

CAVERSHAM BRIDGE

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December, 1966

Incorporating National Christian News

TOPIQUOTES

If the money the Americans are planning to spend on the war (in Vietnam) next year were divided up and given to the sixteen million inhabitants of South Vietnam, every man, woman and child would get the sum of nearly £700 each, which would give them one of the highest per capita incomes in the world.

—Paul Johnson in the "New Statesman."

★ ★ ★

There is, however, no place for cartoons and these spoil the tone of the whole thing and makes one think twice before passing the paper on to others and especially to youngsters.

—Leslie C. Warren, Bible College of Wales, Swansea.—Letter in "The Christian."

★ ★ ★

I see computers at the moment as musical instruments for which no music has been composed; we are at the very beginning.

—J. L. Barrons, General Manager of Westminster Press, Provincial Newspapers Ltd.

★ ★ ★

Perhaps as leisure increasingly becomes the norm, work will be coveted as leisure is today.

—David McKie, the "Guardian."

★ ★ ★

The feeling, however mistaken, that the churches do not want to know and do not appreciate the problems of ordinary, fallible human beings has undoubtedly contributed towards the decline in influence and prestige of the churches. This is especially unfortunate because the churches have a great deal more to offer today and clergymen of all denominations are nowadays probably more thoughtful, more liberal and of better quality than they have ever been.

—Birmingham Post.

★ ★ ★

People matter. If we wish to enrich the lives of ordinary people within the framework of a free society, we must create a climate which enables them to think for themselves, which makes it possible for their voices to be heard and their ideas to have effect.

—Edward Heath, M.P., at a newspapermen's conference.

★ ★ ★

It may be that as a people we are more naturally reticent than the peoples of Western Europe and the U.S.A. It may be that we have had an hereditary establishment — of which the civil service is part — undisturbed by revolution.

The fact is that British journalists have always had to fight authority to get at the facts the people are entitled to know.

There is today, it is true, an army of press officers in Whitehall. But their job is to provide the facts that the governors wish the public to know and these are not always the facts the public need to have.

—Cecil King, chairman of the "Daily Mirror."



... with a BANG !



HOOEY!

Quiet
Christmas?
I'm going to
let it go . . .

THAT'S A CHRISTIAN VIEW OF THE ' QUIET CHRISTMAS ' IDEA

"Have a nice Christmas ?"

"Yes. Quiet, you know. Just a few friends on Boxing Day. We never go out very much."

What a laugh it is. Great Britain; home of the finest roisterers in history, celebrates the finest festive season of the year sitting in its armchair, eyes glassy with boredom, staring emptily at a few friends, nourishing their hearts with endless tedious cliches.

Maybe it was the telly; maybe it's unaccustomed booze. Perhaps we're overpowered by the sheer weight of numbers and our own inferiority complex. BUT SOMETHING DISASTROUS HAS HAPPENED TO THE ABILITY OF THE PEOPLE TO LET THEIR HAIR DOWN, AND HAVE A GOOD TIME.

God wants us to have a good time.

What! did you think he wanted you to spend Christmas silently chewing over the theological implications of the incarnation? He wants us to rejoice because He's come to share our humanity with us. It isn't sinful to be happy!

Rejoice. Of all people Christians have something to rejoice about. Sheer, positive bubbling rejoicing, based on the positive affirmation of the outrageous, splendid Gospel.

So go on; rejoice. Have a party. Sing round the piano. Go out and celebrate. We can do it better because we've got a reason. We aren't celebrating to forget, but because we're Christians with something wonderful to remember.

Death to the awful "quiet Christmas."

Go, SHINE.



In the office of the Christian Council of South Africa the file is growing thick with reports of how the people of the valleys are suffering after four years of drought. The reports come from the Ciskei, Natal and the Northern Transvaal. Here are some extracts:

Two appeals have been made on behalf of those affected by drought in Botswana, and in Southern, Central and East Africa. These appeals have brought a response of \$43,471 from churches and their agencies in Britain, Australia, Canada the Netherlands, and Sweden, and this has enabled \$20,000 to be sent to the Christian Council of South Africa. The Council's Secretary, Mr. Basil Brown, estimates that for 1967, at least \$35,000 will be required to meet known needs. The Council had only \$9,184 in hand on September 1 to finance a relief programme up to the end of 1966.

"The people of these valleys have not had a harvest for four years. They really suffer. Many of them did not plough this year. Those who ploughed have had a small harvest.

"In January 1966 there was 10.27 inches of rain and in February 1.39 inches. During June, July and August there was no rain at all.

"The heavy rains in January damaged many fields because we have clay soils here and the water cannot seep into the ground. The Inadi river nearby has had no water for months. There are only a few places in the river bed where there is water and men and cattle are drinking it. So there is much disease. In our school of 240 children there are 72 cases of pellagra."

"In this district we have had very little rain since 1964. That year the land was very dry and many children died. I remember one home where three children died in two days, one after another. Many cattle died too.

"Rain was insufficient and crops were scanty. Many homes now have no food."

"In one of my schools there should be 120 children but now I have only 86. TB and malnutrition are

doing a lot of havoc.

"Our people sold their mealies to the stores to get hard cash in the hope that when rain fell they would be able to plough for new crops. Some even burned the grass — a foolish practice — in preparation for rain.

"In many places cattle refuse to go for grazing and

sequently we have a great shortage of milk, hardly any at all. The little fields have given no vegetables, no crops for last three years. Our children are suffering from general malnutrition and TB.

"Expectant mothers are under-nourished and so their babies are handicapped right from conception, and when weaning time comes there is no nutritious food to build the child up to resist disease. Many of our families are on the border of starvation. I understand that our African infant mortality rate is one in four.

"During the first half of this year our Church helped 3,354 children with nutritious food and 2,093 adults with staple food."

have dried up for the first time in memory. There have been barely any crops this year. Most of the women and grown girls are doing piece work on the surrounding farms but for this they are paid the ridiculous wage of 13 cents to 15 cents a day.

"There is no grazing, no hay, no mealie stalks, and the water is far away and very scarce; just a few pools of dirty water. The stock is miserable and starving. Every day you can see dead beasts lying here and there, starved to death. This stock is the 'reserve bank' of the Africans here.

"I have helped many people, especially widows with children, who are mostly living on what they can get from charity, and on little herbs they find here and there in damp spots. Many of our school children are dressed in rags."

"Part of this area is owned by the government, who have sunk bore holes and found good water for the Africans. But a vast tract is owned by the Africans themselves and the water situation is critical. Many people have to travel two or three miles to obtain very poor water. They obtain this water by digging a hole in a donga and allowing the water to seep in. Most of the cattle drink once a day only."

"A few years ago our Circuit invited a white man experienced in finding places where there is water underground. He discovered there was a good supply of water a little more than 200 feet below the surface of the land. Unfortunately no further action was taken because funds did not permit."

"Most of the springs here

MUST THEY DESPAIR ?

prefer to be around their masters as much as to say, 'you burned our food, now give us what you eat.' Many die every day and there is nothing we can do. Even if it rains, the animals will be too weak to pull the ploughs. By now fields should be ploughed to prepare for the first rains. All the country is silent as if in mourning."

"A few of our cows can no longer give milk. Con-

LETTERS

WE PRAY FOR THE KINGDOM "ON EARTH"

The Rev. Colin Morris is perfectly right (back page, N.C.N., October) to point out that "any belief that our nation is closer to God than theirs is a delusion." The official reason for Christ's crucifixion was, surely, because he stressed just this point. What happened to the thinking of St. Peter and Paul as they developed in the Christian life, surely, shows the same thing. I do not follow him, however, when he goes on to talk about the "political" heresy of converting "enough people in every country" ending up with the Kingdom of God—on earth, he means presumably.

I do not belong to the "Evangelical Wing" (whatever that may mean) but I do believe that when we pray, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" that is just what we are praying for. The fact that professing Christians do "wash their hands, in a public statement, of the

Vietnam tragedy" (as well as racial discrimination, hunger and a whole host of other evils) does not alter the truth.

These evils are not new to our time, they were attacked by Christ and by His followers, many of whom were martyred for this very reason. Of course, "professing Christians" have failed to follow their Master—no honest Christian could deny this and as we are part of a Body, we share this guilt.

We confess it and we shall only be forgiven in so far as we recognise these evils and try to do something to alleviate them, at whatever cost to ourselves. This situation seems to show the meaning of the statement attributed to St. Augustine that "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church."

Marie Caummaerts

Station Road,
Marlow,
Bucks.

Psychic "treadmill of empty dismay"

I feel most truly sorry for Millard Lindley and any others who really believe that "psychic work (is) the most important thing in the world, by far." Let his letter make my point.

He quotes "that great scientist, Sir Oliver Lodge" as pronouncing that "life was continuous and goes on after this one," a decision the great man had reached "after years of investigation with reputable mediums." This intelligence, Mr. Lindley says, "has helped to keep me going in the face of adverse circumstances and periods of unhappiness when life has seemed very hard."

Who, I wonder, wants an endless continuation of "adverse circumstances and periods of unhappiness when life has seemed very hard?" What will help to overcome these circumstances when we have left this part of life and passed through

the experience we call death? Are we to have another set of investigations, another batch of "reputable mediums," further encouragement to accept the present discomfort with the knowledge that life never ends? God forbid Christianity ever succumbs to such a treadmill of empty dismay.

And yet, Sir, your own newspaper seems recently, with its emphasis on spiritualism, to have fallen into the same error of thinking that "evidence" of continuing life after death is what Christianity means by the term "eternal life." How about treating us to some real Christian teaching about eternal life for a change?

F. E. Chard (Rev.)

Ewood Vicarage,
Blackburn,
Lancashire.

Next world harvest could be crucial

Desperate food/population race

There is no room for complacency about world hunger in view of the production and population figures for 1965-66, writes Dr. B. R. Sen, Director-General of the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation, in a foreword to the report on the state of food and agriculture.

The report reveals that world food production failed to rise in 1965-66, but population increased by about 70 million. Widespread drought led to poor harvests "not in the midst of plenty" but after several years of a neck-and-neck race between food and population.

Estimates indicate that food production per person in developing regions dropped back to the inadequate level of 1957-58.

"But for good harvests in North America, world production would almost certainly have declined," Dr. Sen writes. "In each of the developing regions, except the Near East, food production is estimated to have fallen by 2 per cent. in total, and 4 to 5 per cent. on a per caput basis."

"When many millions are

already inadequately nourished, there is little if any margin against the effects of a bad season."

North American grain stocks have been reduced to their lowest level for more than a decade.

Precarious

In Dr. Sen's view, the world food situation is now more precarious than at any time since the period of acute shortage immediately after the war. The world has become much more dependent on current production and hence on weather conditions.

"It is therefore with some anxiety that we await the outcome of the 1966-67 harvests."

'RETIREMENT WITHOUT BITTERNESS' COURSE

by Marion Troughton

A few years ago the forward-looking West Riding engineering firm of Richard Sutcliffe Ltd. introduced schemes to help workers approaching retirement.

When a man reaches 65 he can do one of three things. The first is to take the non-contributory pension which the company grants—is a week for every year of service—and retire altogether. Or he can continue to work full time and postpone his pension. Or he can take the retirement pension and work part-time.

If deciding on the latter course he does four periods of work, each lasting 3½ hours every week. Beyond this the system is flexible. The work can be done in the mornings or afternoons just as the men wish, though most prefer mornings. They choose their own ways.

To be suddenly cut off at 65 from what has formed the main part of a man's life can be bitter. He sadly misses the companionship at work and the interchange of views on sport and allied topics. A scheme such as that run by this Horbury firm ensures that a man is kept in touch without being hard pressed at work, yet doing a useful job with keenness and conscientiousness.

It is not a case of providing these older men with any odd jobs; the work they do would have to be

done by someone else if they were not available.

One part-time worker said: "It gives you independence and you can afford a pipe of tobacco and a glass of beer without having to seek for charity." (National Assistance is still considered such by many independent Yorkshire folk).

Fulfilment

Sutcliffe's Group Personnel Officer, Mr. G. N. Barthorpe, believes that people should be thinking about retirement when around 50 and start planning for what can be a time of fulfilment and enjoyment depending on adjustment.

To help those nearing this time of life the firm has run courses of lectures in co-operation with the Stainercross and Gaskell Institute of Further Education under the West Riding Education Authority.

The average age of those taking part is 62 and numbers are kept small to facilitate free discussion.

Talks include those on health by doctors, a health inspector and other experts. Finance in relation to retirement is dealt with by a retired bank manager.

Wouldn't it be nice, we thought, to have some black people here for Christmas... but...

They wanted us to kill a GOAT for dinner

FOR CHRISTMAS last year we had two guests from Nigeria. Man and wife, he was a student and she had just arrived to join him in time to sample a nice old fashioned English winter.

Neither of them had any experience at all of British social customs and neither of us had any experience of Nigerian social customs. Both of them were acutely intelligent, and hugely aware of their "disadvantages" in both colour and awkwardness. She couldn't manage the English language too well.

We hadn't really given it a thought beyond that it would be "nice" to share our Christmas with some poor, lonely visitors from overseas.

I wonder what we expected? Perhaps they would sit quietly by the fire, watching television, telling amusing stories about their homeland, enjoying our food, luxuriating in a bed with an extra blanket.

My wife's smile froze when they arrived. For the three days of Christmas they had brought enough food to feed a tribe for a week.

He took me aside. "Of course," he said, "my wife would like to do her own cooking. She isn't used to English food."

"Of course," I said.

The arrangements for Christmas cooking in a British kitchen seldom leave room for intrusions of any sort, let alone the staggering achievements plotted by our guests.

Never before had she cooked with non-stick pans, or with gas. Never had she washed up in hot water. She had such a sweet smile, and when she walked into the kitchen bearing yam powder, and a large collection of vegetables and packages, we didn't argue. She took the place over.

"Tell you what, old man," I said to my smiling friend. "You cook the meal tonight, and we'll cook tomorrow. There just isn't room for two cooks in one kitchen." He smiled agreement.

That night we ate Nigerian. They loved it. We hated it, frankly, but my wife, bless her, smiled all the way to the toilet. We hated it even more when we went into the kitchen and saw the mess. Every pan had been used. The floor was covered in a kind of sticky mucous goo. The stove was like a slapstick film prop.

On Christmas Day they expected us to kill a goat. When we did not they were extremely disappointed. Instead we produced a gigantic turkey and they were appalled. Surely we wouldn't eat that!

We did. The meal started at 1.30.

They turned down many items, but loved the turkey, and neither of them rose from the table until 3.15 p.m. Then they staggered to bed, and we saw no more of them until 8.30 at night.

"Perhaps we've killed them," my wife suggested nervously.

"We've merely filled them" I assured her.

When they came down they sampled a spare wing or two, toyed with a few mince pies, played some extraordinary Nigerian '78' records, and then came the night.

In bed they had four hot water bottles. In their room was an electric fire, an oil heater, and a fan heater. Waking in the night, we heard the fan heater blowing the meter round.

"They don't understand that it costs money," I said. "Surely they're warm enough in there?" I lay, becoming furious. Finally I leapt up, tore downstairs, rushed frantically into the garage and switched the power off at the mains. In the morning I switched it on again before the cock crew. There were no complaints.

Our Nigerian friends continued to enliven Christmas. He wore national costume to read the Christmas story in our church on Sunday, Boxing Day. We took them to cocktail parties among the neighbours where she went quickly to sleep in the best chairs while people were trying to find out from her what folk actually DID in Nigeria at Christmas time.

We introduced HIM to a woman who stood a little to the right of Mr. Vorster in South African politics, and was fresh in from Capetown. She stared into his grinning black face across her large gin, and froze. That made our day.

Finally, we sat round and sang carols with great joy while HE played the piano, better than I ever could. Before we went to our beds for their last night we talked deeply about the Christian faith we all confessed.

"It's so hard to share anything with people of another country. We knew this was going to be difficult, and it has been. But we shall never forget it," he said.

Neither shall we, mate, thought my good wife. But she caught my eye as she thought it, and smiled.

It was what you might call a very hard Christmas.

Try one yourself. But don't expect anything but trouble, hard work, frustration, and deep, deep satisfaction.

LAURENCE YARDLEY

Hostel network may replace prison for some

Discharged and homeless prisoners should be catered for in a network of hostels, with varying degrees of supervision, and this form of treatment should be far more widely considered as an alternative to prison than it is now.

This is the view of the working party on the place of voluntary service in after care, set up in 1965 under the chairmanship of the Dowager Marchioness of Reading.

The report sees these hostels as the responsibility of the Probation and After Care Service, which, however, must work closely with the Ministry of Labour, the National Health Service, and voluntary community workers who have a central role.

The provision of large numbers of hostels, the report says, is essential to the rehabilitation of the 5,000 or so homeless ex-prisoners, and it is stressed that they must be supported by adequate Government grants, on a per capita basis, and registered with the Home Office.

The working party sees the hostels as ranging from specialised establishments, staffed by retired prison officers, which would provide a framework of discipline for those too used to institutional life to make their own way unaided, to bed-sitting rooms for women or men who dislike institutional atmospheres and prefer to live on their own.

In both these cases, the working party suggests, grants should be made.

The Home Office should finance an experimental hostel of the first type, and, in the second, individual landlords should be encouraged to take this type of lodger by a guarantee from the local probation and after care committee that any theft, damage, or arrears of rent would be reimbursed.

The most urgent provision, however, is a network of multi-purpose hostels, at the disposal of local probation and after care committees for emergency and classifying purposes.

Ideally, the report says, there should be no need for these at all as the prisoner's needs should have been worked out while he was still in prison, but in many cases such provision is inadequate, or a prisoner fails to honour commitments made on his behalf.

The working party recommends that sexes, ages, and dependency groups should be kept separate, although it recognises that this would increase the difficulties.

Specialised hostels should be provided for discharged alcoholics — the largest group needing this kind of after care — for men with mental or physical disturbances, and for those of very low intelligence who are incapable of holding down a job.

RUBBISH TIP IS BASE FOR EXPORTS

A giant rubbish tip at Clay Cross, Derbyshire, is being used to help Britain's export drive. For two expanding firms wanting to increase sales abroad are building new premises on the tip where the town's refuse has been dumped for 30 years. More than 40,000 cubic yards of shale have been brought in to make the eight acre site usable and by January the £80,000 development will be complete.

The two firms are Peter Hamilton Equipment, Ltd., and Lemand Machinery, Ltd., both subsidiaries of Lehane, MacKenzie and Shand, Ltd., the building and civil engineering contractors.

Hamilton Equipment is a sales and service company for hydraulic excavators and

dumper trucks and Lemand have an agency for cars, trucks, Land Rovers, tractors and other commercial vehicles and a plant hire fleet. They have outgrown their premises at Rowsley where they have 150 employees.

NEW BOOKS

by Peter Croft

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

New World — Alan T. Dale — Oxford University Press.

Readiness for Religion — ed. Dr. R. J. Goldman, Rupert Hart Davis.

Both these series illustrate the new look in Christian education. Their aim is to foster a growth in the sense of wonder and discovery through a child's own experiences.

Dr. Goldman is directing his books at the younger junior and asking them to explore what he calls "life themes" — light, bread, sheep; — he looks at these things in terms of art, music, science, history, geography and personal relationships, thus making the world of the Bible their world, realistically linking it with the space age.

Mr. Dale's series carries on

from there. Any child with a reading age of 9½ can cope with books 1 — 3; any with a reading age of 11 plus can cope with books 4 and 5.

He presents the New Testament in five books; there are background chapters, the story is interspersed with helpful comment, at the end of each book there's a section of "Things to Do." The copious illustrations, by artists, school children and photograph are superb.

Anyone concerned with teaching the Christian faith, at home in school or Sunday School, should take a long look at both these series. They're first class.

THE PLEASURE OF OUR COMPANY

PARTIES? — THE ENGLISH ARE IN A RUT!

Time was when a party invitation was something we got excited about. What would mine host have up his sleeve this time for our enjoyment? What could we expect in the eats line from that clever little wife of his?

Even running our own party gave us a lot of pleasure. It was good to sharpen our wits on a programme we thought would help to make the party go with a swing. It was a challenge we could get our teeth into.

Now the anticipation is more on the lines of: "Hope old Bill's got plenty to drink," or "D'you think those boring neighbours will be there?"

Boring — that seems to be the attitude most of us have these days to the cocktail party or Christmas get-together. What can we possibly talk about to our friends' boring friends? Will there be enough drinks to loosen our tongues and avoid those embarrassing silences that most of us have become lazy enough to accept?

Overdressed

Or formal — so formal that we work ourselves up into a tizzy beforehand wondering what to wear and then find we're overdressed in a D.J. and silk shift or under-dressed in a lounge suit and woolly dress.

Aren't we sidestepping the real issue? A party should be a gay occasion when we let our hair down and exchange animated conversation with those we like or with new people we're glad to meet. The drinks — now considered to be far more important than the food — should be merely a happy accompaniment.

Party games were fun, let's face it. They forced us to mix together instead of sticking to the same small clique because it involves too much effort getting around to strangers.

Nowadays, if we suggest a game, our visitors look at us as if we're mad. The very idea that they should actually be expected to do something to make the party to go well is regarded as old-fashioned.

Even the tame pianist who was always a sure-fire success is kept hidden away. Songs round the piano are thought of as something from another decade.

by Pat Plant



On the continent the English party is considered a dull affair. And we seem to have accepted this role and settled into a rut party-wise.

Even the Scots enjoy themselves more than we do south of the Tweed. We moan about the expense when with a little more effort a party can be a hit without costing too much. Instead of "Let's give a party" it's now: "I suppose we ought to have a party and settle our debts."

We're resentful of being omitted from somebody's party list without stopping to think what sort of contribution we may have made in the past. Isn't it possible we may have been left out on purpose because we had got into the habit of standing around waiting for others to scintillate?

Change

We've all known how the atmosphere can miraculously change with the arrival of just one lively character. It is surely time for us to try and give more of ourselves instead of self-consciously living up to the image others have of us.



An Englishman is never happy
but when he is miserable.
—19th Century proverb

FOR MICHAEL, HAPPINESS IS SAX-SHAPED

Michael Pilane, a South African refugee in the Congo wrote to the World Council of Churches' Africa Secretary in Geneva and asked if he could be given a clarinet or tenor saxophone so that he could earn as a musician part of his maintenance.

"I believe it is a sin," he wrote, "to live and be content under charity when one is physically fit and mentally sound."

A letter was at once sent to the Rev. Juel Nordby, of the Congo Protestant Relief Agency in Leopoldville, and the day after it was received a saxophone was handed to Michael.

"It so happened," Mr. Nordby explains, "that when the United Nations military forces left the Congo, the chaplain of the Swedish contingent came to me with a saxophone and thus I was able to satisfy Michael's request."

"You should have seen his face when I brought the instrument. He was dancing with joy."

To the W.C.C.'s Africa Secretary, Michael wrote: "You have changed my dreams to reality. There is nothing more I want. I have all I wanted."

Annual Ball Grand Draw or just "Knees Up"

Harvest and Hallowe'en only just behind them, and the leaves still on the trees, the shops lead the way with Christmas tinsel a-glitter in their windows, as they carefully announce the number of "shopping days to Christmas."

Then party M.C.s who have been planning their pre-Christmas "bean feast" or "knees-up" ever since last Yuletide begin to gain enthusiastic momentum. In city, town and village they prepare to mark the Christmas festival with seasonable "do's" for all ages and classes.

It takes a Victory or Coronation night to persuade the English to let their hair down and come revelling into the streets. But Christmas may find them "showing a leg" with the best in club, pub or dance hall, determined to make the season as "Merry" as the greetings cards will have it.

Mayors, Masons and Local Hunts stage their "annual ball."

Offices, Women's Institutes and rugger clubs their party or dinner.

Private houses provide cocktails or punch.

Public houses, beer, piano and "grand draw."

Many of the attendant merry-makers prefer less gregarious activities and look forward to Christmas Day spent quietly in the bosom of their family.

Nevertheless, the success of the festivities does depend hugely on the participation of both party-giver and party-goer.

The party-giver should provide good cheer and convivial company—and cultivate that rare gift of fading from the limelight; whilst keeping a sharp eye on the enjoyment of his guests.

The party-goer can contribute by relishing the good cheer and the good company—and he should take his departure assuring his hosts that THEIR party has been the outstanding event of the Festive Season.

DIANA DUNCAN.

Be a devil, go in your old togs!

Once again, "It doesn't seem like Christmas." Soon we shall be eating too much, drinking too much and sleeping too little and after the parties and a few days off from work, most of us will be glad it's all over for another year.

Christmas and its attendant festivities have steadily become more wearying, especially in affluent urban areas. Money has deadened our sensitivity to the message of Christmas, and television and other forms of ready-made entertainment have drugged our powers of enjoyment.

Many of us have forgotten how to appreciate a party and the spirit of the bottle is too often our solution. We drift around at cocktail parties, grinning inanely and making idiotic conversation. At cheese and wine parties we nibble and sip.

Dinner parties are agony and we ruin our digestion and that of other guests by toying with the cutlery and swallow nervously and noisily. It is too much trouble to organise party games and even if we did, would our friends really appreciate it?

To be capable of enjoying a party, we must participate and let ourselves go a little. As guests, all that is required of us is happiness and a readiness to share this with others. As hosts, we should spend some thought and effort beforehand planning the evening and eats.

To be different, suggest your guests come in their old clothes as these are wisest for your party anyway, it isn't a fashion parade. We could still recapture the old magic and make it feel like Christmas again if we would only take the risk of being ourselves, and thinking of others.

SHEILA BRYAN

CAVERSHAM BRIDGE

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OF CAVERSHAM

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A time for action

TWO important matters are given prominence by different contributors in this edition of the "Caversham Bridge," the one a national, the other a local matter, but one for which the BRIDGE, as Caversham's own paper, must be used as a forum for discussion.

Christians of all denominations are rightly showing grave concern with the proposed Bill which seeks to bring to an end the growing practice of "back street" abortions. Few will question the need for legislation but Christians view with alarm certain aspects of the Bill, which has already received a second reading in the House of Commons.

The petition, which has been drafted by Mr. Collett, who is himself the husband of a doctor, deserves the thoughtful consideration of our readers. Can anyone be satisfied with a Bill which provides for abortion where the mother is likely to find the care of the child too great a burden, or beyond her capacity?

How can these things be determined in advance of the event? Is the Bill not also placing the medical profession in the intolerable position of judging issues which are not merely medical ones? Indeed can one really successfully tie up in legal terms matters which can never be defined merely in such terms?

The Bill, as it stands, cannot expect to be supported by Christian people. We can at least feel the Bishops will introduce amendments when it reaches the House of Lords, but it is our responsibility to make it plain to to our own Member of Parliament that Caversham Christians will be gravely alarmed if Mr. Lee votes for this Bill in its present form.

The other matter which faces us is that of the future development of Caversham. Just because a public enquiry has been held we must not suppose that the matter is closed. Development is a long term process and policy can be changed before anything happens. Here it seems that much more knowledge is needed.

What sort of public services and shops are, in fact, wanted in a community with the population that Caversham and surrounding areas on the same bank of the Thames are likely to have by 1980? The Caversham Adult Centre could fulfil a great service by arranging as soon as possible a series of lectures on the principals of town planning.

Mr. Marshall, in the article we publish this month, will, I hope, allay some of the fears that have been expressed to the proposed development. But we need more information as to the sort of public services that it is economical to provide. How many shops can the communities at Emmer Green, Caversham Heights and Caversham Park be expected to want for their more local needs?

Are there intermediate stores between the big ones of Reading and the smaller local ones which should be provided in a Caversham centre and which will save housewives the journey to Reading?

Let's have some lectures and discussion in Caversham's own adult centre to help us towards the right solution.

The community sense in Caversham is a growing reality. But let us be sure we know the needs of all Caversham residents, and then we must see that the voice of Caversham is not only heard but also heeded in the rooms of the Town Hall.

And we are very glad that Reading's new Town Clerk is a Caversham resident.

John Grimwade

CAVERSHAM BRIDGE: DECEMBER, 1966—ONE

CAVERSHAM AWAKE!

An urgent call to vigilance by "Caversham Resident"

This Autumn saw two highly successful public meetings. The first one was organised by the Education Department at the request of Reading Liberal Association, and was to explain the Council's plan for Secondary Education in Reading. The Chief Education Officer, Mr. W. L. Thomas, and Mrs. A. Sturrock, Chairman of the Education Committee were the speakers and there were many questions from the audience after. This was a good meeting.

BUT for sheer liveliness, rum-bustuousness, and severe but good-tempered criticism the meeting arranged in Caversham by the Planning Department of the Town Hall on the proposed shopping precinct development plan in Church Street was quite an experience. To anyone taking a jaundiced view of the appalling apathy of the Great British Public, this was a real tonic. Councillor Williams, Chairman of the Planning Committee, was in the chair and Mr. Tee, Deputy Town Clerk, and Mr. Scragg, Chief Planning Officer, were on the platform.

I do not recollect a single speaker from the floor having a word to say in favour of the plan. Admittedly, many of these were the present shopkeepers and this proposed plan is going to hit them hard. But there were quite a few housewives and others without a vested interest who also spoke up against the plan finding the present shops adequate and praising the service given.

Next day I discovered many of the shopkeepers were quite touched by the warmth of the tributes they received from their customers at this meeting.

Ridiculous

It seems perfectly ridiculous to force more shops on to this part of Caversham when, by the admission of the platform, the results of the survey showed the existing shops are not being used to capacity.

It also seems perfectly ridiculous to force more shops on to this part of Caversham which will add to traffic congestion. The plans dealing with the traffic seemed hopelessly inadequate, and even the mention of a new bridge, occurring as it does in Phase III and not likely to be built for at least two decades, seemed particularly futile and not material to the present issue.

We learnt that as part of the new precinct project, a car park will be provided. BUT, at the public enquiry, in spite of invoking the assistance of the Ministry's Inspector carrying out the enquiry, the Liberal representative was unable to draw from the applicants any statement as to whether or not the car park space they plan to provide is to be free. If it is not, it is highly likely that it will not be used.

Day-to-day shopping is what we have in Caversham, and further day-to-day shopping facilities are what the developers plan for this precinct. This does not involve most of us in much time, and it is hardly likely that we shall think it worth while paying to park our cars for the short time involved.

Criticism

If the shopping facilities on the outside fringes of Caversham were increased, private cars and public transport should be relieved, and a great deal of time and money saved by the people living in these parts. For example, there is no chemist shop or fishmonger in Emmer Green and this has been a constant source of criticism from elderly people living there. Return bus fares on top of the price of the odd herring is a lot to an O.A.P., not to mention time and effort involved.

Finally, there would appear two further points which the awakening inhabitants of Caversham might like to notice. From P. J. Seaby's letter in the "Chronicle" of October 21, 1966 it would appear that the Reading Development Map approved by the Ministry of Housing and

Local Government allows only for single-shop development along the south side of Church Street. Any major alteration (and surely this is a major one?), should have been made in 1962 as it is the practice of planning authorities to review their plans every five years. BUT NO CHANGE WAS MADE THEN.

Secondly, I discovered it came as quite a shock to several people to learn that a Councillor elected by them to represent them and to look after their interests, unless he or she happened to be on the Planning Committee is usually in total ignorance of the development plans proposed for his own ward! How foolish the poor man or woman must appear when tackled by their awakening electorate.

Must we not ask ourselves whether so much secrecy is really necessary, or "in the best interests of the community," which is the excuse usually given for enveloping everything in a thick smoke screen? If you, I and everyone in Caversham say loud and clear, "We want Council Committee and Sub-Committee meetings open to press and public with very few exceptions," something might eventually happen.

Remember the Council elections come round again in May and this is a point to look out for on the election addresses of the various candidates. We are forever reading that "Justice must be seen to be done," etc., but in my submission this is true of all public affairs and I maintain it would be possible for most of our Council affairs to be conducted under the critical glare of the public eye.



The Editor regrets...

both that the November issue of the Caversham Bridge was delivered late by our printers so that the distributors were inconvenienced, and that a number of mistakes were made outside our control: the remarks on Caversham Park attributed to the Editor were not written by him but by a Roman Catholic contributor and a number of photographs went unacknowledged.

Readers have also enquired who the author was of "Talking Point." It was written by the Vicar of Mapledurham, the Rev. Eric Wood. We are very sorry about these mistakes and have been assured that they will not be repeated.

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Postbag

Abortion : Catholic position

Mrs. Mair has already written on the Abortion Bill in your September issue. Further to her letter I would like to make the following additions:

Widespread opposition to this Bill, as it stands, has come from many quarters embracing all classes and all creeds, and also requests for amendments to the certain clauses contrary to the ethical code accepted by all who hold life sacred. To us Catholics, of course, all life in the womb is sacred.

I would also like to bring to attention an additional aspect in the proposed Bill, namely that of the position of those doctors, nurses and others who being conscientious objectors may be asked to act against their consciences. Legislation to them would spell coercion and, as Britain's Catholic Doctors' Guild has declared, it would be the first time in British history that coercion would be brought to bear against the profession. I may also add that the Catholic Doctors stress that our social services should do everything in their power to aid the woman in distress.

Surely all those who value human life and human conscience should rally in protestation to their local M.P. urging him to do his utmost to bring about amendments to the necessary clauses.

Norah Murphy O'Connor.

A doctor's position

The law on abortion, as it now stands, needs clarification. However, it rests upon a

principle which was part of common law long before the 1929 Act, namely, that the protection which the common law of England affords to human life, extends to the unborn child.

Justification for abortion is accepted by the law where the continuance of the pregnancy would endanger the life and health of the mother, and this rarely happens.

However, an entirely new concept has been introduced in the proposed bill. Clause 1 (c) allows abortion if it is considered that the pregnant woman's capacity as a mother will be overstrained by her care of a child. As a doctor I could not agree to a law asking a doctor to prophesy about anything, as intangible as a woman's capacity as a mother, nor to a law justifying destruction of life on those indefinable social grounds.

Pauline Collett.

Residents organised

The newly formed Caversham Residents' Committee collected 960 signatures in the course of one week to the petition protesting against both the property company's and the local authority's plans for the development of the land lying between Church Street and the river.

This was presented to the Inspector appointed by the Minister of Housing and Local Government at the public enquiry held in the Town Hall on October 12 and 13. The matter is now in the hands of the Minister and it is likely to be some considerable time before his decision is known.

This may or may not be the end of this particular case, but it is certain that there are many other matters of concern to Caversham residents. It is

proposed therefore to put the Caversham Residents' Committee, which, because of the need for immediate action has been of an ad hoc nature, on a more regular basis.

Those interested in joining or supporting it should contact Mrs. Sheila Clifton, 52, St. Anne's Road, Caversham. Telephone Reading 71054.

S. Clifton.
Secretary.

MISS MARY HASELHURST LEAVES

After a recent church parade a presentation was made to Miss Mary Haselhurst as a small token of appreciation by St. Peter's Cub Pack.

Transferred from Bristol to Reading, she took over a very struggling St. Peter's Cub pack. In two years the Pack became one of the best in the town with a waiting list as long as its membership of 30. The Pack attended a Pack holiday in Somerset in the first year of her reign, and in Kent this year. She organised trips to the Circus, Gilwell Park, Windsor, etc. and the Pack took part in every one of the Jubilee Year celebrations.

Mary is an exalted member of the Movement, being a member of the Gilwell Park Training Team, and A.D.C. Cubs for Kensington and an erstwhile A.C.M. of a Bristol Pack. (She is also a Civil Servant in her spare time).

Mary's transfer to Bath has left an enormous gap in our Scout Team, and we doubt whether we shall ever have an Akela again of such calibre.



Walton Adams' photograph shows Miss Haselhurst receiving her presentation.

THE TIMING OF PUBLIC ENQUIRIES

By Winnie Darter

It is too late now to complain about the recent public enquiry into Caversham's development, but it is not too late to raise a question which has bothered some of us ever since.

Why must public enquiries—particularly when they concern large numbers of local residents—be held at a time when it is frankly impossible for many people to attend?

This particular enquiry lasted two whole days and while many Caversham people found time to pop in for an hour or two, very few residents or traders could attend for the whole time.

And, as anyone will realise, if people are to speak or cross-examine witnesses, it is vital that they should be there for the whole proceedings. In actual fact, in an enquiry of this nature the chances are that the only people able to be present the whole time are the developers themselves and their legal representatives, and such legal representatives as local people are able to afford. And good as they may be, legal personalities are a poor substitute for the people themselves.

It will be said, of course, that one cannot expect public servants to work outside normal office hours. But why not? Many people—doctors, vets, shopkeepers, library staff, etc.—have adjusted their hours to suit the public. So why not civil servants, barristers and so on?

It is simply not good enough to say that all interested parties have an equal opportunity to have their case heard and then to hold the enquiry at a time which prohibits their attendance. This is a matter which might well be brought to the notice of our Member of Parliament before many more such enquiries are held.

With the replanning of Caversham in the news today, we reprint extracts from a book published in 1843, "The Environs of Reading," edited by J. G. Robertson, which gives a picture of Caversham in an earlier and gentler age.

ECHOES FROM A GENTLER AGE

"Proceeding towards Caversham, we pass under the archway of the Great Western Railroad, and through some pleasant meadows, the scene of several battles, to which we shall allude more particularly when we describe Caversham in a future trip.

"The scenery around is very pleasing and diversified, embracing rich meadow-lands and cultivated fields, bounded on the north by a lengthened ridge of hills which line the southern borders of Oxfordshire; and are covered with parks, woods and corn fields, interspersed with mansions, villas and cottages.

"The tranquility of these meads has of late been strangely broken in upon, by the commercial enterprise that distinguishes the times; and the quiet pastures converted into a scene of manufacturing activity and bustle.

"On reaching Caversham Bridge, which is an old one, and consequently not of the most convenient construction, although the Berkshire part of it has been of late years improved, we observe on our right a number of fishing punts and gaily-painted pleasure boats, which are let at very moderate charges, by the week, the day, or the hour, by THOMAS FREEBODY, long established in his calling, and well-known in Reading, from his having enjoyed upwards of 30 years' experience as a fisherman.

RICHARD LYFORD, living it."

in a house on the bridge, is another who provides for the amusement of parties desirous of enjoying aquatic trips.

"The Thames affords here almost every variety of freshwater fish: pike, perch, eels, chub, roach, dace and gudgeon are very plentiful and during the early part of the season some very fine trout are to be caught by the experienced angler.

"Passing through the village of Caversham, we keep the road to the left, by the churchyard. On ascending the hill, we have a fine view of Reading, with its grey pinnacled towers, its ruined abbey, and Saxon archway. Behind it rises a range of hills, and in the west, the rich vale of the Kennet, with the river flowing in many windings. Beyond this the distant woods and dark hills of Hampshire are perceived.

"The lanes in this neighbourhood afford delightful walks; but we must not anticipate, as we shall treat of this parish more at large hereafter. We proceed towards Mapledurham.

"The pedestrian has the choice of two roads: the one by the river, through Caversham Warren, is the nearest, and very delightful, but not so convenient for carriages. We take therefore the high road, which will be found very picturesque, and agreeably shaded for miles on either side, by the spreading oaks and lofty elms which line it."

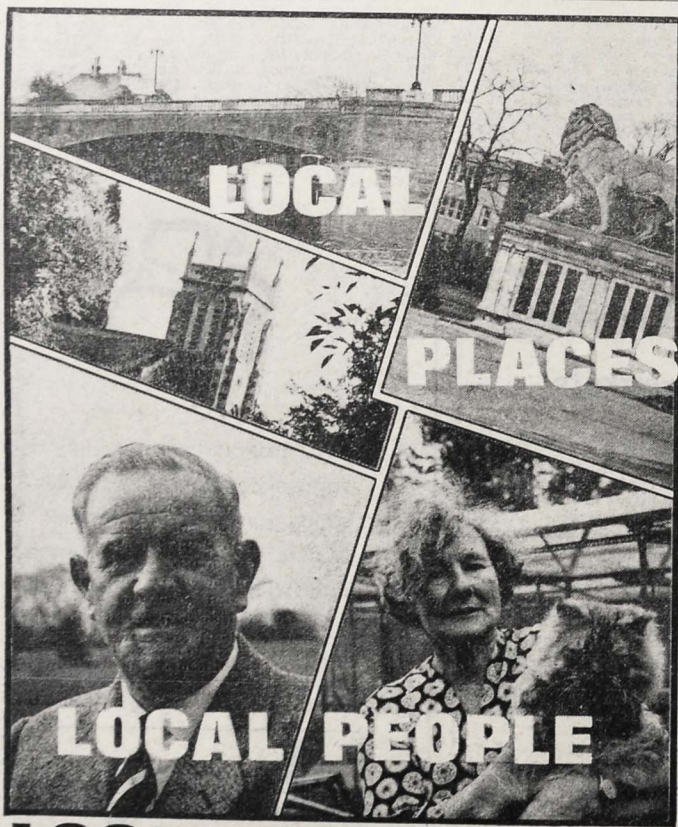
CHRISTMAS FOR OUR OWN OLD FOLK

As most people know, the almshouses in Westfield Road have now been emptied and are being modernised. For the benefit of those of you who have been in the habit of doing something for the inhabitants at Christmas time, we thought it best to let you know where they are at present.

Mrs. Matthews and Miss Keep are temporarily at the almshouses in Castle Street, and Mrs. Bowsher is now with her son and daughter-in-law at The Kennels, Coppid Hall, Binfield Heath, Henley-on-Thames. They will be returning as soon as the almshouses are ready, we hope in the spring, and in the meantime we are sure they would welcome Christmas cards as a reminder that we have not forgotten them in Caversham.

At the time of going to press, Miss Nightingale, who was taken to hospital earlier this year, is still in Eustace Ward, Wokingham Hospital, and we are sure that she, too, will welcome news of her old friends at Christmas time.

W.D.



LOCAL PAPER

order today's

EVENING POST

CHRISTMAS CHURCH SERVICES IN CAVERSHAM

CHURCH OF ENGLAND

ST. PETER'S

Christmas Eve
4.00 p.m. Children's Gift Service with Blessing of Crib.
11.45 p.m. Midnight Eucharist.
Christmas Day
7.00 a.m., 8.00 a.m. and 12.15 p.m. Holy Communion.
9.15 a.m. Parish Communion.
11.00 a.m. Matins.

ST. JOHN'S

Christmas Eve
11.45 p.m. Midnight Eucharist.
Christmas Day
8.00 a.m. Holy Communion.
9.45 a.m. Family Eucharist.
11.00 a.m. Family Carol Service.

ST. ANDREW'S

Christmas Eve
3.15 p.m. Crib Service.
6.30 p.m. Solemn Evensong and Blessing of Crib.
11.45 p.m. Midnight Eucharist.
Christmas Day
8.00 a.m. and 11.15 a.m. Holy Communion.
9.15 a.m. Family Eucharist.

ST. BARNABAS'

Christmas Eve
6.00 p.m. Nativity Play by the children of St. Barnabas'.
11.45 p.m. Midnight Eucharist.
Christmas Day
8.00 a.m. Holy Communion.
9.15 a.m. Family Eucharist.

ST. MARGARET'S, MAPLEDURHAM

Christmas Eve
11.45 p.m. Midnight Eucharist.
Christmas Day
8.00 a.m. Holy Communion.
9.15 a.m. Parish Communion.
10.00 a.m. Family Service.
11.00 a.m. Matins.

METHODIST CAVERSHAM

Christmas Day
11.00 a.m. Family Service.
Mr. R. A. Loveys.
6.30 p.m. Evening Service.
The Rev. E. B. Wright.

CAVERSHAM HEIGHTS

Christmas Eve
11.45 p.m. Holy Communion.
Christmas Day
11.00 a.m. Morning Service.
The Rev. E. B. Wright.
(No evening service).

ROMAN CATHOLIC ST. ANNE'S

Christmas Eve
Midnight Mass.
Christmas Day
8.00 a.m., 9.30 a.m., 11 a.m. Mass.

OUR LADY OF CAVERSHAM, RICHMOND ROAD

Christmas Day
8.30 a.m. and 10.30 a.m. Mass.
There will be no evening Mass.

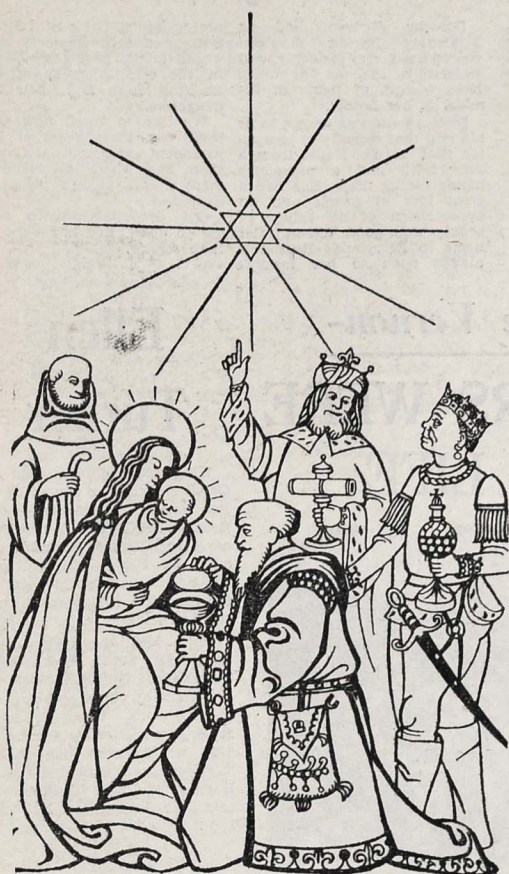
The Chairman
and Editorial
Board of the
Caversham
Bridge wish
our Readers,
Distributors and
Advertisers
a Happy
Christmas and
New Year

CAVERSHAM BAPTIST FREE CHURCH

Christmas Day
11.00 a.m. Morning Service.
The Rev. L. S. Lewis.
6.30 p.m. Evening Service.
The Rev. L. S. Lewis.

CONFESSIONS BEFORE CHRISTMAS

St. Peter's
The Rector. Wed., Dec. 21, 7 p.m.; Sat., Dec. 24, 6.15 p.m.
The Rev. D. Clift. Thurs., Dec. 23, 6.15 p.m.
St. John's
The Rector. Tues., Dec. 20, 6.15 p.m.
The Rev. H. J. H. Stevinson. Tues., Dec. 20, 3 p.m.; Wed., Dec. 21, 8.15 p.m.
St. Andrew's
The Rector. Wed., Dec. 21, 6 p.m.; Thurs., Dec. 22, 3.30 p.m.
The Rev. R. Packer. Fri., Dec. 23, 6.45 p.m.; Sat., Dec. 24, 5.30 p.m.
St. Barnabas'
The Rector. Thurs., Dec. 22, 4 p.m.
The Rev. M. T. Coper. Sat., Dec. 24, 5 p.m.
St. Anne's
Sat., Dec. 24, 11 a.m.-12 noon, 3 p.m.-4 p.m., 6 p.m.-8 p.m.



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EDUCATION PLANS FOR CAVERSHAM PARK VILLAGE

Parents meet with officials

The Chairman of Oxfordshire's Education Committee and Primary Education Sub-Committee and the County's Acting Director of Education met the parents of Caversham Park Village on November 1 with the headmasters and other representatives of Micklands and Sonning Common County Primary Schools.

Mr. Durrell, as Director of Education, explained that the county had made plans for Caversham Park in 1955, when it was clear that at least a thousand houses were to be built there. All this part of the county would be served by Micklands School and one in the northern end of Caversham Park.

Micklands was now being expanded to hold the first arrivals and a site had been chosen for the park school, which would have a Roman Catholic school

next to it. Micklands and the park school would expand to suit the numbers of children using them: children from the southern end of Caversham Park would always go to Micklands.

The boundary within the park would be flexible, decided by the number at either school at any time. No further children can be taken in to Sonning Common unless accommodation became available and then parents would have to provide their children's transport.

The plans for secondary education revision has been published three years before the Department of Education and Science put out its 1965 circular on comprehensive education. The comprehensive system now begun is that all children from this area will attend Chiltern Edge up to the age of 13 or 16. Those

wishing to study until 18 will transfer to Henley at 13 or 16; those staying at Chiltern Edge can take "O" level or C.S.E. examinations. Henley will cease to have under-13 classes. In the eventual system, at some time in the '70s, all will stay at Chiltern Edge to 16, then those wishing to continue studying will go to Henley or the Technical College.

In a lively questioning session the speakers were able to clear up many of the residents' doubts and accepted other points for further investigation. The Education Committee Chairman said that it was easy to make plans in committee, remote from the people involved, but it was always his desire to get close to the people he served.

He would be glad at any time to discuss what the county was doing.



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Obituaries

Dorothy Scriven



Dorothy Scriven

Dorothy Scriven died on Thursday, October 20. She passed away very suddenly, very peacefully, and, as she would have wished, at home in the midst of her family.

Britt, as she was known to us all, had that serenity of character that always stems from a sure faith and a supremely happy family life. She had a great love of people and an appreciation of all things of beauty and good taste. Her home in Berrylands Road was always open to her family's

ever-widening circle of friends. She loved good company, and we all know the joy she found in the companionship of her husband John and their two daughters.

We like to think now that those last three years of her life, spent amongst us at Caversham and where she made so many friends, brought her great happiness.

Our deepest sympathy goes out to John, Sue and Jane in their sorrow.

W.W.

Florence Vernon-

FLOWERS WERE HER LIFE



So often one hears people say: "Give me my flowers while I am alive"—well, Wilfred Vernon went one better than that. He raised a new type of dahlia and named it after his wife. And there can be no more fitting memorial for Florence Vernon who died a few weeks ago, for flowers were her life.

Trained as a florist, she worked mainly in a free-lance capacity and her standard of work was so high that she was often called in on unusual and important assignments.

Her husband recalls the time when, on the death of Edgar Wallace, she was asked to make all the floral tributes, and one of his treasured possessions is a picture of his wife with a huge cross, taller than herself, which she made on that occasion.

With her great love of flowers, it was not surprising that she married Wilfred who was at that time working in his father's nursery, or that she took a very keen interest in his side of the work.

Never beaten?

Although Mr. Vernon left gardening to work at the post office about ten years ago, together they continued to raise flowers in their very large garden in South View Avenue, where they lived for many years. Among other new breeds, there is one named for each member of the family, including Keith and Joyce, their children. As a rule, floral arrangements

Philip Alec Drew

The congregation of St. Anne's was shocked to learn of the death of Philip Alec Drew in a motor cycle accident near Eton College on Monday, October 24.

A young man of 19 years of age, he was very popular in the district among a large circle of his own age group. He was a young man one only had to meet to like. It must have been a tremendous shock to his parents when this news reached them. We extend to them our fullest sympathy and assure them of our prayers.



Mr. Vernon—picture by Fred Walker.

Ellen Turner

When Ellen Turner died on October 12 at the age of 69 at her home in Hemdean Road, Balmore Hall lost a faithful caretaker, whose association with St. Peter's Church and the Hall went back 50 years to the time of her marriage during the first world war.

Until 1916 she helped her husband's aunt, Miss Olive Haggard, of Gosbrook Road, in her duties as verger and cleaner in St. Peter's. When the Rev. R. S. Stoney became Rector in 1916 he did not like ladies working in church, so Miss Haggard and Mrs. Turner were asked to look after Balmore Hall.

Caretaker

With one or two intervals, she and her husband have been carrying out the caretaker's duties there ever since. Mr. and Mrs. Turner, who recently celebrated their golden wedding, at one time left Caversham, and lived for five years in Emmer Green, on Grove Hill. During this time their two sons sang in St. Barnabas' Choir, when the Rev. J. Neville was priest-in-charge.

She and her husband did their work in Balmore Hall unobtrusively. Many who used the place never saw them. Those who knew her, and appreciated the time and trouble they both took to keep the Hall clean and warm, will miss her sadly and remember her with affection.

Our sympathy goes to Mr. Turner and his two sons, in their loss.

James West

Caversham Methodist Church has suffered a great loss with the death of Mr. J. West, who since his retirement had given a major share of his time and energy to the work of the church. At 72 he was a very active member—captain of the Boys' Brigade, chapel steward, trustee, class leader and member of the choir.

For many years he had been a society steward and superintendent of the Sunday School. A few years ago he and his wife founded a Junior Guild for young teenagers, which has borne fruit in the membership of the church.

It is perhaps for his work with the Boys' Brigade that Mr. West will be best remembered. He founded the company early in the war, particularly for boys who had been evacuated from London. Many of them have kept in touch with him over the years. He was also active in the wider affairs of the Brigade, and in September was a representative at the conference in Edinburgh.

Mr. B. Collett of 64 Sheridan Avenue is sponsoring a petition to our Member of Parliament, Mr. J. Lee. If readers agree either in full or in part with the objections he brings forward to the Abortion Bill they should write at once to Mr. John Lee at the House of Commons, S.W.1.

ABORTION BILL PETITION PLEA

Sir,

We the undersigned wish to raise some objections to the Medical Termination of Pregnancies Bill, 1966, presently before Parliament.

We recognise the urgent need for reform in this matter of therapeutic abortion, principally, (i) the need for legal clarification, (ii) the need to end "back-street" abortions, (iii) the need to alleviate the suffering of women who, for various reasons, find their pregnancies an intolerable burden.

However, this bill attempts to deal with these problems merely by making abortions easier to obtain, which is a solution of doubtful value; moreover the bill introduces principles that are opposed to human rights and immoral in themselves. The bill provides for the destruction of human life in the womb in the following circumstances:

(a) where there is a substantial risk of the child being born seriously handicapped, physically or mentally.

(b) where the mother is likely to find the care of the child too great a burden, or beyond her capacity.

(c) where the mother is mentally defective, or below the age of consent, or has become pregnant as the result of rape.

After consideration of the above, we wish to point out the following facts:

(i) Whereas until now the

The clergy of the R.C. parish of St. Anne's spoke against the Bill at all services on Sunday, November 6. They urged the laity to write privately to their Member of Parliament and to sign a petition to him.

Those organising the campaign in the parish wish to do so on the lines of the very successful campaign being run by Bishop Wheeler in the Leeds Diocese. They have asked for copies of the literature used in this campaign.

primary aim of the law has been to preserve the life of the mother, with the destruction of the foetus an unavoidable consequence; the proposed act embodies as a primary aim the elimination of the child. The distinction is both fundamental and of a moral nature.

(ii) It is wrong to kill a human being because he or she is not wanted, because such destruction means that the right to life is overridden for social convenience, and that this principle is immoral in it-

self and has frightening implications for "unwanted" people.

(iii) that the bill implies that a doctor has an obligation to carry out a therapeutic abortion under certain circumstances, which would constitute an intrusion on the freedom of conscience of doctors; moreover we wish to draw attention to the widespread hostility of the medical profession to these aspects of the bill, as contrary to the Hippocratic code of ethics, and their basic function to preserve life.

Minister's thanks

I and my family have now moved back into No. 41 Highmoor Road after our disastrous fire on July 4, so may I take this opportunity of thanking you and many neighbours and friends, parishioners of yours, for their kind enquiries about our health and welfare?

In particular I wish to say thank you to those whose practical help made a difficult situation less tiresome. I can never fully express my gratitude to the people of Caversham and to my own congregation for their wonderful kindness, and I would take it as a privilege if you would convey my thanks to them through the Caversham Bridge.

George E. Shearer,
Minister of St. Paul's
Presbyterian Church.

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CAVERSHAM CENTRE: WE MUST DEVELOP OR STAGNATE

By Alan Marshall.

Municipal correspondent
of the "Evening Post"

CAVERSHAM stands today at the planning crossroads. Either it can go on with its out-dated central area and stagnate. Or it can be properly planned for the years ahead so that its environment is protected and improved.

As the local planning authority, Reading Corporation is not prepared to let things go on as they are now.

Instead it wants to transform the central area of one of the town's biggest suburbs, in the same way as it hopes to improve other suburban centres, so that it will eventually become a pleasant, modern, traffic-free retail centre.

After almost two years' work, the planning department, in conjunction with a private developer's plan for a new shopping precinct in Church Street, developed a scheme which is aimed to modernise the central area, assist the free movement of traffic to and from the area north of the Thames and, eventually, provide a completely pedestrianised centre.

Admirable

On the evidence known now, it would seem an admirable plan — although the Minister of Housing and Local Government must be the final judge of this.

When I wrote about central Caversham in the "Caversham Bridge" earlier this year I pointed out the need for the local community to take an active part in the planning of its shopping centre. However, I never envisaged such a strong reaction to the corporation's final proposals as we have all recently seen from a very vocal minority in Caversham.

Whether the Minister approves the corporation's plans or not—his decision will probably be known next spring—the objections raised to the scheme, both at the Caversham public meeting and the public enquiry in October, are certainly not compatible with the planning necessary to make central Caversham a better place to live and shop in.

There seem to be two basic objections to the Caversham Centre Plan: (1) the shopping centre is not necessary, and (2) the proposed new road system, also, is not required.

Let us deal with the road plans first. Whether a new shopping centre is built or not, increasing traffic must still be dealt with.

Dangerous

It is wholly wrong, from a planning point of view—and I doubt if many will disagree—that traffic should be allowed to pass through a shopping area. It is basically dangerous and hopelessly exasperating for the shopper.

Conditions are bad enough today, although it can be argued that the flow of traffic in Prospect Street and Church Street at present is not particularly heavy outside the peak periods.

But the point that is so often overlooked is that traffic everywhere will have doubled within 15 or 20 years. In Reading it is growing every year at the rate of 5.6 per cent., 12 per cent. faster than the Ministry of Transport's forecast national average of five per cent.

At busy times Church Street and Prospect Street are ill suited to even today's traffic. So there are three answers: (1) widen both streets, (2) make use

of other existing streets to absorb some of the traffic, or (3) provide new roads.

The first method would be very costly, requiring the acquisition and demolition of one side of both streets. Using existing streets would be wrong, because they are residential areas and through traffic must and should be kept out of such streets. The third solution is the only really practicable one.

The corporation's plans for a ring road can quickly realise a benefit to at least part of the central area. It is estimated that a new road could be driven through from Bridge Street to Gosbrook Road, within five to seven years, relieving Church Street of all but service traffic, i.e. vehicles, such as delivery vans, wanting to get to shops and traffic feeding to and from Hemdean Road.

Limited

It is no good talking about traffic signals at Church Street-Prospect Street junction and a pedestrian crossing as the answers to the future. Traffic signals have only a limited life of usefulness in the face of ever-increasing traffic. Those planned at Church Street/Church Road will improve the capacity of the junction by 40 per cent. But this extra capacity will have been used up within five or six years because of increased traffic.

Pedestrian crossings help little in busy central areas. They merely worsen congestion, as is evidenced by the sole crossing in Broad Street already.

The only answer is to remove traffic from the central area.

The corporation proposes what is known as "environmental management." In a report to the Association of Municipal Corporations, a joint standing committee of eminent experts drawn from the Institution of Civil Engineers, the Institution of Municipal Engineers, the Royal Institute of British Architects, the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors and the Town Planning Institute, said:

Interim

"The fullest application of environmental management, which should provide at least for a substantial segregation of pedestrians and vehicles, can only be accomplished as new urban areas are built or as existing areas are redeveloped, but much can be done to improve or protect environmental conditions, or limit their deterioration, in existing areas, by the application of "interim measures."

"This would involve an

examination of existing environmental conditions, a delineation of suitable environmental areas to which interim measures can be applied for the purpose of limiting traffic flow therein to vehicles servicing the area, and the private cars of those living therein and their visitors."

Examine the proposed phasing of the Caversham Centre Plan and it will be seen that the Reading planners have followed all the criteria laid down by the committee of experts.

As for the proposed shopping precinct, the mass of statistics put before the public inquiry prove, so far as possible at present, that there is scope for the new centre.

Many have objected that no inquiry into the need for more shops was conducted by the corporation, but only by the developers. However, the development company retained one of Britain's top independent consultants, Dr. Nathaniel Lichfield, President of the Town Planning Institute and Professor of Economics and Town Planning at London University.

The corporation could hardly have done better, and had it retained an independent consultant of its own there would only have been unnecessary duplication at considerable cost to the ratepayers.

Benefit

A new, modern shopping area will attract Caversham people to shop for their day-to-day needs in Caversham. Already more people shop in Reading than from any other suburb in the town. If they can be attracted to shop in Caversham instead one important effect will be to reduce the traffic flow into the town centre. This could minimise the growth in congestion at Reading and Caversham bridges and along their approach roads, and perhaps save money in future road improvements.

There is no reason why existing traders should suffer if the new shops are built. Our spending power is increasing all the time, in spite of financial crises and squeezes and freezes, and a new shopping precinct which attracted people to central Caversham would benefit present shopkeepers as well as the new ones.

If a large national multiple, such as Woolworths or Marks and Spencer, announced they would open in Caversham, many objections would disappear, I believe.

Caversham needs its new shops and its new roads. The alternative will be disastrous stagnation and deterioration.

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—NEWS FROM

Round the Anglican parish

Stewardship—a wonderful result

The economic situation has not apparently had much effect in reducing the response by Caversham Anglicans to their financial commitments towards the Church.

In the weeks that followed the inspiring Town Hall service more than 1,000 homes were visited and 674 families made pledges.

The campaign wound up on All Saints' Day when the Bishop of Reading preached at a special Thanksgiving Eucharist in St. Peter's when there were 239 communicants. He received at the offertory the pledge cards of the four districts. The choir of Queen Anne's School sang the Appleford Mass of Five Melodies, and we are grateful to the Head Mistress for allowing this, and to Miss E. Leahy and Miss M. Hazel for the work they put into the musical preparations.

Refreshments followed in Balmore Hall.

The figures at present (a few visits have still to be made) are as follows:

| District | Pledges made | Annual sum promised |
|-----------|--------------|---------------------|
| St. Peter | 227 | £7,364 |

For Worcester

We are sorry to report that the Rev. David Clift will be leaving Caversham for Worcestershire where Mr. Clift is to be vicar of Arley and industrial chaplain in the carpet town of Kidderminster.

Mr. Clift was formerly curate to the Bishop of Birmingham's Industrial Chaplain, Canon R. S. O. Stevens, and always hoped on leaving Caversham to resume his interests in industry.

The date of the Clifts' departure is not yet known, but the

Board of the Caversham Bridge will be much impoverished by the loss of Mrs. Clift and an appreciation of their work here will appear in a later edition.

Days off

The Bishop of Buckingham has been urging that the clergy should make it known which day off they try to have each week. It is of course difficult to keep to the same day with complete regularity as sometimes important meetings are fixed which it is necessary for the

| | | |
|--------------|-----|---------|
| St. John | 119 | £1,670 |
| St. Andrew | 198 | £4,474 |
| St. Barnabas | 130 | £3,041 |
| Total | 674 | £16,549 |

This total is about £3,500 more than that promised at the time of the 1963 campaign, but due to so many removals the current figure stands considerably below the total reached in 1963. This may sound a lot of money but it must be remembered that our commitments to the Diocese and the Church overseas will amount to nearly £5,000 next year.

In addition the five assistant clergy of the parish have to be paid and housed, and repayment and interest on the heavy bank loans which the parish has to meet account for further large sums.

All those who worked so hard in all four districts are to be thanked most warmly, and the fact that the campaign was achieved at about one third of the cost of the last one is another gratifying matter. It is hoped that we can now meet our growing commitments with confidence in the years that lie ahead.

clergy to attend on the day they try to have off.

But as far as possible the Rector and the Rev. M. T. Cooper have Fridays and the rest of the clergy of the parish Mondays as their day off, and would be grateful to be spared phone calls and visits on those days unless the matter is urgent.

Men's meeting

A meeting for the men from all districts of the parish will be held in St. John's Hall on Wednesday, December 14, at

8 p.m., when the speaker will be the Rev. C. Birtles, who is the General Secretary of the Church of England Men's Society.

It must be many years since the men of the parish came together for a meeting on their own, and it is hoped that there will be a good attendance. Mr. Birtles began his ministry at Earley where he was curate.

He has been both a naval and a hospital chaplain, an industrial missionary and an incumbent; few men in the Church of England have had a more varied ministry.

St. Peter's

Music on Sunday nights: On three successive Sunday evenings music will be prominent in our evening worship. On Advent Sunday we welcome as usual the whole of Queen Anne's School to share with us in the Advent Carol service.

Both choirs have been learning new music for the occasion and the congregation are reminded to arrive in good time as the church is always very crowded for this service which is at 6.30 p.m. On the following week immediately after Evensong we shall be making a relay of hymn singing to patients in the Reading hospitals, and on December 11 in place of a sermon the Rev. R. J. Packer will give an organ recital. The Christmas carol service follows on Sunday, January 1, at 6.30 p.m.

Key Fortnight: By the time this edition of the Caversham

Bridge comes from the printers we shall have had the visit of Fr. Mark Gibbard to make plans with us for the Key Fortnight next October. This must now be given a prominent place in our prayers and will be given priority over all other district and parish matters next autumn.

The Rev. G. L. W. Armstrong: A most welcome visitor on the Feast of the Epiphany, Friday, January 6, will be the Rev. Guy Armstrong, who forsakes Bagshot that evening to preach at the Parish Communion at St. Peter's at 7.30 p.m. His many old friends will have plenty of opportunity for talking to him and, we hope, the rest of the Armstrong family as we are planning to have seasonal refreshments in Toc H. after the service. The social committee intend to arrange a Christmas party on some other evening and not have it following on after the Epiphany Parish Communion as in former years.

St. John's

What next? Stewardship established, we can now turn to the next thing, which is "Key Fortnight," in autumn, 1967. This may well prove to be one of the more memorable fortnights in many peoples' lives. The Rev. Fr. Jonathan Young is coming to stay in the District and through meetings, talks and services will be trying to help "to make God real" to us. He is a monk of the Society of St. John the Evangelist, at Cowley, Oxford, where he is Novice Master.

In preparation for this, he is coming to stay with us for the weekend beginning November 22, 1966. Over the weekend, he will meet a representative cross section of the congregation in three or more coffee parties; he will preach at 9.15 a.m. on the Sunday, and then in the evening service, after an introductory talk, will hold an open

forum. In this way together we will begin to make our plans for next autumn.

Ten days later, when we have had time to digest our discussions and first impressions, he is returning to meet the District Committee and begin to hammer out with them how to make best use of "Key Fortnight," 1967.

This weekend will therefore provide everybody an opportunity to say what they think would be most helpful to them, their friends and neighbours and so ensure that we make the best use of this historic occasion.

Thank you: It is with the greatest regret that we announce the resignation of Mr. A. R. England, our organist and choir master. Mr. and Mrs. England are fulfilling a life-long intention of retiring to their home county of Somerset, where they will live in a bungalow just outside Wells, and so will be able to worship in that lovely Cathedral, and enjoy to the full its fine musical tradition.



New altar cloth for St. John's

Members of St. John's Mothers' Union have made a new green altar frontal, and thus met an urgent need for their church. Three of them, Mrs. K. Masters (left), Mrs. K. Billingham (centre) and Mrs. M. Whiteway are seen with the finished frontal. Many thanks. The picture is by Fred Walker.

THE CAVERSHAM CHURCHES—

St. Barnabas

As priest-in-charge few people know better than I do how much the smooth running of our Church and Hall depends upon the faithfulness of a relatively small number of people. I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of us all, to thank them.

Also there are many people who are able to help in a special way from time to time, and this month there are several to mention and thank. Early in October, 15 people spent a Saturday morning doing a variety of jobs in the Church and Hall.

Several people have noticed that someone is decorating one of the cloakrooms in the Hall; —not the P.C.G. this time, but Mr. Price from Kelmscott Close, Caversham, who offered us his help until he sails for Australia with his family.

A number of men from Caversham Park Village, under the leadership of Mr. Jackson, have been making cupboards in the Hall.

A former resident of Emmer Green and a member of our congregation has made a gift of £25 towards improvements in the Hall and Mr. and Mrs. Bright have donated a piano.

Halloween Party: Our Halloween Party in the Church Hall proved to be a very enjoyable family occasion. Our thanks go to the Coffee Pot, who provided a delicious buffet supper for 130 people, and to the P.C.G. who transformed the Hall with their decorations and entertained us all.

Family services: People with young children will be interested to know that special family services are held in our Church from time to time, usually on a Sunday afternoon. Many parents do not feel that they can bring children to the Family Eucharist, and those whose children are at the creche or Sunday School regret not being able to worship as a family. Our family services help to meet this need. The next one will be on December 24, at 6.00 p.m., when the children of the Sunday School will present a nativity play.

Key Fortnight: In October, 1967, the parish will be involved in Key Fortnight. We at St. Barnabas will have Father John Shand, S.S.J.E., staying with us during that fortnight. He will also visit this district on December 17—18 when we will all have an opportunity to meet him and hear him preach.

New minister for Chapel

Caversham Hill Chapel are pleased to report that the Rev. R. C. Callender has been appointed to the pastorate of Caversham Hill Chapel and will begin his ministry in Caversham on Sunday, December 4. The previous evening his induction service will take place at 6.30 p.m.

He will also be minister of Binfield Heath Congregational Church and his induction to that pastorate will be on December 10. Mr. Callender's last church was at Sandhurst. He is a personal member of the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches.

Caversham Methodists

The Church Anniversary was held over the weekend of October 29-30. At the Gift Day on the Saturday the host and hostess were Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Carter. The chairman was Mr. W. J. White, and the sale was opened by Mrs. White. Stalls were manned by the Women's Fellowship, the men of the church and the youth department. In the evening there was a concert by the West Reading Salvation Army band and songsters. By the end of the weekend income from the Gift Day had reached more than £220.

—O—O—O—O—O—O—

Graham Lascelles, 20, son of the organist and choirmaster at Caversham Heights, has obtained his second mate's ticket while in

Sydney, and is expected home again on November 20. He has been serving with the Port Line's modern refrigerated cargo ship, "Burnie." Graham's next target is his radar ticket.

As we go to press we have learned of the sudden death of Mrs. Rhoda Scott. Our deep sympathy goes to her husband and to Michael.

—O—O—O—O—O—O—

We congratulate a member of the congregation on his appointment as our new Town Clerk. Mr. Tee, with his wife and daughter Jennifer, who is in the Sunday School, is well-known to members of the congregation. As "Chief Executive Officer" he will co-ordinate the work of all departments in the Town Hall.

December 18, 11 a.m. Children's Toy Service (parents of course welcome): the gifts will be sent to the Smith (children's) Hospital, Henley.

Sunday evening services: November 27, 6 p.m.: Evening Prayer; 6.30 p.m.: "Key Fortnight — a Preface"; December 4, 3.15 p.m. Family Service with Baptisms. December 11, 6.30 p.m.: Sung Evensong; December 18, 6 p.m.: Evening Prayer, 6.30 p.m.: "Waiting for Christmas," a preparation; January 1, 6.30 p.m.: "Most Highly Favoured Lady." (A Nativity Play).



Mr. England

Mr. England has only been with us two years, but in that time he has revolutionised our singing, and through his own playing and worship has given us a new understanding of what it means to worship God through music.

We wish them both every happiness in their retirement.

Christmas Gifts: We will be taking gifts of food to some of the elderly living in this District so that they can have a little extra to celebrate Christmas. There will be a table at the back of Church, where you can place your gifts from December 11 to 18.

St. Andrews

Key Fortnight: Fr. David Campbell, S.S.J.E., will be visiting the District on the first weekend in December. The purpose of his visit will be to make preparations for the Key Fortnight in October, 1967. On Sunday, December 4, Fr. David will preach at 9.15 a.m. After Evensong (which will end at 7.15 p.m.) he would like to meet as many members of the congregation as possible in the Church Hall.

Coffee and biscuits will be provided. This will give him an opportunity to learn something about our District and will also provide us with an occasion to ask questions or make suggestions about the Fortnight. Please come and welcome him.

Children's Christmas Gifts: The Church of England Children's Society Homes in Reading have been very grateful in the past for the parcels from our Children's Gift Service on Christmas Eve. Unfortunately they have never been able to use them for Christmas presents because the parcels have not reached the Homes early enough to be properly sorted and labelled.

This year therefore we are changing our procedure. Children are asked to bring their parcels to Sunday School on Sunday, December 18.

This means that the presents can be taken to the Homes in plenty of time for Christmas. The Service at the Crib will still be held as usual at 3.15 p.m. on Christmas Eve, when we shall remember the children who will be receiving our parcels on Christmas Day.

Dates to note: The St. Andrews Fellowship meeting for December will take the form of a Musical Evening. This will be held on Thursday, December 8, at 7.45 p.m. in the large Hall. The music will be provided entirely by members of the Congregation.

There will be a Service of Lessons and Carols at 6.30 p.m. on Sunday, January 1.

The Epiphany Party will next year be on January 14 at 7.30 p.m. Admission will be by ticket only. Tickets will be available in church on the first two Sunday after Christmas.

ST. ANNE'S R. C. NEWS

Between 8.30 and 9 a.m. on Thursday, October 26, the School Hall was a hive of activity whilst the used toys which the children had been collecting for the past two weeks were sold in aid of the African Missions.

As a result £33 were handed to Mother Paul Christine who had unexpectedly arrived in England whilst on leave from Ruanda, where the Sisters of the Visitation have two mission posts.

She later showed slides of the work of the Missions and included a very popular sequence of the animal life of the region.

The money collected will help in providing much needed vitamin and medical supplies, and we are very grateful to the children for their gallant efforts during Mission Week.

COFFEE PARTY

Mrs. Justine Mair entertained the ladies of the parish to a pleasant informal coffee party at her home, Hill House, Surley Row, on Thursday, October 27.

The guest speaker was the Reverend Father Ford who came from Sonning Common. His subject was "A New Look at the Sacrament of Penance." In the course of his talk Fr. Ford traced the history of the Sacrament from early Christian times to pre-Conciliar days. He then invited those present to take a post-Conciliar look at the Sacrament based on the Vatican II Decree on "The Church," quoting from Chapter II:—

"Those who approach the Sacrament of Penance win, by God's mercy, pardon for the offence done to him; at the same time they are reconciled with the Church which their sin has injured, and which with charity, good example and prayers is working for their conversion..."

An interesting and fruitful discussion followed. The ladies who attended are indebted to Fr. Ford who is a well-loved visitor to the parish, and to Mrs. Mair for her kindness and hospitality.

Talking point WHY BE HONEST?

By Lyn S. Lewis

Why be honest? Such a query must surely sound sacrilegious and appears to question an assumption of thousands of years' standing. Nevertheless it is a question which is being asked all over the world, especially by the unscrupulous.

Indeed even Christian people are tempted to think that honesty is something which belongs to a less realistic society. Moreover the day has gone when it will be enough to hold up the rewards of a future heaven or the punishments of a future hell. People today are caught up in high pressure salesmanship which brings with it the philosophy that if you don't "do" him he will "do" you.

The first weakness in such an attitude is that we think that honesty is bowing to a MAN-MADE CREED. Throughout the ages humanity has been formulating rules about life and this is one of them.

In our modern revolt against authority all such laws are being questioned. This is not all loss. There is some real gain in having thoughtful people asking questions. But the point is, we are not dealing with a man-made law and I am not going to rush into the Bible to prove my point.

Rules of honesty are not to be obeyed just because the Bible says so. The Bible says so for a reason far older than the Bible. The Bible says so because this ideal is written into the very structure of the universe, and the universe does not lie. It always keeps faith; it is this that makes science possible, what the scientist does today he can do tomorrow, what he does in London he can do in Glasgow if he observes the same laws. And the man who lives a lie is not fighting a man-made code, he is kicking against the solid steel wall of the universe itself.

The second weakness is that the dishonest man is setting himself against the whole framework of society. Life surely would be intolerable without the assumption that the great majority are honest, they do pay for what they have, they do not go about lifting things which do not belong to them.

Finally, we are honest not because we accept the above reasons and a dozen more like them, we are honest FIRST and think of reasons afterwards. You may as well ask a man why he loves his wife: he loves her because deep within something has found kinship. Similarly we are honest not because it pays, but because it is right.

We record . . .

| | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| BAPTISED | 29 Michael Lovegrove and Susan Wells. |
| St. Peter's | |
| November | |
| 6 Amanda Luxton, Ian Wells. | |
| St. Andrew's | |
| October | |
| 16 Alison Kippax, Simon Ailes, Stuart Turgis. | |
| St. Barnabas' | |
| October | |
| 25 Carl Fulker, Alison Lloyd, Suzanne Smith. | |
| St. Margaret's, Mapledurham | |
| October | |
| 16 Simon Dibbon. | |
| Caversham Methodist Church | |
| October | |
| 25 Paul Mason, Nicola Farthing, 30 Anthony Cooper. | |
| Caversham Heights Methodist Church | |
| October | |
| 16 Sarah Harding. | |
| MARRIED | |
| St. Peter's | |
| October | |
| 15 David Grey and Angela Tombs, Frank Bennett and Jane Sadler. | |
| St. John's | |
| October | |
| 1 Ivor Hogburn and Paulette Green. | |
| St. Barnabas' | |
| October | |
| 22 David Goodey and Carole Stevens, Peter Cornwall and Susan Cripps. | |
| St. Margaret's, Mapledurham | |
| October | |
| 8 Michael Sedden and Patricia Mortimer, 22 Derek Dawson and Sheila Boreham. | |
| Caversham Baptist Church | |
| October | |
| 8 Bob Hall and Linda Jones. | |
| BURIED | |
| St. Peter's | |
| October | |
| 10 Arthur Lewington, 16 Ellen Turner, 26 Dorothy Scriven. | |
| St. John's | |
| October | |
| 17 George Leach. | |
| St. Anne's | |
| October | |
| 29 Philip Drew. | |
| Caversham Methodist Church | |
| October | |
| 14 Arthur Haines, 31 James West. | |
| Caversham Heights Methodist Church | |
| November | |
| 7 Rhoda Scott. | |

Methodist preaching appointments and services

| | |
|--|--|
| Caversham | |
| 4 11.00 Mr. E. J. S. Beckley. | |
| 6.30 Rev. E. B. Wright. | |
| 11 11.00 Rev. E. B. Wright. (Toy Service). | |
| 6.30 Mr. M. Pickett. | |
| 18 11.00 Rev. A. J. Badcock. | |
| 3.00 "Come to Bethlehem" | |
| A nativity play by the Sunday School. | |
| 6.30 Mr. D. Wise. | |
| Caversham Heights | |
| 4 11.00 Rev. E. B. Wright. | |
| 6.30 Mrs. E. Carter. | |
| 11 11.00 Rev. E. J. Badcock. | |
| 6.30 Rev. E. B. Wright. | |
| 18 11.00 Mr. J. M. Dixon. | |
| 4.00 Family Carol Service. | |
| 6.30 Rev. E. B. Wright. | |

CAVERSHAM BAPTIST FREE CHURCH DECEMBER SERVICES

| | |
|--|--|
| 4 11.00 The Rev. L. S. Lewis. | |
| 6.30 Evening Communion. | |
| The Rev. L. S. Lewis. | |
| 11 11.00 The Rev. L. S. Lewis. | |
| 6.30 The Rev. L. S. Lewis. | |
| 18 11.00 The Rev. L. S. Lewis. | |
| 2.45 Toy Service. | |
| 6.30 The Rev. L. S. Lewis | |
| — Service includes Christmas Music by Choir. | |

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ROUND THE LOCAL CLUBS

Chazey Boys' Club has now re-opened after a break, and will continue to be held on Fridays at Toe H. Caversham Court, 5.45-7.30 p.m. The Tuesday sessions will not operate on a weekly basis this winter, but occasionally special programmes will be arranged for a Tuesday, and advance notice will be given to members.

Membership at present is open to boys of 10-13 years of age. Table tennis, billiards, darts and other indoor activities are organised, and occasional football matches are played on Saturdays. Further details from Peter Shock, 131, Hemdean Road, Caversham. Tel. Reading 73793.

New look for Lunch Club. The Churchmen's Luncheon Club, which began a year ago under the chairmanship of the Rural Dean, the Rev. D. Bean, has taken on a new look. It is now meeting on the first Thursday of each month at St. Laurence's Hall, and the price for lunch has been reduced to 6/6d. Begun as an Anglican venture, membership is now open to Christians of all denominations. At the November meeting the Rev. A. J. Badcock spoke about the Anglican-Methodist conversations.

The speaker on Thursday December 1 will be Fr. Ford, Roman Catholic priest at Somin Common. Any prospective new members will be welcome but are asked to notify the secretary, Mr. E. Few, at 10, Gun Street, or the Rector of Caversham, if they hope to be present in December.

The December meeting of Maplewood W.I. will take place on Tuesday, 13. Two films will be shown as follows: "Meeting Tomorrow" and "National Trust".

Carols will be sung at the Social Time.

Caversham Heights Townswomen's Guild: At the October

meeting, the speaker was Mr. Fischer, of London, who gave some interesting facts about different furs, and the methods of making up into garments, several of which were displayed to envious eyes.

Miss Alderson, J.P., headmistress of Caversham Park School, came at very short notice to talk to the social studies group on the work of a magistrate.

The international group had two meetings during October. Mr. Goodman's subject was Denmark, and besides showing some delightful slides, he gave some unusual facts about ancient customs of the country.

At the second meeting, Mrs. Shapiro, an eminent authority on Israel, gave an enlightening talk on that country, also illustrated with slides.

Caversham Afternoon Townswomen's Guild: Members were deeply grieved by the news of the sudden death of one of their committee members, Mrs. D. Scriven. She will be sadly missed not only for the hard work she did for the Guild but also for her kind and friendly personality.

At the October meeting Mrs. J. Kirk told members of the excellent work being done by the Spastics Welfare Society which she illustrated with a film.

The Michaelmas Fayre was quite well supported and those who came appreciated the many attractive stalls. The sum raised was approximately £40.

The annual meeting was held at Church House, Caversham on November 17.

New members will be welcomed and should contact Mrs. M. Morton, 71, Balmore Drive, Caversham.

Emmer Green Townswomen's Guild: At the October meeting, Miss Veronica Fountain, of Holmes, of Reading, gave a talk on "Aspects of Design in the Home," illustrated with many examples of materials and slides. Mrs. Klein reported on the Social Studies Residential School held at Southampton. The competition for the best limerick on any aspect of Guild activities was won by Mrs. Caddy with Miss James second.

On October 18 we celebrated our fourteenth birthday and welcomed Mrs. B. Morley, Federation chairman, Mrs. M. Major, Federation secretary, and several visitors. Our president, Miss P. Bone, delighted us with her singing and John Barlow entertained us with his magic.

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December Sunday Services

(NOT CHRISTMAS DAY)

CHURCH OF ENGLAND

St. Peter's

8.00 a.m. Holy Communion
9.15 a.m. PARISH COMMUNION
11.00 a.m. Matins
11.00 a.m. Sunday School (Balmore Hall and Hemdean House School)
12.15 p.m. Holy Communion (1st and 3rd Sundays)
6.30 p.m. Evensong

St. John's

8.00 a.m. Holy Communion
9.15 a.m. FAMILY EUCHARIST
11.00 a.m. Children's Church
6.30 p.m. Evening Service (1st Sunday, 3.15 p.m.)

St. Andrew's

8.00 a.m. Holy Communion
9.15 a.m. FAMILY EUCHARIST
11.15 a.m. Holy Communion
11.15 a.m. Sunday School (Church Hall)
6.30 p.m. Evensong (3rd Sunday, 3.15 p.m.)

St. Barnabas'

8.00 a.m. Holy Communion
9.15 a.m. Family Eucharist
9.15 a.m. Sunday School (Church Hall)
6.30 p.m. Evensong (3rd Sunday, 3.15 p.m.)

St. Margaret's, Mapledurham

8.00 a.m. Holy Communion (2nd and 4th Sundays)
9.15 a.m. PARISH COMMUNION
6.30 p.m. Evensong

ROMAN CATHOLIC

St. Anne's

8.00 a.m. 9.30 a.m. 11 a.m. 7 p.m. Mass

Our Lady of Caversham

9.30 a.m. Mass (except 1st Sunday when at 8.30 a.m.)

BAPTIST

Caversham

11.00 a.m. and 6.30 p.m. Worship
Communion after Evening Service 1st Sunday after Morning Service 3rd Sunday.

North Caversham

10.45 a.m. and 6.30 p.m. Worship
Communion after service on 3rd Sunday.

METHODIST

Caversham Heights

11.00 a.m. and 6.30 p.m. Worship
10.15 a.m. Sunday School.
Senior Dept.
11.00 a.m. Sunday School.
Junior and Primary Dept.

Gosbrook Road

11.00 a.m. and 6.30 p.m. Worship.
11.00 a.m. Sunday School.

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10.50 a.m. and 3.00 p.m. Sunday Schools.

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The Rev. Roger Packer (Priest-in-Charge of St. Andrew's) St. Andrew's House, Harrogate Road, Tel. 72788.
The Rev. John Stevinson (Priest-in-Charge of St. John's) St. John's House, 9, South View Avenue, Tel. 71814.
The Rev. Colin Scott-Dempster, The Rectory Flat, Church Road, Tel. 75152.

BAPTIST

The Rev. L. S. Lewis, 8, Kidmore Road, Caversham
Tel. 73633.

METHODIST

The Rev. E. B. Wright, 17, St. Anne's Road, Tel. 7223

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THE WORDS OF POPULAR SONGS... FACTUALLY THEY DON'T MEAN A THING, BUT WHAT A WEALTH OF TRUTH...

LIES, ALL LIES, BUT...

Here is a Christmas riddle: When is a lie not a lie? Answer: When it tells the truth. Want to know how? Then read on...

Once upon a time there was a not-so-young married couple. They loved children, but after 14 years of marriage none had come along. They'd been to the doctor — taken all the advice they could, but still remained childless. Time was running out for them when, wonder of wonders, the wife became pregnant. She was very ill in the early stages and sick most of the day, and then to crown it all she nearly lost the baby.

The doctor explained that her age was against her and that she'd have to take great care. Both she and her husband knew that there would be no second chance. If they were to have a child of their own this baby was it. She took great care. A fortnight before the baby was due she was admitted to hospital, just to make sure.

Very hard

At last she went into labour. It was very long and very hard. The thought of the baby kept her going. Perhaps it would be a boy. They both badly wanted a boy. But would it be all right... after all at her age and with the trouble and everything? The hours dragged by, measured only by the pain and the effort... and then at last the baby was born.

Afterwards the wife described how she felt when she was told that she had given birth to a perfect 8lb. boy.

"I floated in the air," she said, "about six feet above the bed. There was a great golden light all about me, and I was supported by soft, fleecy white clouds. My heart sang so loudly that I thought I'd burst with the joy of it, and my whole body glowed."

In actual fact she remained on the bed bathed in perspiration and the harsh glare of an electric light bulb, with a very tired smile on her face and a pulse slightly above normal. But you wouldn't call her a liar would you?

Sometimes facts are just not big enough to carry the truth. A list as long as a summer's day wouldn't have conveyed the truth of that

by Geoffrey Brown

woman's experience. She needed to burst through the fact barrier to show the depth and the significance of her experience. She had to use a kind of picture language that transcends fact—the kind of language that if we stop a moment and think about it we all accept as being perfectly natural.

Robert Burns once wrote:

O my love's like a red red rose,
That's newly sprung in June.
O my love's like the melody,
That's sweetly play'd in tune.

As fact it's rubbish, but it tells us more of what he wants us to know about his girl friend than her height, weight and vital statistics could ever do. The language we use to express the deepest kind of truth is not much concerned with facts and we'd do well to remember this when we read the Bible.

I am not trying to convince anyone that there are no facts in Holy Scripture, or that some of the things that we find difficult to understand—like the Resurrection—didn't actually happen as factual events. What I am trying to say to the people who want to treat the Bible as if it were the "Guinness Book of Records" or a manual on car maintenance, is that it is not just a source of factual information—it is a source of truth.

Deepest truth

It is a waste of time arguing whether something is fact or fiction (particularly when you can't prove it either way). Much more to the point would be a concern for whether or not it's true, because there is a difference, and here at last I come to the Christmas story.

Many people find it perfectly easy to accept the guiding star, the virgin birth, the angelic choir, the message to the shepherds, the kingly gifts, as facts. For them fact and truth merge. But others don't find it so easy. The facts are too far-fetched, too difficult to believe, and they reject the whole thing as being untrue. What a pity!

If we accept the central fact that in the stable God's Son was born, just as we accept the birth of the woman's son in our story, or the reality of the girl Robert Burns was in love with, then it is such an earth-shattering event that the language of fact need not necessarily be the language that best expresses its deepest truth.

In other words, even if we find difficulty with the Christmas story as FACT, we need no more reject its TRUTH than we would the mother's description of her joy, or the poet's description of his love.

The language of truth is not always the language of fact.

Success ?

FRANK MILES ends his travels to churches of all denominations, and sums up in his search for the meaning of success in terms of church organisation.



Most people think religion will ensure their sons get their hair cut...



...and their daughters never smoke

A-ha, they say. It all depends what you mean by success.

Come, come, padre. You know what you want. You want the church full. You want a good spirit of worship. You want to be recognised as a dynamic leader. You want things to be happening on your premises which glorify God and make the lives of His children rich and full.

All right, I'll come clean; you've hit it. At least some of it. I'm not sure I really want to be recognised as anything. Oh, yes, of course I do, really, I suppose.

So success is all these things, and I've looked at a cluster of churches in these last few months in which some or all the conditions are being fulfilled.

It's very surprising how many churches ARE being operated successfully. But that's not the biggest surprise about this series by a long way. Here are some more:

Good PREACHING is an almost universal ingredient of the "success" church. Where a parson cultivates his oratorical gifts, and prepares what he has to say so that it is direct and straightforward, then more people are prepared to listen than he might think.

Reluctant

REGULAR church-going no longer seems to mean once a week. It means once a month for some, once a fortnight for others. There is a terrible reluctance for people to be committed to any activity on a regular basis. There is reluctance to become involved, to take responsibility. People are not sure of themselves. They like to slip under the religious scene unnoticed; unrecognised. It's almost as if the admission of religious needs is regarded as a sign of weakness.

In churches where there is life and vitality there is very little interest at grass roots level in CHURCH UNITY. Weak churches may well be concerned about unity because it will give an appearance of numerical strength to the Christian cause. Strong churches do not need to have an appearance of strength lent to them. A Methodist circuit steward said to me: "Only the parsons are worried about unity round here. We lay folk don't see the need. There's got to be religious facilities for all the variety of humankind. I could no more worship in a High Anglican Church than fly, and nor could they worship in our Ebenezer chapels. But we do understand each other now, and that's about as far as it will go."

People don't think WORDS matter very much. Doggerel hymns and choruses in Methodist worship, outrageous platitudes in Anglican sermons,

extreme theological language in prayers, and old-fashioned meaningless phrases from Bible readings do not seem to offend people.

Some acts of worship may be almost totally devoid of meaning from start to finish but people take part because of well preserved tradition, or the sheer spirit of the place.

RADICAL Christian leaders, calling for change in concrete terms of worship order, Christian involvement in society, new musical patterns, and a more rational theology, get almost NO REACTION WHATEVER from their people. One clergyman said: "If you tell them anything they don't already know, having heard it before a thousand times, then they stop listening. It's almost impossible to see the Church becoming anything other than a museum of Victoriana with the people we've got now. Agnostics, even atheists, would be better material to work on. At least they will think."

Irrelevant

The majority of people who take an interest in religion do so because they think it is the best barrier against the decadent trend of the world. They believe it will stop their children thinking about SEX, and will ensure that they have their hair cut (boys) and do not smoke (girls). There is very little evident sense of participation in the creative and redemptive work of God.

To be a churchgoer means to be on the defence, not on the attack. It means to preserve rather than to

start something new. It means to be safe rather than take risks.

Most of the churches I have visited are successful because they have contrived against high odds to preserve something of the spirit of a dead generation. Morecambe and Derby Methodists and Bognor and Barston Anglicans were remarkable for this.

Churches like these provide ample evidence that large numbers of people need their religion to be consoling rather than challenging and simple, even if at the same time dishonest.

This kind of religion can number its days. Even Billy Graham will not for ever be able to protect them from the discovery that what they are up to is largely irrelevant.

The churches that really are nosing their

way into the future with wisdom and courage are not doing so well, numerically speaking.

Blackbird Leys, where the priest is secretary of the community council; St. Timothy's R.C. Liverpool, where the priest gets shockingly involved in politics; the City Temple, London, where great preaching twines in with a rare psychological service, and St. Martin's, Birmingham, where the Rector refuses to allow Christians to spend all their spare time on church premises, are the success churches I have been heartened to find.

THEY AREN'T NECESSARILY ALL PACKED TO THE DOORS, BUT THEY HAVE IN THEM THE HOPE OF THE FUTURE WITNESS OF CHRIST'S BODY IN THIS LAND.

Dogs maybe, but not top dogs

The British must stop thinking that they are a "superior race," the Bishop of Derby, the Rt. Rev. Geoffrey Allen, says.

He told the Derby Diocesan Conference: "We must rid ourselves of any feeling that we as British are a superior race. We may disclaim any such feeling ourselves, but members of other races know only too well that we have often treated them as though we regarded them as inferior to ourselves."

He said: "In the present state of the world and in the present work of the Church it is essential that members of different races learn to treat one another and co-operate with one another without fear or favour as equals and friends."

He said that missionary work no longer meant that the church in Britain did all the giving and urged the British people to be "humble enough" to admit that they needed the help of people from other lands just as much as they needed Britain's.

The Bishop also pointed out that the Vicar of Matlock Bath, Derbyshire, the Rev. James Song, was a Chinese Malayan and described his appointment as "a notable example of our receiving help from other lands."

Poet makes pilgrimage

World-famous poet, W. H. Auden took time off from commuting between his homes in Austria and America to make a sentimental pilgrimage to the village church at Horninglow, near Burton-on-Trent, Staffs. His grandfather, the Rev. John Auden, was the church's first Vicar.

Almost nothing.
A cry in the dark.
One of a thousand women new that night
to the viciousness of birth.
This one almost less than most.
She has nothing. Almost nothing. Just a
husband wretched with his failure to
provide, and stupid with astonishment.
Almost nothing. Blood on straw.
Sweat on a frightened brow.
Thick beasts aware of nothing but the
panting, striving, crying of two human
sorts. And now a third.
Almost nothing.

FOR CHILDREN

HOME - MADE CHRISTMASSES ARE BEST!

Dear children,

A very happy Christmas to you all!
I expect that all of you who are old enough will
be giving some help to your mother in the kitchen
during the next few weeks. There are so many
things to be done. Just think of a few of them:

The Christmas pies have to be made.
The Christmas pudding has to be made.
The Christmas cake has to be made, and
properly iced and decorated.
If you're having a party then all kinds of things
have to be prepared for that.

The little girl in the picture is helping her
mother in the kitchen. I would like you to colour
this picture with crayons, and send it to me at

"Christian News,"
319, Gazette Buildings,
Corporation Street,
Birmingham, 4

not later than December 30.

How can the boys help during Christmas? Well,
several who I know help in the kitchen just like
their sisters, although they do tend to eat more of
the food than they ought, before it's ready!

There are many things to be done in the garden,
and of course there are the house decorations.

Some children's decorations that you make at
school or at home can be even better than some
very expensive ones you can buy in the shops. So
boys—save dad a bit of money and make your own
hangers and streamers this year. It's not hard, and
you will have great fun.

I always say that "home-made Christmases"
are the best sort.

All my love,

MRS. SMALL.



NEW ROSE VARIETY GIVES SWEET SMELL OF EXPORT SUCCESS

by Joan Best

A British pottery firm is about to make a tasteful contribution to Canada's Centennial Year, 1967—and, at the same time, a fine contribution to this country's export drive. The managing director of Royal Albert Bone China (Thos. C. Wild and Sons, Ltd.), Mr. Kenneth T. Wild, has won a very substantial order from Canada for a range called "Centennial Rose."

The Canadians decided to grow their own perfect "Centennial" rose to commemorate their hundred years' existence as a Dominion. Having chosen their ideal after a nationwide contest, they were delighted to find a "truly authentic reproduction" in a design created by the art director of Royal Albert—based on some "Centennial" blooms flown over by air.

Now—well in time for next year's celebrations—the complete range of "Centennial Rose" dinner, tea and coffee services as well as florals are on their way across the Atlantic.

The firm is proud of this order, which is in keeping with its success as an exporting firm—outstanding even in an industry renowned for its export achievements: 75 per cent. of its total production goes overseas.

The actual "Centennial Rose" will soon be in bloom at Buckingham Palace, Windsor Castle, Balmoral and Sandringham, and in the famous botanical gardens in Wisley

(Surrey). It will be growing on 500 bushes presented to the Queen for commemorative planting.

At the same time, the Royal Albert "Centennial Rose" will be helping research on behalf of mentally-retarded children: a royalty on its sale will be devoted to this charitable cause.

Information, please!

We've been hearing more than enough lately about the need for greater mobility of labour. More people than ever before are having to think about changing their jobs and uprooting their homes and families. Of course, this is a problem which has had to be tackled by quite a few people before now. In recent years, many expanding firms have been bursting out of England's overcrowded industrial centres, and many "key men" have led the migration into the relatively open spaces of Northern Ireland.

It is good to see that Northern Ireland has given thought to the key men's wives and their problems: housing, schools, different shops, new neighbours, no nearby relatives. Naturally, not even the most benevolent official can sort all this out for a woman on the move; but it was imaginative of the Northern Irish powers-that-be to commission a well-known woman writer, Jean Bowden, to look into some aspects on which information and advice can be of real use.

Her findings are set out in a well-produced, well-illustrated little book, called "You're Welcome." The author tells us what she learned from scores of newcomers to Northern Ireland, particularly from the women. She also investigated the shops, the shipping and air services, the schools, the hospitals—and the natives' attitude to newcomers.

Her verdict in brief: they're friendly, and their country is a good place to live in.

A first-rate idea, this booklet—and recommended reading for other pundits who plan our menfolk's lives for them—and for us—but rarely remember where we come in.

Batman's back to the wall

All mothers have been up against it, or

will be some day: the problem of how far to go in letting their youngsters decorate their own little den to their own liking.

Now two well-known firms have come to our aid with a fine compromise solution: wallpapers cheap enough to suit a passing phase.

Crown's latest offering is a sop to the Batman craze: "Batman" wallpaper!

ICI cater for the younger set with their colourful new "Wall-flair" range of wallpapers. Their designs incorporate Noddy, Winnie-the-Pooh, Sindy, etc. Here again, the price is low enough to allow your tots to graduate in due course to whatever may have succeeded Batman in the popularity polls.

A pat on the back for the enterprising manufacturers—and one further suggestion: Could they throw in a pair of blinkers for mother to wear while making the beds and clearing up in the newly-papered bedroom—to help her avert her gaze from the walls?

Gas game is great

When I told my neighbour that my children were all searching for gas in the North Sea she looked at me as if she thought I was crazy. You see, my eldest is only eight. But the explanation is simple—and logical. They are engrossed in the latest game—North Sea Quest.

This has been thought up by Radiation Gas Fires Limited, and the gaily-coloured board and accessories are being given away throughout October and November to applicants who happen to spot the press advertisements.

Judging from the way in which my own brood has been kept amused, I'd say it will rival Ludo. Players are liable to miss turns or be sent back to shore by a variety of hazards—but oh! What screams of delight when someone makes a gas strike! I bow to the person who thought this one up!

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Television

Soaked in talent, but it bores me

by Harold Jeffries

The population of this country has a vast appetite for light entertainment. It used to satisfy it at the music hall. Today, in spite of the growth of working men's club variety shows and the number of pub performers, it is still largely catered for by television.

The high spot in any entertainer's career is to be given their own show. We can think of a long list . . . Norman Vaughan, Bruce Forsyth, Roy Castle, Morecambe and Wise, Millicent Martin, Petula Clark, Dusty Springfield, Mike and Bernie Winters . . . and on and on.

We are soaked in talent, but all too often it is to me just a great, dragging bore.

Why? Because talent feeds on material.

Lurking behind every star is the script writer, and if he can't be original, all the talent in the world won't prevent a yawn.

I get heartily sick of smut. Not because it shocks me, but because it bores me. Every time a comic drools over the well-upholstered blonde who flounces across the stage I want to scream. Sex is funny, but it's not funny enough to be the staple diet of entertainment.

Another thing is the sheer repetition. The opening dance routine that tries hard to be different and pitifully fails . . . the jokes about the band and the producer . . . the old gimmick of pretending to fluff a line, and break down into laughter in a sketch which has probably been rehearsed a dozen times . . . you could add a hundred more.

Too slick

The real trouble is that nobody seems to enjoy it any more. It's all too slick and professional . . . except for one or two, like Roy Castle and Millicent Martin, there's no communication of happiness—just clever cleverness.

What I want to do when I watch a variety show is to be entertained—to enjoy myself, and I can only do this if the performers show me that they are doing this, too.

That's why I go a bundle on Val Doonican. I've kept him until last because I think his series has illustrated all that is best in T.V. entertainment, and shown up so much of the other as tired and shoddy. His show is gay, bouncy, talented, original, mercifully free from the blue joke, and brim full of a sense of fun and enjoyment.

Other shows . . . please copy.

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DETROIT TIGERS OUTFIELDER AL KALINE SLIDES HEADFIRST INTO THIRD BASE SAFELY RAISING SOME DUST AS KANSAS CITY ATHLETICS' THIRD BASEMAN ANDEY CAREY STRETCHES FOR LATE THROW IN THE SEVENTH INNINGS OF THE OPENING GAME OF DOUBLEHEADER AT DETROIT. KALINE MOVED OVER FROM SECOND ON A BUNT BY NORM CASH TO A'S PITCHER JIM ARCHER, WHO MADE THE TOSS. UMPIRE IS AL SMITH. KALINE SCORED LATER IN THE INNINGS ON A SACRIFICE FLY. GOT IT?

If it's got to be Boston Rovers could we get Blackburn Redsox next?

THOUGHTS ON BASEBALL,
BY ERNEST ADKINS



Pre-disposed not to enjoy it and overcoming a sense of disloyalty to our native games, I reluctantly agreed to have a quick look at a baseball game being played in a nearby park.

A figure in vivid pantaloons and voluminous shirt, topped by an enormous peaked cap waited to take strike. He missed the ball, delivered with frightening speed, by a minute and a half. Grievously affronted, he poured out a stream of invective in pure Brooklynese in the general direction of the umpire.

It wasn't what he said that shook me but how he said it.

The tough guy with the bat was an acquaintance of mine, who, to my certain knowledge, had never been further west than Colwyn Bay. At the end of the game — baseball is the sort of game that demands that you stay to the bitter end — I interrogated my friend who confessed to having been a secret baseball player for years.

He explained that the colourful vernacular delivered American-style went with the gear, which is reasonable enough when you consider "owzat?" is used and understood wherever cricket is played.

The English attitude to the game: "we play it in our girls' schools and call it rounders, old chap" is gradually dying with the awareness that this is a game demanding great skill and generating a tension and constant excitement equalled by few other games.

The game itself demands the most intense concentration. The ball thrown, repeat thrown, from a distance of 60ft. 6in. can be delivered by the pitcher with any action he likes, usually at a speed around 80 m.p.h. (bleating cricketers apropos Charlie Griffiths please note).

The fielding, particularly the throwing, is far superior to anything seen on a cricket field. The Brooklyn Dodgers, New York

Yankees, Boston Redsox, show how the game is highlighted by colourful names and vivid personalities. The most famous of these, Babe Ruth, must rate as one of the two best-known international sportsmen of this century — Sir Stanley Matthews being the other.

The Babe's exploits made headlines throughout the world. When he died, his funeral was the biggest New York had ever seen. The pride of the New York Yankees, Lou Gehrig, was another player revered internationally as a superb athlete.

In this country, the game is rapidly increasing in popularity but has never been projected as a professional sport. A friendly word of warning to M.C.C. — soccer is being exported to the U.S., at one time an unthinkable proposition. If baseball were to be promoted here on a similar basis it could prove a great success.

Housing Trusts plan to work together now

Voluntary housing associations, which now launch separate appeals for funds to house the homeless, are getting together to make a combined assault on the nation's conscience.

The groups coming together — Christian Action Housing, the Notting Hill Trust, and Catholic Housing Aid among them — will keep full freedom of action to tackle their own sectors of the housing front, but their united voice should help them in their fight to get the Treasury to relent and make cheap loans,

promised for new housing, available for house conversions as well.

In twilight areas such as Notting Hill, Paddington, and Islington in London, the conversion of tall, run-down Victorian houses offers the quickest way to provide homes for families without any hope of a council dwelling and unable to buy their own.

A spokesman of the Ministry of Housing could give no idea when the cheap loan scheme promised in March — for owner-occupiers and housing associations building new houses or flats — would come into effect.

The Trust's annual report notes that it has now helped to bring to birth 28 local housing associations since its own foundation just two years ago. Dwellings actually built or in prospect so far number 100.

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