

W. J. ILOTT

NEWSAGENT — STATIONERY

Greeting Cards . Children's Books

CONFECTIONER AND TOBACCONIST

HIGH STREET, SHRIVENHAM

TEL.: 283

The Shrivenham

Fish Bar

CAR HIRE SERVICE

38 High Street, Shrivenham

TELEPHONE: Shrivenham 388

G. BENFORD & SONS LTD.

BAKERS

FAMILY GROCERS

Orders Delivered Daily

HIGH STREET, SHRIVENHAM

TEL.: 213

R. C. CUMMINS

M.P.S., D.B.A.

PHARMACEUTICAL CHEMIST

HIGH STREET, SHRIVENHAM

TEL.: 439

H. J. HARDING

WATCHFIELD POST OFFICE

PRINKNASH ABBEY POTTERY

CONFECTIONERY

TOBACCO

STATIONERY

HIGH STREET, WATCHFIELD

"THE THATCHED SHOP"

(formerly DIKE'S STORES)

MR AND MRS STEVENS

HARDWARE — TOBACCONIST
GROCER

PERSONAL SERVICE

ORDERS DELIVERED

HIGH STREET, SHRIVENHAM

TEL.: 594

WHITE HORSE DAIRY

(G. CAMERON AND SONS)

DAIRYMEN

MILK . CREAM
EGGS . BUTTER

ETC.

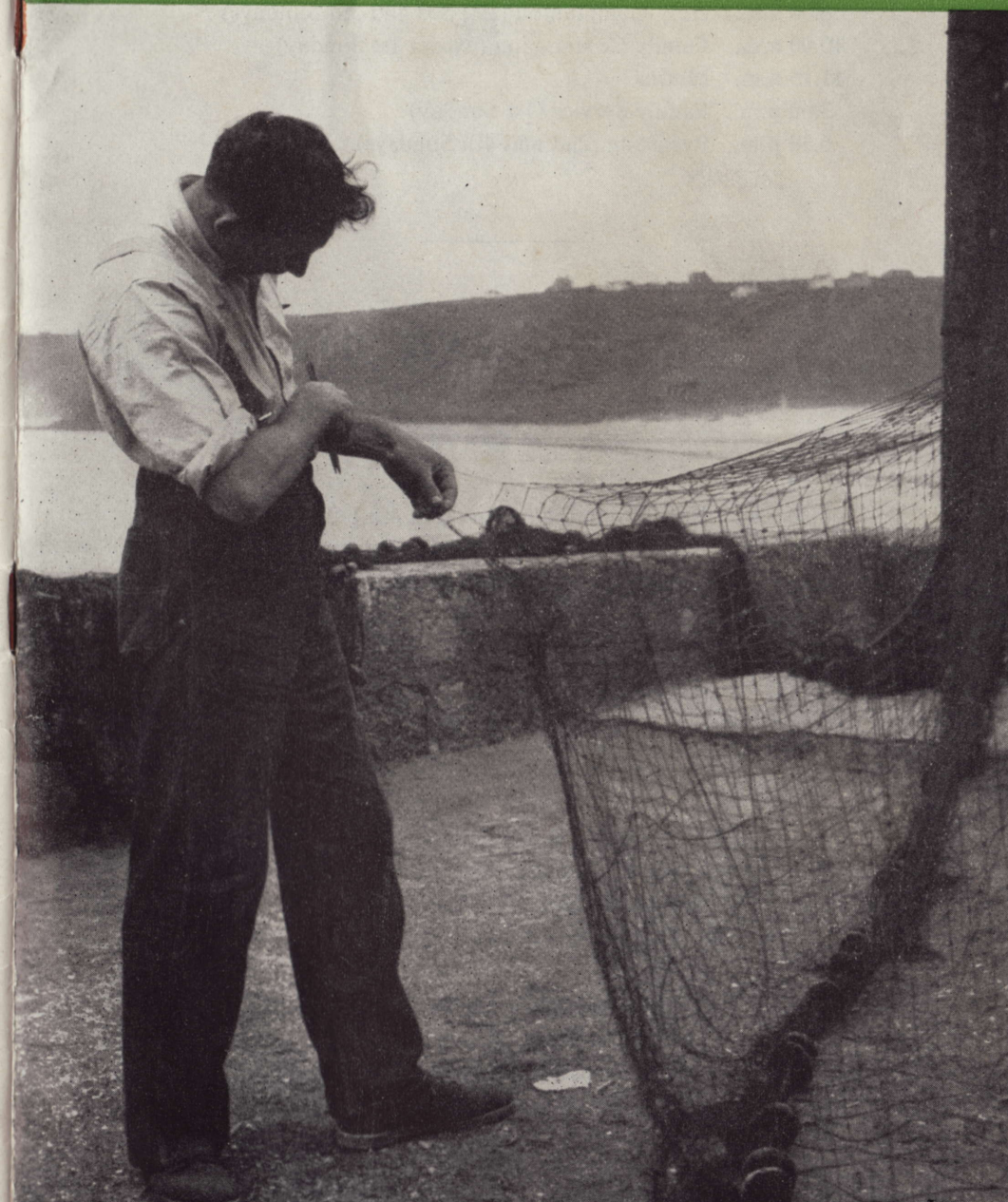
SOUTHAMPTON STREET, FARINGDON (TEL.: 2168)

and

YEW TREE HOUSE, SHRIVENHAM (TEL.: 494)

Parish News

MAY



S. ANDREW'S SHRIVENHAM

SUNDAY SERVICES

8.00 a.m. Holy Communion (1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays)
10.00 a.m. Family Communion (except 1st Sunday)
11.15 a.m. Matins
3.00 p.m. Family Service (1st Sunday)
6.30 p.m. Evensong (2nd and 4th Sundays)

S. THOMAS, WATCHFIELD.

SUNDAY SERVICES

8.30 a.m. Holy Communion (2nd and 4th Sundays)
9.30 a.m. Family Communion (1st Sunday only)
6.30 p.m. Evensong (1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays)

VICAR AND RURAL DEAN

The Reverend R. F. W. DURRANT, M.A.
The Vicarage. Tel.: 243

Churchwardens

Miss C. S. Lock, The Chestnuts.
Mr. R. Friend, The School House.
Mr. W. C. Curtis, Sumach Cottage, Watchfield.

Hon. Secretary of the P.C.C.

Mrs. Isgar, Acorn Way.

Hon. Treasurer of Parochial Funds

Mr. J. Brunnen, 1 Fairthorne Way.

VOL. IV No. 5

MAY 1965

Price 6d

Calendar

1 S	S.S. PHILIP AND JAMES	
2 S	EASTER II	P.C. 9.30 a.m.(w) Evensong 6.30(w)
3 M		
4 Tu	S. MONICA	W.I. 7.30 (w)
5 W		M.U. 3 p.m. B.L. 7.30 p.m.
6 Th	S. JOHN A.P.L.	
7 F		
8 S		
9 S	EASTER III	Evensong 6.30 p.m. (s)
10 M		
11 Tu		
12 W		Y.W. 2.15 p.m. (w)
13 Th		
14 F		
15 S		
16 S	EASTER IV	Evensong 6.30 p.m. (w)
17 M		
18 Tu		
19 W	S. DUNSTAN	
20 Th		W.I. 7.30 p.m. (s) A.G.M.
21 F		
22 S		
23 S	ROGATION SUNDAY	Evensong 6.30 p.m. (s)
24 M	ROGATION DAY	
25 Tu	S. ALDHELM	Y.W. 7.30 p.m. (s)
26 W	ROGATION DAY	
27 Th	ASCENSION DAY	H.C. 7.15 a.m.
28 F		
29 S		
30 S	Sunday after ASCENSION	Evensong 6.30 p.m. (w)
31 M		

(s) Shrivenham

(w) Watchfield.

* * * * *

The A.G.M.

Our A.G.M. was held on Friday March 19th in the School Dining Hall. At the Vestry Meeting held first, the Vicar thanked the Churchwardens for all they had done during the past year and said how glad he was that Miss Lock had agreed to continue as Vicar's Warden at Shrivenham and Mr. Curtis as Warden at Watchfield. Mr. Friend was then unanimously elected as People's Warden.

At the A.G.M. itself the following were elected to serve on the Church Council for the coming year: Messrs. T. Cox, J. Brunnen, E. Russell, R. Guyon, R. Irish, G. Otter, J. Tasker, W. Cretchley, L. Harvey, W. Wintle, A. Stephenson, Mesdames Benfield, Tubb, Lowe, Burston, Snow, Brunnen, Watkins, Titcombe, Harvey, Mackenzie, Miss Dike and Miss Richens. Members to the R.D. Conference elected were Mrs. Durrant, Mr. Isger Mrs. Knapp and Miss Green, who will be ex-officio members of the Council.

The accounts for 1964 were presented by Mr. Brunnen, showing that our balances were well up on last year and that the Envelope Scheme had again made a great contribution to our finances, bringing in over £637 in a full year. Mr. Brunnen asked that more people should consider entering the Covenant Scheme which brought so much more into the funds without additional cost to the donor. The Accounts were adopted and the Vicar thanked Mr. Brunnen for all the hours of work that he had given.

It was reported that various schemes were being prepared for the Church. Such as the Restoration of the Tower, new lighting in the Chancel and Sanctuary, and new shades for the lighting in the Nave. Finally the Vicar said how grateful he and Mrs. Durrant were for all the kindness shown to them, and very grateful to all who did so much to keep things going and who so willingly helped in the work of both Churches.

YEARS MIND

May 2nd Frederick John Prime
16th Elsie Lily George
22nd Adelaide Victoria Maud Emery
28th Edith Ellenor Bennett

Baptisms

April 13th Frederic Joseph Wigmore
Jodi Ann Wigmore

Marriages

March 20th Alexander Wallace Raeside and Valerie June Mephram
Stuart Allistair Tom Bates and Gillian Joyce Kierman
April 3rd Dennis Arthur Hitchcock and Barbara Mary King.

Notes and News

It was good to have so many at the Mothering Sunday service in March. The weather was kind and we even managed a Procession round the outside of the Church! The children brought their bunches of flowers and these were blessed before being taken to Mothers.

Our "Coffee for Men" evenings have been great fun. I am personally very grateful to all who came. We hope to have them again more or less regularly through next winter and we will let you know the date of the first one. It does give us the opportunity of meeting each other informally and I would be grateful if you would yourselves give an invitation to anyone whom you think might like to come. This, however, is for September.

ASCENSION DAY Our great festival falls this year on May 27th. This is one of the major festivals of the Christian year. It always falls on a weekday of course so it is not easy for us to keep as well as we might, but we should not let it pass unheeded. For those of you who can, there will be Holy Communion at 7.15 a.m. and there will be breakfast in the Vicarage afterwards for those who have to catch a bus.

We have had several recruits for bell-ringing! They are very good! - You will be hearing them very shortly.

Our love and sympathy to all the children who have had measles - quite a number, we hear - and to Andrew Mitchell who has been in bed for several weeks and on a diet. Mrs. Cuss has been to hospital for an operation from which we wish her a speedy recovery. Mr. Whittington is home again after a long spell in hospital and to him too we send our best wishes. Our love and sympathy too goes to those who

have lost relations or loved ones recently.

* * * * *

Flowers for the Church. We are always grateful for flowers for the Church during the year. We have a rota of those who kindly arrange the flowers on the Altar each week. Please let us know if you would like to do this one Sunday.

* * * * *

MOTHERS' UNION

The next meeting of our Branch will be held on Wednesday May 5th in the Vicarage when Mrs. King, who is the Editor of the Diocesan inset for "Home and Family", is coming to speak to us. Each Diocese has its own inset in the magazine giving news of the Diocese as well as news from Headquarters. During Lent members have been joining in the Lent services on Wednesdays when it has been good to see so many of you present. At the time of the monthly meeting we also went over to the Vicarage for tea. At our last Branch meeting, before the service, Mrs. Mathers was admitted to membership of the Branch to which we welcome her.

SHRIVENHAM YOUNG WIVES

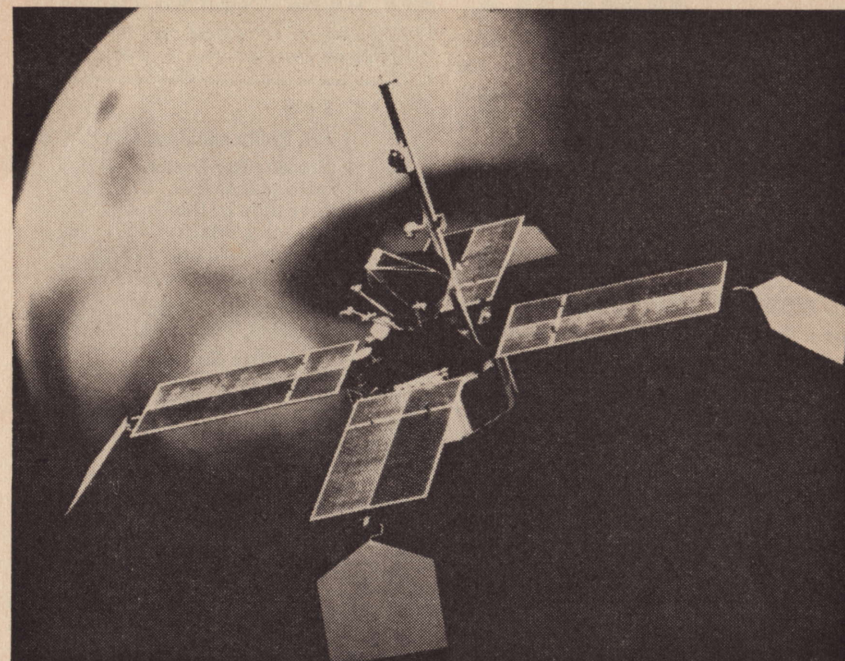
At the end of March we met in the Vicarage at 7.30 p.m. on the 30th when the Vicar spoke on "Visual Aids" and showed the use of models, diagrams and the flannel Board, ending with the showing of 2 Filmstrips. We meet next on Tuesday May 25th when the Headmistress of Eaton Hastings School is coming to talk to us on the Archaeology of the district. During Lent we studied the book written by Canon A.J. Watts, called "Teach your children about God". We had several very interesting discussions and learnt, I think, that there had to be knowledge in ourselves before we could teach anyone, let alone children.

SHRIVENHAM W.I.

The A.G.M. is on May 20th at 7.30 p.m. when the Officers and Committee are elected for the ensuing year. The Jumble Sale on March 29th made about £17. The Committee wish to thank all who supported this effort.

WATCHFIELD YOUNG WIVES

We met last month on April 8th for a short service in Church when the Vicar gave a talk on "Praying with the Church", and afterwards, we went over to tea at the Grange. Our next meeting will be on Wednesday May 12th when we have planned a visit to the Fire Station leaving at



Artist's conception of a Mariner spacecraft passing a planet

American Embassy

ABOVE THE BRIGHT BLUE SKY

'WHILE they beheld, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight.' This kind of language is getting some people worried, these days. How can we any longer talk about going 'up' to heaven, or 'down' to earth, in days when space exploration has made such terminology outdated? Where is heaven, in relation to those mysterious and apparently illimitable distances explored by such pieces of apparatus as those which have photographed the surface of the moon, or the Russian and American space vehicles which are even now on a journey to Mars? Even when the first sputnik orbited the earth, in the days of Mr. Khrushchev, he was reported as having jocularly

commented that the astronaut found no signs of heaven.

Symbolic Language

But such questions are really rather silly. When, for instance, St. Luke was compiling, in Acts, some account of what happened at the Ascension he was necessarily using language which is inescapable whenever any attempt has to be made to describe the indescribable. We do the same ourselves when we speak of a man having a 'high' purpose, or of someone 'sinking to the depths' of despair, or even of someone else having a 'broad' mind. In none of these cases do we really mean height, or depth, or breadth in physical terms. We are only seeking

to express an idea, and we are using the language of images to do so. Cardinal Newman was doing the same thing when he wrote 'Praise to the Holiest in the height, and in the depth be praise.' So was Charles Wesley when he wrote: 'Hail the day that sees him rise, to his Throne above the skies.'

It is perfectly true that St. Luke, and many others for many centuries after him, until science showed the facts to be otherwise, believing that they lived on a flat earth with the heavens above, might have found it easier than we do to think of the Ascension in literal terms. The point is that we were never meant to think of it in literal terms. Indeed, to do so is to miss the whole essence of the mystery and beauty of that happening when, although Jesus passed from the sight of his friends, yet 'they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and were continually in the Temple, praising and blessing God.'

SIGNET

LORD OF LIFE

*Lord God, Creator of this world so fair,
Give us true sight to see you everywhere.
Not only in the swallows' swooping flight,
Not only in the Spring-time woods bedight
With ferns and bluebells; and in Summer night
With air stock-scented, and the moon's soft light
That floods with glistening glow the dew-kissed lawn,
To greet the first rose-tinted rays of dawn.*

*Lord Jesus, Saviour of each human soul,
Give us your sight to see life as a whole.
As you saw men in fishing boat and mart,
In customs' booth and legions' ranks, as part
Of God's creative plan, dear to his heart.
And as through bread and wine, you now impart
Yourself, so making common things divine,
May we see you in factory, shop, and mine.*

LEONARD LAMBERT

THE SIGN

*Not ashamed to confess the faith
of Christ crucified*

MAY 1965

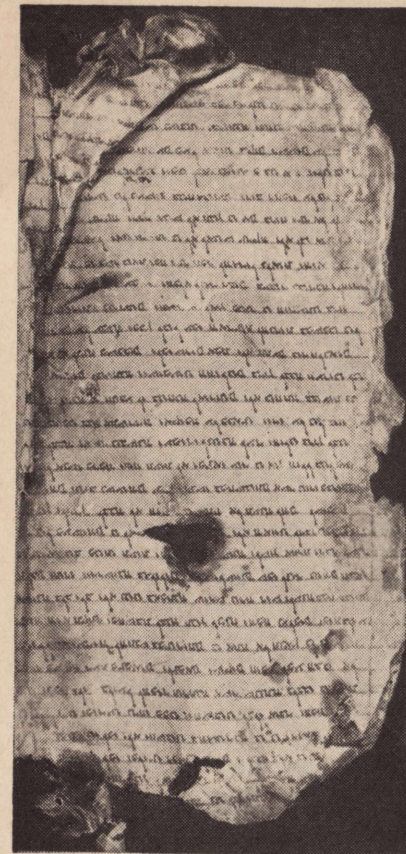
No. 725

- S. 1 SS. Philip and James, AA.MM.
S. 2 Second after Easter.
Athanasius, B.D., 373.
M. 3 Invention of the Cross.
Tu. 4 Monnica, Matron, 387.
Th. 6 St. John Ev., ante P. Lat.
S. 9 Third after Easter.
S. 16 Fourth after Easter.
W. 19 Dunstan, Abp., 988.
S. 23 Fifth after Easter.
(Rogation Sunday.)
Tu. 25 Aldhelm, B., 709.
W. 26 Augustine of Canterbury, Abp.,
605.
Th. 27 Ascension Day.
S. 30 Sunday after Ascension.

THE SIGN PILGRIMAGE

Have you booked your Pilgrimage to
the Holy Land with THE SIGN yet?

See coupon on page 79.



Part of the Dead Sea Scrolls

Camera Press

READING THE BIBLE

It is important in the first place to realize what the Bible is. It is a library, bound within one cover. And the many volumes of this library have been written by different hands at different times, in different places, and for different purposes. The Bible contains poetry, history, legend, philosophy, story-telling. Many centuries separate the date of composition of the oldest and the most recent parts of it. Yet it has an underlying unity,

LIVING YOUR FAITH

Canon William Purcell

since it seeks throughout to justify the ways of God to man.

Need for a Guide

It is not therefore a simple book, so that some sort of guide—above all the right kind of guide—to its complexities is necessary. There is nothing new in this need. There is a man mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles who wanted to understand the Scriptures and found it rather difficult. 'He had been to Jerusalem on a pilgrimage and was now on his way home, sitting in his carriage reading aloud. The Spirit said to Philip, "Go and join the carriage." When Philip ran up he heard him reading the Prophet Isaiah and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?" He said, "How can I understand unless someone will give me the clue?" So he asked Philip to get in and sit beside him. And Philip told him the good news of Jesus.'

The inquirer would not have got very far if Philip had been concerned solely to point out to him the literary or historical aspects of the Scriptures. Instead, he preached unto him Jesus. So it is part of the wise study of the Bible, to which all Christians are called, not only to choose a guide, but to choose one who is involved in the beliefs implied by and set forth in the Scriptures. The reason for this is that the Bible is not only the Bible but the

Holy Bible, and in that, as in other ways, is unique.

The Word of God

So the reading of the Bible is not required of us in order that we may enjoy its beauties, but that we may gather from it something of the Word of God. Those who laboured so much to translate the Bible into English for us have not done so in order that its literary merits may be noted but that its eternal message may be understood.

So let us ask ourselves a few leading questions. What is the Old Testament? What is the New Testament? Why should we read both—and how should we read the Bible anyway? The Old Testament is a revelation by God of himself to the Jews, expressed in their history, folklore, poetry and prophecy. Indeed, the whole of it may in a sense be called a prophecy looking forward to the coming of the Kingdom of God.

Yet the Old Testament cannot be regarded as a finished book with a beginning, middle, and end, so much as a number of documents dating back for their original sources at times a very long way indeed. What renders the Bible's treatment of its material unique is the fact that the whole of its thought is God-centred. Indeed, it is what we might call the Bible's philosophy of history which makes the book what it is, since, to the Bible, history is not so much a record of events as an unfolding, through the events, of God's purposes for man.

It is also important to remember that the Old Testament is a very much edited book, the material of which has passed through many hands, been copied, recopied, added to, always from the work of scribes and copyists working from material the original documents of which have long been lost. It therefore follows that we

should not be surprised or disturbed by the discrepancies, repetitions, and lack of chronological order which some have found puzzling.

The grouping of the books of the Old Testament has been the result of a long historical process dominated by the traditional division of the Hebrew Bible into three categories—Law, Prophets, and varied writings not admissible under these heads. Thus the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible, represent the Law. The Prophetic writings include not only such clear examples, in the biblical sense, as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Amos, Hosea and so forth, but also the historical books of Judges, Joshua, Samuel, Kings. To the Jews all this, and much more, represented the speaking voice of God; it embodied and expressed the unique position of their race in history. From this directly derives the place given to the Scriptures in the worship of the synagogue: the same Scriptures as our Lord himself must so often have heard in his own village synagogue in the days of his earthly ministry.

Interdependent

Admittedly, it all sounds, and at first looks, very complicated. But the way into the Bible is by the reading of it, just as the way into prayer is by praying, and the way into worship is by worshipping. But why should we read the Old Testament at all? There are two possible answers to this question. Firstly, the Old Testament is of immense and unique spiritual value by itself. Secondly, it is absolutely necessary to an understanding of the New Testament, because the new emerges from the old, and the two are deeply interdependent. So we shall be looking at the New Testament next month, and also to the questions of how and with what guides to read our Bibles.

LETTERS

The Editor welcomes correspondence, but reserves the right to use extracts as space allows. A guinea Book Token will be sent to the writer of each letter published.

Children at Communion

Sir—THE SIGN recently asked for letters on the subject of children receiving Holy Communion at eight or ten, confirmation being postponed for a further ten years or more.

I think it is highly desirable that children of eight or nine should be able to receive Holy Communion after instruction. A child who has attended the Parish Communion from his earliest years will be ready for this step, and can be taught to look forward to it. Moreover, I am told that this age is the golden age for children. They have a very real love of our Lord, accept with faith what they are taught, are sensible, and are not yet caught up in the upheavals of adolescence.

In confirmation a person in his late teens has a unique opportunity to confirm his baptismal vows, and offer himself and his life work to God.

Halifax

P. A. OLDFIELD

Sir—I am against the Coventry plan so far as it affects confirmation. Confirmation is, historically viewed, part of Christian initiation, and as many would say, a necessary part, where it may be had. But at present the Church of England is in a state of confusion on this subject.

If children are capable of receiving Communion at the age of eight, they are capable of receiving confirmation at that age. If children are to be allowed Communion at eight years

old, they should have been confirmed first. If confirmation is deferred, it will not seem to be part of their initiation, or if it is so regarded, Communion will no longer appear as the great climax, for which baptism and confirmation prepare the way.

That some sort of special service or rite is needed at the end of adolescence, or thereabouts, I would not dispute. Only don't call it confirmation. Don't call it reception into full membership, because, if a person has been admitted to Communion, what else is there to admit him to?

Hove

J. D. C. FISHER

Knowing our Faith

Sir—Although the Christian Faith has never been without its critics, there are some indications that these are gathering strength. It seems to me that the ranks of atheists, agnostics, secularists, humanists and some particular individuals in the public eye have at least one good thing in common—they are quite clear about their position *vis-à-vis* Christianity and they present some cogent, nay persuasive, arguments in support.

By contrast, we who call ourselves Christians often appear uncertain of the very facts of our faith.

I should like to see more study and discussion groups in our parishes, so that we lay people can brush up our ideas about, for example, our Lord's teachings on particular issues (divorce, money, hell, etc.); birth control; the ecumenical movement; 'Honest to God'; the appointment of bishops; compulsory religious worship in schools—and so on.

Norwich

G. H. W. PEACH

Making them Welcome

Sir—We have a very great number of 'coloured' people in the country, but one hardly finds them in our churches. I have lived and worked in Jamaica, and I noticed they were great church-goers. Cannot something be done to get them to come to our services and so enable the English to have a better understanding of these brave people?

Croydon

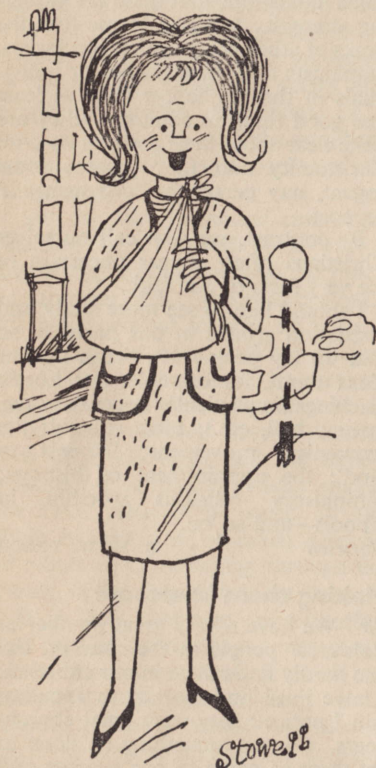
GLADYS A. JARVIS

Henrietta

... WITH HER ARM IN A SLING

HENRIETTA came towards me with her arm in a sling and her tongue in her cheek.

'It might have been worse,' I said. 'You're too right,' she chuckled, 'it could've been the other way round.' 'How'd it happen?'



"It might have been worse," I said.
"You're too right," she chuckled.

'Got my hand trapped in the wringer, and along comes Bert like a knight errant and rescues me. Didn't think he had it in him. Only the night before he'd been tucking into me something chronic—moaning at what he called "all this blah about salvation." Made him sick, he said. "You make me sick, Bert Hardcastle," I says. "You just don't know what you're on about. If you got stuck in a machine down at work you wouldn't think it a lot of blah if someone hopped along and tiddled you out. You'd thank your lucky stars he had."'

'Not half.'
'Then when this happened last night I felt a proper Charlie. "Done this on purpose." I could've sloshed him.' 'I'll bet you could.'
'But I didn't let him get away with it.'
'No?'

In Need of Help

'It's dead easy seeing you need help when you've got your hand fast in a wringer, but it's not so obvious you're trapped by sin, and being really damaged by it. Jesus comes to rescue us from sin, just like you've rescued me from the wringer, I told him. You and he've got something in common.'

'Did he see what you meant?'
'I doubt it. I suppose being rescued is bound to be a lot of hopscotch until you realize you're in a mess and know you need help.'

'I suppose it is,' I said.

Your Questions Answered

Bishops

What is the meaning of the word 'Episcopacy'? I would be glad to have a definition in ordinary language.

Episcopacy is the system of Church Government by Bishops. The English word 'Bishop' is, in fact, derived directly from the Greek 'Episcopos,' which means overseer. In the New Testament the word is used in the sense of the spiritual overseers, or chief pastors, of a district. It is found in Acts 20. 28 where St. Paul describes the Elders of the Church at Ephesus as 'Overseers'; in Philipians 1. 1; 1 Timothy 3. 1 and 2; Titus 1. 7; and in 1 St. Peter 2. 25 where it is applied to Christ himself.

4381

Rural Deans

Could you tell me how rural deans are appointed and what their duties are?

Rural deans are appointed by the bishop, usually from among the benefited clergy in the diocese. The post of rural dean, an ancient one, was revived in 1836 when the bishops found that it was impossible to keep closely in touch with all the parishes in their dioceses. The rural dean is regarded as the senior incumbent in a group of parishes. He calls the clergy together for regular 'Chapter' meetings, and the bishop calls all his rural deans together from time to time to discuss pastoral matters.

4382

The Colour Bar

I am told that the Bible says it is wrong for white and coloured people to inter-marry. Is this so?

There are very few references to colour in the Bible at all, and certainly nowhere is it stated that a white man should not marry a black woman or vice versa. Ezra and Nehemiah taught that a Jew should not marry a Gentile.

The Book of Ruth, which dates from about the same period, sets out a contrary view. But perhaps the most significant passage is that from St. Paul: 'There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female: for you all are in Christ Jesus' (Gal. 3. 28). In other words, the Christian faith does not recognize divisions of any kind.

4383

How many Sacraments?

I am puzzled to learn from the 39 Articles that there are only two Sacraments ordained by Christ and that the other five commonly called Sacraments are not to be counted for Sacraments of the Gospel. I find this most confusing as I attend a church where all seven Sacraments are practised.

Differences concerning the number of the Sacraments arise primarily from the definition of the word which is adopted. St. Augustine defined it as 'the visible form of invisible grace,' and in the early Middle Ages as many as thirty Sacraments were listed under this head, including the Creed and the Lord's Prayer. The traditional seven were first enumerated by Peter Lombard about 1150. The Catechism in the Prayer Book, in accordance with Reformation teaching, added the words 'ordained by Christ himself' to the definition, and this limits the number to two. Thus the number of Sacraments we recognize depends entirely on the manner in which we define the term. All would agree that the two Sacraments of the Gospel, Baptism and Holy Communion, are more important than the others.

4384

The Bread and Wine

Why does the Church of Rome communicate in one kind only, while the Anglican Church does so in both bread and wine?

The custom of receiving the Holy Communion in one kind only appears to date from the persecutions of the Church in the third and fourth centuries, when the consecrated bread was kept for distribution to those who could not attend the service. The normal custom of receiving both bread and wine was, however, general until about the twelfth century, by which time the majority of the laity communicated at Easter only, and there seem to have been few protests when the Synod of Lambeth in 1281 restricted the wine to the celebrant, in case it might be spilt.

The Church of England restored Communion in both kinds when the first English Prayer Book was issued in 1549. While there is at the moment no sign of the restoration of the practice in the Roman Church, we may be encouraged by the fact that this Church adopted English for much of the Mass last Advent, and we have no doubt that in a united Church Communion would be in both kinds. 4385

Heaven and Hell

How is it that in the Creed we say 'He descended into hell' and yet Jesus said to the dying thief 'To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise'?

The answer to your paradox is that the word 'Hell' in the Creed and the word 'Paradise' in St. Luke 23. 43 mean exactly the same thing; namely, the abode of the departed. When the Creed was first translated into English, 'Hell' meant simply a hiding place. It was only during the Middle Ages that it became associated particularly with ideas of fire and torment prepared for the wicked. 4386

All questions on the faith and practice of the Church of England sent to the editor of Question Page, 28 Margaret Street, London, W.1, will be answered personally by him if accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope.

A Book Token, value 5s., will be sent to the writer of each question published.

PERSONALITY COLUMN



Tom Hustler

Monica Furlong

ONE of the most cheering developments of recent years has been the emergence of a new kind of Christian writer; critical, hard-hitting, not a bit sentimentally pious, and well able to hold her own with critics. Such a one is Monica Furlong, whose articles in the *Daily Mail* have a wide and appreciative following. Her work has also appeared in *Punch*, the *Spectator*, and many other journals.

Married, with two young children, she is well able to look upon the Church with a critical yet understanding eye. There is plenty of criticism in her most recent book, but it is still called *With Love to the Church*; and the American magazine *Time*, in an article on new trends in Christian thinking, has quoted her as saying: 'I cannot imagine a more enjoyable time to be a Christian. For while the holocaust is sweeping away much that is beautiful and all that is safe and comfortable and unquestioned, it is relieving us of mounds of Christian bric-à-brac, and the liberation is unspeakable.'

The Epistles for May

EASTER 2

1 Pet. 2. 19-25

THIS is a passage addressed to slaves. Slavery of the traditional kind is no longer met with. Nevertheless, everyone is still to some extent 'enslaved'—to the children perhaps, or to the job.

St. Peter's message is one that is not popular to-day. It is that our very slavery is at the same time our opportunity—our opportunity to follow in the steps of Christ. Submission, whether to lawful authority or to conditions of work or to the claims of the family, is not now usually classed among the virtues. But it was through the patience and submission of Jesus—submission, not servility—that the world was redeemed.

'When thou shalt be old,' said Jesus to Peter, 'thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not.'

EASTER 3

1 Pet. 2. 11-17

The four imperatives at the end of this Epistle are a summary guide to the Christian in his relationships with others.

Every human being is to be honoured. Such is the due of one created in the image of God. 'Man is not a thing—not something to be used merely as a means: he must always in all his actions be regarded as an end in himself' (Kant).

Then come some specific categories. *Fellow Christians*, who stand to us in so close a relationship that they are best called brothers, are to be loved. They are to be treated as Christ treated his own. *God* is to be feared.

We are not to be frightened of God, only to be reverent. That is the beginning of wisdom. *The secular power*, at least when seen to be an instrument of order and justice, is again to be honoured.

EASTER 4

Jas. 1. 17-21

There is a growing tendency to refuse to accept moral responsibility. I did what I did, we think to ourselves, because of psychological or sociological conditioning.

It is no new discovery that our actions are influenced (if not determined) by factors of heredity and environment. The iniquity of the fathers is visited upon the children. But we must not conclude from this that there is no personal accountability for our moral decisions.

For the universe is not morally neutral. At the heart there is God, generous, just, and consistent in all his ways. He is 'the Father of the lights of heaven. With him there is no variation, no play of passing shadows' (N.E.B.). And only those who open their hearts to him can live.

EASTER 5

Jas. 1. 22-27

In this passage James is echoing the characteristic protest of the great Jewish prophets, that a ceremonial religion is worthless if it does not issue in just dealing.

It is, of course, questionable whether Christianity is aptly described as a 'religion' at all. But at least St. James is emphatic that its value must be judged by moral, and not ceremonial,

Continued on page 77

5. THE LAITY

NEW Testament writers, like modern scientists, sometimes borrowed words in common use and gave them special meanings. One such word is laity which comes from the Greek word 'laos.' In the New Testament the word is used to define those people of God who are not in Holy Orders but who are nevertheless special people because they have been called out by God through Holy Baptism for his service. To be a layman is to be one of the people of God with all the rights and grave responsibilities that membership of an order of ministry in the Church involves.

The whole Church is Christ on earth; it is made up of the people of God, and the most numerous among these are the laity. Because in the services of the Church those who are in Holy Orders have specialized duties, the idea has grown up in the course of centuries that to be a layman is to be somewhat of a mere follower and on-looker. From this has developed the further idea that lay service for the Church should primarily be connected with church finance, buildings and serving on committees.

HOW THE CHURCH WORKS

The Venerable Guy Mayfield

We have lost sight of the fact that the functions of clergy and of laity for God are interlocked. They are in partnership. Neither can function in church without the other. A priest cannot celebrate Holy Communion unless there is a congregation. There can be no Holy Communion without a priest. At morning and evening prayer the priest speaks for the people of God in church. Whenever on occasion one voice is heard, be it

priest or layman, he speaks not for himself but for the whole church assembled.

But it is outside church where the proper differences between the duties of clergy and laity are least understood and need most to be seen. The clergy by their training and work have neither the knowledge nor the opportunities for great Christian witness. The primary task for which the clergy are called and especially equipped is to teach and train the laity to go out as Christian witnesses to the nation. They are to take the experience of God which they receive by grace through the Sacraments, through worship, and through the study of the word of God and, not least, through prayer to the people they meet outside. The laity are called by God who sends them to their homes and families, to their colleagues at work and in recreation. When they leave church, they are to take Christ with them when they go.

The Church tries to bring Christ to the nation in two ways; through the individual witness of the laity within their own circles; and through the influence of the laity as members of official bodies and organizations of all

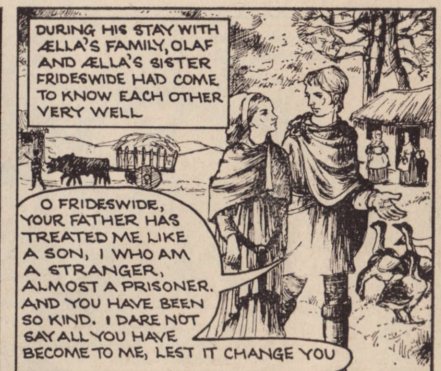
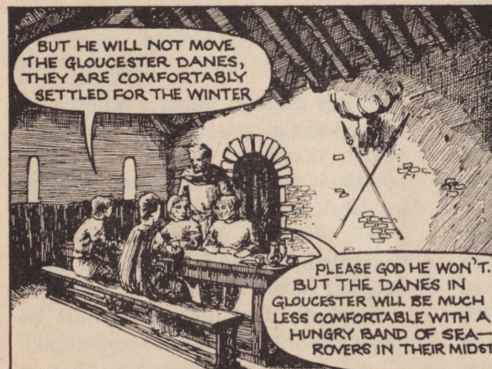
kinds. Among these are obviously parliament, but more locally county councils, borough and rural district councils and the multitude of civic and state organizations which are associated in one way or another with the common life of the nation within the neighbourhood of a parish.

To all these bodies the layman can make a contribution denied to anyone else. He or she can bring Christ's spirit and understanding to the work whatever it is. More often than not the witness may not be openly religious, but it will be there so long as the layman is ready and waiting as one of the people of God to be used as God pleases.

Perhaps misunderstanding as to the duties of clergy and laity arises because the difference in the religious duties which both have is not appreciated. The job of the clergy is religion. They will rightly lay an emphasis on prayer and spiritual devotion which to some laity may seem excessive. To some people clergymen seem to spend too long in prayer when they might be 'doing something really useful.' But the emphasis is never excessive and few clergy have enough time for

Continued on page 79

The Dragon of Wessex: a story of King Alfred



Canon H. G. G. Herklots on

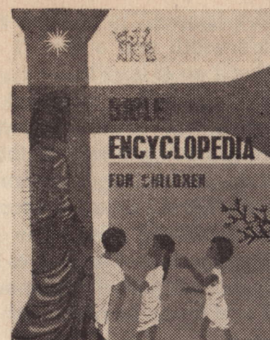
Two useful books on the Bible

No book is more read than the Christian Bible; no book is so widely translated: and yet, it might be added, no book is more often misunderstood. Modern translations can help us to get the meaning clearly; yet they cannot do the whole job for us—for, as Professor Burnaby once put it, 'no translation of the Bible into "modern speech" can modernize the thought of the Biblical writers.' What we need is to understand their vocabulary, to understand it, so far as we can, 'in depth,' as the modern phrase has it.

Scholars have long been aware of this; and one of the greatest achievements of modern biblical study has been the *Theological Word Book of the*

New Testament, issued in Stuttgart under the editorship of Gerhard Kittel. Some of its articles have been translated for English scholars—as separate books!—and the Dean of York's simpler *Theological Word Book of the Bible* has been a stand-by for preachers for fifteen years. Now books are coming which help the layman to gain some of this vocabulary; and *The Greatest Old Testament Words* by Professor Edgar Jones is admirable. There are three main sections: 'Concerning God,' 'Concerning Man' and 'Concerning the Community and the Cult.' In 'Concerning God' we are introduced to 1. The Name of the Lord; 2. The Holiness of God; 3. The Righteousness of God; 4. The Glory of God. This is the beginning of a working vocabulary which all will find useful.

Bible Encyclopedia for Children by Dr. Cecil Northcott deserves a warm welcome. It is more expensive than most books which I recommend—it costs a guinea—but it is worth every penny of it. There are pictures on all the 175 pages—many of them in colour—and Mr. Denis Wrigley, who is responsible for them all, is a most gifted illustrator. The maps and plans



are admirable. 'In writing the text the aim has been to provide the basic information about the Bible, and to guide children towards finding out more about the Bible themselves.' Each entry in the encyclopedia has its biblical reference; and the readers—who will not be children only—are led back to the source from which the information they have read is largely derived.

Two useful books on the Bible:

The Greatest Old Testament Words by Edgar Jones (S.C.M. Press, 6s. 6d.).

Bible Encyclopedia for Children by Cecil Northcott (The Lutterworth Press, 21s.).

EPISTLES FOR MAY from page 73

criteria. The religious man—in the only sort of religion that counts for anything—is compassionate towards others and strict with himself. He responds to human need wherever he encounters it, and while living in the world he does not let it claim his heart.

SUNDAY AFTER ASCENSION

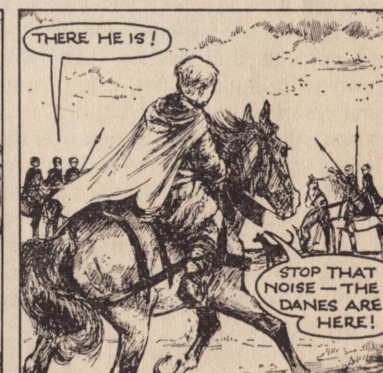
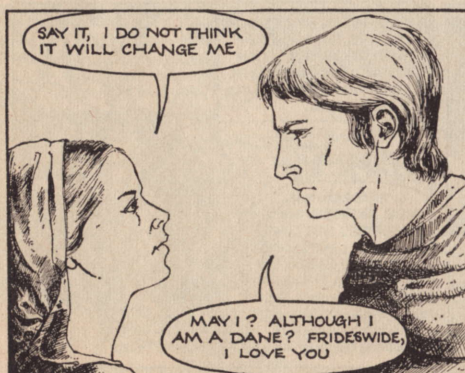
1 Pet. 4. 7-11

The early Christians proved to have been mistaken in thinking that the consummation of all things would be realized in their lifetime. But although they foreshortened the perspective, they were right in their conviction that the here and now has to be understood in the light of the promised End.

If Jesus were coming to-morrow, how prayerful and charitable we should be! How this expectation would dominate all our thinking and action! Should the significance of his coming be any less simply because it is no longer expected immediately?

In any case Jesus will come to-morrow, even though all will not yet be subjected to him. In every event, every meeting, every decision he will come, the Saviour and the Judge.

RONALD GORDON



Dr. W. E. Shewell-Cooper's

GARDENING NOTES

KEEP the hoe going between the rows of broad beans, tending to draw the earth up to the plants. Sow a row of that unusual vegetable salsify, making the drill half an inch deep and sowing three seeds every six inches along the line. Sow some seeds of dwarf annuals in the rock garden if there are any bare spots and pinch back the side growths of fuchsias to encourage bushy plants. Sow some wallflower seeds in rows a foot apart so as to have plenty of plants for putting out in the autumn. Plant out the early flowering chrysanthemums, putting them about one foot square. Fork up the early tulips which have finished flowering and heel them in in a spare corner until the leaves have passed back all the food to the bulbs.

Look out for Onion Mildew

Get up the suckers which are developing around plums and cherries. The aphides are usually appearing on red currants and cherries just now. Spray with liquid Derris, using three-quarters of an ounce of liquid Derris in one gallon of water. Look over the lines of your early onions—mildew may have broken out, and it will pay you to dust them with a fine sulphur dust. If you have not prepared the celery trench, do this immediately. Fork plenty of sedge peat into the bottom of the trench.

The soil should be warm enough to sow ridge cucumber seed out of doors.

Prepare a 'station' by digging a hole a spade's width and a spade's depth and filling it up at least half-way, when pressed down, with well-rotted dung or compost. Cover with surface soil to leave a small mound on the top. The seeds go in the centre of this. Dust with Derris Dust, if necessary, to control Black Fly. Sow New Zealand spinach where it is to crop, eighteen inches apart. This never goes to seed and crops heavily.

Sow Maincrop Peas

Sow a maincrop variety of peas, choosing a selected strain of Aldermen. Be prepared to provide tall sticks. Dig over the strip of ground and bury really well-rotted compost at one bucketful to the yard run. Plant out Brussels sprouts if these are ready. If the soil is dry, put water in the holes at planting time.

Several readers have written in to know what the subscription is to the Good Gardeners' Association. It is only £1 a year.



Patron
H.M. THE QUEEN

The R.N.M.D.S.F.

MINISTERS TO THE SPIRITUAL AND MATERIAL NEEDS OF SHIPWRECKED, SICK, DISABLED, DISTRESSED, RETIRED AND SEA-GOING FISHERMEN, THEIR WIVES, WIDOWS, AND CHILDREN, IRRESPECTIVE OF CREED, COLOUR, OR NATIONALITY

Please help us all you can

**ROYAL NATIONAL MISSION
TO DEEP SEA FISHERMEN**

43 Nottingham Place, London, W.1

HOW THE CHURCH WORKS

from page 75

prayer, for their duty is to present God to his people. The laity rely far more than they realize upon the spirituality of their clergy, and this reliance is right and necessary. The work of the members of the order of laity is to take God outside church and to present him, consciously or unconsciously, in all their activities, to the world.

Pilgrimage to the Holy Land

August 26—September 9

To: The Editor, THE SIGN, 28 Margaret Street, London, W.1.

Please send details of THE SIGN Pilgrimage to the Holy Land for which I enclose stamped addressed envelope.

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

Children Under Attack



Thousands of children spend their early years under constant attack from neglect, unhappiness, mental or physical handicap, deprivation of love and care. Alone these children are defenceless. They need our help and yours. Help us to protect them. Please will you help.

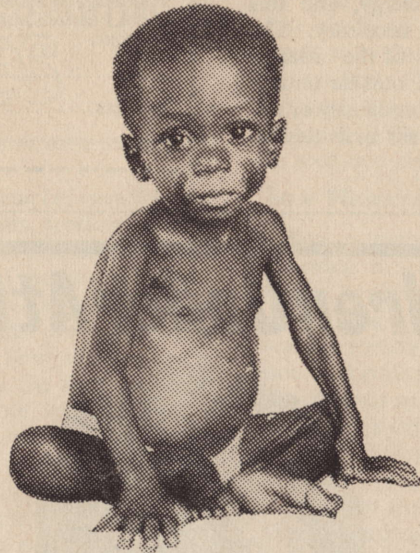
£1 will help to provide for one of our family of over 8000 children.

You can help so simply and surely by sending a donation NOW, as much and as regularly as you can manage, please to:

376 Stepney Causeway, London, E1

DR. BARNARDO'S HOMES

You know the word Malnutrition



he knows what it means

Malnutrition can mean children with swollen legs and bodies, peeling skin, sores and continual suffering.
 Malnutrition can mean slowly going blind.
 Malnutrition can mean nerves wasting and eventual paralysis.
 Malnutrition can mean going mad.
 Malnutrition can mean being so weak that there is no energy left.
 To sow. Or to reap. Or to do anything but slowly die.
 Oxfam is fighting malnutrition. With food and medicines.
 But most important of all with the kind of long-term aid that helps people rid themselves of malnutrition once and for all.
 Someone, somewhere can hope again if you help today.

OXFAM

Room 29
 c/o Barclays Bank Ltd
 Oxford

Advertisements for THE SIGN should be sent to Eversley Publications Ltd.
 33-34 Craven Street, Strand, London, W.C.2

2.15 p.m. by Car and Minibus for Swindon. During Lent we had weekly discussions on "Prayer", learning more clearly that this is not just a question of saying prayers or asking God for help but of something infinitely deeper and wider as part of life itself, that Praise and Worship is more truly prayer than asking only.

British Legion - Women's Section

The monthly meeting was held on Wednesday April 7th at 7.30 p.m. We had quite a lot of business to attend to. The result of the Dance and Draw amounted to the sum of £25 (all expenses paid), this we share with the Men's Branch. We were sorry that more people did not attend the dance as a lot of hard work was put into this function. Names were taken for a group meeting at Abingdon on April 21st and we have also a County Competition to be held on May 18th and we hope that some of the entries in which we hope to take part will be successful, as we need points to help us with the Chairman's Cup Competition which we have entered. We have been in touch with the Bournemouth and Boscombe Women's Section and they will be very pleased to welcome Mrs. Colner into their Branch. We shall all miss her very much as she was a very generous member. We all wish her happiness in her new branch.

TOC H

This has been an interesting month for us. The Berkshire County Police came along one evening and gave us a real insight into their work. The talk was illustrated by some really first class colour slides.

This month we have been promised a talk on Income Tax - by an expert - its just as well to know what we can claim as well as what we cannot claim! - and on the last day of the month we are having a further talk on Social Psychology - its predecessor causing some rousing arguments. We shall always welcome anyone who would like to come along. Our work nights have been fully occupied with splitting kindling wood, for which there is always a ready sale, and the proceeds are put to a variety of uses.

The members of the Wolverton Branch of Toc H are supplying elderly and lonely residents with cards bearing a large red letter H. for help which can be placed in the window in case of emergency. If this scheme would be appreciated in Shrivenham, we shall be very happy to carry out a similar scheme here. The Vicar will be very pleased to receive any comments or suggestions. P.B.

The Iothians

The Club is now in the middle of its Easter break but will meet again for its summer session on May 12th.

Ascension Day falls on May 27th when we shall be holding one of our customary breakfasts after our Communion at 7.15 a.m. Members spent one evening just before Palm Sunday making Palm Crosses - in fact made 220. It was good to know that there were very few left after the end of Palm Sunday.

Watchfield W.I.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday May 4th at 7.30 p.m. in the Village Hall. This will be our business meeting of the year so we hope that you will really make an effort to be present.

British Legion

The Branch Meeting was held in the Hall on April 7th. Major Sydney a new member from Longcot was introduced by the Vice-Chairman, Mr. F. Titcombe and welcomed to the Branch by the Chairman, Mr. W. King. This year the Branch proposes to attend the "Royal Tournament" at Earl's Court on Saturday July 24th. Any members wishing to go should please give their names to Mr. F. Titcombe of Claypits Lane or to Mr. J. Hayward, 42 Stallpits Road. Mr. D. Williams the County Chairman will be giving an address on Group procedure and Legion work at our next Branch Meeting on May 5th when we hope to have members from Faringdon and Lambourne Branches with us. Will all members please pass on this information as we should like as many members as possible present? Please make an extra effort.

What's in a Name?

Sometimes the old names of a district can throw an interesting light on its past. The Vale of the White Horse, one of the oldest parts of Old England, has many ancient names, and of these Shrivenham and the surrounding district have a fair share. For instance, take Shrivenham - this name can be divided into two elements, the second, "ham", being the Old English "HAMM" which means an enclosure often a meadow near a stream. So far the "Shriven" part has defied the efforts of the Scholars, one school of thought saying that it comes from an Old English name "Scrifena", while another says that it may be connected with the Old English verb "Scrifan" (to decree, or to impose a

penance). Perhaps the mystery will be solved when the English Place Name Society publishes its volume on Berkshire in the not too distant future.

The Old English "Wyke" turns up in a lot of ancient farm names in the Vale - Chapelwick, Stainswick, Ruffinswick. This word means "Dairy Farm", and many of the farms so named doubtless existed before William the Conqueror conducted his Domesday Survey in 1086. Hundreds of years later we hear of 3000 cows being kept in the hundreds of Shrivenham and Faringdon, and contributing to the large quantities of cheese which were yearly sent down the Thames from Buscot wharf. However, if you find "Wyke" in a name in the Midlands or North, areas of Danish settlement where Old English was not spoken, it refers to a small stream!

Other interesting facts may come to light from the study of names. A complete collection of a parish's field names may reveal the layout of the old open fields, woodlands and commons when marked on a map, and this in turn can suggest how our forbears set about clearing for themselves a settlement from virgin territory and fields big enough to provide a livelihood (Needless to say, the mere collecting of names does not always give this information, but the writer would dearly like a few more field-names than are in hand at present!) Abbot's Hill tells us where the Abbot of Cirencester had part of his lands; "The Generals" suggests that these were fields hedged round at quite an early date; "Twilley" reveals the presence of willow trees, which at one time provided a light industry in this part of the country.

It is tempting to go on, but a quick glance at some of the farm names must suffice. Stainswick seems to have been named from the de la Stane family, important people in the district in the 14th Century; Chapelwick had its own Chapel, and it is possible that the present farm is the remnant of a small hamlet which had disappeared by the 14th century. One would expect Home Farm to have been the headquarters of the bailiff of the Beckett estate, but in fact Homelease Farm is the older of the two and closer to the demesne lands which supplied the lord's household. Stallpits either supplied the name for, or was named from, one of the mediaeval manors in Shrivenham and this by no means exhausts the list of fascinating names.

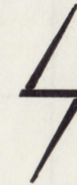
* * * * *

Christian Aid Week

The churches in England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland are holding another Christian Aid Week this year from 10th-15th May. In that period they will campaign vigorously to gather for funds - not to spend on themselves but to spend on others. To spend on training people to become bread-winners for their families; to spend on rehousing refugees and squatters who crouch in Asian shacks; to spend on reclaiming land and planting crops for the hungry; to spend on medical supplies and clinics in areas where people die of curable diseases. It is a slow process, and it is expensive. Without money it could'n't even be started. Money is the ammunition which we are privileged to be able to put in the hands of churches overseas to fight this battle. Christian Aid is the Churches in action - together.

P. G. HENNION & COMPANY

HEATING and ELECTRICAL ENGINEERS



HIGH STREET, SHRIVENHAM

Tel.: Shrivenham 429

IAN GOODMAN & SON

HIGH-CLASS
GENT'S HAIRDRESSING
SALOON

HIGH STREET, SHRIVENHAM

Tel.: 565

THE BARRINGTON ARMS HOTEL

SHRIVENHAM

Tel.: 225

W. DIKE

DECORATOR — CARPENTER
UNDERTAKER

HIGH STREET, SHRIVENHAM

Haircraft

By

DOREEN

38a High Street, Shrivenham

Tel.: 546