. Jenkins, Mr. C. P. Jennings, Mr. Marsh, Miss Lodge, Mr. Oliver, Mrs. Smith, Mr. H. Starmer-Smith, Mr. J. Starmer-Smith, Mrs. Tims, Mr. Webb.

Sidesmen. Messrs Alley, Ballard, Bartlett, Brown, Cardy, Coster, Day, Daves, Hall, Harley, Holmes, Jarrett, Jenkins, Jennings, Jones, Sargent Sheppher, Sleightholm, Smith, Starmer-Smith, J. Starmer-Smith, Warman, Webb, Wren, Yates.

Choir Sidesman. Mr. Maund.

Reserve Sidesmen. Messrs Bellingham, Cattermole, Dunkley, Gammon, Marsh.

MARGRETTA HARLOW,

Secretary to the P.C.C.

ADULT CONFIRMATION CLASS :

In response to a number of requests there will be a series of Adult Confirmation Talks beginning on Wednesday, May 1st, at 8 p.m. in Church. This will be a preliminary gathering when we can talk over the best time, and place of meeting. It is hoped that all who hope to attend will come to this initial session. Any who wish to treat this series as a Refresher Course will be quite welcome to join us, even though they have been confirmed already.

PROFESSOR VINCENT HARLOW MEMORIAL FUND :

It would be greatly appreciated if any who have not yet sent their donation to this fund which will provide books for the library of Farnham Castle, the Overseas Service training centre, will send them as soon as possible to MRS. STREATFIELD, 44 Ash Lane, Wells, Somerset.

Details of the proposed memorial were printed in last month's magazine.

TORONTO STUDY GROUP REPORT :

In response to a report by the Archdeacon of Oxford, the parish undertook a detailed study of one of the topics under discussion at the forthcoming Anglican Congress in Toronto in August. Five other parishes in the diocese were also given subjects, and the one given to us was : "The Vocation of the Anglican Communion." In Marston we divided this up into various headings :—"Where have we come from?" "What do we offer?" "How do we look?" and "Where are we going?"

At the final session the members produced a report which will be sent on to the delegates from our Diocese, of which the Rt. Rev. Gordon D. Savage, Bishop of Buckingham, will be one of them.

The section of the report on Evangelism is reprinted below, as the members of the Study Group felt that it would be of general interest to the parish :

EVANGELISM

1. Although we in the Church think in theological terms, it is important to remember that the "outsider" does not think in such a way. As a consequence he has an "image" of the Church which is largely affected by what he hears and sees on the radio and T.V., reads in the newspapers or what he sings or sees when he DOES come to Church!
2. There is a tremendous need for instruction in faith, worship and communication for those "inside" the Church, and literature for those "outside" the fellowship of the Church, shewing —
 - (a) What the Church stands for.
 - (b) The financial workings of the Church and her commitments both at home and overseas.

.....Such literature should be of a readable nature and "geared into" the modern mind which does not go in for sustained reading. To often the "outsider" thinks of the Church as a "money-making racket".....

3. It is our considered opinion that there is no one technique for evangelism. As we are integrated and built into the Body of Christ, so He will work through us in His way, provided we are obedient to His Will and guided by His Holy Spirit.

We may be tempted to think that if only we could find the right technique then the Kingdom of God would come in—but no technique can be a substitute for Divine Grace.

SCOUT NOTES AND NEWS:

Important Date for your Diary

Official Opening of the Scout Hut, Saturday, May 4th, at 3 p.m.

The ceremony will be performed by the County Commissioner, Lt. Col. H. de Grey-Warter, and followed by short displays by the Scouts, Cubs, Guides and Brownies. It is hoped to celebrate the opening of the Hut further with a Social for parents only, from 8 p.m.—11.15 p.m., providing there is sufficient support. If you would like to come to this social please contact the Chairman of the Group Committee, Mr. W. H. Furber, 42 Cherwell Drive, as soon as possible.

S.M. Carson McCartney writes: "As Scoutmaster I should like to say how wonderful it is to be in our new headquarters, and on behalf of the Troop I should like to thank all those whose hard work made this possible.

I also welcome to the Troop our four new scouts from the Cub Pack: J. Guest, M. Walton, M. Boulton and T. Ballsdon; and a newcomer to scouting A. Mielozarek.

My congratulations go to scouts C. Naish and P. Harvey on their recent investiture. I will take this opportunity to say that we still have a few vacancies for new scouts."

MARSTON PLAYERS:

Owing to ill-health the production of the play "Robert's Wife" has been postponed until Thursday, Friday and Saturday, May 9th, 10th and 11th. The Players regret to have to say farewell to Mr. G. Isham, who will shortly be leaving the district to take up a new post at Farnham.

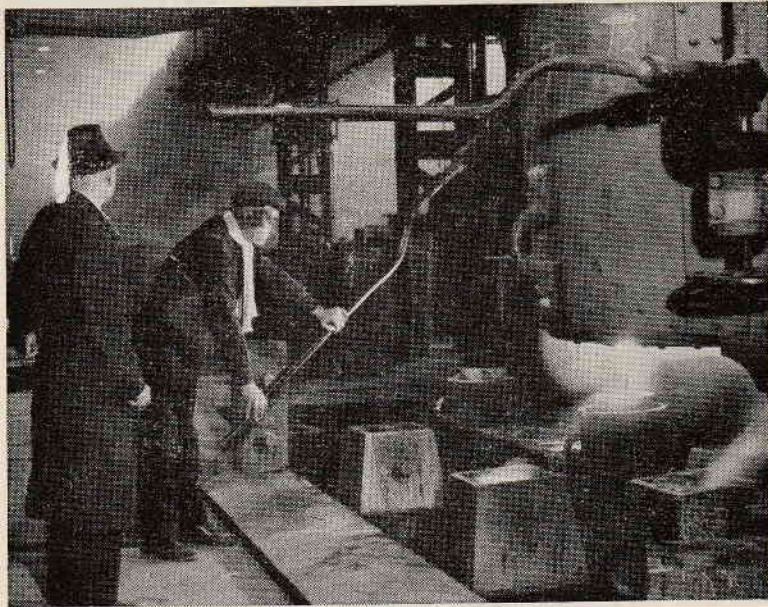
SUMMER FETE — Advance Notice

The Old Marston Secondary School will be holding a Summer Fete on the 15th June. Please book this date and come along and have a flight in the Helicopter. This will be a mammoth fete with many new attractions. Programmes will be on sale beforehand.

OLD MARSTON "OVER 60's" CLUB:

A very successful "Coffee Morning and Sale" was held in the Church Hall on the morning of Easter Monday. The sum of £31 odd was raised for Club Funds.

On Tuesday, 23rd April, a Coach Party visited Coventry Cathedral, accompanied by some members of the local Mothers' Union. A pleasant break for coffee was arranged at Banbury for 11 a.m. after which the party continued the journey to Coventry and attended the Lunch time Service at the Cathedral. The party then visited the shopping precinct and later met for afternoon tea at the Cathedral Refectory.



Drawing steel from an electric furnace

N.P.Y.

THE initials stand for National Productivity Year. Inaugurated by the Duke of Edinburgh, it is to be a year in which all those responsible in industry and commerce are invited to take a hard look at their methods in order to see how they can make themselves more efficient and therefore more productive.

In a statement introducing this National Productivity Year the Duke wrote: 'Efficiency can only be maintained by a continuous process of improvement and innovation. Therefore, the great value of the National Productivity Year will lie in the atmosphere which it generates, the contacts

which it helps to make and the need for a continuing effort which it manages to stimulate. The whole nation stands to gain from the success of this venture, particularly if it can inspire a spirit of co-operation and joint endeavour which alone can help this country to overcome the challenge of the future.'

A hard look

These are excellent words, putting into clear perspective the aim and object of the whole enterprise. And no doubt, if it is to be carried through with the same vigour and enthusiasm as are suggested by the Duke's words, then a pretty frank examination, a

pretty clear look, at many of our habits and practises will be necessary. And if the look is hard enough it will reveal, as is inevitable, some things wrong, some attitudes and prejudices which would be better got rid of. The aims and objects of the Year are, we are told, 'to focus attention on every possible means that lie within the capacity of management and workers to raise efficiency and lower costs—in manufacturing industry, agriculture, mining, building, distribution, transport, public corporations, all types of service.'

Effort and Efficiency

This National Productivity Year comes at a good time. In this enormously overcrowded island of ours, with a high standard of living to maintain, great efforts, backed by the most efficient methods, are going to be needed if we are going not only to improve our place in the world but even to maintain it.

But it also needs to be remembered that in the end trade and industry can never be better than the people who work in them. When we talk about being productive we are talking about ourselves: and this is where, in our view, the whole idea of National Productivity Year could be usefully extended to cover a much wider field. What is needed is much greater 'productivity,'

THE SIGN

Not ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified

MAY 1963

No. 701

- W. 1 SS. Philip and James, AA.MM.
 - Th. 2 Athanasius, B.D., 373.
 - F. 3 Invention of the Cross.
 - S. 4 Monnica, Matron, 387.
 - S. 5 Third after Easter.
 - M. 6 St. John Ev., ante Port. Lat.
 - S. 12 Fourth after Easter.
 - S. 19 Fifth after Easter.
(Rogation Sunday.)
Dunstan, Abp., 988.
 - Th. 23 Ascension Day.
 - S. 25 Aldhelm, B., 709.
 - S. 26 Sunday after Ascension.
Augustine of Canterbury,
Abp., 605.
 - M. 27 Ven. Bede, P.D., 735.
- Days of fasting, or abstinence:*
Fridays, 3, 10, 17, 24, 31.
Rogation Days, 20, 21, 22.

much greater sense of purpose and devotion to the job in those who practise the Christian faith. A very heavy responsibility rests upon all of us to make the practice of our faith count vitally in daily life, so that we can do something towards offering a vision and a sense of purpose to those around us.

To page 79

MY PRAYER *Not as I am, but as I would be, Lord,
Look thou on me!
Remember not past sins,
But lend thine aid
To efforts made
To follow thee.*

*Though dim my vision be,
Oppressed by earthly cares,
Forgive, O Lord, my want of faith,
My feeble prayers!*

B.H.P.



Looking up at the tapestry

Coventry Evening Telegraph

One Year After

The Very Rev. H. C. N. Williams, Provost of Coventry, writes on the first year of the Cathedral's work

FOR what we have received may the Lord make us truly thankful' is the content of most of our prayers at Coventry Cathedral on the subject of 1962-63. For we have received far more from the insight and experience of others than we can ever have given. And those who have enriched our ministry have come from every nation on earth—three million before 1962 had ended.

The real issues

It is a fair criticism of much of the Church's work that we spend a good

deal of thought and emotion in answering questions that are never asked and proclaiming on matters which never arise. In setting out to understand more clearly the real issues which concern humanity—as represented by three million visitors—and in hearing from that small minority with whom time and manpower enabled us to have fuller discussion, the fundamental questions which the man in the street, in the factory, in the store, in the club, in the home—in any nation—is trying to answer, we have

learned very clearly the need to base the whole teaching and pastoral ministry of the Church on *where people are*, in the situations in which they find themselves. Out of these situations arise the questions and the issues, in the solution of which the Church must be capable of leadership. But the Church must be humble enough first to listen to the questions and the issues which come from the situations in which men live, and not pretend that proclamation from inside the society called 'the Church' is the only way of preaching God's word.

Faithful to 1662

Liturgically we are still learning and still hungry to learn. We fear arriving at a point when we are tempted to claim that 'we know the way to do' this or that. Most of us have come to fear the stylization of service forms, which very soon corrode the vitality of their purposes. Obviously basic to the liturgical forms must be a recognizable uniformity, or else chaos will result. In the presentation of the Communion with variations of presentation gained from all the principal centres of so-called liturgical reform, we have been faithful to the words of the 1662 Service. The Church of England has not survived for eleven centuries without amassing great experience of the English mind. We believe, in Coventry Cathedral, that our first task—liturgically—is not to be gaily radical, but to interpret intelligently and relevantly what the Church of England has given us.

The Pilgrimage

Perhaps the greatest enrichment of our experience has been in being the centre of and occasion for a rediscovery of what fellowship in a diocese can mean. No priest in the diocese can have failed to be moved by the experience of consciously belonging to

a team led by the Bishop, aware of the need to live 'in the unity of the spirit and the bond of peace.' This consciousness was gloriously aroused by the Pilgrimage of the Cross of Nails, now central to the High Altar Cross in the new Cathedral. It has been dramatically expressed in the full programme of Diocesan Services in the new Cathedral. And it is now significantly applied by the involvement of a large team of parish priests as pastors to the visitors to the Cathedral by serving as chaplains regularly once a month. One said recently: 'My day at the Cathedral each month helps to remind me that I was not ordained to be priest in the parish of — but priest in the Church of God.'

Reconciliation

The widening scope of the Ministry of International Reconciliation has been a challenging responsibility but an enriching experience. The International Centre in the Ruins, is now an indispensable part of the Cathedral's pastoral work. An experimental Residence Hostel for International Christian Youth has now demanded the permanent building now being completed. Links with churches in other nations now number more than twenty, which are effective and not nominal—effective in the interchange of ideas and critical thinking conveyed by youth and adult groups, and preaching and lecturing.

The experiment must go on. The opportunities available to this 'workshop for the Kingdom of God'—as with every other such centre, whether it be a new cathedral or an ancient parish church—must be kept resilient and sensitive, and never lead to a 'fixed' situation. That Coventry Cathedral may have vision and courage to do this work is the prayer we ask of all who try to understand it.

Question Page

That Inner Voice

What is the connection—if any—between the Holy Spirit and the inner voice of one's conscience? Are they, in fact, one and the same?

Conscience has sometimes been called 'the voice of God,' but since it is liable to error, and in the case of psychopaths to disease, it cannot be identified with the Holy Spirit himself, who is God. Conscience is a means whereby man can normally ascertain the will of God, but its verdict is liable to distortion by human infirmity.

4273

Learning to Give

I have been a member of the Church in Wales for many years. We have recently had a Christian Stewardship Campaign. I have been told by a member of another denomination that this is an American idea, and an American firm were given a large sum of money to come to this country to organize this campaign. Is this true?

It is one of the sad facts of Church life in England that the subject of Christian giving has not for many years been emphasized as it should have been. One reason for this is that the Church of England possesses endowments, the interest on which is sufficient to meet a large part of the incomes of the clergy. In the United States the Church has no endowments, and therefore Americans have had to face up to the need of giving not only for the maintenance of their buildings, for foreign missions, and suchlike,

but also on a scale sufficient to enable their clergy to live. Some years ago the Church in Australia was acutely embarrassed by lack of money, and a firm which had been very successful in America in presenting the need for Christians to be ready to give was asked by the Australian Church to come and help. This firm, the Wells Organization, was outstandingly successful in its efforts. It subsequently came to this country, where it was employed by a number of parishes whose vicars considered that the facts about Christian giving could be presented with greater impact by an outside body. The majority of campaigns here have been carried out by organizations which give the whole of their profits to the Church. It is, perhaps, regrettable that it should ever be necessary to call in outside help in a matter such as this, but the facts show plainly that the help was needed.

4274

Vain Repetition?

In Mattins and Evensong, why do we say the Lord's Prayer twice within a short time? It is difficult to put one's heart and soul into both occasions.

Mattins and Evensong consist of two parts, the first of praise and Bible reading, the second of prayers. The Lord's Prayer is used as a fitting introduction to each part, thereby linking the two together. It should not be difficult to make the words one's own on both occasions, since the prayer may be used in so many ways; for example, we may say 'Our Father' having in mind ourselves and our near relatives; or the congregation among whom we worship; or those, of all races, the world over, of whom so many are in need. 'Give us this day our daily bread,' again, may apply to our own needs, or to the needs of the many millions of our fellow human beings who go hungry.

4275

Each day letters regarding the faith and practice of the Church of England reach Question Page from all parts of the country. Only a few of the questions can be printed, but all are answered by post when a stamped addressed envelope is enclosed.

Our address is: Question Page, THE SIGN, 28 Margaret Street, London, W.1.

The voice of the prophets

by William Neil

5

MANY MEN: ONE MESSAGE

IT is right to remember that not all the prophets were masters of the calibre of Amos, Hosea and Isaiah. God spoke a word through lesser men at various times in Israel's story, yet they had this in common with the major spokesmen of God, that they said what they were moved to say without fear or favour, and what they said was the word that was needed for their time. If we call them 'minor' prophets it is because few of their utterances have been preserved, not because they were men of little significance.

Micah and Nahum

While Isaiah of Jerusalem occupied the centre of the stage and shaped his country's policy, a man of the people made himself felt as an equally forthright critic of his times. This was *Micah*, a prophet about whom we know practically nothing, but whose denunciation of social injustice in his day marks him out as one of the great keepers of mankind's conscience. Many of the themes that we have noted in Isaiah recur also in the book of Micah, but if he had said no more than the words recorded in 6. 6-8 he would still deserve a place among the moulders of our faith: 'What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?'

About a century later, three striking figures made pronouncements on the

course of events which earned them the right to be called interpreters of the mind of God. *Nahum*, in terse and powerful words, expresses the universal joy which was felt when the Assyrians, most brutal and ruthless of all imperialists in the ancient world, suffered themselves the devastation and destruction which they had so often inflicted on others.

Habakkuk and Zephaniah

This same problem of the apparent success of the big battalions and the helplessness of small and weak folk exercises the prophet *Habakkuk*. Believing passionately in the justice of God, he yet finds it difficult to see any moral order in the universe. Like Job he will not be put off with easy answers. The message which comes to him and which he passes on to us in his little book is simply the need for faith. Even if at times it is difficult to see any purpose or sense in anything, says the prophet, we must trust the wisdom of him who has created and sustains all that exists.

Zephaniah was a man who felt that his times were so far out of joint that he has left behind one of the most sombre books of the Old Testament. He is rightly indignant that after the deaths of great prophets like Amos, Hosea and Isaiah their message should be so quickly forgotten, and that after King Hezekiah's attempt to reform the state religion, the lapse into paganism

under King Manasseh made nonsense of Israel's claim to be the people of God. Like so many other prophets he sees no future for Israel as a nation, but pins his hopes on the faithful handful who will fulfil Israel's historic role beyond the impending disaster.

Obadiah and Joel

The shortest book in the Old Testament—*Obadiah*—records the words of a prophet who in troubled times tried to see some intelligible purpose running through world events. In his day the Edomites, who had always been a thorn in Israel's flesh, who had exulted in her collapse and hastened to pick her bones, found themselves in their turn overrun and despoiled by Arab tribesmen. *Obadiah's* song of triumph is not so much a hymn of hate as an assertion that in such historical events God is showing men in his own time and in his own way that they live in a world governed by moral laws which they flout at their peril.

Finally, among these less well-known prophets comes the book of *Joel*. It is vivid and dramatic and contains a number of well-known biblical sayings: 'Rend your heart and not your garments,' 'Multitudes in the valley of decision,' 'I will restore to you the years that the locust hath

eaten.' A plague of these insects had devastated the crops, but to the prophet's mind this was more than a natural disaster. He urges the people to take this visitation as a warning.

It would seem that some kind of response was made to his appeal whereupon he held out as Israel's hope for the future a great outpouring of the Spirit of God. His words (2. 28-32) were quoted by St. Peter on the day of Pentecost, when the chief apostle proclaimed that this prophecy had now come true (*Acts* 2). Ordinary men and women were being given this new power from God through Christ, enabling them to know him as intimately as did the prophets of olden times. As we look forward to Whitsuntide Joel's triumphant words may well ring in our ears.

Many-sided Impact

There were doubtless many words uttered by the biblical prophets which failed to be recorded, and many prophets whose timely words did not for one reason or another find a place in the Bible at all. But the presence in the Old Testament of these half-dozen little collections of oracles reminds us of the many-sidedness of the impact of the prophetic message on Israel's faith.

FROM THE BOOK OF JOEL

- 27 You shall know that I am in the midst of Israel,
and that I, the LORD, am your God and there is none else.
And my people shall never again be put to shame.
- 28 And it shall come to pass afterward,
that I will pour out my spirit on all flesh;
your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
your old men shall dream dreams,
and your young men shall see visions.

Joel 2

THE PILLAR OF FIRE

5

God had made his promise that the mission on which he had sent Moses to liberate the people of Israel from their Egyptian bondage would be accomplished. But in spite of this reassurance for a time things went from bad to worse. The taskmasters continued, at the orders of Pharaoh, even more severely to afflict their slaves. The Hebrew overseers themselves, ignoring Moses with bitter disdain, went themselves to Pharaoh to plead with him. But always the answer was the same: 'Ye are idle, ye are idle!' And so they would be sent back to the enforcement of cruel decrees, and the people still laboured therefore to make their bricks without straw.

A dark time

This was a dark time for Moses. He dwelt among his own people to whom he had come with such high hopes, and he dwelt in despair.

And then, one day matters came to a head. It was the custom of Pharaoh to go down to the Nile each morning to worship the river god and to bathe in the waters. The thing was done with ceremony: a retinue accompanied the monarch; there were slaves in attendance and the sounds of music in the air. Now, as Pharaoh emerged from the river he was met by a startling apparition—the figure of Moses. Under great stress of emotion, as he now was, the personality of Moses seemed to throb and vibrate. His voice was deep and thunderous: his eyes wide and staring. Aaron was with him: for both, after hours of meditation during

*The story of Moses
retold by John Lastingham*

the night, had come to feel that they were commanded by God thus to seek this encounter with Pharaoh as he came from the river. And so Moses spoke: 'The Lord, the God of the Hebrews, hath sent me unto thee, saying, Let my people go, that they may serve me in the wilderness; and, behold, hitherto thou hast not hearkened. Thus saith the Lord, in this thou shalt know that I am the Lord; and behold, I will smite with the rod that is in my hand upon the waters which are in the river, and they shall be turned to blood!'

The sudden appearance of the two men, the startling words, were both so astonishing that even the courtly retinue around Pharaoh was reduced momentarily to silence. And in that silence they watched as Aaron, at the command of Moses, took the rod and stretched out his hands over the river in a gesture of silent menace. And with that, unmolested, the two moved away.

There was no laughter at their going. The Egyptians were themselves too superstitious a people not to be impressed by so uncanny an occurrence. And the strange thing was, that the

great river which on that morning flowed clear under the skies along its immemorial way to the sea, was by evening mysteriously polluted. It was a direct threat to the whole life of the Delta; and the people waited their terror when they saw the waters terrifyingly red.

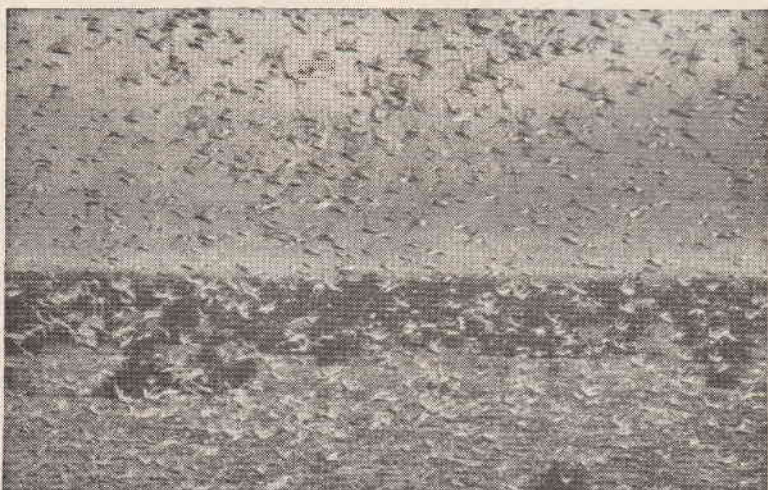
No redress

The visitation lasted a week. The river was befouled during all that time. And yet, grim indeed though the occurrence had been, it was not enough to open the eyes of Pharaoh to see in it a divine intervention. He continued to persecute the Israelites.

So again God commanded Moses to go to Pharaoh and to command him again to let the people go, and to say that this time the penalty for resistance would be a plague of frogs. Once again, therefore, Moses caused Aaron to stretch out his rod over the waters; this time there came, in appalling numbers, like a nightmare army, crawling and hopping into houses, into

utensils, upon people as they slept, the frogs of the Nile. This time Pharaoh himself was frightened, and begged of Moses that he would use his power to end the affliction. And so the frightful visitation ended as it had begun. But when Pharaoh saw that the land was clean again, he went back on his promise and again refused to let the people of Israel go.

The third plague which God sent upon the land was of gnats. It was true that they, like the frogs, had been a familiar part of life in the Nile Delta for centuries, appearing after the seasonal inundation. These mosquitoes, dread carriers of malarial disease, came when the ground was wet. It was strange now that they should come when it was dry. 'This,' said the magicians to Pharaoh, 'is the finger of God.' Yet still the monarch remained obdurate, and so a further plague was visited upon his land, this time of flies in number unimaginable. They came in murmuring multitudes, darkening the skies, alighting in people's hair,



A plague of locusts

Anti-locust Research Centre

swarming over the eyes of living creatures; they were everywhere, until life became a misery. This time Pharaoh was moved sufficiently to promise Moses that at least his people should be allowed to go a little way apart into the wilderness to sacrifice to their God. And so, to the inexpressible relief of every living creature in the Delta, the plague passed as mysteriously as it had arrived. But the relief served only to harden Pharaoh's heart still further. And still he refused to let the people go.

And so a fifth plague descended upon the unhappy land, the rinderpest, a cattle plague which killed by the score, by the hundred, by the thousand. It was a vast affliction which, strangely enough, yet spared the cattle of the children of Israel. Yet even this was not enough to change the mind of Pharaoh.

Enormous damage

So after the rinderpest there came a visitation which afflicted the people themselves with a horrible skin disease known as the Nile-scab, taking the form of small red blisters which burst

and suppurated. And after that, Pharaoh still remaining stubborn, there came an onslaught of hailstones which did enormous damage to the growing crops.

Then came, therefore, the eighth plague, perhaps the most appalling of them all—locusts. They had been seen in Egypt before, massive clouds of all-devouring winged insects apparently brought out of the depths of Africa by the wind. Starvation rode upon their multitudinous wings. As they passed, so they devoured, leaving nothing behind. And then, after the locusts there came the ninth plague, of darkness in the form of a scarifying hot wind of the desert bringing with it sand particles which blotted out the sun. Truly, Pharaoh was terrified this time. The people could go, he said, but they must leave their cattle behind. But now the battle of wills between Moses and the monarch was reaching its climax. And when Moses, who had become stronger and bolder as the struggle continued, contested this ruling, Pharaoh turned upon him in a fury, banishing him from his sight.

To be continued

Quo Vadis?—a story of ancient Rome



Have you read . . . ?

By Canon H. G. G. Herklots

THE historian, Mandell Creighton, later Bishop first of Peterborough, then of London, once wrote to a fellow historian, Thomas Hodgkin, 'I don't think it is any good trying to popularize history except by writing it as clearly as possible and by avoiding all needless tediousness. When events are tedious you must be tedious; when they are exciting you must let yourself rise with them.' This discipline of clear writing is indeed valuable for all historians upon whatever scale they write. Nor does the ordinary reader—if there be such a person—want his history 'jazzed up' for him. What he needs is clear writing, so that events and people may become more real to him.

Two recent paper-back volumes by two Cambridge historians admirably fulfil this exacting role. They cost more than some paper-backs, no doubt because of their very useful illustrations. *The Church and the Nation* (Hodder & Stoughton, 12s. 6d.), by the Rev. Charles Smyth, contains six studies in the Anglican tradition which have already appeared, in shorter form, in the *Church Times*. It is right that a book which may alter some popularly held opinions—particularly about the Puritans—should come from a university; for, as the author puts it, when writing about the Oxford Movement, it is 'a striking fact that, with such rare exceptions as George Fox, all the great leaders of religious movements in this country, from John Wyclif to William Temple—including Thomas Cranmer, William Laud, John Wesley, and Charles Simeon—have at some stage been dons.'

Spiritual rebirth

Saints and Scholars (Cambridge, 9s. 6d.) contains twenty-five medieval portraits by Dom David Knowles, Regius Professor of Modern History

LYGIA HAD BEEN STAYING AT THE HOUSE OF LINUS. ONCE IN THE CITY, VINICIUS FOUGHT HIS WAY TO IT. UNABLE TO FIND HER HE WENT OUT INTO THE STREET, TO FIND HE HAD TO FLEE FOR HIS LIFE FROM THE FLAMES, BUT THE HEAT OVERCAME HIM.

HE AWOKE TO FIND HIMSELF IN SAFETY, WITH A FAMILIAR FIGURE



at Cambridge, best known, however, for his medieval studies. All but two of these chapters have been taken from his larger books, *The Monastic Order in England* and the three volumes of *The Religious Orders in England*. They were not written for a popular audience; but are clearly written, and in this book of selections there is no tediousness. Because they have been extracted in this way means, however, that a certain amount is assumed. The notable pages on Francis of Assisi do not tell his story, but differentiate his greatness from that of others. There were reformers who aimed at spiritual rebirth, 'and though many of them were, like Grosseteste, men of evangelical zeal, they thought and acted as rulers and legislators in a world of men and things. St. Francis moved upon another and a far deeper plane.'

A great Englishman

A broadcast on Bede the Venerable introduces him as 'the first great Englishman of whom we can form a clear personal picture. . . . Bede lived near the Northumbrian coast, on what

to an Italian or a Gaul must have seemed the very fringe of the world. . . . He lived also in the darkest hour of European civilization, when the last traces of the Roman organization had gone, and when both the Eastern Empire and the Western kingdoms were threatened by the vast pincer movement of the Moslem advance. . . . Bede is the only Englishman who has been saluted by the whole Western world as one of the Doctors of the Church. . . . More than this, Bede is a great historian, perhaps the greatest between the last notable historian of the ancient world and those of the Italian renaissance.'

This is popular historical writing at its best.

Titles to note

Here then are two books to deepen our understanding of the historical background of our faith:

The Church and the Nation by Charles Smyth (Hodder and Stoughton, 12s. 6d.).

Saints and Scholars by David Knowles (Cambridge University Press, 9s. 6d.).



HOME AND GARDEN

My Garden in May

BY W. E. SHEWELL-COOPER

Do you know those glass covers known as ganwicks?—they are so easy to erect—they are absolutely square and they are particularly useful this month because they enable you to put plants out with absolute safety. I use them for rows of Dahlias, for Chrysanthemums, which can easily be ruined by a late May frost, and the ganwicks protect these tender plants perfectly.

Squashes

Squashes are far better than Pumpkins and they may be sown during the first half of the month, either in the Eclipse No-Soil Compost in pots in the greenhouse or out of doors where

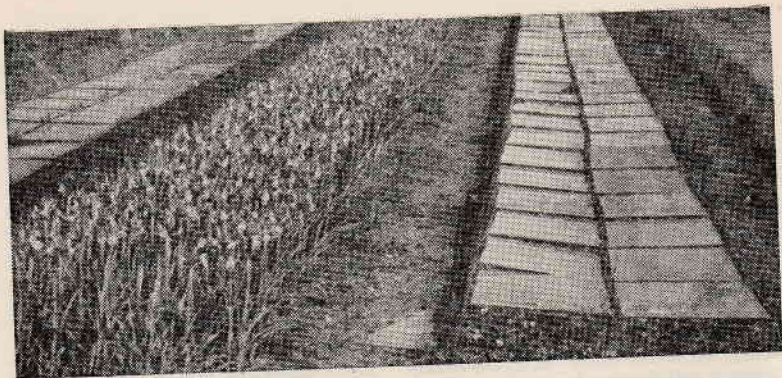
the plants are to grow, covered over with a 1-lb. glass jam jar upside down. Dig into the ground where you are going to sow the seeds well-rotted compost 8 inches or so down. This would provide some bottom heat.

Have you made a little herb garden yet near your kitchen door? Mine consists of a little strip only 2 foot wide and about 8 foot long, but it does grow parsley, sage, thyme, mint and marjoram in rows 1 foot apart. You can easily raise thyme and parsley from seed, and you can usually get someone to give you a few mint roots or else a slip of sage. After sowing or planting, cover the surface of the ground with medium-grade sedge peat half an inch deep.

Old bulbs

If you have been growing bulbs in the home or in the greenhouse, don't waste them, plant them out straight away out of doors. They can be put out around trees or shrubs or they can go as an edging to the garden by the fence where they will be quite happy in the flower border in groups of a dozen or so. Don't cut off the leaves,





How ganwicks look in my garden

for these manufacture the plant foods which feed the bulbs. So leave them on when you plant them and let them die down quite naturally.

Think quite seriously about having an electric motor-mower. The lawn mowings should go on to the compost heap, though when it is very dry in the summer you can take off the grass-box and let the lawn clippings return to the soil as food.

Some people write to me complain-

ing that they have apple and pear trees that are making nothing but wood, while not fruiting at all. If you have a tree like this then make up your mind to do some bark-ringing. This means that you cut a ring of bark a quarter of an inch wide right the way around the trunk of the tree, then paint the wound over with thick white lead paint. You will find drawings as to how this work can be done in my book *The A.B.C. of Fruit Growing*.

Vegetable Recipe: *Summer Salads*

The moment I pull off the first of May's strip from the calendar, I think of the lovely spring and summer salads that I am going to have. One of my favourites is made of cooked vegetables. I use:

1 teacupful of cooked French beans, 1 tablespoonful of cooked asparagus tips, 1 teacupful of young cooked carrots, 1 teacupful of cooked peas, 1 teaspoonful of finely-chopped chives.

I always cook the vegetables separately in as little water as I can and then prepare them afterwards. The beans are not cut too finely, the carrots are only thinly sliced, and the asparagus tips are left as they are. When the vegetables are quite cold I arrange them tastefully in a salad bowl and pour on the salad dressing. The chopped chives are then sprinkled over the top as a decoration. Of course you can use other vegetables if you wish but this particular 'mixture' is a great favourite with my family.

Irene Shewell-Cooper

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N.P.Y. (from page 66)

What about a Church National Productivity Year, then? It is quite possible to translate into the terms of our own Church life some of the objects of the year as stated in the official booklet and see how far we are furthering them. Are we, for example, doing our best to 'strengthen the determination of all organizations to take a more active part in improving efficiency, are we fostering a more favourable climate of opinion as to better methods and their proper use, are we trying to bring clearly before everyone the nature and value of the services that exist to help them?' There are quite a number more such objectives listed. But these alone are enough to show us the lines upon which we may very profitably think. If, as our Lord said, his followers were to be the leaven in the lump, the salt which must not lose its savour, wouldn't it be a good thing for us to take a hard look at our attitudes, and certainly at our prejudices, in order to see in what way we may strengthen our witness, deepen our devotion, and in general make ourselves more effective soldiers and servants of Christ in this day and age?

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