

Vicar's Notes

CARRYING ON AFTER THE CORONATION

Though this magazine and inset will have features more appropriate to a pre-Coronation issue, it will not now be possible for it to be published until some time afterwards. There has been a dearth of fresh "copy" this month, which means that I must try to fill up the gaps. To prevent this from happening in future, it would be very helpful if each of our organisations could appoint a "Magazine Liason Officer" who would send in notes of meetings and activities month by month. We should then have a large nucleus of matter giving a broad picture of what is happening or being planned in the parish, from which we could make a selection. We might not always be able to print the matter sent in just as it reached us: we might have to shorten it, adapt it, sometimes expand it, sometimes leave it out altogether. But there would always be something for Miss Stanton and myself to get our teeth into. Could we please have such notes for the July magazine not later than Tuesday, June 16?

As I write, people are more and more falling into the grip of "Coronation Fever." Every day vast crowds flock to see the London decorations, and whenever the Queen appears she is in danger of being mobbed by her enthusiastic subjects. What it will be like on the day itself can only as yet be guessed at, but we hear of many who, resisting the temptations of second-hand T.V., are determined to see as much as they can of the real thing, even if it means an all-night sitting. Then there will be all the local parties and celebrations—our Young Wives' group made a flying-start here with their grand party for the 94 children of their members. More about this will, I hope, appear in next month's magazine. But by that time it will be all over. What then? Will it have made any difference? Certainly it will have made a difference to the Queen. She will be "our anointed Queen"; her own deep dedication will have been indelibly sealed by the consecrating touch of God. She will be a "sacramental person": divi-

nity will hedge her round. The Coronation service will have proclaimed to all the truth that the Queen is a servant of God, and that under His guidance and authority she seeks to fulfil her ministry towards us.

There is no doubt that English people as a whole are glad of this. They are pleased to think that their Queen is a Christian, able to enter fully into the meaning of her Coronation service. Public profession of Christianity often wins applause in England today. I have noticed this on such wireless programmes as "Any Questions," where an uncompromising witness to the Christian Faith causes the audience almost to raise the roof, and yet many of those who thus applaud know little of the Faith themselves, and leave many of its principles unpractised. Surely one of the best ways of carrying on after the Coronation would be a real effort on the part of all of us who are Her subjects to attempt to remedy this: to examine seriously our own position as Christians, or applauders of Christianity, and to do all we can to fill in the gaps of our knowledge and practice. A letter in the correspondence columns of "The Daily Telegraph" well summed up the matter the other day: "I believe the greatest gift that can be given to the Queen on June 2 is that the nation should begin to share with her the Christian life. If God were raised up in council house, in cottage, in mansion, as He has been raised up in the royal palaces, we should become a nation not only worthy of such a Queen, but a nation which God in this Elizabethan era could use to lead the world into peace and security."

CORPORATE COMMUNION

There has been some discussion in several of our societies recently whether they should have a Corporate Communion or not. Some people have felt it important, others not. In some cases the attempt to hold one has been made, but less than half of the membership have been present. Should they go on trying? Some parishes hold the view that no special Corporate Communions of individual societies are needed: every Sunday there should be one

Corporate Communion of the whole body of the Church in that particular place, the "Parish Communion." In some churches they manage to get somewhere near this ideal. At St. Alban's, North Harrow, for instance, the average number of communicants for an ordinary Sunday is 150. There is no need here for monthly Corporate Communions of particular societies. Our average is about one-fifth of this figure. Corporate Communions of different societies might help to increase it, until in the end they become unnecessary. The main purpose of a Corporate Communion is to bring all the members of a particular body together (ideally the whole local church) to offer the aims, life and work of the body to God, and to receive from Him the wisdom and strength necessary for that work to be done as He wants. The Offertory signifies this offering of work, and it is fitting that the bread and wine (products of human labour) should be brought to the altar by members of the body. The Queen at her Coronation made the Offertory herself: and this custom of the Early Church is gradually being recovered by our parish churches. We do it here at our incipient Parish Communion on the second Sunday in each month. Another thing a Corporate Communion does is to encourage infrequent communicants to take their obligations more seriously. They know that on a certain day and time other members of the same group will be there, and this inspires them to make an effort they might not otherwise make, and gradually to communicate more often. So in the end the ideal

of a real Parish Communion, which would make separate Corporate Communions unnecessary, might be attained.

NECESSARY ALTERATIONS

At the moment I am experiencing a certain amount of inconvenience and discomfort through a recently-contracted hernia. It is certainly putting an effective brake on my physical activity. I have been advised to have it treated as soon as possible, and I am told that this will mean about three weeks in hospital. It is most probable that I shall be able to go in early next month, and then go away on holiday in August. This will mean, I think, postponing the beginning of the Confirmation classes until September. It will also involve some modification of Sunday and week-day services. I hope to give full details of these in the July magazine.

Talking about week-day services, I am rather concerned that so few people make use of them. The 7 o'clock service on Tuesday morning very rarely has anybody there: in fact the only people who have attended recently have been some who cycle two miles from a neighbouring parish when there has been no service in their own church. All the other services too are very sparsely attended. It is also noticeable that there has been a falling off in the numbers attending Matins and Evensong on Sunday. I hope that there will, this Coronation year, this year of national self-dedication, be an all-round improvement in this matter of Sunday worship: it would be most sad if, instead, a decline were to set in.

FROM BEYOND THE SPIRE

THE MEANING OF THE CORONATION

(This report held over from last month, is included here, because though the Coronation may have happened before it is read, it will help to keep in our minds that deeper significance of the great event which we ought not to forget).

About twelve of us from this Parish attended the party given by

the Deanery M.U. on April 21st especially for the Young Wives' Group. During the first half of the evening we heard a brilliant and inspiring address on the Coronation given by Miss Monica Hardcastle, M.A. Principal of St. Christophers' College.

In the part of her address dealing with the order of the service we saw how the service came down from the earliest times—Samuel's

anointing of David—and how it had been built up and varied according to the needs of successive times. We recognised the two parts of the service. First the Introduction when the Queen is “recognised,” reminding us of times when Kings were elected and of more recent times when in other parts of the world peoples of republics and dictatorships no longer “recognised” a monarchy: our Queen is really “by will of the people.”

In the Introduction the Queen also makes her “covenant” with the people, in the Oath with wonderful words like “.....maintain the laws of God and the true profession of the Gospel.....?” “.....Law and Justice, in Mercy, to be executed in all your judgments?”

And soon after, the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, taking part in the ceremony for the first time in our history—will give the Queen the Holy Bible “.....to keep your Majesty ever mindful of the Law and the Gospel of God as the Rule for the whole of life...” and “Here is Wisdom; this is the Royal Law; these are the lively Oracles of God.”

It is wonderful and humbling to think that such are the principles for the government of our commonwealth. Even more so when at the delivery of the Orb set under the Cross the whole of the world, or that part of it which is allowed to listen, will hear “.....and remember that the whole world is subject to the Power and Empire of Christ our Redeemer.” And should the world think that that sounds like hypocrisy we should consider something that Miss Hardcastle pointed out but which

is seldom mentioned in the current literature on the Coronation. It is that after the anointing, when the Queen comes to hold her unique position between layman and priest, she not only dedicates herself but in her person represents her people. So that at the time of the Coronation, although we join with the foreign visitors and people the world over in sympathy and prayers for the Queen, we of the British Commonwealth are ourselves dedicated to the same life and service.

The second part of the service is the Communion. At the beginning of it the Queen will have removed her magnificent robes and jewels and be wearing a simple white dress such as any of us wore for our confirmation and symbolic in the same way.

After the Gospel comes the anointing and the delivery of the regalia with all its wonderful symbolism, and the crowning. When all these rites have been observed the Queen will then descend from her throne and giving up her crown, royal sceptre and orb will kneel with her husband at the altar for the rest of the communion. She will offer the Bread and the Wine in the same way that members of our congregation do at our Parish Communion once a month, symbolising the oblation or offering of the whole of her own and her commonwealth's life and work to God.

Miss Hardcastle reminded us that one of the signs of a Christian should be joy and gladness and so Church people should not only observe and join in the solemn part of the occasion but also afterwards in all the rejoicings and merrymaking that would be going on in our locality.

AROUND THE SPIRE

being notes and news about
people, activities & organisations

MOTHERS' UNION AND YOUNG WIVES' GROUP

Neither group has a meeting very much before the Fête so may I remind you now that the M.U. has a needlework stall and the Y.W. a miscellaneous stall including handwork to man and furnish.

Working party groups meet at Miss Chamberlin's, 117 Uxbridge

Road, on Thursday afternoons and at Mrs. Strawson's, 8 Lindsay Road, on Tuesday evenings, but please will **every** member contribute something so that we can make a bumper contribution to this year's effort.

On June 24th the M.U. choir is arranging an “at-home” with entertainment and refreshments in the Hall at 3.0 p.m. in aid of

the Renovation Fund. Admittance will be by 1/- ticket from choir or committee members.

Both your committees are just now planning your programmes for next year. Please give to them any suggestions you may have.

DRAMA GROUP

The Coronation Play, "Our Sovereign Lady," produced by Mrs. Frances Whitton, will be given on Friday and Saturday, June 12 and 13 at 7.30 in the evening at "The Wilderness" 96 Park Road, Hampton Hill, by kind invitation of Councillor F. J. Edwards, who will then be Mayor.

Tickets are now available, from Miss H. Stanton, 63 Park Road, Hampton Hill, Molesey 5821, from Mr. C. Tarrant 31 Anlaby Road, Teddington, Molesey 4987, and from all members of the St. James's Drama Group. Tickets will also be available at the gate on the evenings of the performances.

The Catering Committee is most kindly undertaking to provide refreshments after the play is over. The garden, as everyone knows, is very lovely, and we feel that the evening will be a very pleasant one. Please come and back up this effort, the proceeds for which are to go to the church Renovation Fund.

"Out of the Whirlwind"

The Drama Group is planning a coach party to go to this play which is being acted in Westminster Abbey during June. A coach has been booked, and will leave St. James's Church at 6.45 p.m. on Tuesday, June 23. We have not been able to get a reduction in the price of the tickets, and the price of ticket and coach fare amounts to 10/6. The play is, however, being put on in aid of the Westminster Abbey Appeal Fund, and we feel that people who can come on this party to "Out of the Whirlwind" will welcome the opportunity of contributing towards the renovation of this most important and beloved Abbey.

The play is a modern version of the "Job" theme, with a central figure of a woman living through the two World Wars. Fay Compton is acting this part, and the cast includes professional actors, giving, it is understood, their ser-

vices at a very reduced rate, in order to make this play a financial success in aid of the Appeal.

Please send in your names as soon as possible to Mr. C. Tarrant, Secretary of the Drama Group, at 31 Anlaby Road, Teddington, Mol. 4987.

H.S.

SOME DATES TO NOTE

- June 12 & 13—7.30 p.m. Open Air Play "Our Sovereign Lady," at The Wilderness.
- June 14—11.0 a.m. Dedication of New Guide Colours. 7.45 p.m. News-team Fellowship (Vicarage).
- June 23—Coach Party to Play at Westminster Abbey.
- June 24—3.0 p.m. Mothers' Union Choir: Musical "At Home" (Hall) 8.0 p.m. Young Wives Group (Hall).
- June 26—7.30 p.m. Magazine Distribution (Vicarage).
- July 1—3.0 p.m. Mothers' Union Service.
- July 4—3.0 p.m. Summer Fete, Laurel Dene. Opener: The Mayoress.

ALTAR FLOWERS

- June 7—Mrs. Harper and Mrs. Harper, Jr.
- June 14—Mrs. Swatland and Mrs. Beckett.
- June 21—Mrs. Bird.
- June 28—Mrs. Rockcliffe.

BAPTISM

- March 22—Paul James Tribe, 27, Windmill Road.
- March 22—Janet Ann Farmer, 173, Uxbridge Road.
- May 24—Julie Elizabeth West, 263, Uxbridge Road.
- May 24—Nicholas Kevin Minns, 25, Clonmel Road.

MARRIAGES

- March 28—Norman George Ross to Patricia Mary Barrett.
- May 28—John Acton Holmes to Beverly Ann Crihfield.

BURIALS

- March 27—Mary Ann Withers, 121, High Street, aged 82 years.
- April 8—John James Farmer, 44, Windsor Road, aged 71 years.
- April 13—Henry Beauchamp Male, 26, St. James's Road, aged 66 years.
- April 24—Marion Augusta Blamey, Mountford House, Sunbury, aged 88 years.