

SPURGEONS HOMES

Spurgeon's Homes were founded as the Stockwell Orphanage by the late Charles Haddon Spurgeon in 1867. The present Homes at Birchington were built after the last war (1951-53) in spacious surroundings and were designed to accommodate about 200 children, ranging from a few weeks old to school leaving age.

The Chapel, seating 200, completes the layout of the homes and is to the design of Donald G. Robertson, F.R.I.C.S., M. Inst. R.A. It is of lofty and impressive appearance and has remarkably good acoustics for both speech and music. **The Organ** specification was drawn up in consultation with John Wilmshurst, F.R.I.C.S., a trustee of Spurgeon's Homes. It is designed to give a well equipped basic instrument without frills, using octave duplexing to give flexibility whilst avoiding the compromises of extension.

The New Organ and Chapel were dedicated on May 13th 1961.

£100,000 Babies' Home is opened at Birchington

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The former matron of old Baby Home in Birchington Hall became the first to enter the new Spurgeon's Babies' Home, Birchington at the official opening on Saturday. Miss Alice Goodhew, of Herne Bay, a former matron of Birchington Hall, who had worked with Spurgeon's Homes for 36 years, was the first to enter the new wing after it had been officially opened by Dr. and Mrs. Ernest A. Payne. Dr. Payne, General Secretary of the Baptist Union, declaring the new home open, said: "This is one of the greatest developments of Spurgeon's Homes." Talking about the need of a new babies' wing, he added, "I am sure that the need to train and teach the children is as great today as it was in 1867, when the homes were first started."

After the official opening, the Rev. Dr. J. Ithel Jones (President of the Baptist Union and Principal of the South Wales Baptist College), preached at a service in the chapel before the ceremony, after which the babies' wing was opened to the public.

This wing was started in August, 1965, and cost £100,000. It has been planned to accommodate 40 children from a few days old up to the toddler stage. The children have a staff of 20 qualified and trainee nurses, and each member of staff has her own room. The children are kept in small family groups to avoid the home being run like a school.

The home has been built on the same lines as the rest of the homes, being designed by Mr. Donald Robertson, of Camberwell and the opening has formed part of the Spurgeon's Homes centenary celebrations. Despite heavy rain and thunder storms, about 1,000 from various parts of Kent and London attended the opening.

"We were very pleased with the large number that attended our celebration and if the weather had been better we could have been embarrassed by a larger crowd," said Mr. Thomas P. Anderson, principal of Spurgeon's Homes. After the official opening, the children took many of the visitors around the whole of the home, showing them every room. The Mayor of Margate (Ald. A. W. Adams) and the 12 Trustees of the Homes were present.