

Parish Church of St. John-the-Baptist, Hartford

# Monthly Magazine

December, 1961

Price 4d.



Vicar :—Revd. M. J. F. WILSON, The Vicarage, 65 School Lane. Tel. 4539.  
Churchwardens :—Mr. T. A. EARLAM, 106 School Lane. Tel. 4627 and Mr. T. J. BEST,  
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Magazine Treasurer :—Mr. W. LITTLER, 68 School Lane.  
Recorder (Planned Giving) :—Mr. E. C. HILDITCH, 11a Bradburn's Lane. Tel. 4500.

## SERVICES :

Holy Communion : Each Sunday at 8 a.m., and at 12 o'clock on first and third Sundays of the month.

Parish Communion : At 9 a.m. on second Sunday of each month.

Children : 10 a.m.

Mattins : 11 a.m.

Evensong : 6-30 p.m.

Weekday Services :—

Holy Communion, Saints' Days and Wednesdays, 7-30 a.m.

Mattins daily at 8 a.m. except when Holy Communion celebrated.

Evensong, Wednesdays at 6-30.

Weddings, Baptisms and Churchings : By arrangement with the Vicar.

Sunday School : 2-30 p.m. in the Church Schools, except on the last Sunday of the month.

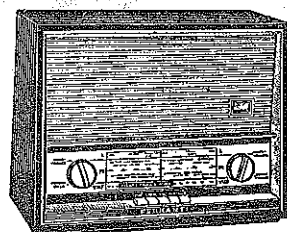
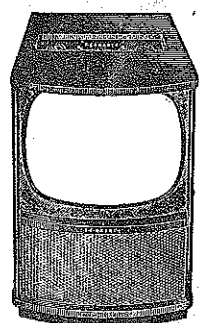
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## Hartford Church Magazine - December, 1961

My dear Friends,

This is our Christmas number so let me begin by wishing you on behalf of my wife, my family and myself, a very happy Christmas.

Christmas is, of course, a happy time for many people, and especially for those with children, but we should not forget, for those who are old and lonely, Christmas may only serve to emphasise their loneliness. There are others too, I fear, who are only too thankful when Christmas is over and they can return to normal. It all depends on the spirit in which we keep the feast. The mere fact of getting the family together, giving and receiving presents, eating and drinking, may only put more strain on temper and digestion than they can bear; it does not necessarily make for happiness. To be happy, to rejoice at Christmas, we must remember the reason for Christmas, and the reason lies in an event that actually happened at a known time — at a known place — at a place which is still on the map. What happened? A baby was born, Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Sent by God to rescue us men and women from the tyranny of self, from our selfishness—the cause of our unhappiness—and unite us to God for time and for eternity.

Why did that happen? Well because, as St. John in the New English Bible puts it, "God loved the world so much that He gave His only Son, that everyone who has faith in Him may not die but have eternal life".

That's the reason why we have Christmas, so let us keep that at the centre of our Christmas rejoicing. Let us all come together and offer our praise and thanksgiving to God for HIS Christmas gift to us.

Yours sincerely,

FRASER WILSON.

### THE HALLOWE'EN PARTY

About a hundred people attended the Hallowe'en party on Oct. 31st. The hall was transformed with witches, ghosts, spiders, skulls, "Jack o' lanterns" and the like. A full programme of dancing, games and competitions had been arranged, and there was an excellent supper, speedily and daintily served.

Our grateful thanks to Mr. Jim Sayle and his committee for the careful planning and hard work that resulted in such a successful and hilarious evening.

### PLANNED GIVING

At a meeting of the Planned Giving Committee held on Wednesday, 1st November, 1961, the results of the scheme to date, covering a period of 34 weeks from the 12th March, 1961, to the 29th October, were considered. The figures reported by the Recorder and the Treasurer were as follows :-

Weekly pledges in envelopes	...	£3430
Pledges paid monthly, quarterly, half-yearly or yearly by cheque or Bankers' Order	...	1319
Tax refunds under covenants	...	391
Donations	...	114
Cash in envelopes—unpledged	...	200
Cash on plate	...	334

Total £5788

Amount of pledges in arrears ... £208

It was the opinion of the Committee that the results so far are very encouraging and show that most pledges are being met regularly. The total amount received is quite up to expectations, and, taking into account absences from home, sickness etc., the figure of £208 arrears is negligible. As a matter of interest the arrears at the end of 26 weeks were £212, an average of about £8 a week, whereas the average for the 34 weeks is only about £6 a week.

It is interesting to note that £200 has been received from people who for one reason or another were unwilling to sign a pledge card but who were nevertheless supplied with envelopes. This sum is almost exactly equal to the amount of arrears. Cash on plate averaging as it does almost £10 per Sunday is also a very satisfactory feature.

The number of non-starters has now been reduced to five and it is hoped that these, together with all those in arrears, will endeavour to bring their contributions up to date before our financial year ends at the end of December. R.W.A.

### PARISH DAIRY

10th December, 9 a.m.—The Parish Communion  
13th December, 7-30 p.m. — The "Messiah",  
Northwich Festival Choir  
17th December at Evensong, a Missionary film  
25th December, Christmas—see separate notice

## CHRISTMAS IN CHURCH

### Christmas Eve, Sunday, 24th December :

3 p.m., Children's Carol and Gift Service

11-45 p.m. The first Communion of Christmas Day

### Christmas Day :

7 a.m. Holy Communion

8 a.m. Holy Communion

11 a.m. Family service

12 noon Holy Communion

### Sunday, 31st December :

6-30 p.m. A Service of Nine Lessons and Carols

## SERVERS' ROTA

Dec. 3rd. — Peter Halsey

Dec. 10th—8 a.m. Joe Brimelow  
9 a.m. Roddy Moore

Dec. 17th—Chris Latham

Dec. 24th—11-45 p.m. David Goodwin

Dec. 25th—8 a.m. Harry Burgess

Dec. 31st—8 a.m. John Smith

Jan. 7th—8 a.m. Peter Halsey

## SIDESMEN

8 a.m. 11 a.m. and 6-30 p.m.

Dec. 3—Messrs Thornton and Malam Messrs. Lyon, Walker, Percival and Dr. Smith Reserve—Mr. Beazley

10—Dr. Smith and Mr. Allen Messrs. Rogerson, Forster Hornby and Sayle Reserve—Mr. Robinson

17—Messrs. Forster and Percival Messrs. Littler, Bates, Malam and Burgess Reserves—Messrs. Goodwin and Jameson

24—Messrs. Sayle and Robinson Messrs. Allen, Dean, Hilditch and Nixon Reserves—Messrs. Steadman and Shaw

31—Messrs. Cooper and Lyon Messrs. Walker, Percival, Beazley and Dr. Smith Reserve—Mr. Lyon

Jan.

7—Messrs. Beazley and Shaw Messrs. Forster, Hornby, Sayle and Robinson Reserve—Mr. Rogerson

Parish Communion—10th December  
Messrs. Bates and Steadman

## MOTHERS' UNION

In November the Revd. C. H. Huggill of Delamere spoke on Faith—in place of Mrs. Lee who was unable to come at the last minute.

We were most grateful to Mr. Huggill for coming and giving such an excellent address to many members present.

On Wednesday, December 6th, at 3-30 p.m. the Christmas Party will be held, to which we hope as many members as possible will come and bring a friend—1/6 for members, 2/- for guest. There will be carols, an excellent tea, entertainment and games. It is an opportunity to get to know each other better, so do come.

## LADIES' GUILD

(Rota for December)

Dec. 1—Group Leader—Mrs. Thornton

Dec. 8—Group Leader—Mrs. Sale

Dec. 15—Group Leader—Mrs. Hilditch

Dec. 22—Group Leader—Mrs. Goodwin

Dec. 29—Group Leader—Mrs. Bolton

Jan. 5—Group Leader—Mrs. Moore

## FROM THE REGISTERS BAPTISMS

Oct. 22—Stephen Paul William, s. of Wallace A. and Pauline R. Blears

Oct. 22—David, s. of William and Elsie Ollier

Oct. 22—Digel David Graham, s. of William B. and Lenora M. Dickinson

Oct. 22—Christopher John, s. of John C. and Doreen E. Blackhurst

Oct. 29—Simon Andrew, s. of Wilfred and Patricia A. Halewood

Nov. 12—Andrew, s. of Jerry and Dorothy Steenwyck

## MARRIAGES

Oct. 21—Alfred Moulton and Florence Jane Lee

Oct. 21—Harold Stott and Lois Robb

## BURIALS

Oct. 25—Rebecca S. M. Bennett, Holme Croft, Chester Road, Cuddington, aged 67 years

Oct. 27—Kate Dickinson, Chadwick Fields, Middlewich, aged 91 years

Nov. 9—Harry Sayle, 81 Beech Road, Hartford, aged 54 years

## FINANCIAL STATEMENT

(Collections in Church during Sept. and Oct.)

Sept. 3—£109 12. 4. Oct. 1—£188 4. 9.

Sept. 10—116 6. 1. Oct. 8—105 0. 9.

Sept. 17—146 3. 5. Oct. 15—102 17. 11.

Sept. 24—107 7. 3. Oct. 22—101 9. 7.

Oct. 29—109 19. 8

(Note:—The amount for Sept. 3rd, was omitted from the last Magazine in error)

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# CHESTER DIOCESAN LEAFLET

No. 433

DECEMBER, 1961

Circulation over 75,000

Bishop's House, Chester,

November, 1961.

My dear People,

My wife and family and I wish you all a very happy Christmas. I hope that many of you will be able to enjoy a reunion with relatives and friends, and together recapture once again the joy and happiness of Christian family life as you welcome the birth of the Christ Child. In a world so dominated by commercialism it is especially important for practising Christians to bear their witness to the religious significance of Christmas. There is no need for us to be behindhand in the traditional festivities and the gaiety of the season. But we must make it plain that these things are empty unless at their heart are the welcome we offer to Our Lord and the spirit of giving for his sake.

Above all, there is the urgent need for us to remember those who are in need. We have a clear call in this respect from the Freedom from Hunger Campaign. The Churches part in this has adopted the slogan 'Bread for the World'. As you enjoy the plenty for your Christmas celebrations, remember the terrible hunger and poverty of the greater part of the world. There are countless demands made upon Inter-Church Aid and Refugee Service. We can help to meet these demands. I suggest that at every dinner table this Christmas a collection should be made, and sent to Inter-Church Aid at 10 Eaton Gate, London S.W.1. So in a very real way, you will share your hospitality with others whose need is far greater than your own.

### ADVENT ORDINATION

The following is the list of men to be ordained in Chester Cathedral on Sunday, December 17th, at 10 a.m. :—

#### TO BE MADE DEACON:

Frank Thomas Howard, B.Sc. (Econ.) of the London School of Economics and Bishops' College, Cheshunt, to Macclesfield, St Michael.  
Joseph George White, of St Deiniol's Library, Hawarden, to Frodsham.  
Ronald Worsley, of St Deiniol's Library, Hawarden, to Alderley Edge.

#### TO BE ORDAINED PRIEST:

The Reverend Thomas William Edward Grinham—Stockton Heath.  
The Reverend James Leonard Ramsay Hale, M.A.—Timperley.

### THIRTY YEARS IN CREWE

On Tuesday, October 17th, the Bishop of Chester preached at Festal Evensong in the Church of St Peter, Crewe, to mark the thirtieth anniversary of the induction of the Reverend Geoffrey Marshall as the first Vicar of the parish. The service was attended by the local clergy, and the Mayor and Mayoress of Crewe were also present. During the course of a

*The Archbishop of York.*

At the Sung Eucharist in the Cathedral on St Thomas' Day, December 21st the Archbishop of York will dedicate the splendid new West Window in the Cathedral. We are fortunate to be able to welcome the Archbishop so soon after his assuming his new office and we look forward to doing so. The Dean and Chapter are inviting all parishes to be represented at the Service. I hope there will be a great congregation for a notable occasion in the life of the Diocese and the Cathedral.

*Church Unity.*

The growing realization of the need for unity among Christians gives added significance to the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, from January 18th—25th. I suggest that wherever possible the Christians of different communions should get together in this week for prayer that the increasingly charitable spirit between them may be further enlarged, so that we may move nearer to that ideal of corporate union which must be our goal. The Prayer Leaflet prepared by Pere Michalon (25/- per 100), and that prepared by the World Council of Churches (10/- per 100) may be obtained from the British Council of Churches, 10 Eaton Gate, London S.W.1.

Your sincere friend and Bishop,

*Gerard Cistr.*

reception held after the service the Bishop, on behalf of parishioners and friends, presented to Mr. Marshall an inscribed album containing the signatures of those who wished to show their esteem and appreciation of all he has done for the parish. By a strange chance your Editor was present at the Induction thirty years ago. He has also had the privilege of working in a neighbouring parish, and knows, therefore, something of Geoffrey Marshall's quiet, unobtrusive, but always successful ministry. He feels sure that all our readers will join him in wishing the Vicar of St Peter's many more years of happy service in the parish and diocese he loves so well.

### CHURCH ARMY MISSIONARY VAN

The Church Army Van is at work in the Diocese, conducting two to three week missions in parishes where the Officers are requested by the Incumbent to do so. During their stay in a parish the Officers seek to make known the Gospel of Christ through the following activities: Adult and Children's Services; Home Meetings; Youth Squashes; Visiting. Parishes visited during November included Willaston and Great Saughall. The Evangelist in Charge, Captain A. N. Ford, C.A. c/o Missions Dept., 55 Bryanston Street, Marble Arch, London, W.1. will



gladly deal with all enquiries and requests for a visit from the Van.

### CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP

An interesting letter from Mr. H. Aynsley, the Honorary Treasurer of St Mary Magdalene, Ashton-upon-Mersey may be of help to some of our readers, and we have pleasure in quoting from it. He writes: "In undertaking a campaign it may well be that some Church Councils are deterred, as mine was, by the fees charged by the professional organisations. We were quoted a fee of £2,500 to launch our Campaign and my Council felt that this was too much . . . I could see, therefore, that unless someone made a start our Campaign would fail by default. In July, 1960, I made a start of this work with a target to commence the scheme on January 1st of this year . . . The object of the Campaign was to augment our current envelope scheme which had approximately 130 members with an annual income of £730 p.a. The number of subscribers is now 470 and the income for this year will be over £4,000. The cost of the Campaign amounted to £160, which was mostly printing charges, but as I also received gifts amounting to over £200 in response to the appeal, there was no actual cost to the parish."

Mr. Aynsley has to date visited three other parishes who have since organised successful campaigns on a do-it-yourself basis, and if any other parish would care to consult him he would be only too happy to help with advice, suggestions and the benefit of his experience. He is, of course, in no way connected with any professional organisation, and makes this offer in gratitude to Almighty God for the success of St Mary's Campaign. His address is 15 Barnfield Crescent, Ashton-upon-Mersey, Sale, Cheshire.

### WE HEAR THAT

On Michaelmas Day the Bishop of Stockport dedicated in St Michael's, Chester, new sanctuary rails in memory of Canon J. Arthur Walker, former Vicar and Diocesan Secretary. Restoration work in this lovely old church has now been completed, costing over £4,500, and in just over sixteen months an appeal for that amount has realised £3,250.

\*\*\*

Mr. L. S. Dawson of Fermain, Pownall Avenue, Bramhall, Stockport, has been elected to a vacancy in the Diocesan representation to the House of Laity of the Church Assembly.

\*\*\*

The two Church Halls of St Peter's, Crewe, were painted outside and within by a band of ten men during August and September, at a saving to the Church of about £150 in wages. This occupied them four nights a week, after a full day at their ordinary work. Well done!

\*\*\*

Cheadle Parish Church has introduced a funeral card which is sent to or left with the bereaved. It reads: "The Rector and Staff of Cheadle Parish Church sympathise with you deeply in your bereavement. If we can help you in any way at this time please do not hesitate to contact us."

### BOOKS

Two new books of widely differing intention are now on sale. "The Christian Year", by H. W. Dobson (Geoffrey Bles), 8/6, contains the Prayer Book Collects, Epistles and Gospels for each Sunday and Holy Day in the year. The Epistles and Gospels are rendered by J. B. Phillips' well-known translation, and there are simple and valuable notes by the Editor. Although primarily intended for the newly-confirmed, or those about to be confirmed, this book will be found invaluable by those who for one reason or another are unable to attend Holy Communion. Despite its simplicity we also believe that clergy and teachers will find much in it to inspire and suggest.

"What's Wrong With the Church?" by Nick Earle (Penguin Special), 2/6, is a book of a very different order. Here is an angry young man of the Church, and he will probably infuriate many of you. Mr. Earle is a teacher of mathematics, not a parish priest, and speaks on Tower Hill. The book is a series of attacks—on the idea, for instance, that every citizen is entitled to a church and priest within easy walking distance of his home. Superfluous churches should be pulled down. Let the clergy pay their way. Ill-paid though he may be, the parson enjoys a degree of security unknown to many of his parishioners. What is wrong with the Church is that she has strayed from her original purpose. She has not gained but lost from an identification with the State. However much you may disagree with this book it is thought-provoking.

### THE PRIVILEGED AND THE UNDER-PRIVILEGED

Dr. Cooke, Director of the Division of Inter-Church Aid and Service to Refugees of the World Council of Churches, says that he pictures the world's privileged one-third, virtually confined to Western Europe and North America, as having: 17 per cent more food than it needs; an average of almost two rooms per person; three-fourths of the world's doctors and an average life-span of 68 years.

By contrast, he says, the remaining two-thirds of the world's people, most of them in Asia, Africa and Latin America, have 24 per cent less than their food needs; housing that averages five persons to a room; one-fourth of the world's doctors; and an average life-span of 32 years.

### MEN FOR THE MINISTRY

The Church's first need is more men for the Ministry. Since 1900 the population of England has increased by over a third. The number of clergy has decreased by a quarter. In 1901, there was a priest for every 1,300 people; in 1951, there was a priest for every 2,100 people, and now there are still fewer clergy. To fill the gaps, staff the parishes and meet new opportunities at home and overseas, the need is: not less than 700 new Deacons each year. Further information may be obtained from the Central Advisory Council for the Ministry (C.A.C.T.M.), 9 Tufton Street, Westminster, S.W. 1.

Contributions for the January Leaflet should reach the Editor, the Reverend Eric Jones, Eccleston Rectory, Chester, no later than Wednesday, December 6th.

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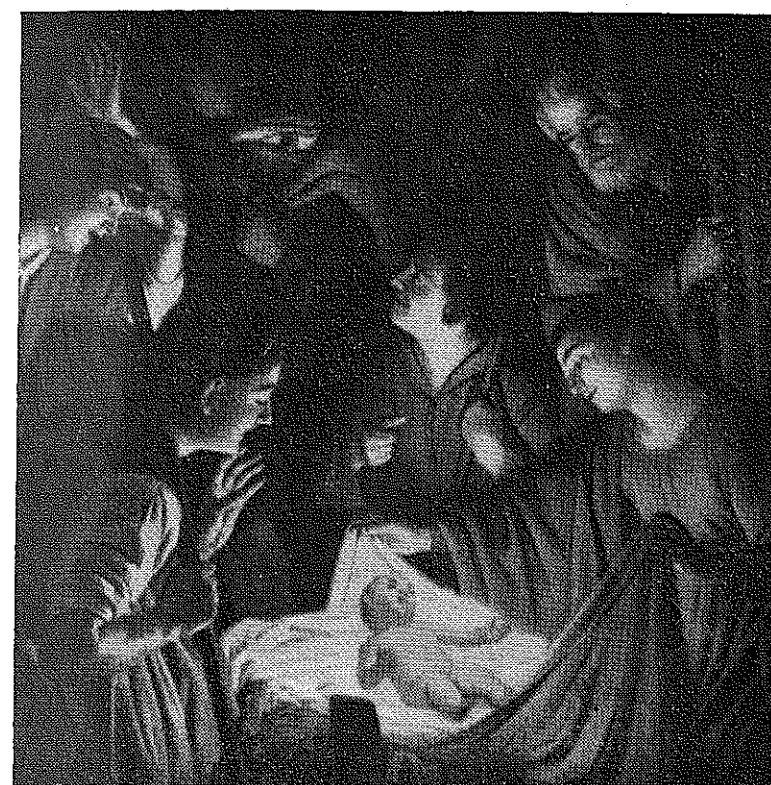
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## A New Look at the Old Testament

By William Neil

### 12. THE SON OF MAN

THE book of Daniel may not seem to be the most appropriate theme to conclude this series, particularly at Christmas. Next to the book of Revelation, which it most closely resembles, it is perhaps the most obscure book in the Bible. Part of it, of course, is quite straightforward, the splendid stories about the Lion's Den and the Fiery Furnace which we know from childhood. We seldom, however, get past the first half of the book where these tales are to be found and penetrate into that bewildering mixture of visions of monsters and cryptic allusions which makes up the second half.

Yet it is here in this forbidding territory that we find the clue to the description that Jesus most frequently used of himself—the Son of Man. One of the

many lessons we have learnt about the Old Testament in recent years is just how much the New Testament looks back to it and depends on it, and how great a part the thought of the Old Testament played in the minds of the writers of the gospels and epistles. But this is equally true of our Lord himself. All Jewish boys were schooled in the synagogue on the Law and the Prophets, but in Jesus' case this was doubly true. It is clear from his language, his sayings and stories, that he loved the Old Testament and lived with it. That alone should make us want to know more about it for ourselves.

#### The Servant of God

But, in addition, when we try to fathom the depths of our Lord's

## THE SIGN

Not ashamed to confess the  
faith of Christ crucified

No. 684

VOL. 57

DECEMBER 1961

- 3 S. First in Advent.
- 4 M. Clement of Alexandria, D., c. 210.
- 6 W. Nicolas, B., 4th century.
- 8 F. Conception of the B.V.M.
- 10 S. Second in Advent.
- 13 W. Lucy, V.M., 303.
- 16 S. O Sapientia.
- 17 S. Third in Advent.
- Ignatius, B.M., c. 110.
- 21 Th. St. Thomas, A.M.
- 24 S. Fourth in Advent.
- 25 M. Christmas Day.
- 26 Tu. St. Stephen, M.
- 27 W. St. John, A.E.
- 28 Th. Innocents' Day.
- 31 S. Sunday after Christmas.
- Silvester, B., 335.

Days of fasting, or abstinence:

Fridays, 1, 8, 15, 22, 29;  
Wednesday, 20; Saturday, 23.  
Ember Days, 20, 22, 23.

thoughts about himself, his vocation and mission, we are forced again and again to recognize just how much the Old Testament influenced his actions. Earlier this year, in Lent, we saw how much his mind was moved by Second Isaiah's great conception of the Servant of God, who through his own suffering would lead men to God. This was, indeed, so far as we can, with reverence, seek to probe the mind of Jesus, the role that was uppermost in his thoughts as he set his face steadfastly to go to Jerusalem and the Cross that awaited him there.

#### The Son of Man

There was, however, another Old Testament insight that moved him and shaped his purpose—Daniel's vision of the Son of Man. Sometimes, of course, when our Lord uses the words Son of Man, he simply means 'I,' e.g. the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head (St. Matt. 8, 20). But when Jesus asks the disciples: Who do men say that the Son of Man is? (St. Matt. 16, 13) or when he talks of the right of the Son of Man to forgive sins (St. Mark 2, 10) or to criticize the sacred Law (St. Mark 2, 28) or when he figuratively claims the place of honour at the right hand of God for himself as Son of Man (St.

Mark 14, 62), he obviously means a good deal more. We can only learn what was in his mind by turning back to the book of Daniel.

In chapter 7 of that strange book there is a characteristic vision of fierce monsters rising out of the sea. We know from the conventions of this type of writing that monsters stand for world empires, and we are told elsewhere in the book that these particular four stand for the great powers that terrorized the ancient world. But as we read on in this seventh chapter of Daniel we see these hideous monsters being destroyed, and the writer is obviously telling us that sooner or later the days of all ruthless and militaristic tyrannies come to an end. They are not in accordance with the will of God and he brings about their downfall.

#### The Man

But notice what happens next. The prophet sees in his vision the Almighty on his throne pronouncing judgement on these pagan despotisms and inaugurating a new kind of world power, 'the kingdom of the saints of the Most High,' and the ruler of this new type of community is called 'one like unto a son of man.' No doubt in Daniel's mind the contrast was between the barbarism of godless world-states, personified as fierce monsters, and the peaceable, lawful character of the new community, personified as a human being or perhaps an angel. But by New Testament times the figure of the Son of Man had become a kind of supernatural visitant from the skies, another name for the Messiah whom John the Baptist expected to come with fiery judgement.

#### The Everlasting Kingdom

Was this what our Lord meant when he called himself Son of Man? Surely not. As in every other case where he uses the Old Testament, Jesus proved himself its master and not its slave. Our Lord saw himself not as a supernatural, apocalyptic figure, but as the fulfilment of Daniel's vision. His role was to be the ruler of a new kind of community as different from world empires as Daniel's monsters were from Daniel's Son of Man. Jesus knew himself to be the Messiah of God for whom men had hoped and prayed, but he himself would decide what kind of Messiah he would be.

In obedience to God he chose the path of the Servant which led him to a Cross, but beyond the Cross he saw his destiny as Son of Man, the Head of the community of 'the saints of the Most

High,' the Church. As we celebrate the festival of his Incarnation, it is perhaps as perfect Man—the child of Bethlehem, the carpenter of Nazareth, the Master among his friends—that we

think of him most. Let us not fail to remember also what Jesus meant when he called himself Son of Man, and what that means for us to-day. Read Daniel 7, 14.



And four great beasts came up from the sea.—DANIEL 7, 3

## Your Magazine in 1962

Your magazine will be as bright as ever next year. What is more, in addition to your favourite features in THE SIGN—Question Page, The Topic, Puzzles, The Garden Page—there will be new features too.

Here are some of them. Dr. William Neil, whose articles on the Old Testament so many of you have enjoyed, is writing an entirely new series. He is calling it 'An Outline of the New Testament.' Its background is the New English Bible, and its purpose is to help us all to read it.

There is going to be a new Strip. This will be based on the famous story *Quo Vadis?* the story of how St. Peter, fleeing from Rome in time of persecution, met our Lord and returned to face martyrdom.

There is a new serial too. John Lastingham, whose final instalment of *Ben-Hur* is in this number, is writing a new tale of St. Paul, *God's Adventurer*. It will be illustrated by pictures from the B.B.C. Television Serial, 'Paul of Tarsus.'

Last but by no means least! Hazel Macleod, of the Leicester Domestic Science Training College, will be taking over the whole of the women's interests in THE SIGN.

All these, and a good many other things as well, will be in your magazine next year.

As I See It . . .

## Like It or Not (2)

By Rosamund Essex

A MONTH or two ago I asked the readers of THE SIGN to tell me their views on modern art in churches. I have been showered with

They say modern art has a meaning behind it. Well, what meaning? P. M., while approving most modern art, castigated some windows as



The Nativity

Giorgione

replies and fascinated with the strongly divergent answers. May I remind you of the questions I asked. They were:

1. Do you approve or disapprove of modern art in church?
2. Do you think that on the whole modern art is beautiful or ugly?
3. Do you think that we are too conservative in our likes and dislikes of church art?
4. Is your age group under 30, over 30, over 45?

First I turned to letters of the very young, whose views varied enormously. F. E. P., aged 16, wrote, 'I approve of modern art in churches, for it expresses, not only a picture (as the paintings of Renaissance artists did) but the idea behind the picture.' But K. P., also aged 16, said, 'I think that on the whole modern art is ugly. I fail to see any beauty in it.'

A third youngster (18) asked: 'Why must modern artists portray huge hands and distorted and bloated feet.

'glaringly out of place, like the backdrops of a bad pantomime,' and went on to describe some of the figures as being 'like Belsen victims.'

When the whole pile of letters was finally opened and read, I found that the votes were very close indeed—50 per cent were wholly in favour of the modern trend; 48 per cent were antagonized by it; 2 per cent just could not make up their minds, and there were a few who, like E. M. H., said, 'I disapprove of all art in churches,' and quoted the second commandment.

While we are about it, let us stick to the disapprovers first. A typical letter came from E. O. who said, 'I do not like modern art in church because it seems to me to lack the Christian spirit.' T. W. B. added, 'The modern artists are more apt to express themselves than the spirit of the Church, about which they appear to be wholly ignorant.'

B. M. (aged 32) was very hot about it all: 'What will future generations

think of some of these monstrosities in our places of worship? They will be led to think we were a generation of idiots and inartistic fools.' N. R. called modern paintings 'grotesque and crude monstrosities.' C. M. R. thought 'modern art awful; it bewilders me because I cannot understand it'; and A. M. A. asserted, 'Gothic raised one's eyes and soul to heaven—modern art makes me close them in horror.'

On the other side, H. F. (aged 17) said, 'I find modern art interesting rather than beautiful. . . . Modern art is like the mediaeval in being concerned to express not the objectively real but the spiritually real.' C. S. (aged 35) began with a question: 'By modern art do you mean Bazaine, Leger, Lurcat, Renner Senn, Lambert Rucki, Matisse, Coteau, Moore? . . . Modern art is both beautiful and ugly. Nearly all apostolic Christianity was ugly, with death and torture commonplace. It is to our eternal discredit that we do not face facts, and even make our crucifixes pretty.'

D. K. H. expressed a view repeated by many others: 'Modern art is to me a very mixed bag. Rather than being either beautiful or ugly, I find that some modern art is rather strange and austere, and also it can be very bright and gay' (aged 21). Very many writers said that modern art was appropriate only in modern churches (something with which I myself could not agree: and it is plain that the older masters did not mind in the least adding the genius of their generation to that of any older one). D. G. agrees with me: 'I become more and more convinced that good work of any period will suit good work of any other period,' and he (and others) instance Epstein's and Moore's works.

Of course, this investigation only scratches the top: it cannot be very deep because of the little space at my disposal. Of course, some of the questions beg the question. Of course, when one speaks of 'beauty' and 'ugliness' these are terms that need more careful definition than is possible here. Many letters have taken me to task on such points.

I have only been able to quote tiny pieces from long letters: but let my correspondents be comforted. 'The Central Council for the Care of Churches' has been so interested in our experiment in THE SIGN that I am sending it quotations from the most interesting letters. I thank all my correspondents very much indeed for a feast of fascinating arguments.



## BEN-HUR

A Tale of the Christ, retold by John Lastingham

## PART 12. THE CROSS

WHEN the first ecstasy of reunion with his mother and his sister, now so miraculously healed of leprosy, was over, the first thing all did was to fall upon their knees in prayers of thankfulness. Ben-Hur himself repeated the prayer with them, but he was still mystified as to the true nature of him in whose power the healing had been effected. He asked: 'Mother, what is this man whom they call the son of the carpenter?'

His mother's eyes rested upon him with all their old tenderness as she replied: 'He is the Messiah. He has his power from God.'

During the next twenty-four hours Ben-Hur became increasingly astonished at the vast numbers of people who were gathering in Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover. There were Jews from all parts of the world; there was a concentration of power sufficient to raise a revolt in the name of he who was to be king of the Jews. But would that king make a sign? Would he proclaim himself an earthly ruler and so bring the crowds rallying to his side? Ben-Hur anxiously awaited the sign from the man of Nazareth; but no sign of that nature was forthcoming as the Messiah went quietly about his ways. Always the Galilean recruits whom Ben-Hur had so rigorously trained in the past months and, indeed, years, were coming to him with messages keeping them informed of the movements of the Nazarene. It was from them that Ben-Hur soon learnt that the man's life was in danger both from the Jewish authorities and from the Romans. Meanwhile, Ben-Hur himself lived without the city, awaiting the moment to strike. But that moment not coming, and he growing increasingly impatient, there came a night when he decided to ride into the city and to go to the old palace of the Hurs, his boyhood home, and learn there what new developments there might be. It had been his intention to seek out Malluch, but that worthy was out. Simonides and Balthasar the Egyptian were likewise away from the house. It thus befell that he found himself closeted alone with Iras, the daughter of Balthasar.

He was astonished beyond measure by the coldness of her greeting. He soon learnt the cause of her coldness. 'Tell me,' she asked haughtily, 'tell me, O prince of Jerusalem, where is he, that son of a carpenter of Nazareth

from whom so lately such mighty things were expected. I looked everywhere among the procession for a figure with a promise of royalty. Yet all I saw was a man riding upon an ass. Was this thy king, was this thy redeemer of the world?' She broke into ironic laughter.



The Procession to Calvary

Ben-Hur understood all. She had been banking upon the worldly gains which would come to her from association with Ben-Hur as a lieutenant of the king who was to be. And now, seeing the meek and humble nature of this so-called king, she was angry and disappointed. He would have left her, but she held him back. And what she held him back for was to make a plea to him—and this for the second time astonished him beyond measure—to forgive Messala the massive debts which the Roman had incurred by being the loser of the chariot race at Antioch with Ben-Hur. It was clear, though now revealed for the first time, that she was the lover and the ally of the Roman. Proudly Ben-Hur replied. He would not forgive Messala his debts. And though, as he learned, the Roman was broken in body after the accident of the chariot race, he could not in that find any reason why he himself should abate one iota of his vengeance. Nor did the threats of Iras to disclose Ben-Hur's true identity to the Romans move him at all. She could do, he told her, her worst. And with that he parted from her.

Thoughtfully he returned from the guest chamber where he had been speaking to Iras to seek Simonides in the little house upon the roof. But Simonides was not there. Instead, curled up in her father's chair and asleep, was his daughter Esther. Sadly and longingly Ben-Hur looked upon the girl, and as he looked he saw her beauty, and he remembered her faithfulness. Leaving her asleep in the chair, he went out into the moonlit city and there walked straight into a strange adventure.

The first thing he saw was an armed party, partly made up of Temple guards, partly of Roman soldiery,

making their way purposefully out of the city, carrying torches and lanterns under the moonlight. Three men among them he noticed particularly: the first was the chief priest, the second was an officer-guard of the Temple, the third was one whom he knew to be called Judas Iscariot, one of the followers of the Nazarene. To this man Ben-Hur called a greeting, but the other, walking with his head sunk upon his breast, passed him without returning the salute.

Because it was Passover night the gate of the city was open. Joining himself to the procession, Ben-Hur followed him down the gorge and over the bridge at the bottom of it to where was a little garden known as Gethsemane. There, outside the entrance, stood a man in white clothes, bare-headed. His hands were crossed before him in an attitude of resignation and waiting. He was the Nazarene! Presently his clear voice was heard saying: 'Whom seek ye?' 'Jesus of Nazareth,' replied the High Priest.

The reply was simple: 'I am he.' And at that moment he whom they

called Judas said 'Hail, master!' And with that he kissed the Nazarene.

It appeared to have been a signal. The guards closed upon him whom they had clearly come to take. Surely, Ben-Hur thought, he would not allow them to bind him! Yet it was even so, and though one of the disciples standing by made a move to resistance and, drawing his sword, cut off the ear of a servant of the High Priest, the Nazarene restrained his follower and healed the man with a touch.

Ben-Hur, now wildly excited, resolved to ask one question of the man whom they were taking so easily. Fighting his way to his side, he asked breathlessly: 'Tell me, I pray thee, if I bring rescue, would thou accept it?'

The Nazarene never so much looked up nor allowed the slightest sign of recognition, but only passed on. But the action of Ben-Hur brought attention upon him and many hands were reached out to try and seize him also.

Next morning, about the second hour, two men rode at full speed to the doors of Ben-Hur's tents. They brought urgent tidings. The Nazarene was condemned to die and the Cross of shame awaited him! Ben-Hur sprang up.

And so it came to pass that Ben-Hur was a witness of the Crucifixion. Three companions were with him: Balthasar, failing fast, in anguish of spirit, and carried in a litter; Simonides, and his daughter Esther. They saw Golgotha, the place of the skull. They saw the procession arrive, they saw and heard the vast crowd which accompanied it; and in the midst of all they saw the Nazarene. And then, as he watched the preparations for the Crucifixion, the climax of Ben-Hur's life came. He was conscious of a change within him. A conception of something better than the best of this life began to dawn upon his mind clearer and clearer, bringing to him a certain sense that, after all, the mission of the Nazarene was that of a guide across the boundary for such as loved him, across the boundary to where his kingdom was set up and waiting for him. Then it seemed to Ben-Hur that he heard again the saying of the Nazarene: 'I am the Resurrection and the Life.' The words repeated themselves over and over, and took form, and the dawn touched them with its light, and filled them with a new meaning and understanding. Going over to where Balthasar was kneeling, Ben-Hur, laying his hand upon the good man's shoulder, said: 'O wise Egyptian, thou alone wert right, the Nazarene is indeed the Son of God.' Simonides, for his part, was deep in thought. It was at his suggestion that the little party drew near to the Cross, noting how the figure upon the centre one remained silent while the thieves upon either side of him groaned and cursed.

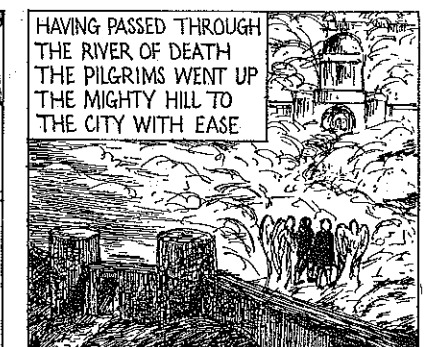
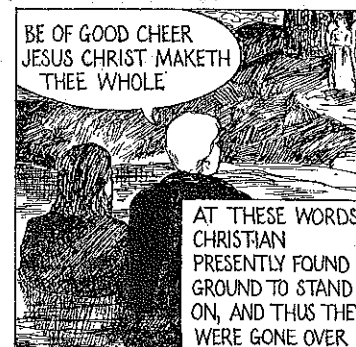
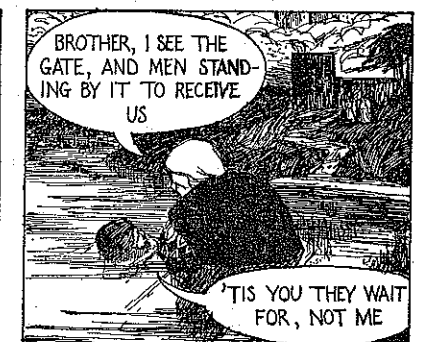
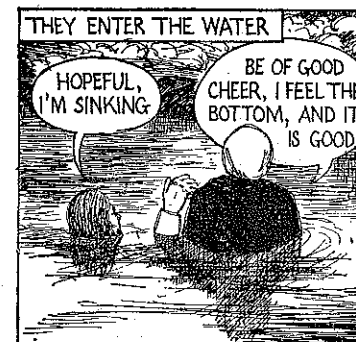
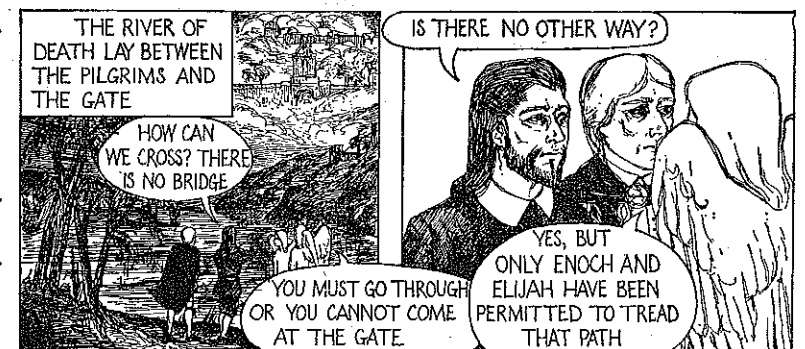
Simonides folded his hands and said: 'The darkness is gone. I see with other eyes.'

Even so was it with Ben-Hur himself.

The End

The Pilgrim's Progress

The Heavenly City



NOW I SAW IN MY DREAM, THAT THESE TWO MEN WENT IN AT THE GATE; AND LO, AS THEY ENTERED THEY WERE TRANSFIGURED, AND THEY HAD RAIMENT PUT ON THAT SHONE LIKE GOLD. THEN ALL THE BELLS IN THE CITY RANG FOR JOY, AND IT WAS SAID UNTO THEM, "ENTER YE INTO THE JOY OF YOUR LORD"

This story is from the book by General Lew Wallace, on which Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer have based their motion picture William Wyler's presentation of Ben-Hur. Photographs © by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Inc., 1961.

# QUESTION PAGE

**4187.** Why is so much importance given to the ancestors of St. Joseph, in tracing the ancestry of Jesus, when Joseph was not, in fact, his father?

The genealogies of our Lord in St. Matthew and St. Luke are to a large extent symbolic, and they illustrate the three stages of Jewish history, from Abraham (or Adam) to David, from David to the Exile, and from the Exile to Christ. It is important to remember that in Old Testament times women had no legal status, and it would have been unthinkable for a Jew to trace his ancestry through a woman. Relationship to a father by adoption was considered of greater importance than to a natural mother.

**4188.** May an agnostic be married in church?

All baptized persons are entitled to be married in church provided they have not formally disclaimed belief in the Christian Faith, or adopted a non-Christian religion; and can, with a good conscience and a right understanding, take their part in the marriage service. An agnostic, in cases where the other partner to the marriage is a believer, could presumably take part in the service with a good conscience by adopting the attitude 'I do not know whether this means anything or not. In so far as it does mean anything I am prepared to accept it.' The Church has never turned away those faced by honest doubts, and prays their doubts may be resolved.

## HOUSEWIVES' CHOICE

By Elizabeth Gundry

IF someone told you that a concoction containing vitamins, enzymes, proteins, amino acids, glucose, fructose, organic acids and saccharides was health-giving you would probably be impressed. To a lay mind, barely understood technicalities usually impress. If you were told that honey is beneficial, the information might not carry much weight. Familiarity breeds contempt.

All the constituents mentioned in the first paragraph are in an unimpressive pot of honey, so the moral is:

If an advertiser proclaims that his product contains some chemical bearing an awe-inspiring name, it is generally advisable to refuse to be awed until you have discovered the exact significance of the claim.

That is what SHOPPER'S GUIDE investigations have shown. In so many issues there have been analyses and test reports that included phrases such as 'negligible amount,' 'no appreciable value,' and debunking of a similar kind. And not only in that periodical. In a Government Committee Report there was this:

'Glucose beverages are at present widely advertised as a source of energy. If account is taken of the amounts likely

### Question of the Month

**4186.** Why was December 25th chosen as Christmas Day, as the actual date of Christ's birth has never been ascertained?

When Christmas Day was added to the Christian Calendar in the fourth century it was assumed that our Lord began his ministry exactly thirty years after his conception, and that his ministry lasted for exactly three years. It was calculated that the date of the Crucifixion was March 25th, and this was therefore fixed as the date of the Annunciation. The Nativity was fixed nine months afterwards on December 25th. A further reason was that in the Roman Empire December 25th was observed as the festival of the re-birth of the sun (after the passage of the shortest day) and was a day of national rejoicing. Christians turned the pagan festival into a Feast of the Church.

**4189.** How can Jesus be present in our hearts, and in the Blessed Sacrament, as well as in heaven?

Jesus is God, as well as man, and being God, is not limited in time or space. How this can be is beyond our limited human comprehension; but the Psalmist

expressed it in the language of poetry in Psalm 139:

If I climb up into heaven, thou art there: if I go down to hell, thou art there also.

If I take the wings of the morning: and remain in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there also shall thy hand lead me: and thy right hand shall hold me.

**4190.** Why do choirboys wear a cassock, surplice, and ruff?

Choirboys wear a cassock, surplice, and ruff because this was the uniform of the clergy in Elizabethan days. A cassock is convenient because it covers all one's ordinary garments. The white surplice symbolizes purity, and is referred to in the New Testament, for example, in Revelation 7. 9. The ruff, or Elizabethan starched collar, looks extremely well if it is clean and tidy, and has been adopted by many choirs.

**4191.** What are the responsibilities of a sacristan, and from whom is his authority derived?

A sacristan is responsible for the good order of the chancel, under the direction of the parish priest. It is for him to see that bread and wine are always available for Holy Communion, that candles are changed when necessary, and that the altar linen is always clean and available. His authority derives from the parish priest, under whose instructions he must act at all times.

Questions on the faith and practice of the Church should be sent to Question Page, THE SIGN, 28 Margaret Street, London, W.1, with a stamped addressed envelope for reply. Each will be answered by post individually; some will be printed on this page. A book token for 5s. will be awarded to the sender of each question published.

### Stain Removers

Nearly all household dry-cleaning fluids consist mainly of carbon-tetrachloride; some contain nothing else. If you provide your own bottle (tightly stoppered, as the stuff is volatile), most chemists will sell you some carbon-tetrachloride at about 3½d. per fluid ounce; if you buy a much-advertised branded cleaner you will pay at the rate of at least 4½d. a fluid ounce. That is the cheapest—the scale rises to as much as 1s. 2½d.

For the extra outlay you perhaps get an additional chemical or two, and in a few cases there are cleaning pads. But is the higher payment worth while? To answer this question SHOPPER'S GUIDE had half a dozen of the leading makes examined. The report was that the basic constituent of them all was tetrachloride (in two cases, that alone), and with the four to which something had been added decisions were that they might be 'slightly more efficient though not significantly,' 'doubt whether the additional chemicals would make the cleaner differ greatly in effect from plain tetrachloride' and 'does not differ greatly in cleaning properties.' Even when the additive bore such resounding names as perchlorethylene and petroleum hydrocarbon (a cheaper solvent than tetrachloride) the verdict was 'no appreciable improvement.'

# HOME AND GARDEN

## 1. MAKE YOUR OWN MINCEMEAT

By Hazel Macleod

HOME-MADE mincemeat is much nicer than the bought kind. I was given a jar of it last Christmas and liked it so much that I asked the friend who gave it to me for her recipe. She had obtained it in turn from an elderly relative and that is why it is named

### Deborah's Mincemeat

2 lb. apples when peeled, 1 lb. raisins, 1 lb. sultanas, 2 lb. currants, ½ lb. mixed peel, 1 lb. suet, rind and juice of two lemons, 2 lb. sugar, 2 teaspoonfuls grated nutmeg.

Put the apples (cored), raisins, peel and suet through the mincer. Add the currants and sultanas, the grated lemon rind and juice, sugar and spice.

Mix well. Allow to stand overnight before packing into jars and covering down. If you like you can moisten the mincemeat with a little rum or brandy, which will also improve its keeping quality, but this mincemeat does not seem to ferment very readily and we have, in fact, kept a jar for several months without the addition of any spirit—in a cool place, of course.

As a change from mincepies use your mincemeat for an open mince tart. Line a pie plate with a good shortcrust pastry. Put in your mince-

meat filling, covering it with a greased paper to stop it burning. Use your trimmings of pastry to make star shapes (cut out the shape from card if you haven't a star biscuit-cutter). Bake them on the shelf below the pie (oven 400°—No. 6) and place on the pie when it is cooked.



Mincepies at the party

## 2. MY GARDEN IN DECEMBER

By Dr. W. E. Shewell-Cooper

MANY people have electrically-heated greenhouses these days with the result that they can sow tomato seeds about the 20th of the month and thus ensure an early summer picking. The immune variety Syston Cross is the best for this purpose and the compost used should be the Eclipse No-Soil Compost. If you find the latter or the seed of the former

difficult to get, write to me enclosing a stamped addressed envelope.

See that your newly-planted trees are staked, for if they rock in the soil ever so slightly in the winter a cone-shaped depression is formed at the base of the stem. This fills up with water, breathing is stopped and the tree is killed. Watch the apples and pears in store. Diseased specimens must be removed. If the storehouse is too dry the fruit will shrivel; sprinkle the floor of a dry store with water occasionally to create a humid atmosphere. Hedges may be beautiful as well as useful. Now is the time to plant such fascinating hedges as Sloe Pink, Purple Flash and Flamboyant. Clear up the debris under your present hedges and put this on to the compost heap, sprinkling with a little fish manure. If this debris is left around insect pests will live in it over winter.

If the ground becomes hard and frozen, wheel barrowloads of well-rotted compost on to the soil and put it into heaps, i.e. one load to each 8 square yards. This will be ready to dig in when the thaw has taken place. Consult *The Complete Vegetable Grower* (Fabers). This book contains a complete chart showing exact quantities of seeds required for a family of four or five.

It's easy to force rhubarb under the staging of a heated greenhouse in the dark providing you use three- or four-year-old clumps and syringe them over from time to time. Another method of forcing is to cover the crowns outside with boxes or pots upside down and then to surround these with dung or straw.

## 24. SIXERS (age limit 13)

The second table will provide six names of famous people in the Bible. To discover these names, each of which has six letters, take the first letter from somewhere in column 1, the second from somewhere in column 2, and the third from somewhere in column 3, and so on.

When you have discovered the six names, write them on a sheet of paper and by the side of each name give one chapter from the Bible where that name is to be found.

Three book tokens for 5s. will be given for the best and neatest answers.

Entries for both puzzles should be addressed to the Puzzle Editor, THE SIGN, 28 Margaret Street, London, W.1. Closing date: December 15th.

Sept. winners: No. 17. Miss Marian Smith (Harrow), Mr. W. T. Jarvis (Leatherhead). No. 18. Caroline J. Evans (Woolstone, Cheltenham), Leonard Richardson (Leadgate, Co. Durham), John Denyer (Worthing).

## Richard Tatlock's Puzzles

### 23. SEVENSES (open to all)

This month brings us to the end of another year and the end of our puzzles on the shorter Epistles. It also brings me to my swan-song as Puzzle Editor and a retirement long overdue. Puzzle Page, 1962, will be 'under new management.'

Make words of seven letters (not six, five, or four, but seven) from this table according to the following rule: the first letter must come from column 1, the second from column 2, the third from column 3, and so on.

When you have made as many words as you can, discover how many of them occur in the First and Second Epistles of Paul to Timothy. Discard the rest.

For each word give the Epistle, chapter and verse number, and, please

note, the score will not be the number of words which occur in these Epistles, but the total number of references you

A	A	C	E	I	C	E	1	2	3	4	5	6
E	B	H	E	I	L	E	A	A	A	E	A	H
F	I	L	E	N	N	E	E	A	D	S	A	N
I	O	O	H	O	S	G	J	A	I	M	E	L
O	P	O	I	R	U	H	N	L	M	R	E	N
S	P	S	L	S	U	R	S	N	M	J	O	H
S	T	V	S	T	V	S	S	O	S	U	P	W

find. For example: if Timothy were one of the words and it occurred six times, it would give six towards your total score.

Two book tokens for 10s. 6d. will be awarded for the best entries.

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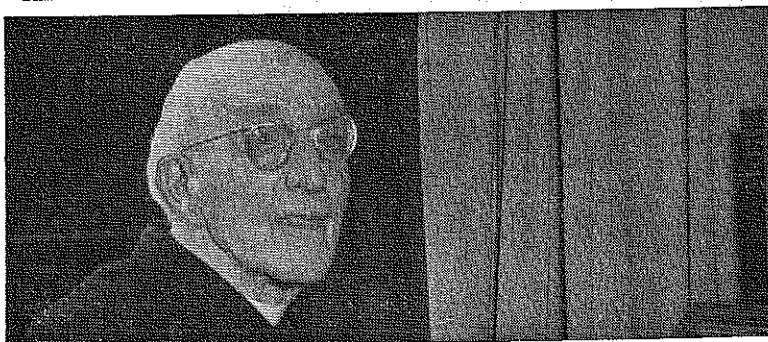


Christmas Eve—and a child dreams of the excitement to come. Gaily wrapped parcels... cheerful crackers... the tinsel-strewn tree. Won't you help us to make that dream a reality for all the children in our care? At this the season of goodwill we ask you to be especially generous so that they, too, will enjoy a Happy Christmas. Don't let us disappoint them.

*Please send a donation to:*

## DR. BARNARDO'S HOMES

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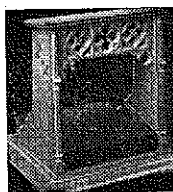
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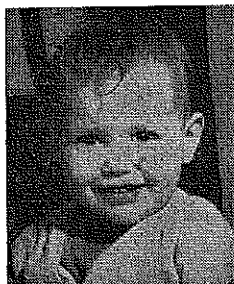
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