

SAINT JAMES AND HIS DAY

July 25, the day of our Patronal Festival, used to be a great day in our village — one of the outstanding days of the year in Victorian times, with bands, processions, sports and games and all the fun of the fair, as well as packed-out services in church. As the years have gone by it has become more and more shorn of its glory: for few people now have holidays at home, and large numbers are always away at this time of year. And for those who do stay at home there are far many more diversions than there used to be, so the kind of outlet that St. James's Day used to provide is no longer needed. The main observance and commemoration this year will be on the Sunday following, July 27, when as well as the usual Parish Breakfast, we are having another social gathering in the afternoon. This is a new idea. For eighteen years we have been having an 'At Home' after Evensong: but this time we are having it **before**, in the form of **Family Afternoon Tea** from 4.45 p.m. onwards, and so that the occasion may not be too long or late for children, the time of the evening service is being brought forward to 6.00 pm., and we hope to devise a special form to bring home the significance of the festival.

St. James, like many others of the great saints of old, is one round whom many legends have gathered in the course of time. An untrustworthy tradition represents him as preaching the gospel in Spain. He could not at any rate have been there long, because he must still have been a young man when he was put to death by Herod in Judea. The legend goes on to assert that after his martyrdom his body was placed on board ship and transported to Iria in the north-west of Spain under angelic guidance. The surrounding heathen were converted by the prodigies which witnessed to the power of the saint, and a church was built over his tomb.

During the barbarian invasions all memory of the hallowed spot was lost until it was revealed by vision in the year 800. The body was then moved by order of Alphonso II to a place now called Compostella, which became famous as a place of pilgrimage throughout Europe. (Some of our many parishioners who now take their summer holidays in Spain may well have visited it — or perhaps may be visiting it this year: if so, we should be very grateful if they would kindly write for us a short account of their experiences, and tell us what happens there to-day, as apparently it still draws in the crowds in their thousands, and many travel long distances to be there. We should be glad to publish a first-hand report about all this in a future issue). It is, I think, from Compostella that the shell-symbol for St. James is derived. Pilgrims either placed shells around the shrine, or took them away from there as sacred souvenirs of their journey.

The saint, under his Spanish name of Iago, soon became established as patron of Spain, and was believed to have appeared on many occasions, mounted on a white horse, leading the Spanish armies to victory against their infidel foes.

It should of course be said that Roman Catholic scholars have long since proved the impossibility of much in this legend, but so far it seems to have had little or no effect upon the worshipping congregations in Spain, and particularly I suppose in and around Compostella. We need not be surprised at that, because the legend is so colourful and appeals to such strong emotions as national pride and historic grandeur. Here is one example of the problem which the Pope is now facing with great

courage. The Roman Church has become hampered and hindered at every turn by a clutter of saints surrounded by unbelievable legends obscuring the Gospel where they do not actually obliterate it. Nothing is more urgent, as forward-looking Roman Catholic priests testify, than a widespread clearance from the Calendar of obscure and legendary saints, and the purging of unhistorical accretions from the commemoration of saints like James, whom we still rightly honour because of the sufficient true facts and well-attested traditions about them apart from the unnecessary fictitious and legendary additions. That this is going to prove an unpopular enterprise even for the Pope was clearly demonstrated by the flood of letters in newspapers throughout Britain when St. George was recently demoted. The passion displayed far exceeded what one could have expected if it were decided by the Pope that James should cease to be commemorated on July 25. But then the outburst would have been in Spain, and for much the same reason — national pride would have been outraged. But the Spaniards would have had a far stronger Christian ground, to say nothing of historical foundation, for their objection than the non-churchgoing Englishman defending St. George or his dragon.

THE JUNIOR COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

The Hampton Junior Council of Churches held an open meeting preceded by a brief A.G.M. on Sunday, May 12, in St. Mary's Parish Hall. Over eighty people attended including some parents and members of local congregations invited by the J.C.C. to see the epic film of a working weekend at Cranleigh. This is an 8 mm. film in colour shot by John Jackson of St. James's, edited by a team from J.C.C. and with a taped commentary put together by Anne Bilton, Chris Brooks and Sarah Carswell during hours of frenzied work — now we all know why epics cost so much to make!

The twenty-minute business meeting — other church organisations take note! — dealt with the constitution, accounts, reports on the year's activities, the election of a new chairman (Chris Brooks of Hampton Hill Congregational Church), and thanks to all those who had assisted J.C.C. during the year. If you wish to read the annual report I recommended this month's (June) Talking Point — I recommend it anyway.

Next year's junior ecumenical programme is being thrashed out. We hope that the older members of the churches will continue their support which is much appreciated. We hope that younger members will join us and above all we hope that joint endeavour in the name of Christ will increase in the coming year.

Anyone wishing to view the 20 minute film for themselves should contact Janet Robinson, 1 Jillian Close, Hampton, 979-8377.

THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL MEETING (concluded)

As a result of elections at the meeting, and co-options later, the Parochial Church Council now consists of the following in addition to the Vicar and the Churchwardens:

Representatives on the Ruri-Decanal Conference: Mesdames M. I. Milns, M. Orton; Messrs. L. Melville, F. E. Peel and A. Taylor.

Parochial Representatives: Miss O. R. Wright (Secretary); Mesdames D. Childs, M. Leatherdale, V. Maddox, I. V. Rockliffe, E. Severn; Messrs. R. Bridges, R. Brooks, S. Harris, J. Gostling, A. F. Brittain, B. Reep, H. Severn.

The Treasurer's report showed that our financial position is very satisfactory, giving us room to manoeuvre and not to be pressurised or stampeded by circumstances. So we were able to increase our giving to good causes, and still have reserves to draw upon when expenditure was needed to keep our own plant and equipment in good order. But he warned that this happy position is not one to be taken for granted: we could easily slip back, and there were signs of this happening, as the number of people making a regular commitment through Stewardship had decreased.

There are still spare copies of the accounts, and reports from the various church groups as presented at the meeting, on the bookstall table.

TO ADD TO BOOKLIST

Another book to add to the list of recommended reading on the Bible was recently published, and it is interestingly and vividly written, and clarifies many issues and problems. It is called "What about the Old Testament?", and is by John Bowden (SCM Press, 8/6). A review is in preparation, and will be printed in a later issue of the The Spire.

THE HAMPTON HILL OLD PEOPLE'S WELFARE COMMITTEE

At half-past-two on a Thursday
Hampton Hill folk wend their way—
Ladies and Gentlemen, large and small
Off to the Congregational Hall
Where, no matter if rain or shine
They're bound to have a jolly time.
A cake or biscuit, a cup of cheer;
No wonder they all gather here
On every side, to give a hand
To Mrs. Cox and her willing band.
Last week like bees set in a hive
They had some fun at a Beetle Drive.
I myself was in a fix
For it took me ages to throw a six,
While all around me Beetles fine
Were being drawn upon the line
And one by one the Ladies spry
Were calling out the "BEETLE" cry.
At length it was my awful fate
To finish up with 128.
And yet, to my complete surprise
I didn't get the Booby prize.

Then the Hall was set a-ringing
By lovely voices raised in singing.
Too soon it came to half-past four
And each one toddled to the door.
But more good days to come—a lot—
At our Club we call “Forget-me-not.”
So if at home you’re feeling blue
Be sure a welcome waits for you.
So don’t forget to come and play
At half-past-two on a Thursday
And drive away that lonely ache
With a song, some tea, and a piece of cake.
We want to make it a success
SO COME AND SHARE OUR HAPPINESS.

J. F. THOMPSON, O.A.P.

As you see by the above we have a poet in our midst!

In prose, in short, the Committee will be pleased to welcome any Hampton Hill Old Age Pensioner every Thursday at 2.30—4.30 p.m. at the Congregational Church Hall in the High Street, by kind permission of the Minister and friends of the Church. At the recent A.G.M. Mr. Cook, past Chairman, resigned after years of active interest, for which we offer him our sincere thanks. The Congregational Minister, the Rev. A. E. Hunter, has very kindly consented to become our new Chairman and Miss Olive Wright is also a welcome addition to our Committee as a new representative of St. James’s Church.

If YOU have a talent to amuse or entertain, or know anyone else who has, and would be willing to use it to give pleasure to our Club Members, please contact Mrs. L. Mills, 40 Oldfield Road, Hampton. Entertainments of ten to fifteen minutes—monologues, recitations, guitar playing, etc., will be received with pleasure and appreciation.

L.M.

TUESDAY CLUB

At our meeting on June 3 we heard Miss Petronella Reynolds, the London Region Organiser for Save the Children Fund, outline the work done both in this country and abroad. Her talk was extremely interesting and resulted in Dr. Jill Richards of 44, St. James’s Road, the local organiser, getting support for her group. Dr. Richards has written to the Editor of the Spire, thanking the Tuesday Club for their interest and expressing the hope that the S.C.F. will gain equal and additional support in their future activities.

FIFTEEN HUNDRED PAIRS OF BROWN EYES

“Needless to say, the chaplain’s work is not confined to formal preaching. We hope to get to know the boys on a much more personal level though this is easier said than done in a school of this size.” The speaker is C.M.S. missionary John Spencer who has recently gone as chaplain to Rikkyo High School for boys at Shiki in Japan. “With

everybody having brown eyes, black hair and the same black uniform, it's amazing how alike 1,500 boys can look, and remembering individual names and faces is a daunting task. However, we are able to meet boys in smaller groups not only when we are teaching English in the classroom, but in Bible study and conversation groups after school and also at more informal times when they drop in for various reasons—to practise their English, teach me to play the guitar, play with the children, etc. Only about 5% of the boys are Christians, which, although ten times higher than the national average of $\frac{1}{2}\%$, still leaves a pretty wide mission field! For many boys this school is their first contact ever with Christianity, so the impression they gain here is of vital importance. Do please pray for them and for the Christian teachers on the staff, who, unfortunately, are a small minority.”

ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL—SON ET LUMIERE

The Social Committee have purchased 51 Reserved Seats for the Evening Performance on Friday, September 19. A coach will leave the Church at 7.15 p.m.—returning afterwards—and the cost inclusive of admission will be 17/- per head.

Tickets may be obtained now from the Social Committee and early purchase is advisable to avoid disappointment.

GARAGE TO LET

There is a lock-up garage at Wayside which is now available for letting at a rental of 12/6 a week. Inquiries to Mr. Gostling at 21, St. James's Road (979 3748).

SOME DATES TO NOTE

- July 8.—8.00 p.m. Liturgical Committee (90, Ormond Drive).
- „ 9.—3.00 p.m. Party for mothers of babies recently baptised (W);
8.00 p.m. Drama Group (W).
- „ 11.—Members of the Young People's Fellowship leave for their weekend in Snowdonia.
- „ 14.—8.15 p.m. Properties Committee (31, Wellington Road).
- „ 15.—8.00 p.m. Parochial Church Council (W); Tuesday Club (W).
- „ 16.—3.45 p.m. Holy Communion for school-leavers (St. Anne's Chapel, L.E.H.S.).
- „ 17.—7.45 p.m. Newcomers' Party—by invitation (Hall).
- „ 19.—3.30 p.m. Old People's Party (Hall).
- „ 22.—8.00 p.m. Stewardship Committee (106, Park Road).
- „ 25.—SAINT JAMES'S DAY: BEGINNING OF PATRONAL FESTIVAL—9.00 a.m. Holy Communion.
- „ 27.—CONTINUATION OF PATRONAL FESTIVAL :
Arrangements as usual for the fourth Sunday, except that the Evening Service will begin at 6.00 p.m. and will be preceded by FAMILY AFTERNOON TEA on the Vicarage lawn (if wet, in Wayside) at 4.45 p.m.

BAPTISM

- On June 22 :
Adrian Lee Collins, 3, Sheffield House, Park Road.

MARRIAGES

- On June 7 :
Kenneth Richard Middleton to Diane Elizabeth Britton.
On June 14 :
Malcolm Lewis to Jeannette Ann Darling.

BURIALS

- On May 31 :
Amy Ball, Gaffs Park Nursing Home, Crawley, aged 95 years.
On June 24 :
Catherine Robins, Springfield Hospital (formerly of 24, Seymour Road), aged 86 years (at Twickenham Cemetery).
On June 25 :
Mary Lilian Margaret Scott, 24, Fitz Wygram Close, aged 67 years (at Hampton Cemetery).
On July 2 :
Charles Franklin Knight, 7, Arundel Close, aged 66 years (at Hampton Cemetery).