

THE LIBRARY

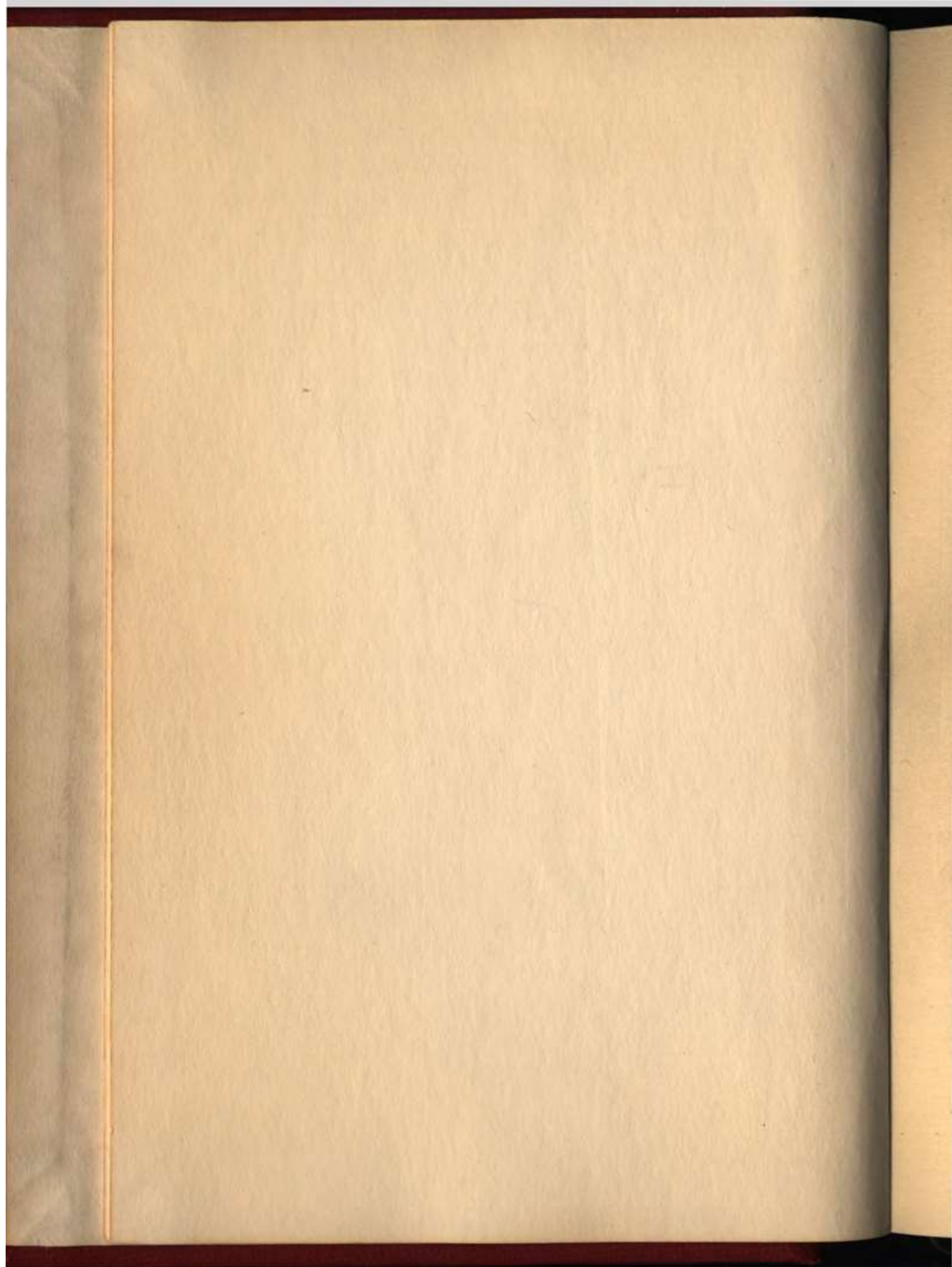


248

H247

35







SAINTS RUN MAD

*By the same author*

GO WEST, GO WISE

SAINTS RUN MAD



# SAINTS RUN MAD

A CRITICISM OF THE "OXFORD"  
GROUP MOVEMENT

*by*

MARJORIE HARRISON

*With a Foreword by*

THE BISHOP OF DURHAM

"The worst of madmen is a saint run mad."

POPE—HORACE, BOOK I, EP. VI.

UNIVERSITY OF  
MINNESOTA  
LIBRARY

LONDON

JOHN LANE THE BODLEY HEAD LTD.



SALVITS RUN MAD

A CRITIQUE OF THE  
THOUGHT MOVEMENT

MALCOLM MARRIOTT

WITH A FOREWORD BY  
THE BISHOP OF DURHAM

*First published in 1934*

TO THE  
ALDERMAN  
YARLEY

MADE AND PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN  
BY THE BOWERING PRESS, PLYMOUTH

J OF M BINDERY JUL 26 '32

APR 10 '35

AYLEN



248  
H247

## FOREWORD

THIS little book is timely. It gives a picture, drawn from life, of Buchmanism in practice. The details are clearly marked with an almost photographic accuracy. Miss Harrison is a keen observer, and a discriminating critic. Moreover, she has the pen of a ready writer. I am glad of the opportunity of commending what she has written to the careful consideration of all who are interested in Dr. Buchman's Movement, and, perhaps, not a little puzzled as to its character and tendency.

My own carefully formed estimate of the Movement is generally known. I hold it to be unsound in its distinctive features, and unwholesome in its permanent effects. I regret that the precipitate complaisance which has led many excellent Christians, including some eminent ecclesiastics, to associate themselves with it, has had the effect of obscuring the unsoundness, while the permanent ill-effects will for obvious



## FOREWORD

reasons hardly be proclaimed from the house-tops.

What will be the future of Buchmanism? In itself it has slight promise of survival; for the sensational advertisement which has secured its rapid success must necessarily lose its impressiveness, and neither "sharing", nor "guidance", nor even the quasi-hypnotic domination of Dr. Buchman himself is likely to be permanently effective. It is noteworthy that, with few exceptions, the Buchmanite converts are drawn from those who already belong to Christian denominations. The Movement does not extend appreciably the area within which Christianity prevails. Will the excitement die down, and the zealots be absorbed again in the existing Churches? Or, will a new Sect arise, and traverse the too-familiar cycle of sectarian life?

In any case, we cannot doubt that, while many persons have been influenced for good, many have been brought to spiritual bankruptcy.

HERBERT DUNELM.

AUCKLAND CASTLE,

*March 6th, 1934.*



## CONTENTS

| CHAP. |   | PAGE |
|-------|---|------|
|       | FOREWORD . . .                              | vii  |
| I.    | INTRODUCTORY . . .                          | I    |
| II.   | REVIVALISM UP TO DATE . . .                 | 17   |
| III.  | THE FOUR-FOLD RULE . . .                    | 36   |
| IV.   | THE GUIDANCE OF GOD . . .                   | 53   |
| V.    | SHARING . . .                               | 69   |
| VI.   | LIFE-CHANGERS . . .                         | 85   |
| VII.  | THE JOY AND THE FUN AND THE<br>THRILL . . . | 97   |
| VIII. | MEET DR. BUCHMAN . . .                      | 110  |
| IX.   | A HOUSE PARTY . . .                         | 122  |
| X.    | QUO VADIS ? . . .                           | 136  |





## SAINTS RUN MAD



## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTORY

THOSE who by an accident of birth belong to what is curiously described as the "educated" and "leisured" class are regarded by the Buchmanites or—as they cleverly but inaccurately prefer to call themselves—the Oxford Group, as suitable material for their activities.

I am a member of this class. I was educated at a select school for the daughters of gentlemen—that is to say, I am entirely self-educated. As for leisure, to quote the incomparable Ogden Nash : "I would live all my life in nonchalance and insouciance were it not for making a living which is rather a nounciance."

Those of us, then, who are regarded as suitable material for the "life-changing" methods of Buchmanism, doubly suitable if we are critically minded, have a right to question how this metamorphosis is to be brought about and the results it is likely to produce. And we *do* question it



## SAINTS RUN MAD

here, there and everywhere : in the columns of the Press : in drawing-rooms and clubs : in student bed-sitting rooms : over dinner-tables, and under the "lovingly relentless" eyes of Groupers themselves at innumerable meetings and occasional House Parties. The House Party is a name designed apparently to give a social cachet and a worldly flavour to the concentrated activities of the Group spread over several days and centred in a private house, a college, or a luxury hotel.

But so far our questionings have brought no adequate answer, and this has only served to deepen our misgivings.

Many of us have read—or valiantly attempted to read—*For Sinners Only*, but have received no assurance from this. It is the main "text-book" of the Movement and it is also a piece of incredibly cheap journalese. I emerged from its study feeling as if someone had attempted to drown me in a bath of treacle. Its sickly sentimentality and grotesque examples of "Guidance", especially, are a sufficient proof that there is something very wrong with this new form of revivalism. Its propagandist value must be doubtful, for it must have warned off as many as it has attracted.



## INTRODUCTORY

Many prominent people, both among the clergy and among members of the University of Oxford have already written or spoken with gravity of their fears regarding the Movement. So far as I know I am the first critic from among the rank-and-file of potential converts. My book is by no means a record of my own opinions and impressions. I have heard the majority of the doubts expressed over and over again. In that sense I am but a spokesman.

The Group insists upon regarding critics as base people ready to "crab" any spiritual endeavour. They refuse to see them as men and women who are anxious to find a solution to their own and the world's problems, but who fail to see the answer in what appears to be the singularly facile doctrine of Buchmanism.

There must be thousands who, having shared an upbringing and outlook similar to my own, regard Dr. Frank Buchman's Revival from an almost identical standpoint. They, like myself, are full of admiration for the high endeavour that undoubtedly actuates the majority of the Group members. But we are repulsed by the emotional appeal, alarmed by the sometimes unfortunate results of "conversion" on formerly normal



people, and disgusted by the levity and cheap jokes that destroy the dignity of true religion and mitigate the seriousness of sin in the proper sense of the word. We refuse to accept the doctrine of Divine Guidance as it is interpreted by them.

We have seen "sharing" (or the public and private confessions of the Buchmanites) result if the subject is inexperienced and sensitive—in depression and besmirching.

As for the snowball activities of the Group whereby every new convert is bound to go out and interfere with the lives of his fellows in an effort to "change" them, that appears to be often impertinent and unnecessary.

I regard the Oxford Group Movement from the point of view of those who believe that religion in all its aspects has never been more absorbingly interesting or more vitally important than at present. Nominal Christianity is mercifully a thing of the past. The days—not so long gone by—when it was associated merely with respectability are over.

To-day once again, as it was two thousand years ago, the Christian philosophy of life is a lively and debated interest among men and women



## INTRODUCTORY

of the world. Every thinking person is faced with the question, "What think ye of Christ?"

In order to make clear my approach to the Oxford Group interpretation of Christianity, I should like to say something about my own religious background, because I believe it is one that is shared by so many potential Groupers who have had a conventional—though none the less sincere—religious teaching.

I was brought up in the fear of God in the days immediately before the War, when little girls wore pinafores and pigtails and were told that they should be seen and not heard.

My mother read to me from "Peep of Day" and "Line upon Line", and I was taught, among many things, to believe in Adam and Eve and the Flood that destroyed the whole world, including Breconshire where we lived.

Religion permeated every part of one's life: it was as natural as sleeping and eating. One said one's prayers with the same regularity as one cleaned one's teeth. One gabbled "Thank God for my good dinner," whispered a panic-stricken "Please, God, help me down" when one got stuck at the top of a tree, and "Please God, take care of me," when forced to go upstairs in the dark.



## SAINTS RUN MAD

The New Testament was taught against the background of the Old Testament, and both were interpreted through the formal dignity of the Church of England. I piped my treble "Amen" to robust curses on Ash Wednesday, as cheerfully as I sang "While Shepherds Watch" at Christmas time.

Then came schooldays.

In a definitely Church school the effect of much religious teaching and many chapel services is varied. In some cases it may deepen the sense of religion, but if there is a dawning bias towards the world, the flesh and the Devil it may have the reverse effect. Bed called in the morning more insistently than the bell that rang only just early enough to allow one to get through one's dressing and arrive in chapel in time.

Lessons were frankly a nuisance. The only satisfactory thing in the whole time-table was the moment when one came to the end of a geometrical theorem. Logical conclusions gave a sense of completion and satisfaction. In future, if a rule could be proved to be sensible I lost at least some desire to break it. I was ready to listen to reason. People who could give reasonable answers to my questions earned great re-



## INTRODUCTORY

spect. And I wanted grown-ups from the depths of their infallible wisdom, to give me proof of the correctness of many things.

Very early in schooldays the rainbow story had been shattered in all its beauty. It was not really hung by God in the sky just to prove that He would never drown the world again. No, it was only the rain with the sun shining through. Heaven was not "above the bright blue sky", after all. The blue was not the floor of Heaven, but nothingness—just empty, unending space. And Hell apparently, was not somewhere in the bowels of the earth midway between here and Australia.

People now said something about Heaven and Hell being "states" and not "places". Perhaps then, much that one had been told, and in which one believed implicitly, was either untrue or quite different?

One grew older and heard a little about the theory of evolution. Then how about Adam and Eve? Just another story, apparently. But everyone who went to church at home believed in the Garden of Eden implicitly. I no longer believed it, and felt rather superior and daring in consequence. But it was easier and more reasonable to



believe that the world grew very slowly. It seemed, too, that there were clever people who could write "Q.E.D." to that theory.

But no one ever explained that the first chapter of Genesis was the story of evolution told in simple manner, and that the sequence of Creation was precisely the same as that taught by the evolutionist.

If the tales in the Old Testament were not to be taken literally, what reason was there to suppose that the New Testament was absolutely true?

I was about seventeen when I asked a clergyman some question—I forget what it was—that arose from my bewilderment. He said, "My child, I don't know. It's better to leave these questions alone. They only upset you." That was not very helpful; besides, questions won't leave *you* alone. They nag at you with their incessant, "Why?"

As I grew older there was a good deal about religion that I did not like, though it was too ingrained a habit to shake off. I hated—frankly hated—going to church. The children of the clergy are brought up to be Good Examples, and frequently live to be Awful Warnings, largely because they confuse true religion with an excess



## INTRODUCTORY

of church-going and church activities, of which they have had a surfeit.

It is easy, alas ! to lose sight of Christ if the Church looms very largely in the foreground.

By this time a great many precepts had to be thrown overboard as rubbish. The "Be good and you'll be happy" slogan, for instance, and "Be sure your sins will find you out." The more one saw of life the more one realised that the Psalmist was nearer the truth when he lamented that "the wicked flourish". The idea that happiness depended on yourself was obviously another yarn. Happiness depended on other people, and that being so, probably other people's happiness depended on you. It seemed a more moral as well as a more reasonable point of view.

I suppose most people who have lived in the world and known all kinds and conditions of men and women must have reflected that the conventional interpretation of Christianity is in some ways very wrong.

I remember hearing a nineteen-year old girl, who had landed herself in a nice pickle through the threatened production of an unauthorised baby, say, "I don't know where to go. I can't



stay in my rooms. You see, the people are very religious."

What a contrast to "Let him that is without sin cast the first stone" and "Neither do I condemn thee." The "good" often seemed to be interpreting their Master's teaching in a strange manner. "What think ye of Christ?" Is He the monopoly of the respectable or the friend of sinners? And by "friend" I mean friend—a Man who chose them for His companions because He liked their society, and Who influenced them unconsciously by reason of the charm of His goodness and the power of His personality, and not through any deliberate "missionising".

There are thousands upon thousands of men and women of my generation who, up to this point in the spiritual quest will have had an almost similar experience.

They, too, will have had a fundamentalist upbringing first shaken by even that small amount of scientific teaching which comes the way of the most casual education. The Church failed her children when she refused to look facts in the face and to show that science was but a further revelation and not contrary to the essentials of true religion.



## INTRODUCTORY

They became further estranged by the smug respectability of so many professing Christians at a time when smug respectability was the last thing in the world that they wished to achieve.

They saw their generation tormented in the hell of war that easily outdid the worst fundamentalist version. In that blinding darkness the faith of such men as Donald Hankey and Albert Ball shone like lights by which lesser men and women could grope their way to sanity.

They staggered out into a world, fit for heroes indeed, for none but the heroic could survive, and learned that if the battlefield could be the place of Hell, then the post-War world could be the state of Hell. Many of them had been brought up on the Church Catechism and taught to submit themselves to all their governors, teachers, spiritual pastors and masters.

They found their governors were a laughing-stock ; and where were the spiritual pastors and masters of the post-War world ?

But out of that medley of bewilderment and disillusion thousands of them built up some kind of a religious philosophy by which they lived. They did not go to church very much because the services of the Church were somehow out of



touch with their needs; but they said their prayers and tried to do their best. Some managed to side-step the coldness of organised religion and reach the warmth and succour of the Sacraments. They had their background of religious teaching, and they rescued from it all that seemed sweet and sound and that had stood the test of Hell. It is background that matters more than environment.

Many found a refuge and a home in the revival of a pre-Reformation teaching, through the Anglo-Catholic section of the Church of England, thanks to the saintly Oxford Tractarians of a hundred years ago. Here they found the colour and warmth and poetry of religion as well as sane teaching. Some clung to the teaching, but shied away from the strain of emotionalism that they distrusted. Or they disliked the attitude of infallibility adopted by so many Anglo-Catholics, and the effort to force their conservatism too quickly. These were but small matters, however, and only hindered, but did not quench the revival of life in the Church of England.

Others, a comparatively small number, still kept in touch with the more formal religious organisation that they knew as children. Large



## INTRODUCTORY

numbers gave up bothering about religion. Far more evolved for themselves an unformulated and very simple way of life based upon the teachings of Christ, and followed it as best they could.

It was not against their code to dance and go to the cinemas and play games on Sunday, although the Church lifted hands of horror and complained of the irreligion of the modern world. The Church took scant notice of the growing charity and kindness and the fact that so many people lived decent lives in a time more difficult than any before. How could this be if they were indifferent and irreligious?

Newspaper editors, with their understanding of public demand, decided that religion was a best-seller as a subject for articles and debates.

Other people discovered that religion was welcomed. There appeared one, Frank Buchman, an American, with sound ideas on high-pressure salesmanship and the advantage of advertising.

He said in effect: "You want the best seats; I have them. Walk right up and join in the joy and the thrill and the fun. All troubles solved. No thought needed. Personal attention guaranteed."



## SAINTS RUN MAD

And a post-War generation, lonely in the midst of crowds, hungry in the midst of plenty, with neither standards nor stable background, thought that it sounded good to them. They were joined by those of their elders who were equally at a spiritual loose end.

Many of them had pronounced Christianity to be a failure. But Christianity had not "been tried and found wanting". It had "been found difficult and not tried" and a milk-and-water version had been substituted. The Oxford Group's appeal largely lay in the promise of the joy and the thrill and the fun. All as easy as that.

There were other men and women attracted by all that was good in the teaching—the teaching of Christianity, but taken out of its context of suffering and elaborated with some attractive additions. It is to such as these—and among them that gentle and saintly prelate, Dr. Foss Westcott, Bishop of Calcutta and Metropolitan of India—that the Oxford Group owes the preservation of the sound core of Christianity in the midst of the exaggerations, follies, fanaticisms, inconsistencies, thoughtlessness and dangerous theological teaching in which it is en-



## INTRODUCTORY

wrapped. These people were selective, choosing the good and leaving out the bad.

But for the thousands of converts there are tens of thousands who, while acknowledging all that is good, are dismayed and horror-struck by so much that is wrong. They are anxious on behalf of those who are not essentially discriminating. They know that materialism has failed, and that a spiritual revival is needed and has been taking place for many years past. But that is a different thing from revivalism.

Prominent Groupers who have heard of my intention to write this book have alternately attempted to bully or bribe me into relinquishing the idea. On the one hand, I have been told that "it will not be a seller"—that "it will be damned at the outset" and "that it will make dull reading"; and on the other hand I have been urged with promises of commercial success to write in *favour* of the Movement, apparently regardless of whether I am convinced or not. The "wide field" for such a book has been spread temptingly before my eyes. Although the present book has been condemned unread as "dull", the other has been praised unwritten as a "best seller". I have been obliged to reply that



in all honesty I must associate myself with the large and growing body of thoughtful people who are seriously alarmed at certain aspects of the Group teaching and practice. I have begged my Grouper friends to believe that the critics are not unsympathetic. They would be only too glad to welcome the Group if certain teachings were explained so that they were acceptable to conscience and to intellectual honesty. I hope, but hardly expect, that such an answer will be made. In the absence of any such assurance the grave doubts and misgivings that now obtain must continue and increase.

It would seem from my experience that the Group is somewhat afraid of criticism. One wonders why. Is it because the leaders fear that no convincing answer can be made to the question, "What is the Oxford Group, and is it a sound and good interpretation of the Christian teaching?"

T  
in  
and  
Gro  
I  
An  
Per  
six  
T  
call  
(wh  
of  
Phi  
F  
Per  
Lut  
he  
mer  
A  
inv



17-35

## CHAPTER II

### REVIVALISM UP TO DATE

THE latest experiment in revivalism was tried out in the United States of America, launched in China, introduced into England at Cambridge, and for no good reason is called "the Oxford Group".

Its founder is Dr. Frank N. D. Buchman, an American Lutheran minister. He was born in Pennsburg, Pennsylvania, and is now about fifty-six years old.

The Soul Surgeon, as some of his followers call him, was educated at Muhlenberg College (where he was later given an honorary Doctorate of Divinity) and at Mount Airy Seminary, Philadelphia.

He started his ministerial career at Overbrook, Pennsylvania, and was afterwards attached to a Lutheran settlement house in Philadelphia, where he was in charge of a hospice for boys and young men.

After five years he appears to have become involved in a quarrel with his committee. What-



ever the rights or the wrongs of the case may have been, there seems to have been considerable bitterness on each side. Dr. Buchman resigned and set out for his first visit to Europe.

Eventually he arrived at Keswick to attend a religious convention, and here he claims to have undergone some supernatural or visionary experience.

While at Keswick, and immediately following his conversion, Dr. Buchman discovered a remarkable capacity for influencing young men.

In the course of a walk one evening he claims to have "changed the life" of a young Cambridge man who was staying in the same house. He was evidently impressed by this success, and attracted by its possibilities. When he returned to America he did not take up another pastorate, but became Y.M.C.A. Secretary at Pennsylvania State College. Here he experimented as a "life-changer" in real earnest.

In this way the corner-stone of the new revivalist movement was laid, for one of the most important facets of the Movement is the insistence upon a definite conversion that can be pinned down to some specified time, place, and emotional condition, rather than upon the slow building-up



of the religious life on a completely unemotional basis.

Dr. Buchman spent six years at the college. During this time he developed the gift for personal influence that he had discovered at Keswick, and claims to have brought about several spectacular conversions.

During 1916 he was travelling in India, Korea and Japan. In 1917 he was back in America with an appointment as extension lecturer at Hartford Theological Seminary. Whether he found this to be an unfruitful field is not known, but he did not remain there long. In the following year he was once more in China and launching his first House Party. Since that time House Parties have been the chief means of expanding the Movement.

And then Dr. Buchman decided to turn his attention towards England. He arrived at Cambridge, armed with introductions to undergraduates from people he had met abroad, and started what has been described as "a conversational work among the students".

By this time he had a certain following on three continents. He seems to have regarded his work in Cambridge as successful, for on his return to the United States he applied similar methods in



several American universities. He then imported into England some of his converted American students, and reciprocated by taking back certain picked men from this country.

In the summer of 1921, the first English House Party was held at Cambridge. By this time, Buchmanism (a term that did not find favour with the Buchmanites) was established in England and the U.S.A. An effort was made to change the name to "First Century Christian Fellowship". The term "Oxford Group" was adopted later.

There are many people who contend that the first precept of the Movement, "absolute honesty", is infringed by this inaccurate title. That the name remains unchanged, in spite of the annoyance caused, certainly seems a breach of the rule of "absolute unselfishness".

Those who object, and with good cause, are usually members of the University, or people who are interested in the very different Oxford Movement which originated with Dr. Pusey a hundred years ago.

The juxtaposition of "Oxford" and "Movement" has been a happy one from Dr. Buchman's point of view for, apart from the social and



intellectual *cachet* of the place name, it has undoubtedly brought the reflected glory and the reflected publicity of the true Oxford Movement. The Centenary Celebrations of the Oxford Movement taking place, as they did, three months before the launching of the intensive campaign of the Group in the autumn of 1933, has caused a natural confusion in the mind of the public.

Possibly it is partly because of this similarity that the title has not been altered. Dr. Buchman, as I shall presently show, realises that the uses of publicity are sweet.

Oxford is proud of such men as Newman, Keble, and Pusey, but it repudiates the Buchmanites. In the whole University there are only about two hundred members. In the interests of absolute honesty I shall, in future, refer to the organisation by its truer title of *Buchman Group Movement* or *Buchmanism*.

Here is the official explanation of the use of the name "Oxford", sent to me by Dr. Buchman and signed by the Rev. A. E. C. Thornhill, Fellow and Chaplain of Hertford College; the Rev. C. F. Allen, Fellow and Chaplain of Lincoln College; and Miss C. L. Morrison, Tutor to the Society of Oxford Home Students :



"To millions of people throughout the world the name 'Oxford Group' represents a re-awakening of vital Christianity. This re-awakening has been brought to them for the most part by Oxford men and women, both dons and undergraduates, who base their lives on their motto '*Dominus Illuminatio Mea*'.

"The name was given first of all to a group of undergraduates who went out from this University to South Africa in 1928, accompanied by a Chaplain to the Oxford Pastorate. It became current usage in public periodicals in England and abroad to the extent that its general adoption became natural and inevitable. From Oxford trained leadership has gone out for thirteen years to establish the movement in over forty countries and in all these countries the name 'Oxford Group' has been accepted as the logical title to be used.

"The world does not suppose that the Oxford Group speaks the unanimous opinion of Oxford, any more than the Oxford Movement of a hundred years ago had this unanimous backing. Because there are some to-day who disagree with the principles of this Christian re-awakening it does not therefore follow that the cognomen should be dropped, any more than it was incumbent on Pusey, Newman and Keble to disavow their Oxford association.

"Oxford men and women in hundreds have



## REVIVALISM UP TO DATE

found this movement a means of discovering a vital religious faith. They realise the utter confusion contingent upon the changing of a name that has become identified in millions of minds with the Christian message. There are many Group Movements in England alone, of which the Oxford Group is only one. To alter the word 'Oxford' would be unnecessary, confusing and seriously detrimental in these days of urgency to the cause of Christ."

The comments that I would make on this are as follows :

Only about one-twentieth part of the University of Oxford appears to associate itself with the Buchman Group Movement. The proportion outside this comparative stronghold is very much less. To talk, therefore, in terms of "millions" seems to be an exaggeration. On the other hand, to say that "there are some who disagree" is an under-estimate. And those who do disagree do not find fault with any re-awakening of Christianity, but purely and simply with certain Buchman Group principles. Tragically enough the name "Oxford Group" is not identified in the minds of millions with the Christian message. [Because of its exaggerations and fanaticisms it is associated with an emotional revival full of laugh-



able absurdities, and bringing in its train, all too often, by no means laughable but very sad results.

As I have already said, Oxford is proud of the Tractarians but the University as a whole violently resents the use of the name "Oxford" in connection with this new movement. Some of the most powerful elements in the Group are Americans, beginning with Dr. Buchman himself and continuing with the Rev. Cleveland Hicks, Mr. K. Twitchell, and Miss Eleanor Forde—all right-hand helpers of Dr. Buchman and in great evidence at Group House Parties. Another prominent member is Mr. Loudon Hamilton, who, however is an Oxford man. Properly speaking any credit or blame—if it is to be associated with a place—should be given to America where the Movement originated.

The world does not indeed suppose that the Group speaks the unanimous opinion of Oxford. It fully realises that it not only represents a minority of opinion but that some of the strongest criticisms and denunciations come from members of the University.

I do not agree that the cause of Christianity is in any way dependent on a name. I do, however, agree that it might be difficult to alter the name at



Va. Gleason

## REVIVALISM UP TO DATE

this stage without some confusion. But it would not have been difficult when exception was first taken to it. Its use may be justified for reasons of expediency but not of accuracy.

Dr. Buchman has permitted one of his admirers to liken him to such giants as St. Francis, Martin Luther and John Wesley. In this he sets an example to his followers, for the Movement is remarkable among all other revivals for its complete and utter lack of humility. It believes that it may achieve the reunion of Christendom, although it includes a new doctrine that would never be acceptable by any Church.

Failing this, it considers that it may become "just another gem or facet of Christendom like those affectionately associated with Augustine, Francis, Luther, Wesley, Booth and Moody". The linking of these names is, in itself, one of the many absurdities of which the Group is guilty. The patronising reference to the work of two of the greatest saints of the Church, two great Christian teachers and the founder of the great and practical Salvation Army, is sufficient proof of the assertion that the Buchman Group suffers from what, to use their own jargon, is popularly known as "swelled head".



## SAINTS RUN MAD

The name of Dwight Moody is the only one in this list that might be correctly associated in a comparison. That of Billy Sunday under whom Dr. Buchman once worked might be added.

Buchmanism has been likened to the Salvation Army. There is a similarity with a vital difference. The Salvation Army is chiefly known to the general public through its tambourine-banging at street corners. In this, there is indeed a likeness with the Buchmanites. The Salvation Army has deliberately adopted a method that it considers suitable and successful in attracting corner men and women. The Group uses measures equally undignified as a means of appeal to gilded youth. In place of the tambourines it has a slangy jargon : instead of sanguinary hymns, modern catch-phrases : its emotional appeal is subtle and insidious instead of blatant. Above all, and in this it differs from every other form of revivalism, the "penitents' bench" with its genuine, if hysterical manifestations of sorrow, is superseded by the slap-stick confessional.

But apart from superficial methods, there is no other likeness between the Salvation Army and the Group Movement.

Behind the band at the street corner there is a



## REVIVALISM UP TO DATE

great, hard-working organisation that fulfils in the widest sense the first part of St. James's definition of true religion—"to visit the widow and fatherless in their affliction".

The Salvation Army concerns itself with the upbringing of destitute children, the provision of homes for aged people, the after-care of prisoners, the well-being of emigrants : with unemployment and its trail of tragedies : with healing of body as well as of spirit.

Dr. Buchman has been severely criticised, both here and in America, for his concentration on the souls of the well-fed. It has been said that even in the Colleges the greatest attention is given to "the apple-cheeked boys of wealth and family". The Movement has been accused of applying the effective principle of "snob appeal" which is used by advertisers who seek for their wares the endorsement of some well-known name. It is believed that the social climbing instinct of the masses will induce them to follow such exalted examples.

The Bishop of Durham, in his famous letter to *The Times* which was printed on September 19th, 1933, says that following a Charge to his Diocese, published in December, 1932, he had been the recipient of many illuminating letters. He goes



on to say that among other things his correspondents "express disgust at the toadying of rich and prominent individuals, at the unscrupulous and even unwarrantable use made of well-known names".

This charge of social interest is among the least of the criticisms that can be levied, for God knows that the children of the Ritz are, of all men, the most spiritually desolate; and, after all, as the Bishop of Guildford has remarked, "The rich have souls like the rest of us!"

The Bishop of Rochester has said of the Group: "Its sense of social wrong is very weak". Certainly Dr. Buchman has yet to prove that he inculcates a sense of responsibility towards less materially fortunate people.

At the last meeting of the House Party, held in the Grand Hotel at Eastbourne in December, 1933, a young girl stood up to testify to her surrender to God. She was an exceptional young woman, because she was one of the few people who did not use the opportunity to tell everyone all about herself. She had the courage to beg a well-fed and well-dressed audience to consider the needs of the poor.

"When I see so many fur coats," she said, "I



cannot help thinking of all those who have no warm clothing in this bitter weather. I think we ought to consider whether we have the right to so many comforts when there are others who have so little."

Up rose Dr. Buchman in his wrath. He seemed to resent the reminder. He appeared to take it as a personal affront. He valiantly defended his own fur coat.

"It was a hand-over," he said. "Before you criticise, find out the history of these fur coats! There is no difference between the rich and the poor."

Well, well, well. Remarkably illuminating, but not very inspiring. Not a word of commendation for a courageous appeal. The unfortunate young woman was made to feel a fool. "Don't think I'm thinking about you," Dr. Buchman shouted at her. "I've forgotten all about *you*." And the whole audience roared with laughter. The appeal was side-tracked—not skilfully, but through bluster.

Wealthy ladies, momentarily startled, settled their furs more comfortably about them. Not one in that audience of three hundred or more backed that appeal to their pity—the only attempt to face



reality that I have ever heard at a group meeting. Yet those people would have responded immediately if their conscience had not been stifled as quickly as it had been aroused.

The leaders of the Group under estimate the genuineness of the converts. They are careful to avoid anything that might make for a disturbance of conscience and comfort. I have heard "helping" instead of "changing" other people described as a sin.

No one who has not at least some spare money and leisure can take part in the Group's real activities. House Parties cost participants between eleven and fifteen shillings a day. The Headquarters of the Group in London are at the Metropole Hotel. Those anxious to learn what they have to teach are invited to call there. Would anyone poverty-stricken to the extent of threadbare or shabby clothes be likely to face a West End hotel? Dr. Buchman has evolved a technique of evangelism that is acceptable to Mayfair.

The leaders of the Movement have begun to be sensitive on this point, for in January, 1934, the Group for a brief ten days (I believe the time was shortened from the original idea of three weeks) sent about ninety members to conduct a concen-



trated mission in the East End Parish of St. Mark's, Victoria Park.

The *Church Times* sent a special representative whose report is obviously written with care and a sense of responsibility. His description is extraordinarily reminiscent of many meetings that I have attended. He writes of the large numbers of Groupers providing their own applause, laughter in the right places, and answers to questions which speakers asked. "The leaders supplied commendatory interjections at the end of many of the speeches, such as "That's fine!" or "Well! I guess that's splendid!" He remarks on the tension and weariness that a session of meetings induces and calls attention to the fact that "very many sins were confessed amusingly and greeted with laughter."

The Rev. R. G. Legge, the Vicar of the Parish, in a letter to the *Church Times* questions the accuracy of this last statement. For myself I can only say that if laughs were not raised by the so-called "confessions" of sins then the Group's methods in the East End were totally different from their methods elsewhere. I have heard Dr. Buchman himself enjoin new converts to make their testimonies with hilarity!



Mr. Legge writes with a sincere appreciation of the Group and is entirely satisfied with the results of the mission—a week or ten days after its close. It will be interesting to hear whether the results survive the natural waning of emotional excitement.

It is probable that there will be more good and less harm following the Group's activities in the East End than anywhere else.

The sturdy humour of the East Ender will be proof against many absurdities. He will have neither space nor time for introspective Quiet Hours and his native shrewdness will guard him against the dangers of the so-called Guidance. The man or woman who can survive and glean good from the crowded life of the East End can sift the gold from the dross of a Group Mission.

The Movement in its present form was started because "Frank" was not making converts as successfully as he would wish. He set himself to find out "what was wrong with Christianity or with Frank". It is recorded that he made the discovery, although we are not enlightened as to where he fixed the blame. It is remarkable, however, that certain points in the Buchmanite Movement are definitely un-Christian. Their



## REVIVALISM UP TO DATE

interpretation of Guidance is one, and their / apparent indifference to the poor is another. The insistence on "the joy and the thrill and the fun" — "a primrose path through the trials and difficulties of life", as a critic has described it,— is yet another teaching at variance with the Christianity of the *via dolorosa* and the Cross.

Dr. Buchman carefully trains his followers / to carry out his technique of revivalism. Several of the rules seem to have been made for the express purpose of side-tracking intelligent enquiry, the displacing of intellectual honesty by subversive emotional appeal and, above all the muffling-down of criticism. Two of his precepts are: "Avoid argument" and "Aim to conduct the interview yourself".

The Movement sets itself like a blank wall against either criticism or advice. Its members are bristled against it even if it cannot be expressed. The audiences at the Central Hall meetings had no means of expressing politely any criticism; yet at the outset of one meeting young Cuthbert Bardsley, Curate of All Hallows, Barking-by-the-Tower (who, by the way, had discarded the clerical collar in place of the Old Etonian tie) informed the inoffensive crowd,



"We don't care if you don't like us." Another speaker patronisingly remarked, "If you don't come in with us, well! it's just too bad you've missed the boat, and the laugh's on you."

That worldly, but extremely shrewd weekly, *The New Yorker*, has described Buchmanism as "a form of evangelism which combines the advantages of mysticism, mesmerism, spiritualism eroticism, psycho-analysis, and high-power salesmanship."

High-power salesmanship and a conspicuous appreciation of advertisement are strong characteristics of Dr. Buchman himself.

His carefully prepared technique of evangelism includes many of the proved measures adopted by other revivalists. But he realises that they must be brought up-to-date, and that the stigma attached to the old-fashioned methods must be avoided by the use of different terms for the same thing. Thus, "Conversion" has become "life-changing"; "converts" in turn may become the more positive and sometimes impertinent "life-changers".

The question, "Are you saved?" is transformed into "Are you changed?" In the same manner, the "testimony" of converts has become the "sharing" of the Buchmanites.



## REVIVALISM UP TO DATE

There are a string of catch phrases and slogans. The vocabulary of the Groupers is very limited. Great use is made of topical similes, as, for instance, "Frank's" explanation of the word "PRAY"—

Powerful  
Radiograms  
Always  
Yours

The initial letters of the name Jesus are used to form a reiterated sentence: Just Exactly Suits Us Sinners.

One profound utterance is, "Crows are black the whole world over," which being interpreted means, "Sin is the same in whatever country it is committed". This remark is becoming very stale.

"Sin blinds, Sin binds," is one of the few catch-phrases that has some sense in it.

The actual revivalist methods of the Group Movement take their place midway between those practised in the past by Sankey and Moody, Torry and Alexander, Billy Sunday, Gypsy Smith and Evan Roberts; and those emanating from the Four Square Temple in Los Angeles under the control of Mrs. Aimée Semple Macpherson,



36-52

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE FOUR-FOLD RULE

THERE are in different parts of the world thousands of Buchmanites who believe that they are entirely perfect.

They would be the first to deny such an assertion. I make it only to prove the surprising results of following their own statements to their logical conclusion.

The Group makes without rhyme, reason or other authority than Dr. Buchman, a presumptuous claim that in every smallest detail of life direct guidance from God may be had in the form of supernatural "radiograms".

These supposedly Divine instructions are received chiefly during the morning Quiet Time. The Group publishes a pamphlet setting out the way in which this time should be used. Under the heading "The Conditions for an effective Quiet Time", there appears a series of precepts or rules. One of these entails "*absolute* honesty, purity, unselfishness and love".



## THE FOUR-FOLD RULE

Now, the Groupers find this belief in the guidance of God—not as the Church teaches through the proper and God-inspired use of intelligence, reason and common sense, but in the form of a “personal” message—to be one of the chief charms of the Movement. They are “guided” over every triviality and act upon this “guidance”. Only the word “trivial” is not included in their dictionary. They consider nothing is trivial—not even the spending of sixpence on a packet of cigarettes. This “guidance” is the mainstay of the whole Movement. By making use of it—in season and out—they logically prove that they believe themselves to be perfect, for “the effectual use of the Quiet Time”, on which “guidance” depends, entails *absolute* honesty, *absolute* purity, *absolute* unselfishness and *absolute* love. I asked a young Buchmanite—a member of the Team whose duty it is to “change London”—how he managed to act on guidance that was dependent on such conditions. He replied that it was a matter of being willing to break down every barrier or give up anything that stood between himself and God’s Will; to be ready to submit his will to the Divine Will.



"For instance," he said, "supposing I make a kind of mental reservation that I will not be a parson—even if God wishes me to be—or made any mental reservation of that kind, that would cut me off from God's guidance." That was a perfectly reasonable answer and he voiced a teaching that has been given by the Christian Church from its foundation. The guidance and blessing of God follow the desire and the effort to do His Will. But it is not the same thing at all as the "absolute" perfection that is set as an essential for the effectual reception of guidance.

The four absolutes are the rules of the Movement. It has been criticised for its use of the word which is, of course, an adjective applicable only to the Infinite. The "absolute" goodness insisted upon is an attribute of God alone. But this is again a small point of criticism and the use of the word is merely one of those instances of looseness of thought and inaccuracy of word that characterise the Movement.

You will constantly find that the teaching of the Group is interpreted according to the mind of the individual. The balanced man or woman with an at least fairly well-trained mind will explain it in reasonable terms in much the same



#### THE FOUR-FOLD RULE

way as it has been broadly interpreted by the Christian churches from the beginning. There are points—as I shall show—in which there are great differences. But the less balanced and thoughtful members not only explain but practise it in a manner that is both foolish and dangerous. They become fanatical. And there is no discipline to check their excesses. Each member can assign to himself or herself something of the position of the priest or minister. If through human weakness the ministers of the Church can fail—as they often do—how much more likely are these inexperienced and sometimes unbalanced people likely to make mistakes that are terrible in their consequence. They do not aim at helping their fellow men and women ; they undertake to teach and to “check” the “guidance”, irrespective of a knowledge or understanding of the circumstances and character of the individual.

Miss Barbara Gwyer, Principal of St. Hugh's College, Oxford, has written that “the supreme bugbear of the Group system so far as it affects young and undeveloped characters, is for me its rash handling of mind, spirit, and plan of life, which goes under the name of ‘team guidance’.” On occasion, the Team will justify “guidance”



## SAINTS RUN MAD

that goes entirely contrary to the standards by which it is supposed to be checked.

A woman member of the Group to whom I remarked that surely the rule of perfection was an aim and ideal, replied: "Oh! no, we mean just what we say. We must be absolutely honest, pure, unselfish and loving." But there seems to be a diversity of opinion as to what exactly is the honest, pure, unselfish and loving course of action.

I asked how it was possible to reconcile the rule of "absolute unselfishness" with the behaviour of a woman who, since she had become engrossed with the Movement, had neglected her husband and child to such an extent that a once happy home had become a tragic one. I was reproved with the remark: "We do not judge other people's sins." That is the type of answer you often receive in reply to a reasonable, but possibly awkward question.

But another member was not content to leave it at that. She broke in with the suggestion that if the woman had acted on guidance she was probably doing quite rightly.

"We know of a similar situation," she said. "A woman received guidance that she might be



## THE FOUR-FOLD RULE

of some special help if she attended a certain meeting of the Group. It would mean her being away from home for a few days, and her small child was very ill. She left home, and everyone condemned her as unkind and neglectful and so on. But when she returned, she found that the child, far from being any worse, had actually improved under the care of the nurse she had engaged more than it would have if she had remained at home herself." I can well believe it. The answer to my question, however, amounted to a statement that first and obvious duties must give way to this so-called "Guidance".

I put the first instance to Dr. Buchman himself as a proof of the concern that is felt for the Group teaching on Guidance. I told him how it had been justified by a Team member. He replied that no two real duties ever conflict. "Surely," I said, "that is very sweeping. How about a woman torn between her duty to her husband in the East and her children who must live in England?" "Ah!" said Dr. Buchman, "how well I remember the time when my mother died! I was in India. Everything was radiant. There was no sense of separation." But what has that to do with the dangers of the doctrine of Guid-



ance? Why can one never get a straightforward answer?

The Bishop of Southwark, in a letter to his Diocese, provided a complete and honest reply. He said, while commending the Group to a patient and courteous hearing and emphasising its good points, "We do need God's guidance, and we can receive it if our souls will wait upon God; but not if we neglect to use to the best of our power the intelligence which God has given us. *Nor can true guidance ever lead us to neglect duty, to break engagements, or leave undone work we are appointed to do.*"

If the teaching of the Group leads to actions contrary to this wise and right advice, it must face the charge of undermining a normal sense of responsibility.

One of the many weaknesses of the Movement, and perhaps its greatest tragedy, is that the more serious-minded and thoughtful a convert may be, the more likely he is to become discouraged, depressed, or even deranged. It is not kind to the sensitive-minded. Imagine to yourself the feelings of a young, inexperienced and highly scrupulous person, arrested for, perhaps, the first time in his life by the ideal of the Christian life,



## THE FOUR-FOLD RULE

and faced with the unfortunate exaggerations of Buchmanism.

[At the outset he has been through a disrupting emotional experience in the form of conversion.] His mind is then fallow and receptive. He starts to practise the Quiet Time. He measures thought, word and deed by the standard of absolute perfection. He becomes conscious not only of failure in deed, but of failure in motive. For when motive comes under the searchlight of an honest attempt at self-examination, there is bound to be the shock of realisation that complete honesty and purity of motive is unattainable. There is some stratagem in the best of human endeavour.

One discovers that one's most unselfish acts are but another manifestation of self. One gives money to a beggar because it is more uncomfortable to contemplate his destitution than to relieve it : one's own good dinner may be spoilt by the thought that he is going hungry. Sensitive and imaginative people will give up a great deal for peace of mind.

One schoolgirl who became a convert found herself so unhappy by her failure to attain "the absolute" that she was well on the way to an unnatural and unchildlike morbidity of outlook. A



wise and understanding grandmother, who fortunately had a great deal of influence with her grandchild, realised that she was rapidly becoming the victim of her own innate honesty of mind, and exerted her whole influence against the Movement.

Fortunately, she was able to switch the child's interest to more wholesome matters than a [contemplation of her "sins"], and another brand was snatched from the Buchmanite burning.

The conscientious convert to Buchmanism must become an analyst of motives, and I know nothing more likely to make one's head spin.

A spinning head, in the physical sense, will lead to a loss of physical balance and a crash. In the mental sense, it will bring about the same catastrophe in its own sphere.

The following remarkable statement appears in a pamphlet on the Principles of the Group:—

"Absolute honesty demands that there be nothing in one's life about which one is keeping up a pretence."

There are pretences in life that are nothing short of heroic. What of those people who, in the grip of terror, keep hold of themselves and pretend to a calmness and courage they do not possess?



#### THE FOUR-FOLD RULE

They are certainly not being "absolutely honest". But they are being magnificent. What of others, no less courageous, who in face of poverty and the sickening strain of a search for work, keep up a pretence of cheerfulness and hopefulness. What of the man or woman faced with the ordeal of a severe operation, or some overwhelming pain: the fear in their eyes gives the lie to the smile on their lips. All "dishonest" people "keeping up a pretence", but surely valiant enough to please Almighty God, "Who loveth courageous souls exceedingly".

The best of civilisation is based on gallant pretences.

One of the most harmful facets of the Movement is the insistence on the importance of trivialities which can be so bewildering and harmful to the untrained and highly conscientious.

Realising this, I asked a test question that was so silly that it should have been laughed away. I said, "If we are all to be *absolutely honest*, how about using make-up?"

"Ah! you must decide that for yourself. You must have your own Guidance."

Now, I ask you! I am expected to kneel down and ask the God of all the Worlds to tell me



whether or not I am to use a lipstick. Absolute honesty ! Absolute bunk !

The rule of "absolute purity" is chiefly concerned with sex. The Group's attitude to the question is right enough, provided it is interpreted by people of wisdom and understanding. But in the hands of the raw and inexperienced it can be exaggerated to the danger point. There is a fairly sound chapter on "Absolute Purity" in *What is the Oxford Group?*, a book setting out the principles of the Movement. But in the midst of it there appears this sentence :

"Modern art galleries and exhibitions exude suggestive nudity from their walls."

Pictures or statuary that offend decency are not permitted to be displayed in reputable galleries and exhibitions. It must therefore be that the writer of this book (who is obviously young, and a little inclined to be sweeping) regards nudity in itself as suggestive. But why ?

Because the tendency of the Group teaching is to shy away from reality and to regard sex in itself not as a simple biological fact complicated by civilisation, but as a potential occasion for sin. Anything that might remind them of sex is therefore suggestive in a harmful sense. Once again, it



## THE FOUR-FOLD RULE

is the serious-minded and sensitive people who will suffer, especially if they are also young and bewildered as well. In their effort to obtain absolute purity of thought, as well as of word and deed, they come to regard every stray thought that has its roots in the sex instinct as impure. This is harmful indeed. The sex-wallowing of the years since the War has produced at least one good result, for it has completely killed false modesty and prudery, and brought the natural preoccupation with this great instinct to the surface. A rash on the surface may be more disfiguring to the eye than an internal canker, but it is less dangerous.

The reaction has already set in. The subject is becoming slightly tedious as the one and only subject of conversation, books, plays and films. The Group, if it were not so unattractive to many robust and sensible people, might undo every good that has come out of the evil of post-war sex obsession.

In some aspects, the Group makes the profound mistake of taking the subject too seriously. Here is a quotation from one of its pamphlets :

“An incorrigible sinner changed within the past year into a most hearty and humorous young



## SAINTS RUN MAD

saint had this thought when he first began listening to God: 'Stop pretending you are in love with . . .' If all Don Juans were to begin having such Guidance, a mischievous species might soon happily become extinct."

Passing over the fact that an incorrigible sinner would not in the nature of things, become a saint in one year—he might become priggish, which is frequently confused with saintliness, but is as far removed as light from darkness—it is doubtful whether the victims of Don Juan would altogether welcome the change! Flirtation may be harmful and cruel, or it may be a pleasant pastime. The Group abandons it wholesale as impure. The Group is sometimes very silly.

When a Group gentleman falls in love with a lady Grouper he announces that he has been "guided" to marry So-and-So. What happens if Miss Grouper is not similarly "guided" I cannot imagine. It would be an even more unfortunate contingency if she received the original Guidance!

Here is the opinion of a prominent member on marriage:

"Marriage must always turn outwards into the lives of others, seeking to lead them to the same joy. It is a sacrament that must always be shared." I am sure that this is the opinion of a very pure



## THE FOUR-FOLD RULE

young man, but it arouses in me the most impure thoughts, and lest I become ribald I must forbear to comment.

The Group teaches the value of the sublimation of sex. This is the effort and the aim of thousands of virile but decent-living men and women who, for some reason or another, are cut off from a normal and happy relationship. They are the people who carry with them a vision of romance—that dream of true love that is the completion of mind, body and spirit. They face sex fairly and squarely, realising that it is not so simple a matter as a mere bodily need. It is as well a hunger of the mind for perfect companionship, and of the soul for perfect understanding and rest. They know at times torment of their entire nature. But they also know that satisfaction must be threefold. They may attempt to drug the needs of the body, but in so doing they often whip the mind and spirit to greater irritation and desolation. They prefer, on the whole, to put up with the rebellion of the body rather than face the revolution of the spirit against a purely physical domination and control. They will avoid disgust of mind at great cost. They are realists and romantics at one and the same time, and although in their strife



they may fall down, they will not stay down. They may make tragic mistakes and foolish mistakes, but they will not make vulgar mistakes.

And they know that the sublimation of sex is the most difficult thing in the world, and achieved only at the cost of incessant sacrifice and distress. They believe that the vision is worth the price. Those who have attempted to practise it realise that some outlet for a terrific force must be provided. Only in intense activity of mind and body is there any hope of peace. Creative work provides the nearest approach to satisfaction. Dean Inge, in his magnificent book, *Christian Ethics and Modern Problems*, faces the matter in the light of Christianity and humanity.

It is doubtful whether the sublimation of sex is possible without a belief in the forces of the supernatural. There must be a belief in God and the great army of His forces ranging themselves in defence of man's idealism, succouring his wounded spirit and repairing his incessant casualties. With this aid, rare spirits may conquer, and the weakest keep up at least a running fight.

It is a cruel thing to preach the sublimation of sex without, at the same time, teaching the way



#### THE FOUR-FOLD RULE

of escape through intense activity of mind and body.

To attempt to turn the great forces of sex into emotional religious channels is not only mentally dangerous, but utterly opposed to true religion. The love of God was never meant to be a substitute for the love of man for woman and woman for man. The love of God is not an emotion, it is a way of life—an admiration of every steel-like quality of life.

The Group makes the terrible mistake of attempting to turn the sex instinct into an emotional love for the personal Christ. It is this attempt all through history that has weakened the power of Christ. It has made Him to be regarded as the pale Nazarene rather than the Prince of Peace Who yet promised His followers during life not peace but the sword. The Group denies that it induces emotionalism, and always checks any sign of it during public confessions. But to check its expression is not to turn it into vigorously healthy channels. The fact that it is there at all is a danger signal. At a House Party the almost hypnotic emotional atmosphere is so strong that it must be actively fought if one is to keep one's head instead of losing one's heart. One visitor left in a



## SAINTS RUN MAD

hurry because she felt that there was some hypnotic influence at work, and if she stayed it would assuredly "get her".

The Group hopes to cover this emotionalism by the use of a hearty jargon that does not appear to be sentimental. But one has only to see the beaming and often vacuous expressions of so many Groupers to realise that they are for the time being infatuated. They are infatuated with Christ. Would they, one wonders, be equally infatuated with the road that He trod and the baptism of suffering with which He was baptised? The Man of Sorrows acquainted with grief stands in strange contrast to the "radiantly soapy and laughing Frank".



53-68  
CHAPTER FOUR

THE GUIDANCE OF GOD

THE stone wall behind which the Buchmanites entrench themselves is their teaching on the Guidance of God. This is the main and most serious point of criticism against them.

The teaching of Christianity as it is interpreted by every branch of the Church is briefly on these lines. God is a Father. We are His children. So long as we are ready to do His Will, we may claim His Help and rely upon His Guidance. Absolute honesty, purity, unselfishness and love are not necessary on our part—only the will to do right, and the effort in so far as we are able.

But the children of God, like the children of a good earthly father, are not spoiled. They must learn to stand on their own feet and to use a God-directed intelligence, common sense, reason and, as the years go by, experience and judgment in solving their problems. We believe that God will direct and guide through these channels. But



there is no reason to suppose that He will, in normal circumstances, use any other means. That exceptional circumstances occur when Guidance comes in some other form, is an experience of almost everyone who has relied upon God and tried to do his best.

In great weakness and danger—when the fight has worn down resistance—a deliverance from an insupportable temptation may come in a miraculous fashion. God sends great angels in our sore dismay . . . irrevocable mistakes are averted and dangers escaped often unconsciously. It is only when we look back that we see the things from which we have been saved. We usually call it “luck” or “fate” in talking of it to our friends, when we might well give the thanks unto God.

It is a less usual experience to have, as it were, some vision or voice directing us. But there are undoubtedly people who have received God’s Guidance from time to time in this way—it may have been only once in a lifetime. The Bible provides several instances of this direct guidance. It would, however, be presumptuous to expect Divine instructions in this manner, or indeed to expect instructions at all. The Bishop of London, speaking on the Group some time ago, said :



## THE GUIDANCE OF GOD

"God has given us intelligence and reason to be the lamps to guide us."

The Group by its interpretation of Divine Guidance advocates the dowsing of these lamps.

To return to the simile of a father and his children. The Group teaches the child to regard his father not as a guide and defence generally and a ready help in time of trouble, but someone to whom the child turns for actual direction in everything he does. Father, shall I play with my train or my bricks? Father, shall I build a house or a bridge? Father, shall I use red bricks or blue? Father, shall I knock it down? Father, shall I build it up? Father this and father that, until a father might well wonder whether his child is a half-wit, instead of a reasonable being.

Why should we storm the courts of Heaven to know whether we shall buy cigarettes or take the 10.45 or the 11 o'clock train to town, or as a critic has said: "render God responsible for our neckties or whether we choose to eat beef or mutton at luncheon."

Believe me, these instances are no exaggeration. Dr. Buchman acknowledges that he asks for guidance for the expenditure on postage. At the House Party I attended we were told to ask God's



guidance as to the amount we should tip the hotel servants. At a Group meeting in the North of England, people were told to ask God's guidance as to whether they should put sixpence into a cigarette machine or into the missionary box.

At another meeting in the Midlands, an excited young woman recounted how she had been guided to buy a dress. She had given so much money away under "guidance" that she had only sufficient left to allow two and a half guineas for the frock. But she was guided to a certain street and a certain shop and there, lo and behold! was the very dress, correct colour, material and perfect fit, and costing just the right amount of money. Wasn't it marvellous?

Stories are told of "guidance" that has led men and women to neglect duty. Mr. John Macadam, writing in the *Sunday Dispatch*, tells of a conversation with an Oxford don. Mr. Macadam asked if the Movement had affected the work of his students. "It most certainly has," he replied, "immediately one of my men joins up, I can tell. His work becomes affected. He loses interest in all the normal things. He wants only one thing—to talk and talk and talk religion.



## THE GUIDANCE OF GOD

These boys lose their sense of balance. They seek guidance on all sorts of things, and then evade their responsibilities by saying that they were 'guided' to do this and that."

The Group boasts of the reunion of parents and children thanks to its influence. It lies low over the sundered homes through the same cause. Parents, who have made sacrifices to send their sons and daughters to the University, are exasperated and distressed to find time wasted, work neglected and careers ruined. I was told recently of a man who, at considerable financial inconvenience, had undertaken the education of a young nephew. In the midst of his University career the boy insisted on throwing up his work and attaching himself to the Buchmanites. No sense or reason can be used as an influence. To every argument they blandly reply that they know that they are right because God told them so.

Dr. Buchman teaches his followers to set apart an hour the first thing every morning, which is kept as the "Quiet Time". At first the time may be shorter, but an hour is the aim. The "Quiet Time" is not devoted to the meditation that is practised by many spiritually-minded people—for in this there is an occupation for the mind in the



contemplation of some aspect of the Life of Christ or the attributes of God. The "Quiet Time" is to be spent partly in prayer and Bible reading, but chiefly in "listening". Thoughts and ideas that come into the mind during this time are written down. Apart from the morning hour, this "Quiet Time" is indulged in at any moment during the day. In any doubt or dispute someone says, "Let's have a Q.T." Note books are produced and in a few minutes pencils are scribbling. It is all rather after the manner of planchette and the "messages" read in much the same way. Groupers guide their lives entirely by these "messages".

Converts who have not yet lost the habit of regarding obvious duties as of first importance are sometimes torn between the thoughts that have come into their heads during "Quiet Times" and what their own sense of responsibility tells them is their proper course of action. Their bewilderment is piteous, and the stifling of their conscience a tragic thing. They are taught to believe that the ideas coming in the "Quiet Time" are instructions from God. They often fail to see how they can carry out these instructions without a neglect of duty. But they are



## THE GUIDANCE OF GOD

told, too, that—"Doubt stifles and makes abortive our attempt to act upon God's Guidance," and that if it is true guidance, God will provide the means and assistance.

So in an earnest desire to do all in their power to lead this new life, they follow a will-o'-the-wisp into the darkness, for, in obedience to the teachings of the Movement, they have dowsed the lamps of reason and intelligence that have been given them.

One of the questions by which "guidance" is supposed to be checked is: "Does it conflict with our duties and responsibilities to others?" If this were followed, we should hear less of broken homes, of neglected duties, and selfish unkindness. One of the most remarkable facts about this Movement is the way in which its members so quickly lose all sense of proportion and disregard what is most sound in their own teachings. Possibly this is because the sound and the unsound are so hopelessly mixed. For instance, in this same pamphlet we are told that God's Guidance will be forthcoming on such matters as letters to write and visits to pay, as well as what are vaguely described as "Miscellaneous thoughts and promises". It must be



remembered that guidance is expected in the form of direct instruction. If a thought comes into their heads that they must write to So-and-So, they obey it blindly, not because they think it is the wise, kind or sensible thing to do, but because they "have been told to do so".

I have already shown how a woman member of the London Team defended to me the action of a woman whose "guidance" led her to neglect her home and cause unhappiness to her husband and child. I had asked how this could be reconciled to the test of "absolute unselfishness". My question was not answered; the woman's action was blindly justified because it was the result of "Guidance".

Here, from my own experience, is another instance of how Guidance is interpreted by members of the Oxford Group.

The scene is a comfortable sitting-room at the Hotel Metropole. Three middle-aged women are sitting round the fire waiting "contacts". An enquirer is termed a "contact"—an Americanism that always makes me feel like an infectious disease! (One of the women picks up the house telephone and asks for a number, "Miss . . ." she says, "your contact is here.").



## THE GUIDANCE OF GOD

I had explained that I was interested in the Movement, but that I was critically-minded and would be grateful if they would explain certain things to me. For instance, I said, how would the Group advise me to be absolutely honest as a writer for newspapers and magazines? Naturally I must write according to the policy of the particular paper. When I write for a newspaper, I am employed to write from a certain point of view—it may be quite opposite to my own opinions. I may have to write admiringly when I do not really admire, and praise when I would blame, and boost when I would blast, and so on. Is that absolutely honest? There are many good answers that might be made to this question.

But the answer I received was this: "You must have Guidance. You know how often one is asked an embarrassing question. For instance, suppose that you are married to a man who is unkind to you. He is abroad. Someone says: How very sad for you to be so long parted from your husband. Now what are you to say? You cannot reply that it isn't really sad, as you are glad he is out of the way. That would be confessing his sins for him. But if you quickly pray to God, you will find what a wonderful answer



comes to help you to be honest. Perhaps in that moment the conversation is changed, or the question is dropped."

Now, I am not married to an unkind husband, either here or abroad. If I were, and if he were comfortably out of the way, I should not require guidance for my reply to a remark that it was sad for me to be parted from him. I should answer: "Yes, isn't it?" or "My dear, not at all," according to the extent that I knew the questioner. Neither reply would offend any but a quibbling sense of honesty.

But the example had nothing to do with my question regarding the Group's idea of the honesty of writing to newspaper policy. It is not easy to get a direct answer to a direct question. People who have followed this pseudo-guidance for long lose the ability to think to the point. They are, even in conversation, under guidance and following the ideas that come into their heads at the moment. Groupers become extraordinarily evasive people.

When we had returned to the original subject, it was suggested that I obviously did not like what I was doing and had I ever thought of doing anything else? No, I said, I had not. Had I



## THE GUIDANCE OF GOD

thought of giving up that work? No, once again. "Have you any guidance on the subject?" said one of the women, turning to another who was sitting at a writing-table with her back to us. She turned round quickly with a copy of a Group Supplement in her hand. "No," she said, "but while you have been talking, my eye has been on this headline," and she pointed to the words: "Footloose for God." "Perhaps," she added, "God wants you to be footloose for Him."

Now there is an example of the use of coincidence that is one of the accepted "sign-posts" of guidance. "Footloose", another Americanism, certainly sounds slippery, and I gathered that I was to consider embracing this insecurity. Was that very wise and sensible advice to give in these days to someone of whom they knew nothing at all, and of whose circumstances they were ignorant?

Supposing that I had been very poor, very earnest, and very worried by quibble over the word "honesty". I should have left that room with the belief that God's Guidance was in favour of giving up a career on which a great deal of time and money had been spent. Even if I had been unable to bring myself to that point, I



should have been hindered and hampered by a nagging worry that I was doing wrong. Is that true Guidance lightened by intelligence, reason and common sense?

Every one who thinks twice about the subject must realise the grave danger that wishes and desires, or ideas suppressed and dreaded, coming into the mind during a "Quiet Time" when the mind is in a state of negation, may well be mistaken for Guidance.

Every serious critic of the Movement has viewed with the greatest alarm the Group's teaching and practice in this direction.

As *The Times* put it in a leading article: "It would be incredible if the bulk of the 'guidance' received in 'quiet times' would not consist of submerged thoughts and desires. Most of what is put forward as guidance received in these periods of relaxed attention is so trivial that it would be impious to ascribe it to the promptings of God."

The Group itself does not deny this. Dr. Buchman himself admits that "thoughts might come from the sub-conscious self or from the evil one".

The author of *What is the Oxford Group?* says: "The human mind . . . takes up a train of



## THE GUIDANCE OF GOD

thought it finds hard to discard, invents or remembers a thought of its own. But to those closely in touch with God, it becomes easy after a short while to differentiate between spiritual and human messages." Was there ever a more thoughtless, dangerous and careless pronouncement on a subject of gravest importance to the lives of so many people?

A new-comer to the Movement starts to practise the "Quiet Time" and act on his guidance immediately. What right has he, or any other, including Dr. Buchman himself, to assume that he has found a short-cut to the stature of the fullness of Christ, and that he is so in touch with the Mind of the Infinite that he has no difficulty in reading it at a glance?

The greatest saints of history would not make so presumptuous a claim. The members of the Group are just as much and no more in touch with God than any man or woman who seeks His Blessing and Guidance. But whereas the ordinary man humbly does his best by using his sense and intelligence, the Grouper is pitifully handicapped by becoming the victim of every wandering thought and up-rush from the subconscious.



Here is another instance of the shallowness of thought and extremes of teaching for which the Group must be held guilty. In a booklet issued by the Group entitled *The Guidance of God*, there is a story of a three-year-old child taught to be quiet and listen to God's Voice. He looks up and remarks: "God says you must eat more porridge this morning." Although the child is obviously reiterating an injunction of his mother's, this is put forward as a direct instance of Divine Guidance.

In the same booklet there is the dangerous injunction: "Look for the coincidences" as sign-posts of Guidance.

I asked a friend of mine to go to the Hotel Metropole and talk to some of the men members of the London Team. He reported a conversation with a man of great intelligence and intellectualism. He had put forward the teachings of the Group as any believer in Christianity would explain his belief. There were no exaggerations or fanaticisms until it came to the question of Guidance, and then this instance was given. "I was going to my room this morning when I felt I ought to go downstairs instead. I went down, and there in the lounge I saw a man I had not met for many



## THE GUIDANCE OF GOD

years, and who was wanting to see me." If *every* passing thought is to be followed as Guidance, and *every* coincidence regarded as a Divine intervention, where are we to stop this side madness? Dr. Buchman has no authority whatever for his doctrine of direct guidance available at any moment.

The result of such a teaching, made "with an infallibility the Pope would envy", is to rob men and women of their God-given intelligence, and to weaken their sense of reason and their capacity for judgment until they become almost non-existent. It stifles initiative, relieves of responsibility and is entirely pernicious and harmful. A man or woman dependent on such a teaching would soon be incapable of making the smallest decision unaided. It is a pitiable fact that many young children are now being brought up in this way. I believe that there are no words too strong to condemn such a teaching, and that its consequences can be so terrible that no warning is too grave.

The "Quiet Time" encourages introspection: the pseudo-guidance is its result. Minds deranged, homes made tragic, careers broken, bitter disappointment following the unhappy or negative



outcome of this so-called guidance—these are the consequences.

I would sum up in the words of *The Times*:  
 “It must be the most serious charge against the Groups that they encourage their members to shirk the discipline of thought in favour of impulses received from they know not where.”

The teaching on Guidance is as great a superstition as any purged from the Church at the Reformation.



69-84

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SHARING

**B**OB is a nice, open-faced boy in the early twenties. He takes his place before the microphone at the Central Hall and tells us about his sins. He has been introduced to the packed audience as a product of Winchester and a one-time University tough.

He does not tell us that he drank to excess, but we gather something of the sort from the "mechanised pub-crawls" that he and his friends enjoyed. He hints, rather proudly, at great "goings-on" that kept him out until the early hours of the morning.

Then he comes down to concrete examples of wrongdoing. He had defrauded an insurance company over a car claim and obtained a job—"a lucrative job, too"—on a forged testimonial. He does not look a deceitful sort of fellow, and we disobey a Buchman injunction in our expressions of shocked surprise.



He goes on to tell how he came in touch with the Group at his University : of how he went out and thought about it all : and then, sitting on the top of a 'bus, he decided to "experiment with Christ". "I put Christ to the test, and Christ gave the victory." We know what he means, but put like that it sounds rather more silly than a Third Form infant announcing that he had experimented with Sir James Jeans and "put him to the test".

If such a little chap had got up and told the two or three thousand people present that he had proved the claims of modern science and the integrity of Sir James through his tests and experiments, they would, one and all, have felt a desire to spank him. I rather fancy that quite a number had a similar desire with regard to Master Bobbie. He was old enough, if not wise enough, to know that one should not talk of experimenting with Christ, or of putting Him to the test. But the youthful assurance of "the victory" at—what would it be, twenty-four or twenty-five years of age?—that was a remark that made one sorry. For him the fight has only just begun. There were older men on that same platform—among them Dr. Buchman, whose in-



## SHARING

fluence had brought this boy to his feet to face and talk to a packed audience : had none of these been sufficiently wise and experienced in life to tell him what he must expect ?

But Bob has courage of his own, and he may be able to learn the lesson from experience and without shirking. He proved his courage when he explained that he had faced the insurance company in its office and acknowledged his dishonesty. He had offered to repay, "And they took the money, too !" he added, a little ruefully.

All this was recounted in the autumn of 1933, at a meeting at the Central Hall, Westminster, at which I was present and at which the Press was also represented. Bob's story appears in *For Sinners Only*, and is dated 1930.

But there is a marked difference between the earlier and the later versions. According to the original story, the amount of restitution he was called upon to make to the insurance company came as a pleasant surprise. The manager asked him for £9 instead of the £20 that he thought would be demanded.

The lucrative job was not obtained on a forged testimonial, but on an *out-of-date testimonial*, and



that is a very different thing. If one compares the two stories one finds that the sin had become exaggerated with repetition, and so had the restitution. Here is proof of the dangers of this public confession—or “sharing” that the Buchmanites encourage.

This young man had been telling the tale of his wrongdoing up and down the country for three years, and had recently returned from a Group tour of Canada and the United States, where he, and others, had reeled off their sins at meeting after meeting. It would be less than human if, in such circumstances, the story should not become exaggerated and embroidered. When I discovered the discrepancy in the two versions my heart warmed towards Bob. I felt sure his exaggerations were unconscious, and they proved him to be as human as the rest of the world, and the golfer and the fisherman in particular. Nevertheless, there should have been some wise discipline that would have checked such exaggerations. And in the circumstances the condemnation, in *For Sinners Only*, of “the boasting of achievement in business”, or in “beating the other fellow with a good story” is hardly suitable. These are not particularly harmful, but the system that leads



## SHARING

a man or woman to boast and enlarge upon sin instead of being deeply ashamed and sorry, is open to grave suspicion.

To quote *The Times* leading article again :

"It would be astonishing if that hawking round of past sin which goes under the name of 'sharing' should not frequently produce spiritual pride in the sharer and besmirch the minds of those with whom it is shared."

The public confessions tend to produce boastfulness, while the danger of the besmirching lies in the practice of private confession between members, especially when it is remembered that Buchman and his followers compute ninety per cent of sins to be those connected with sex. There is a manual of Soul Surgery which can be bought from the Group by any chuckle-headed youngster who wants to start in practice. It was written some time ago, and a comparison with a later book issued by the Group shows that the strong criticism encountered both here and in America has achieved a great deal. The later book, while still lacking in true wisdom, is comparatively harmless. Yet the other continues to be advertised and sold among the Group literature.



Dr. Buchman's ideas on this matter of Sharing are to be found in the *Soul Surgery* manual. Throughout it there is an analogy with medicine and surgery, and to put such a book into the hands of a would-be "life-changer"—and every new convert becomes a "life-changer" immediately: that is one of the attractions of conversion—is just about as sensible as to hand over a manual on the technique of physical surgery and then tell the novice to go ahead and practise on the first person who complains of a tummy-ache. In fact, the victim does not need to complain of discomfort. The zealous Buchmanite will conjure up the symptoms for him.

In an endeavour to justify confession as practised in Sharing by the Group, the author of *Soul Surgery* writes:

"The clinic of the soul surgeon is a very different thing from the confessional of the Roman Catholic Church."

It is indeed, and this naïve acknowledgment puts the case against the Buchmanites in a nutshell. I am not considering the doctrinal arguments for or against confession to a priest. These I will leave to wiser heads.



## SHARING

The Sharing of the Buchmanites, the confessional of the Roman and Anglo-Catholic Churches, and the consulting-room of the psycho-analyst have one thing in common, apart from great fundamental differences. [Each acknowledges the need for openness instead of repression.]

Nor should it be imagined that the Church of England as a whole does not teach the value of confession. In every Prayer-Book used in the Established Church there appears this Injunction in the Exhortation to the Holy Communion . . . "if there be any among you, who by this means (confession to Almighty God with full purpose of amendment) cannot quiet his conscience herein, but requireth further comfort and counsel, let him come to me or some other discreet and learned minister of God's word and open his grief; that by the ministry of God's word he may receive the benefit of absolution, together with counsel and advice."

The Church provides a sound means of getting rid of those difficulties, anxieties and perplexities of the spirit, mind and emotions that beset most people. Apart, too, from the assurance of God's forgiveness to the true penitent, the troubled soul is wisely advised. Over-enthusiasm and harmful



emotionalism are checked and discipline is imposed.

The psycho-analyst regards the matter from a more material standpoint, and finds the solution chiefly in terms of inhibitions and complexes. But there again, skilled advice is available. The priest and the medical man are both highly trained and experienced. If you wish to confess to or consult with a priest or minister, you may choose your man just as you would choose your doctor.

The churches are richer to-day than ever in wise, kindly and human-hearted men. Their work—like that of the medical profession, is of the utmost importance to the lives of countless people, and their sense of responsibility is correspondingly great.

Dr. Buchman's Soul Clinic is unwise and utterly irresponsible. The most ignorant novice is encouraged to dabble with the sensitive souls and minds of his fellows. He has only to become "changed" according to Buchmanite standards—a process sometimes connected with the development of an inordinate conceit and the shedding of every vestige of common sense—pay a shilling for the manual of *Soul Surgery*, and start to experiment at once.



## SHARING

A critic has described soul surgery as the process of tearing the confession from the suspect. "Life-changers" are urged to be ["lovingly relentless"] insisting that confession is made, when and where it is needed. The so-called "guidance" will indicate the when and the where.

The "moral test" is to be made in order to arrive at a diagnosis, and this appears to mean delving into the sex life of the victim.

Dr. Buchman himself appears to be a specialist in the art of extracting confessions of this kind from the young.

One youth is reported as having confessed to him, and then burst into tears. "Boo-hoo," he sobbed, "you'll never like me again." I suppose that, on occasions, young men do behave like hysterical schoolgirls, but measures that induce such a display are neither sound nor wise. I do not imagine that a priest or a doctor, listening to a similar admittance of wrongdoing, finds himself drenched in tears and lamentations that the sinner will never be liked again.

For here is one great difference between the clinic of the soul surgeon and the doctor's consulting-room or the confessional of the priest.



## SAINTS RUN MAD

The soul surgeon is personal—he is “lovingly relentless”. The priest and the medical man are quite impersonal. They are not “radiating love”, but kindness, common sense and wisdom. Most confessions need quite impersonal handling: otherwise they will become orgies of emotionalism.

Some of the confessions are lamentably amusing. An irreverent American writer says :

“In Buchmanite waves at Ashville, North Carolina and Louisville, Kentucky, half-hypnotised matrons to their own subsequent inconvenience, arraigned themselves for infractions of their marriage vows. One young Buchmanite crusaded so effectively in the home of relatives, that a seventy-year-old uncle, a fine, upright, aristocratic old gentleman, came clean as to the errors of his adolescence, to the great mortification of his wife and children, and, later, of himself.”

It speaks well for a returning sanity that when the Buchmanites re-visited Louisville in the Spring of 1933, two years after the first campaign, only eleven people were found who retained any interest in the Group. This was the experience of Mr. Martin Kiddle, who is attached to the Parish Church of Leeds. After six years as a



## SHARING

close observer of the Group Movement at Oxford, and after a further intensive study of the Movement as one of Dr. Buchman's team visiting Canada and America early in 1933, Mr. Kiddle has no hesitation in "supporting every statement and criticism made by the Bishop of Durham". I am told that the Group has a letter from Mr. Kiddle in which he writes enthusiastically of his contact with them. But this has not been made public, although he strongly denounced the methods and practices in a letter to *The Times*.

The Buchmanites' idea of the spiritual value of their public and private confession is not only over-estimated, but harmful. Sharing is explained in *What is the Oxford Group?* as "two people having a common interest—sin—and getting a healthy viewpoint on it".

One would hardly describe Sin as a "healthy common interest". Elsewhere the same writer speaks of people as being "sin-obsessed". Fortunately there is very little "sin-obsession", which would be as morbid as any other obsession. There might well be a greater consciousness of sin, although most thoughtful people are fully aware of their shortcomings and failures. The Buchmanites, assuming that their converts have



been "sin-obsessed", transform this morbidity into another—religious obsession. The opinion of the Oxford don whom I have already quoted should be remembered: "These young men only want to talk and talk and talk of religion." An observer at a House Party speaks of "one-track conversation". I can endorse this observation from my own experience.

In many instances the confessions are as trivial and grotesque as the examples of Guidance. There arose at the Central Hall a young girl, who told us that at eighteen she had made a broad survey of religion and decided that it was not for her.

Now, apparently, she had made a similar broad survey of Buchmanism, and as a result she told us all about her sins. The chief among these was a tendency to criticise her friends behind their backs and to exaggerate a story to raise a laugh.

I felt that anyone who could raise a laugh in these days by so harmless a measure should be entitled to count it as a virtue rather than a sin.

Once again I found myself wondering whether there was no wisdom among the shepherds of this flock of lambs who would tease her out of the nonsense. And then it dawned on me that



## SHARING

as a member of the Group Team whose business it is to "change" Londoners, she was herself a little shepherdess of sheep!

Mr. H. R. S. Phillpott, who attended the International House Party at Oxford and wrote a series of articles for the *Daily Herald*, speaks of an enthusiastic young woman who confessed that at Holy Communion she noticed a friend there, and thought to herself, "Fancy Mavis coming to Communion in an orange blouse!" Since she had been at the House Party she had "felt a worm", and now she was going to write to Mavis and tell her all about it.

In a later article, Mr. Phillpott says that he has had a few quiet times himself, pondering over some of the rather remarkable things he has seen and heard. He lays no claim to Guidance, but among the thoughts that came to him was this: "I thought that Mavis would have a right to be extremely angry when told by another young woman that she had hated Mavis's orange blouse."

Two Group members told me that their great sins were resentment, and that they had not been able to get rid of this feeling until they had confessed to the person against whom it was



harboured. But would the person to whom the confession was made be very pleased and happy to hear about it?

The big idea seems to be for the Grouper himself to be happy, regardless of the cost to anyone else.

The Sharing of the Buchmanites comprises Confession and Witness. Sins are confessed to another member, or to a Group, as a start: they are then brought up as "dead specimens" to be a witness to a changed life.

The Group says: "When Christians confess—pagans believe" and "Through confession we may win another soul for Christ."

This is a negative doctrine, like so much put forward by the Movement. The primary witness of Christianity is life, not talk. It is in the sane, vigorous, healthy life of mind and body that the true witness of the power of Christ is to be seen.

"Sharing", as the word implies, involves a conversational exchange of sins. This is justified by the remarkable statement that most people consider their sins to be very original and exclusive, and that when they are "shared" the surprising discovery is made that all these sins are the sins of others!



## SHARING

The realisation that there is so much bad in the best of us is one that most people make early in life. It is a discovery that is one of the disillusionings of extreme youth. It is not always very comforting, except in the case of morbidly anxious young people whose belief in their own peculiar wickedness would be set at rest immediately if they consulted any sensible man or woman.

The Buchmanites seem to labour under the delusion that every man and woman and boy and girl is morbidly obsessed and entirely friendless. [Such unfortunates] are few indeed, and for them the desperate remedy of Buchmanism may be a temporary salvation—but one that is likely to leave them eventually more stranded than ever before. For highly conscientious people the method tends to produce the morbid introspection and concentration on sin and self that are the stepping-stones to derangement.

[Restitution] is taught as the natural corollary of confession. In theory, and usually in practice, this is one of the few sound precepts of the Movement. It is a proper course of action to acknowledge a wrongdoing and to make good the harm as far as possible. But once again this excellent principle is often practised in such a way



that it is warped out of recognition. Converts indulge in an orgy of apologies, forgetting that an apology for some long-forgotten annoyance is less embarrassing to give than to receive. They seem unable to discriminate between a genuine need for restitution and a spate of apologetic letters.

Dr. Buchman sets an example in this direction, for it is reported that when he was "changed" he sat down and wrote what appeared to be a round-robin letter of apology to the members of his late Committee in Philadelphia. He received no reply from any of them. Probably they felt a natural resentment at being so circularised.

Circulars appear to be popular among the Buchmanites and have their dangers. When I was last in New York I stayed in an hotel that was in the parish of Calvary Church. The Rector—the Rev. Samuel Shoemaker—is an ardent Buchmanite. Within a few days of my arrival I received a letter signed by him. It began, "Dear Miss Harrison," and continued with a request that if I had any children I should send them to the Parish Sunday School! Very broadminded, I thought.



CHAPTER SIX

85-96

LIFE-CHANGERS

A BUCHMANITE writer asks: "What would your friends do if you began to challenge them about their personal lives and suggested that they ought to be changed?" The answer is easy. My friends would tell me to mind my own business and that charity begins at home. To which, if I were a good Buchmanite, I should be enabled to retort: "Ah! but I have started with myself. I am changed, and now I must change others."

Another name for the Buchmanites is "Life-Changers", and every convert must set to work to change the lives of other people. They appear to collect converts as other people collect china or first editions. At House Parties and the smaller meetings you will hear one after another confessing that their collection is not coming along as it should, and that they have come to find out what is wrong. It usually seems to take



them only a short time to discover this, and they return home to carry on what Dr. W. B. Selbie, late Principal of Mansfield College, Oxford, has described as "a technique of soul healing which they insist on applying to all and sundry, whether it really meets their condition or not."

All potential Groupers, whatever their age, experience or temperament, have one thing in common. Time after time you hear new converts saying that they were first attracted to the Group because "these people have something that I lacked". This little something some others haven't got is usually described as happiness or joy. The truth is that that "little something" is a happy capacity for a facile credulity. The majority of those who are attracted by the teaching have this capacity in some measure, whether they are aware of it or not. Otherwise there would be a very small Group and a much better one.

Two impressions stand out especially clearly after having met and talked with numbers of Buchmanites. The first is that so many appear never to have done any independent thinking in their lives. As one girl confessed: "Whenever I heard important matters, such as war or un-



employment discussed, I simply shut my ears and thought about my own little interests. I never read the newspapers. Now I have come to realise that that was a sin." (I have no doubt that all newspaper circulation managers will agree with her.) Another outstanding impression is the stupendous ignorance of the meaning and reality of the Christian religion. This pitiable ignorance is the most terrible indictment of the churches. What have they been about that so many thousands should not have the first idea of what Christianity teaches? The Roman Catholic Church alone can be freed from this charge of neglect. She has indeed obeyed Christ's injunction to "feed my lambs". Nor has she waited for them to come to her. She goes out among her own flock and shepherds them.

Groupers have sometimes applied "life-changing" methods to myself. They usually start by saying: "Don't you think all this is very wonderful?" I can't help replying, "No, I think it is perfectly natural. I have been taught many of your fundamentals from babyhood. I have believed in the Guidance of God, for instance, all my life. The vital difference is that I have been taught to believe that God will guide me through



normal channels, and you believe that He will give you direct instructions."

— This reply seems to astonish them. Some admit that they have had a religious teaching as children, but that "it never meant anything"; others that they have had no teaching at all and so, of course, religion for them, too, "never meant anything". Others say that they have practised religion to the extent of trying to do their best and going to church, but, once again, "it never meant anything". Why has religion never meant anything to these people who have now proved their desire for it? Because the Church of Christ has failed to teach the living faith.

There are, then, four reasons that account for the success of Buchmanism. The first is a natural instinct for spiritual expression, and the second an extraordinary thoughtlessness. (It is an indictment of our educational system that half these highly "educated" young men and women have never been taught to think.) The third is a stupendous ignorance of the meaning of Christianity, and the fourth an element of "gullibility". Most people have a natural hunger for religion, and potential Groupers have one or more of the other characteristics as well. It is

for the  
the "  
The  
if ev  
critic  
Critic  
prev  
an an  
It is  
critic  
men  
is ab  
Th  
harm  
of th  
the s  
Chri  
tried  
easy  
T  
true  
sign  
The  
imp  
Y  
sins



## LIFE-CHANGERS

for this reason that they are suitable material for the "Life-Changing" methods of Dr. Buchman. The emotional appeal would have less influence if every attempt at intellectual honesty—called criticism by the Group—was not extinguished.

Criticism from outside the Group cannot be prevented. It is combated not by a defence or an answer, but by an assumption of indifference. It is merely an assumption of indifference for criticism is desperately feared just as advertisement is welcomed. Within the Group criticism is absolutely forbidden.

This is for an excellent reason. The insidiously harmful teachings cannot be defended. Stripped of these elaborations there would stand revealed the simple and sane teaching of Christianity: the Christianity that has been found difficult and not tried. Buchmanism has been tried and found easy and swallowed wholesale.

The claim that the Group "changes lives" is true—up to a point, but there seems to be little sign of much spiritual change in many cases. The most casual observer cannot fail to be impressed by this.

You will hear men and women reeling off their sins and experiences as "witness" to their



them only a short time to discover this, and they return home to carry on what Dr. W. B. Selbie, late Principal of Mansfield College, Oxford, has described as "a technique of soul healing which they insist on applying to all and sundry, whether it really meets their condition or not."

All potential Groupers, whatever their age, experience or temperament, have one thing in common. Time after time you hear new converts saying that they were first attracted to the Group because "these people have something that I lacked". This little something some others haven't got is usually described as happiness or joy. The truth is that that "little something" is a happy capacity for a facile credulity. The majority of those who are attracted by the teaching have this capacity in some measure, whether they are aware of it or not. Otherwise there would be a very small Group and a much better one.

Two impressions stand out especially clearly after having met and talked with numbers of Buchmanites. The first is that so many appear never to have done any independent thinking in their lives. As one girl confessed: "Whenever I heard important matters, such as war or un-



employment discussed, I simply shut my ears and thought about my own little interests. I never read the newspapers. Now I have come to realise that that was a sin." (I have no doubt that all newspaper circulation managers will agree with her.) Another outstanding impression is the stupendous ignorance of the meaning and reality of the Christian religion. This pitiable ignorance is the most terrible indictment of the churches. What have they been about that so many thousands should not have the first idea of what Christianity teaches? The Roman Catholic Church alone can be freed from this charge of neglect. She has indeed obeyed Christ's injunction to "feed my lambs". Nor has she waited for them to come to her. She goes out among her own flock and shepherds them.

Groupers have sometimes applied "life-changing" methods to myself. They usually start by saying: "Don't you think all this is very wonderful?" I can't help replying, "No, I think it is perfectly natural. I have been taught many of your fundamentals from babyhood. I have believed in the Guidance of God, for instance, all my life. The vital difference is that I have been taught to believe that God will guide me through



normal channels, and you believe that He will give you direct instructions."

— This reply seems to astonish them. Some admit that they have had a religious teaching as children, but that "it never meant anything"; others that they have had no teaching at all and so, of course, religion for them, too, "never meant anything". Others say that they have practised religion to the extent of trying to do their best and going to church, but, once again, "it never meant anything". Why has religion never meant anything to these people who have now proved their desire for it? Because the Church of Christ has failed to teach the living faith.

There are, then, four reasons that account for the success of Buchmanism. The first is a natural instinct for spiritual expression, and the second an extraordinary thoughtlessness. (It is an indictment of our educational system that half these highly "educated" young men and women have never been taught to think.) The third is a stupendous ignorance of the meaning of Christianity, and the fourth an element of "gullibility". Most people have a natural hunger for religion, and potential Groupers have one or more of the other characteristics as well. It is



for this reason that they are suitable material for the "Life-Changing" methods of Dr. Buchman. The emotional appeal would have less influence if every attempt at intellectual honesty—called criticism by the Group—was not extinguished. Criticism from outside the Group cannot be prevented. It is combated not by a defence or an answer, but by an assumption of indifference. It is merely an assumption of indifference for criticism is desperately feared just as advertisement is welcomed. Within the Group criticism is absolutely forbidden.

This is for an excellent reason. The insidiously harmful teachings cannot be defended. Stripped of these elaborations there would stand revealed the simple and sane teaching of Christianity: the Christianity that has been found difficult and not tried. Buchmanism has been tried and found easy and swallowed wholesale.

The claim that the Group "changes lives" is true—up to a point, but there seems to be little sign of much spiritual change in many cases. The most casual observer cannot fail to be impressed by this.

You will hear men and women reeling off their sins and experiences as "witness" to their



changed lives, and with every word they utter proving that their characters, tastes, faults, and virtues remain precisely the same. At a House Party I heard a young married woman stand up at two meetings and boastfully relate the trivialities, the bickerings and the sordidness that make up the life of an empty-headed woman. She was enjoying herself hugely. She was wallowing in the limelight. She made those members of the audience who were not yet stripped of every critical faculty feel hot and ashamed. If she had been changed at all, it must have been for the worse. For nothing on earth could have been as bad, or as lacking in any sense of taste, as she was at that moment.

And anyway—who cares? What help is it to know that Mrs. A. who was a little fool last year is an even greater fool this year?

Sometimes members of the Group in their confessions are guilty of astonishing exaggerations. I heard one woman say: "Then there was hate—oh! I hated hundreds of people." If she would only have a "Quiet Time" and count up the number of her acquaintances, she would probably find that she did not even know—let alone hate—"hundreds of people".



## LIFE-CHANGERS

Another woman confessed that she found no difficulty in loving her friends—but her enemies—well—she couldn't love her enemies; those people who did things better; those who had prettier children; servants who broke things; and intruders into a railway carriage when she wanted to have it to herself. Enemies—all enemies!

You will see an instance of how "changing" can be for the worse, if you go to a Group meeting when new converts are asked to testify. These people are very touching in their complete sincerity, humility and deep reverence. Then hear the various members of the "Teams"—the same type of people after they have had an intensive training in Group methods and have recounted their sins at many public confessions. There is no longer any ring of sincerity; they are glib. There is no humility; they are smug, complacent and insufferably priggish. And the reverence has gone completely. This picture does not, of course, apply to every member of the Group teams. There are those who have sufficient wisdom as well as native goodness and simplicity of heart to retain the dignity of simple virtues in spite of great temptation to abandon



them. These are usually the older members. The effect on the younger people is very often disastrous.

Finally, there are those people who have indeed changed for the better. There are several men and women who were the victims of some overwhelming temptation and who through contact with the Group have found release and strength. Notably there is the case of the morphine addict who had been a slave to the drug for many years. He is now completely cured. In the Group Movement he and others came in touch with some part of the teachings of the Christian religion. These they applied, and they were people of sufficient character and wisdom—or perhaps one should call it taste—to be untouched by the crudities, the vulgarities and the misconstructions that provide a moral pitfall for many of the Group converts. Men and women of this type *are* to be found in the Group, and the Group owes to them the preservation of all that is good, but they are comparatively few and far between. In their hands the doctrine of Guidance is fairly safe. Their interpretation is often far nearer to that of the Christian Church than to that of Dr. Buchman.

Th  
of th  
A gi  
Hou  
been  
since  
othe  
inste  
M  
Eng  
chie  
ing  
in c  
Afri  
on t  
The  
was  
evid  
H  
muc  
poir  
doc  
W  
to s  
he w  
pass  
D



The destruction of the sense of reverence is one of the many undermining influences of the Group. A girl who had been changed at the International House Party at Oxford in July, 1933, and had been busybodying with other people's lives ever since, confessed later that when she changed others she "hung their scalps round her waist instead of hanging them round God's waist".

Mr. Douglas Buchanan, K.C., who came to England from Bechuanaland to defend the native chieftain, Tshekedi, recounted (at a public meeting that I attended) the Guidance he had received in dealing with an ecclesiastical case in South Africa. He had received guidance to concentrate on the legal aspect instead of the doctrinal points. The next day his Guidance was different, and he was instructed to bring forward the doctrinal evidence.

He said: "Well, really, God, this is a bit too much. Yesterday you told me to go for the legal points and to-day you tell me to go all out for doctrine!"

Why Mr. Buchanan finds it particularly helpful to speak to Almighty God with less courtesy than he would use in addressing the Judge in his Court, passes my comprehension.



## SAINTS RUN MAD

them. These are usually the older members. The effect on the younger people is very often disastrous.

Finally, there are those people who have indeed changed for the better. There are several men and women who were the victims of some overwhelming temptation and who through contact with the Group have found release and strength. Notably there is the case of the morphine addict who had been a slave to the drug for many years. He is now completely cured. In the Group Movement he and others came in touch with some part of the teachings of the Christian religion. These they applied, and they were people of sufficient character and wisdom—or perhaps one should call it taste—to be untouched by the crudities, the vulgarities and the misconstructions that provide a moral pitfall for many of the Group converts. Men and women of this type *are* to be found in the Group, and the Group owes to them the preservation of all that is good, but they are comparatively few and far between. In their hands the doctrine of Guidance is fairly safe. Their interpretation is often far nearer to that of the Christian Church than to that of Dr. Buchman.



The destruction of the sense of reverence is one of the many undermining influences of the Group. A girl who had been changed at the International House Party at Oxford in July, 1933, and had been busybodying with other people's lives ever since, confessed later that when she changed others she "hung their scalps round her waist instead of hanging them round God's waist".

Mr. Douglas Buchanan, K.C., who came to England from Bechuanaland to defend the native chieftain, Tshekedi, recounted (at a public meeting that I attended) the Guidance he had received in dealing with an ecclesiastical case in South Africa. He had received guidance to concentrate on the legal aspect instead of the doctrinal points. The next day his Guidance was different, and he was instructed to bring forward the doctrinal evidence.

He said: "Well, really, God, this is a bit too much. Yesterday you told me to go for the legal points and to-day you tell me to go all out for doctrine!"

Why Mr. Buchanan finds it particularly helpful to speak to Almighty God with less courtesy than he would use in addressing the Judge in his Court, passes my comprehension.



A complete lack of reverence towards God Himself is one of the first changes that can be seen in a "changed" life. Some people become positively profane for the first time in their lives. The particularly foolish type of undergraduate who is blasphemous as a general rule, stops being blasphemous, but adopts instead a hearty "good fellow" attitude towards God. Originally his blasphemy meant nothing because God meant nothing. His new attitude seems to be more reprehensible.

In order to become "changed", converts must make a complete surrender of every part of life and of every corner of the heart and mind. This is taught as surrender to God. But is it? Has God ever demanded the surrender of intellectual honesty? Surely He respects an honest doubter? But an honest doubter—not necessarily of the reality of God, but of the wisdom of Group teaching is of no use to the Group.

There are two ways to the spiritual peace for which most men and women are hungering. One is through spiritual warfare taught by the Church militant. The other through the surrender taught by the Buchmanites. The one is the heat and dust of battle, the other is in return for the laying

dow  
men  
exce  
but  
Th  
escap  
thou  
"  
reviv  
than  
Chur  
inclu  
indep  
Grou  
then  
an a  
guida  
repre  
It i  
conv  
of bo  
lives.  
sense  
Un  
may  
teach



down of arms—the promise of a peaceful internment in a concentration camp, a camp with an excellent social atmosphere and every comfort, but no freedom. It is a selling proposition.

This surrender teaching provides a way of escape from reality—especially the reality of thought.

“Surrender” is a word used invariably in revivalism. It attacks the emotions. It is easier than the word *dedication* used so much by the Church. The emphasis on this surrender, which includes the muffling-down of all criticism and independent thought, is a striking point about the Group teachings. The mind of the convert is then ready for the life-changing, which includes an acceptance of the Buchman doctrine of guidance and every other exaggeration and misrepresentation.

It is a healthy sign that so many of the Buchman converts fall away quickly. There is a great deal of boastfulness about the number of “changed” lives. [The number of people who come to their senses again remarkably quickly is not mentioned.]

Unfortunately their disgust with the Group may tend to make them impatient of all religious teaching.



The "surrender" is generally an emotional experience. At a House Party I was asked to go to a meeting for girls and young women. We festooned ourselves on chairs, tables and the floor. Those who were experiencing their first House Party were asked in turn to introduce themselves by name, and then to say why they had come, and what they had found. The first girl who was asked to speak blushed furiously and stammered: "I don't quite know why I came. I—I was just interested. I don't think I have anything more to say."

Three hours later that girl—she looked about seventeen or eighteen—got up in a crowded audience under the hypnotic influence of mass-suggestion and said that she had decided to give her life to God. Many of the converts—men and women—had come to this stupendous decision within three days. It is not surprising that it is difficult to estimate accurately the shifting population of the Buchman Groups. It is a case of here to-day and gone to-morrow. Quickly come and quickly go. But the subsequent disillusion must be a cruel experience.

THE

T  
allie  
certa  
One  
wor  
their  
It is  
ever  
expe  
cum  
ligh  
I sh  
easy  
surp  
was  
mov  
I do  
that  
noth



## THE JOY AND THE FUN AND THE THRILL

THE world, the flesh and the devil are adversaries worthy of the greatest respect. As allies they do not promise true joy, but they certainly provide any amount of fun and thrill. One thing is positive: if they regard you as worth their attentions you will not find that their repulsion is either joyful, funny or thrilling. It is most unpleasant. The Buchmanites, however, do not seem to share this almost universal experience. They throw overboard every encumbrance from sex to cigarettes in the most lighthearted manner. I remonstrated once that I should find the abandonment of cigarettes no easy matter. But no; it was guaranteed to be surprisingly easy. The Grouper, with whom I was talking, assured me that she had at one time moved in a bridge-playing, cocktail-drinking set. I do not know what was necessarily wrong with that, but she evidently felt that it was all or nothing—no virtue in moderation.



"One day," she said, "I was at a cocktail party, and just in the middle of drinking a cocktail, when the Holy Spirit checked up on it. From that moment I gave it up and I never wanted a cocktail again. I can go to a party now and refuse a drink perfectly happily."

Now, when a middle-aged and cultured English gentlewoman refers to the Holy Spirit in terms of American slang, one is forced to the conclusion that there is some form of hypnosis at work. It is all as unnatural as the easy abandonment of any bad habit.

It is this emphasis on the easiness of it all that is so often a cruel disillusion. So long as the vision lasts it may be easy. But there may come a time when this fades as anyone who has struggled against a besetting sin well knows. The only hope, then, lies in the dull, dogged effort. There must be some deeper foundation than imagination to make that effort worth while and to sustain it.

The Group, with its emphasis on the joy and the thrill and the fun, does not put a weapon into the hands of its weakening brethren. When the joy fades and the fun is thin and the old temptation returns, there must be fear of a great re-

T  
acti  
first  
now  
U  
awa  
strit  
thei  
war  
pha  
mer  
that  
con  
reg:  
play  
and  
casi  
T  
the:  
For  
giv  
hur  
If y  
the:  
so.  
I  
Coc



## THE JOY, THE FUN, THE THRILL

action. The last state may well be worse than the first. The vision has been seen and held; and now it is lost. There is no hope left.

Undoubtedly this Buchmanite tendency to shy away from the reality of sacrifice, struggle and strife is the cause of the falling-away of so many of their followers. They are unprepared and unwarned. Another cause is the ridiculous emphasis on trivialities against which most sensible men and women would soon rebel. God knows that there are temptations enough with which to contend. It is unnecessary to add to them by regarding smoking, moderate drinking, bridge-playing, a strict censorship of plays and films, and—for women—the use of make-up, as occasions of offence.

The Group will tell you that it forbids none of these things, but they are none the less banished. For some reason or other the Group as a whole gives up smoking. At a House Party of some five hundred people only about three or four smoked. If you ask the others why they have given it up they will say that they have been "guided" to do so.

I asked a Grouper if she had seen the latest Cochran Revue. "I don't go to that kind of



thing now," she replied. "I spend my time praying for the people who do go."

I have told already that lipstick is regarded as a fit subject for prayer and that cocktails are things to be abandoned. Many of the confessions are a record of the innocent pleasures of life.

The fact that there is no ruling on these matters and that they are yet regarded as sin is a proof of the inconsistencies that permeate the whole Movement. Undoubtedly this is a cause of the falling away of many a man and woman arrested at first by all that is sound in the Group Movement.

Religion is shown forth as an adventure and as fun at the same time. Now, I agree that religion is the supreme adventure, the most gigantic gamble, in the world. It is based on "I believe", not on "I know". As Donald Hankey put it in his *Student in Arms*, "True Religion is a gigantic assumption that the sight of the mind is truer than the sight of the eyes. It is betting your life that there is a God." The atheist cannot prove that there is no God. The believer cannot prove that there is one. But he takes a chance on it to the extent of betting his life. He lives his life as if there were a God to Whom he is answerable



## THE JOY, THE FUN, THE THRILL

and Who is able and ready to help him, into Whose hands he may commit himself at the last. Religion is, therefore, a great adventure indeed. But I have yet to hear that any adventure worthy of the word is necessarily "fun". We read of Christ's agony at the prospect of Calvary. Did Scott, Wilson and Oates, dying adventurously at the Pole, regard it as fun? Does any slow-dying martyr to medical science regard his lingering disease as fun? Yet these are supreme adventurers.

A young man crucified launched the Christian religion. Apart from its spiritual significance it has brought learning, healing and mercy to the world. These things were paid for heavily both by its Founder and by His immediate followers. The Crucifixion has a great symbolic significance. It signifies the slow and painful conquest of sin, which is the exact opposite of the "dumping methods" for its disposal advocated by the Group.

"We find we can give our sins into another's keeping with as much relief as we would discard a heavy great-coat on a hot summer's day," writes a prominent member.

Very easy. Very comfortable. But it is very



likely we shall go out and get another great-coat when the warmth of emotion has died down.

Father Winslow, speaking at the Central Hall, said that in his fellowship with the Group he felt as if he had stepped straight into the Acts of the Apostles. Now the Acts of the Apostles is a record of tremendously hard work, persecution and hardship. One constantly comes on such sentences as these :

“ They laid hands on the apostles and put them in the common prison.”

“ They called the apostles and beat them.”

“ They took council to slay them.”

“ They cast him (Stephen) out of the city and stoned him.”

“ He delivered him (Peter) to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him.”

“ They raised a persecution against Paul and Barnabas and expelled them from their coast.”

And so it goes on. Great adventure but not much fun and certainly no ease.

St. Paul writes of being stoned and three times beaten. He recounts perils of all kinds, weariness and painfulness, hunger and thirst, cold and nakedness. Somehow I feel that Father Winslow would have had a rude awakening if he had



## THE JOY, THE FUN, THE THRILL

really stepped into the Acts of the Apostles instead of into the Hotel Metropole, Brown's Hotel or the Grand at Eastbourne. The Apostles in their hunger and thirst, cold and nakedness were living on faith. Frank Buchman, too, lives on faith but lives very comfortably.

The finances of the Group are a complete mystery. In Canada the same perplexity was felt. How could a Team of fifty people travel by the crack trains and stay in the best hotels throughout an extended tour of the Dominion and the United States unless there were a very rich backing somewhere? The headquarters of the Group in London are divided between Brown's Hotel and the Hotel Metropole. The Rev. Alan Thornhill, Fellow and Chaplain of Hertford College, Oxford, in a letter to *The Times* attempts to justify the use of expensive headquarters on the grounds that drastic cuts in prices are made for numbers and that hotels are willing to provide private sitting-rooms and large halls for public meetings free of charge. He said that it would be amusing to see a queue of a hundred people awaiting their turn for the one boarding house telephone, or receiving friends or enquirers in the one living-room. I have paid



two visits of enquiry to the Hotel Metropole. At the first, I spent some time in the women's sitting-room, and I had the undivided attention of three members of the Team. No outside telephone call was received during the time I was there. On the second occasion the sitting-room was overrun by Groupers themselves, and I was asked if I would go to a bedroom for the rest of the conversation. I believe one other woman enquirer was being interviewed as well as myself. I do not know to what extent the male members of the Team were occupied.

The Group states that it "never asks for funds by either public or private appeal. Anyone doing so is disloyal to, and in direct conflict with, the principle and practice of the Group." As one member put it to me, "There is no collection or subscription." Quite. But what's in a name? At a House Party there is a "registration fee". This fee of five shillings levied on five hundred people amounts to £125. Any religious organisation that could make sure of securing an average of five shillings from those participating in a concentrated activity would consider itself lucky. There is no reason on earth why the Group should not make this demand of five shillings a



## THE JOY, THE FUN, THE THRILL

head. The expenses connected with the organisation of a House Party must be high. But, on the face of it, it is absurd to say that "it never asks for funds" and that there is no "collection or subscription".

There are large numbers of men and women who are attached to the Teams either as permanent workers or for long periods of time at a stretch. Who pays their expenses? Are their relations and friends content that they should "live on faith", which usually means living on other people? Or are they all people of substantial independent means? Many of them are very young. I believe it is correct to say that Dr. Buchman himself claims to have only a tiny income of less than £50 a year. Yet he travels here, there and everywhere in comfort—even luxury.

Another mystery connected with the Group is its attitude to the Churches. This only concerns the Protestant section. The Roman Catholic Church will have none of it and the Group does not flourish in Roman Catholic countries. There is a small Group in Paris with a few Roman Catholic members, but the majority are Protestants. It is fairly strong in Lutheran Germany, but has comparatively little success in the United



States. There are Groups in over forty different countries, but England is the choicest flower in the bunch. The Movement has had a greater success here than anywhere else. The chief reason is the dissension and lack of discipline in the Church of England.

The Bishop of Durham has made an exhaustive study of the Movement and has no hesitation in condemning it. His diocese knows where it stands in the matter, for it has been given a definite lead. The Bishop of Calcutta is an enthusiastic member of the Group, but on the whole the attitude of the leaders of the Church is non-committal and the majority have damned it with faint praise. They have lauded what was good and warned against the evil, and left their flock to do what they like about it, forgetting that there is no half-measure with the Group. You are all in or all out. Some of the rank-and-file of the clergy are in favour of the Group, others are dead against it. Most of them have very little knowledge of it, except what they have gathered from newspaper reports or the oddly confused literature sold by the Group.

The average man and woman have not the time to investigate thoroughly a new religious

T  
mov  
sum  
men  
reas  
tago  
ano  
has  
mer  
urge  
Tha  
at l  
intr  
teac  
of  
"M  
Goo  
this  
mar  
Goo  
A  
a H  
usu  
sup  
In s  
dire  
usu



## THE JOY, THE FUN, THE THRILL

movement. They look to the Church for a summing up and an opinion. A definite judgment should have been given. Possibly the reason this has not been done is the fear of antagonising the Group into the formation of yet another sect. The Group is quite definite that it has no intentions in this direction. It claims members in every Church and maintains that it urges a new way of life and not a new doctrine. That would be excellent if it had not actually made at least one false doctrinal addition on its own, introduced many unwise practices and failed to teach that the worship of God is an integral part of true religion. St. Ignatius of Loyola said, "Man was created to praise, reverence and serve God, and by this means to save his soul." In this he sums up at least a part of the first Commandment of Christ: "To love the Lord Thy God with all thy heart."

At eleven o'clock on Sunday mornings, when a House Party is in session, there is a meeting usually conducted by Dr. Buchman which is supposed to take the place of the Church Service. In some ways it is a vast improvement. In other directions it is only half the story. There is usually a short Quiet Time. There is a reading



from the Bible, possibly a short prayer and the verse of a hymn. Except when the hymn chosen is that glorious song of praise, "Praise my soul the King of Heaven," there is no sense of worship at all. I have never heard a corporate prayer for anyone except themselves. There are no humble confessions of sins and no almsgiving. The main part of the programme is occupied with talks from various members and these are usually entirely personal.

The clergy might learn something at least from this "Service", especially when the speakers are well chosen and not merely "guided" by their own inclinations to speak. They can often teach far more than the usual sermon.

But it is surprising that Dr. Buchman should frequently take the opportunity of making gibes at the Church. When convert after convert had testified at a Sunday evening meeting, I have heard him say from the platform, "Look at that now! Any other institution would be glad to have that result in a year. We have achieved it in three days!"

If a new revival arises outside the Church, instead of within it, it is a sad thing, but not necessarily a bad thing. The Church of Christ is

T  
not  
"ser  
room  
room  
less s  
Apo:  
they  
prob  
faith  
corp  
vice  
fessio  
Grou  
only  
great



## THE JOY, THE FUN, THE THRILL

not encompassed by stone walls and the first "services" were held in secret in ["upper rooms"]. If the later services are held in ball-rooms there is nothing in that to make them any less sincere and acceptable to God. (No doubt the Apostles would have made use of ball-rooms if they had been available, though they would probably not have talked of renting them "on faith".) No, the trouble is the failure to incorporate every aspect of worship in their "service"—praise, adoration, thanksgiving, confession and prayer for all men—just as in the Group's general teaching there is an insistence on only a part of Christianity and not the whole great story.



110-21

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### MEET DR. BUCHMAN

**I**t is time that you met Dr. Buchman, and it is only fair that you should see him first through the eyes of his disciples.

“When the Churches fail—God sends a man,” writes one of these, and we gather that in this case the man is Dr. Frank Buchman who is given a place beside St. Francis (who loved the poor!), Martin Luther and John Wesley.

The late Harold Begbie, who will be remembered as the trenchant “Gentleman with a Duster”, found it unnecessary to polish “Frank”—as he likes to be called. He describes him as of “scrupulous, shampooed and almost medical cleanness or freshness, which is so characteristic of the hygienic American.” He goes on to say that “if Mr. Pickwick had given birth to a son (I feel that this would have been a flagrant infringement of women’s rights) and that son had emigrated in boyhood to America, he would have

been  
of s  
M  
pub  
crip  
bear  
the  
rime  
“cro  
ever  
bring  
M  
feels  
audi  
guid  
when  
perm  
A  
marr  
a bea  
marr  
So  
crack  
medic  
Th  
been



## MEET DR. BUCHMAN

been not unlike this amiable and friendly surgeon of souls."

Mr. A. J. Russell, the historian and chief publicist of the Movement, elaborates the description. Frank has an eternally happy face. He beams through and around his spectacles. In the morning he is "astir with the birds". "Merriment bursts through the shaving soap." He "crows with joy". He also "crackles"—whatever that may mean. Mr. Begbie adds that "he brings a breeze into the breakfast-room".

Mr. Russell says that "whatever he does he feels is right", for he believes that he has a daily audience of God in which he receives direct guidance in every smallest detail of life, although when it comes to a second helping at a meal he permits himself to be guided by his own desire.

A disciple once asked him why he had never married and reports that the Master replied with a beam, "Because I have never been guided to marry."

So there he is—beaming, smiling, crowing, crackling, gay, merry, eternally happy, excessively medicated and fumigated.

*The New Yorker* believes that "it would have been better to have him morbid and dour than



antiseptic and uproarious," and goes on to say that "the picture of the radiantly, soapy and laughing Buchman is, of course, elaborated in order to offset the suspicion that there is something unhealthy and lugubrious about the Movement!"

In my opinion, Frank's followers have served him badly. I should not find myself admiring a crowing, crackling gentleman, all beams and blessings. But I do find myself with a great respect for Dr. Buchman, who is one of the cleverest men it has ever been my good fortune to meet. He appears to "beam" less than anyone else, in spite of the efforts of his admirers to make him out as a ray of sunshine. From time to time he smiles with approval when some young disciple seems to be an especial success with an audience. He has a highly-developed and subtle sense of humour, and consequently can see a joke against himself.

He has an extraordinary—an uncanny—capacity for knowing immediately just how to treat individual people. His judgment is unerring in this direction. He has a genial manner, is an expert listener and, like Lord Beaverbrook, he has that priceless gift of making the man or woman to

who  
she i  
worl  
more  
touch  
of h  
to ha  
Dr. I  
an un  
ing.  
Beav  
the r  
quiet  
almo  
The  
Anot  
dislik  
to w  
Bu  
come  
brook  
race  
lieves  
like  
casior  
clear



## MEET DR. BUCHMAN

whom he happens to be talking believe that he or she is quite the most interesting person in the world. He reminds me of Lord Beaverbrook in more ways than one : in addition to the unerring touch with the individual, there is the same fear of hostility *en masse*. Lord Beaverbrook seems to have conquered this fear to a large extent, but Dr. Buchman is still its victim. Both men have an unusual and arresting manner in public speaking. One would imagine, however, that Lord Beaverbrook was the revivalist and Dr. Buchman the newspaper proprietor. He is aloof, casual, quiet and completely fascinating. He has an almost hypnotic power of holding attention. The eyes of an audience are riveted on him. Another likeness to Lord Beaverbrook is his dislike of direct responsibility. Both men prefer to work through others.

But Buchman has Beaverbrook beaten when it comes to understanding the English. Lord Beaverbrook cannot believe that we are the stupidest race in the world. Dr. Buchman not only believes it but acts on it. He treats his followers like school-children. And they love it. Occasionally he says, "Now ! Have you got that clear ? Let's have it settled once and for all. Do



you understand that? Let's have it now, if you don't." A House-Party audience is almost entirely composed of adherents to the Movement or those partially convinced. Buchman obviously does not expect anything but an assent to his demands, for if anyone asks so much as a question, he becomes flurried immediately. He shouts, blusters, ties himself into knots and is usually extricated by his followers. He is always evasive. A definite criticism voiced at a meeting spoils the meeting for him. His strength lies in his ability to attune himself to individual types and temperaments and in his great sense of humour. His weakness lies in his complete inability to parry criticism and his fear of an unsympathetic audience. He overcomes this weakness to a large extent by realising it. He does not speak at a House Party until the members have been thoroughly warmed up. After about ten meetings spread over three days and a constant atmosphere of assent, the outsiders are usually mass-hypnotised into at least a highly-sympathetic attitude. It is then that Dr. Buchman appears on the platform.

After I had spent two week-ends at a House Party, and at the end of that time was still asking

ques  
from  
been  
far a  
last  
high  
to te  
We  
Th  
almo  
geste  
I wr  
doub  
discr  
For  
self r  
"Th  
"Gu  
had r  
I had  
the s  
Ezeki  
God  
desire  
ent c  
circul



questions, I found myself receiving scant attention from the earnest young women who hitherto had been all smiles and patient reasonableness. As far as possible they left me severely alone. On the last evening Dr. Buchman and I had a long and highly entertaining interview. He was kind enough to tell me he thoroughly enjoyed it. I know I did. We laughed and we laughed and we laughed.

That evening I put briefly to Dr. Buchman almost every criticism in this book. He suggested that I should do much better financially if I wrote in favour of the Movement. I have no doubt of that. When I brought to his notice the discrepancy between Bob's story as it appears in *For Sinners Only* and as the young man himself recounted it at the Central Hall, he remarked, "That's a good point." I asked him to justify "Guidance" as he teaches it. He asked me if I had read the Book of Ezekiel lately. I replied that I had not. But I have since done so : I fail to see the slightest connection between the vision of Ezekiel, prophet and priest, a man set apart by God and chosen by Him, not when Ezekiel desired it but when God willed—to be the recipient of direct Divine Guidance, and the little circular clumps of converts, heads together, note-



books in hand, seated in the lounge of a fashionable hotel. Their heads are bent; eyes screwed up. Then in a moment or two they start scribbling in the little books. They read out the result in turn. They laugh and chatter and seem to enjoy themselves hugely. They appear to be playing "consequences", they believe they are having an audience of God. No, Dr. Buchman, there does not appear to be any connection between this and the burning vision of Ezekiel "among the captives by the river Chebar" when the heavens opened and he saw "visions of God".

I first heard Dr. Buchman speak at the Central Hall. The packed audience was growing restive and a fraction bored with the "uninteresting confessions of uninteresting people", as I once heard it put. In the momentary lull between each confession people were filtering to freedom. Suddenly Frank sprang to his feet.

"Not a person move!" he shouted. "Not a move, please, until we are through with the final act."

There was an embarrassed but obedient pause on the trek towards the door.

"Shall we have a Quiet Time—a short silence when perhaps God will speak to us?"

D  
voic  
Dr.  
after  
tinu  
diffi  
drov  
loud  
tend  
man  
Fr  
beer  
half-  
W  
one  
sole  
grea  
the r  
the b  
due  
appa  
antic  
Dr.  
guid  
that  
Wisc



Down went everyone's head. Up went Frank's voice. "Be still and know that I am God," said Dr. Buchman, and added it seemed rather as an afterthought, "saith the Psalmist." He continued to break the silence with a recitation. It is difficult to know whether this was in order to drown the still small voice of conscience or the louder tones of criticism, or whether it was intended to impose upon the audience Dr. Buchman's own personality.

Frank's utterances sometimes seem to have been designed not so much for babes as for the half-witted.

When he rose to address a crowded meeting one Sunday evening in the Summer of 1933, he solemnly announced that he had a message of great importance to deliver. Everyone hung upon the master's words. "It's the banana that leaves the bunch that gets skinned," he announced with due impressiveness. These precious words were apparently dropped into a silence pregnant with anticipation. They were repeated a second time. Dr. Buchman claims that he speaks under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Does a remark of that kind suggest the inspiration of Infinite Wisdom?



When Harold Begbie wrote his book about the Group Movement some years ago he thinly disguised Dr. Buchman under his initials. He had stipulated that his name was not to appear for "he regarded publicity as a grave danger and considered privacy essential to his methods". But in 1928 he had changed this point of view very considerably and permitted great personal laudation in an article that appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly*. Three years later he was mailing all over the world about ten thousand copies of an article written by a well-known publicist, Mr. A. J. Russell. A year afterwards the history of the Movement appeared by the same writer. It is said that Mr. Russell first came in contact with the Movement in order to make a good thing out of it from the journalist's point of view, but he became "changed". However, he still made a good thing out of it for Dr. Buchman told me that he must have earned about £7,000 in royalties.

Mr. Russell was on the staff of the *Sunday Express* when he first met Dr. Buchman. At one time he had been Publicity Agent to Madame Tetravzzini and had also served as Literary Editor on the *Daily Express*. While with the *Daily*

*Exp*  
of a  
nove  
theti  
and  
ject.  
Mr.  
case  
be in  
Mov  
"  
reint  
ion c  
with  
Spir  
A  
had  
with  
mitt  
copi  
all p  
A  
publ  
Hou  
a co  
the



## MEET DR. BUCHMAN

*Express* he had been responsible for the collection of a brilliant series of articles by ten well-known novelists on "My Religion". He was sympathetically inclined towards the Group Movement and suggested some similar articles on the subject. Dr. Buchman listened with interest. Then Mr. Russell went on to suggest that, as in the case of the "My Religion" series, readers should be invited to air their views for and against the Movement.

"Oh dear, no!" said Dr. Buchman. He reinforced his own opinion—quite a sound opinion on the advantages of newspaper discussions—with the startling declaration that the Holy Spirit's guidance was against the scheme.

A few months later, however, after Mr. Russell had been "changed" and had been in close touch with Dr. Buchman and his friends, he was permitted to write, and as I have said, thousands of copies of his article were joyously despatched to all parts of the world.

A Group Supplement to the *British Weekly* was published in connection with the International House Party at Oxford in July, 1933. It contains a composite picture of some of the headlines of the Canadian and United States secular press



during the Group's tour of the American Continent. On the first page there appears one of the most tremendous personal "boosts" that any one man could desire or dislike—according to his temperament and occupation. It is printed in large and heavy letters and starts: "One man, twenty-five years ago, saw life-changing on a colossal scale as the answer to the world's problems." That man is Frank Buchman who, seven years ago, considered that publicity was dangerous and privacy essential to his work. "Who's afraid of the Big Black Type?" Not Dr. Buchman!

One gathers from a study of his changed attitude that criticism is still regarded as dangerous but that advertising is quite another matter. In fact this new adventure would seem to be all "ad" and very little "venture".

Sir Evan Spicer, a member of the Group, writing in *The Times* in September, 1933, complains of the criticism of the Bishop of Durham and others, and remarks, "If anything is wrong let them come in and help us and put us right." I can assure Sir Evan Spicer from my own experience that even if one goes direct to members of the Group, and indeed to Dr. Buchman him-

self,  
side  
com  
bilit  
say  
mer  
I  
ver  
the  
and  
live  
beli  
con  
it i  
mes  
of  
fort  
of  
lear  
sim



self, and voices some of the doubts felt by outsiders, one generally receives a courteous hearing combined with a bland assumption of infallibility. The usual attitude is "swallow what we say hook, line and bait, or keep out of the Movement".

Dr. W. B. Selbie has criticised the Group in a very fair and reasoned manner. He emphasises the lack of intellectual or theological background and points out that no religious movement can live on emotionalism alone. He concludes: "I believe that they have something very vital to contribute to the religious life of our time, and it is a pity that the truth and power of their message should so often be obscured by methods of propaganda that are, to say the least, unfortunate. . . . One would be much more hopeful of its future if its leaders were more willing to learn from others and from the experience of similar movements in the past."



## CHAPTER NINE

### A HOUSE PARTY

WHEN the wind cuts like a knife along the Eastbourne Parade; when you are tired and cold and hungry and find yourself chivvied from hotel to hotel: it is then that you become positively bitter about the Group Movement. You wish that those responsible for arranging accommodation might have been "guided" to achieve a greater measure of efficiency. You wish that "Frank" might have been "guided" to "share" that magnificent fur-lined coat. You are thankful—devoutly thankful—that you are not pledged to be absolutely loving but that instead you are free to be absolutely cross.

However, having introduced a little righteous wrath into the code and eventually recuperated your good humour by means of a large dinner, you are bound to fall under the spell of the most disarming friendliness that you have ever encountered. The friendliness continues as long as

you  
peop  
rest

T  
criti

vict

long

self

you

are

C

Eas

feet

aud

patl

wor

anx

Gro

pro

"

"I

lean

you

wil

"

"C



## A HOUSE PARTY

you are a hearer of the word as interpreted by people anxious to add your soul's scalp to the rest of their collection.

They will bear—for a little time—with some criticism. But if you fail to acquiesce in conviction and that fairly quickly, then you are no longer interesting, and in the end, you find yourself exhorted from the platform to “pack up your criticisms with your luggage and go—you are no use.”

One young man, at that last meeting of the Eastbourne House Party, stung by this, rose to his feet and, an almost lone critic in the midst of an audience composed of Groupers, or those sympathetic to the Movement, flung back in a few words the challenge of all those thousands of anxious and serious people who fail to see in the Group the answer to their own or the world's problems.

“I have been afraid of God all my life,” he said. “I have been hag-ridden by God. I came to learn. I cannot accept all your teaching, and so you tell me I am no use. You tell me to go. I will go.”

“Yes. Go!” said Frank from the platform. “Go and talk it over outside.”



And he went. He was the most desperately sincere, the most moving and the most convincing speaker I heard during the thirteen meetings of the Group that I attended during that House Party. Dr. Buchman told me he had sent back an apology. I hope he did nothing of the sort. The Group owed to him the deepest and humblest apology for his was the cry of a tormented soul. A thousand and thousand men and women would echo it. He was the only person in all the House Party who seemed to have suffered spiritual travail. "Religion never meant anything" that is what the Groupers say almost invariably. To this boy religion had obviously meant something. He had been "hag-ridden" by God. Religion had been a disrupting force and his life its battlefield. He did not want the joy and the fun and the thrill offered by the Group. He rejected the blatantly superstitious interpretation of the Guidance of God—and because he had courage and deep feeling, the Group told him to go. They had no use for him. He was followed from the hall by several young men who were prepared to "change" but not to help him. But he had been publicly humiliated and his genuine desire for true guidance had been rejected.

In  
weak

I d  
the n  
put i  
Chris  
each  
right  
throu  
the n  
have  
hone  
first  
the I  
no h  
polit  
mean  
the t  
simp  
Chris  
bigot  
smug  
alwa  
on C  
teach

Yo

E\*



## A HOUSE PARTY

In that incident you see revealed the whole weakness of the Group.

I do not doubt for a moment that on the whole the members of the Group are seriously trying to put into practice at least a part of the religion of Christ and to live their lives in this light. Through each individual life, they believe, and quite rightly, that they can change the community, through the Community the nation, and through the nation the whole world may be re-made. They have undoubtedly the vision of a world in which honesty, justice, mercy and truth would be of first importance. They see the practicability of the Kingdom of God in our midst. And this is no high-falutin and pious hope; it is practical politics. The members of the Group undoubtedly mean well. But there is a great deal wrong with the teaching on which the Movement is based—simply because it is not the whole teaching of Christ. And because of this there is intolerance, bigotry, superstition, exaggeration, fanaticism, smugness, complacency and every evil that has always accompanied a religious teaching *based* on Christ's teaching but refusing to face the full teaching in its stark simplicity.

You cannot get a fair picture of the Group



Movement until you have taken part in a House Party. An isolated meeting is like one scene from a play. You may strike a scene which would send you away convinced that the whole drama is the greatest masterpiece the world has seen since Christ. You may strike a scene that will make you decide that nothing could be more vulgar, cheap and rotten to the core.

I attended some thirteen meetings of the Group during two week-ends spent at the Eastbourne House Party. As I do not live on faith but by the sweat of my brow, I was unable to spend the full ten days there. Out of those thirteen meetings there was one that will remain as one of the most inspiring memories of my life. The speakers included a Russian priest—leader of the French Group in Paris; a German girl, an American boy, an Oxford undergraduate, a law student, a University girl, a retired Admiral, two middle-aged women—one a Canadian—a publisher, and Dr. Buchman himself. On this occasion each one spoke with quiet conviction and deep sincerity. They were quite impersonal. They showed how the practical teaching of Christ could be put into daily life, how it could make for friendship and trust between individuals and between nations;

chan  
earth  
exag  
one  
the  
Chri  
In  
there  
offer  
evid  
Here  
scatt  
weat  
Eng  
shou  
exhib  
an  
spee  
facts  
wha  
You  
of "  
I  
ing-  
for  
temp



## A HOUSE PARTY

change the spirit of industry and bring peace on earth and goodwill towards men. Not one of the exaggerations or fallacies were introduced and one did indeed have a momentary vision of what the world might become under the reign of Christ.

In addition to this one outstanding meeting there were perhaps three that did not actually offend. The remaining nine were convincing evidence of the harmful aspects of the Group. Here you found ponderous young men and scatter-brained young women making heavy weather with attempts at slapstick humour. The English are not a wise-cracking nation and they should not attempt it. You saw gross examples of exhibitionism. You found a play on the emotions, an insistence on trivialities, exaggeration in speech, a complete lack of humility, a disregard of facts and a frequently lamentable ignorance of what they were supposed to be talking about. You grew sick and tired of a continual reiteration of "I", "I", "I".

I remember my first reaction to a Group meeting—some time before the House Party. I faced for twenty-four hours afterwards the greatest temptation to a complete disbelief in God that I



have ever encountered. Is this, I thought, all that there is to it? Is religion in all its aspects nothing but a drug to man's intelligence? For I had seen the application of the simple principles of modern psychology that seemed to be sufficient to convince the Group that they had found and were showing the whole truth.

During a House Party you get a little tired of such expressions as "this crowd" and "a quality of life" and "this fellowship", and the word "vision" is worked to death.

"And then I came in touch with this crowd. They had something I lacked. Their quality of life made me decided to surrender my life to God. Now I live my life under guidance. Since I have been in this fellowship I have had a vision of how I may change my home and my college. In my Quiet Time this morning the thought came to me that I must share with my father. I am going to write and tell him all about it. I have made some restitution and I am going to write to my prep school-master and say I cribbed. I am going to apologise to a man I used to dislike. I am going to do this. I have stopped doing that." I, I, I, I, *ad nauseam*. That is the jargon. It is most unconvincing.

W  
thav  
goo  
to t  
are  
vita  
cou  
an l  
and  
A  
abo  
in h  
that  
the  
surp  
mig  
fam  
plet  
wor  
por  
diff  
equ  
side  
frou  
equ  
old



## A HOUSE PARTY

When the converts have been thoroughly thawed by the influence of their own desire for good, plus mass suggestion, they are called upon to testify at one of the large meetings. The men are far more quick to take advantage of this invitation than are the women. I kept a rough count one evening and found that in about half an hour out of thirteen speakers eight were men and five were women.

A good deal of nonsense has been bandied about the moral atmosphere of these gatherings in hotels or private houses. One sometimes hears that there were great "goings on". Nothing of the sort, so far as I could see. Never once did I surprise so much as a gleam or a twinkle that might lead one to suppose that they were not a family of brothers and sisters. There is a complete lack of self-consciousness between men and women and, what is far more natural and important, between age and youth. You see the different generations talking to one another on an equal basis. There is no condescension on either side. The older people are quite ready to learn from the younger and the young people are equally willing to be taught and advised by the older—which is a very satisfactory state of affairs.



— There is, too, a delightful friendliness and a never-failing courtesy.

The world might indeed be changed if this material were rightly used. The pity of it is that Dr. Buchman has under-estimated the good in mankind and the power of God. It is unnecessary to add or to detract from Christ's teaching. The majority of the members of the Group would have been ready and willing to accept the harder and better way. Not all, of course, for there are many who are influenced by the rubbish that is talked, by the social atmosphere and by the opportunity to make little heroes of themselves in public. Others are pathetically thankful to have their worries and responsibilities shelved.

I found some five hundred people gathered together at this House Party. Many nations were represented. There were a large proportion of Americans and some Germans. Canadians and South Africans were there too. At one meeting the ten speakers included three Americans, two Canadians, two South Africans, one Czechoslovakian, and a Scotch parson and his wife. And they call it the "Oxford" Group! The proportion of men and women was fairly equal. Among the young and middle-aged there ap-

pear  
The  
mid  
is la  
the  
Eng  
dres  
can  
com  
doct  
Lloy  
a M  
of t  
pro  
Am  
Wil  
stat  
wor  
busi  
ever  
wid  
gath  
In b  
sitti  
and  
on



## A HOUSE PARTY

peared to be a larger number of men than women. These people represent a cross section of the middle and upper middle classes. The "county" is largely represented for Dr. Buchman is one of the few Americans who understand this typical English section of society. They are a well-dressed and well-fed crowd and you certainly can have your soul saved in the greatest possible comfort. There were Naval and Military men, doctors of both sexes, a K.C., a past director of Lloyds Bank, the head of an advertising business, a Master of Foxhounds and his wife, a sprinkling of the clergy, a priest of the Russian Church, a prominent official of the League of Nations, an American who held a position in President Wilson's government, a well-known Norwegian statesman, University undergraduates, young women of leisure, and retired professional and business men; indeed, representatives of almost every profession and business. They all have widely different interests in the world, but they are gathered together to share one common interest. In between meetings and meals you will see them sitting in small parties in the lounge of the hotel and every scrap of conversation you overhear is on the same lines.



"Since I lived my life under guidance."

"I was attracted by so many happy faces."

"Surrender my life."

"I have to go to London; God told me to go."

"In my Quiet Time this morning the thought came to me . . ."

"No, he's not changed yet but he's jolly well going to be . . ." and so on.

These people have one other thing in common. Not one of them seems to be possessed of that subtlety of humour that will enable them to keep a sense of proportion, to laugh at themselves, and to query the superstitions of the Movement. They are extraordinary credulous. (But I forget Dr. Buchman himself and Mr. George Light—the one prominent Trade Unionist present!) The Group laughs uproariously at every "joke". They are not difficult to please in that way. They are the audience that the slapstick comedian dreams about.

Although the House Party is drawn from so wide a circle of interests, the members are extraordinarily of one type. There is not a true man or woman of the world among them, once again with the exception of Dr. Buchman himself and

Mr.  
inclu  
wor  
selve  
mos  
blen  
noth  
wou  
hon  
that  
it w  
grea  
of th  
T  
but  
com  
ama  
perf  
the  
clev  
trio  
mar  
the  
are  
hap  
to c



## A HOUSE PARTY

Mr. Light. Men and women of the world are included in all classes from the aristocrat to the workman. They are the people who know themselves and their world. They are as anxious as the most ardent Grouper to solve their own problems and the world's problems. There is nothing in the full teaching of Christianity which would necessarily conflict with their intellectual honesty or that strain of cynicism and scepticism that is part of their make-up. Properly presented it would have a challenge for them. But there is a great deal in Buchmanism that will keep them out of the Movement for ever.

They would be interested in the Buchmanites but hopelessly bored with Buchmanism. For it comes down to this—Group meetings are like amateur theatricals—immensely interesting to the performers, but hopelessly dull and boring for the critical audience. One of Dr. Buchman's cleverest moves is the exploitation of the histrionic ambitions of many people. Every Buchmanite has an opportunity to stand for a time in the limelight. His personal troubles and ambitions are for a brief time the centre of interest. If you happen to dislike the limelight and, above all, to dislike the idea of putting your most intimate



thoughts and feelings under its glare, you are not a potential convert.

No one drinks anything except lemonade, tea, coffee and Ovaltine! There was practically no smoking. None of the women use make-up. A world of Buchmanites might become rather undecorative. Tobacco concerns and the manufacturers of cosmetics would be put out of business if the Buchmanites had their way. Beecham's pills, however, should soar. No one takes much exercise. When they are not eating they are meeting, and when they are not meeting they are confessing their sins in clumps or receiving guidance in groups.

One young man arose at a crowded meeting and said that now that he had surrendered his life to God he had decided to give up smoking and as proof of this he threw a packet of cigarettes on to the platform at "Frank's" feet. Later, Dr. Buchman, noticing that I was smoking, offered them to me. Clever man Dr. Buchman.

I left that House Party feeling profoundly thankful that I was not moved to abandon smoking, confess my sins in public, or strew the country with letters of apology. I was glad, too, that I was not pledged to be "absolutely" anything,

or fo  
impu  
by co  
stree  
is an  
"ch  
exac  
I  
Grov



## A HOUSE PARTY

or forced to bother my head as to whether every impulse and idea is perhaps Divine guidance. If by coincidence I run into an acquaintance in the street, it is unnecessary for me to believe that this is an indication for me to "share". I need not "change" my friends but may keep them just exactly as they are.

I was glad, in fact, that I was "no use" as a Grouper.



## CHAPTER TEN

### QUO VADIS?

THREE men have within recent years shown me very clearly what Christianity is meant to be. The first was a young Rifle Brigade Officer, Donald Hankey, who wrote a book when he was in barracks at Aldershot in October, 1914, and called it *The Lord of All Good Life*. It is the only book I have read on religion that I have never forgotten. He explained the meaning of the Church of Christ.

The second was a philosopher—one George Bernard Shaw, who gave a talk one evening long ago in the Crypt of St. Martin-in-the-Fields. His "sermon" was the only one I have ever remembered. He taught the meaning of the religious life in almost identical terms.

The third is Frank Buchman, who, in my opinion, is seventy-five per cent cute, keen American business man. He, through the organisation of the meeting at the Eastbourne House



## QUO VADIS?

Party that I described in the preceding chapter, gave at least a glimmer of what applied Christianity might mean to the world.

Here is the soldier's description of the Church :

"The Church is the body of Christ. This means that the Church, which is an association of a large number of men and women, who differ from each other in race and language, and qualities and occupation and temper, has to embody the personality of Jesus Christ. Its members have got to remain different, just as the members of a human body are different ; but they have got to be parts of a single life, to be obedient to a single will, and to combine with each other so as to carry out the purposes of that will, just as the members of a healthy and well-controlled human body do."

I cannot now remember the exact words of Mr. Bernard Shaw, but they were to this effect :

God is a Spirit. The world is material. The Spirit of God must therefore be interpreted through material means. A spirit has no eyes, hands or feet, and without these work cannot be done in a material world. Your faculties are the only means through which God can work in this world. You are the body of the Spirit of God. Without the co-operation of man God is power-



less in this world. Without God, man is equally powerless. Together they are omnipotent.

At Dr. Buchman's meeting there spoke a handful of thoughtful people representing different nations and types, who showed how the interpretation of the philosopher and the soldier could provide a common meeting-ground, and that such a God-directed life is a practical possibility in the world of politics and economics, as well as in personal relationships.

The thoughtful and intelligent member of the Group Movement believes that through an ever-expanding body of people, living in different countries of the world and practising Christianity, the whole world may be changed from misery and self-destruction to the fullness of life and development. They show the practicability as well as the value of honesty and unselfishness.

They apply their "sharing" principles by advocating frankness in business, in politics, and in international affairs, as well as in personal relationships.

Is there anyone who cannot think of some friendship spoilt and broken on the rocks of suspicion with their damnable spikes of doubt and

mistrust  
ings,  
disillu  
straig  
and r  
largel  
Im:  
busin  
yond  
essen  
away  
the r  
were  
meas  
to u  
selfis  
shirk  
and  
woul  
Ta  
terna  
even  
even  
kind  
soon  
fear,



## QUO VADIS?

mistrust? There would be fewer misunderstandings, broken friendships and less bitterness and disillusionment if there could be a little more straightforwardness. We all jump to conclusions, and nine out of ten times our conclusions are largely wrong.

Imagine that same directness brought into business and politics. (I know it is almost beyond the keenest imagination.) Distrust, the very essence of misunderstanding, would be swept away. Employer and employee would each have the right to air a grievance, and if the principle were adopted universally and allowing for a measure of unselfishness, there would be an end to undercutting wages for the sake of purely selfish profits on the one hand, and grudging and shirked work, combined with class-consciousness and friction, on the other. Capital and Labour would dovetail at last.

Take this same attitude into the world of international politics. Imagine the nations being even a little honest with one another, and with even a little consideration for the good of mankind as a whole. Disarmament conferences would soon solve their problems, for distrust, breeding fear, would be swept away.



International honesty sweeping away fear, linked with an international sense of responsibility would perhaps see the end of war. In every human activity there would be an end of the smash-and-grab methods.

That the Christian ideal is practical in business has been demonstrated long ago by certain of the Quakers and is again being proved by members of the Group who are business men and women. Honesty in commercial dealings was well illustrated in my hearing by the experience of Mr. E. Reynolds, the head of a Toronto advertising business.

He explained that it is constant practice for advertising agents to take certain "pickings" from the money entrusted to them by their clients; a little extra to commission here and there: an added charge to the cost of photographic blocks, and so on. It is not usual to give a detailed list of expenditure, and without this the client cannot check the exact spending of his money. Mr. Reynolds decided to be completely honest, and told his clients why he had decided to run his business in future on such apparently unorthodox lines. He enclosed a complete account of every cent expended. The result was

that ot  
or lose  
policy

One  
Lond  
educat  
typical  
*telligen.*

Christi  
"chan

The  
do the  
the Ki

And  
pects I  
ploitat  
Christi  
taining  
aim ha  
they a  
demne

First  
with a  
palatab  
tractin  
attemp



## QUO VADIS?

that other firms were forced to do the same thing or lose their business. Honesty became the best policy with a vengeance!

One of the most convincing members of the London Team is Mr. George Light, a self-educated and a highly educated man. He is typical of what one might describe as the *intelligentsia* of the working class. He believes that Christianity can solve economic troubles by "changing the spirit of industry".

These people believe that if mankind desired to do the Will of God as interpreted by Christ, then the Kingdom of God would be in our midst.

And yet . . . why is it, then, that in some aspects Buchmanism seems to be not only an exploitation of the world's need for God, but of Christianity itself? Why should a Movement containing men and women of intelligence and high aim have to face such grave charges, and, unless they are answered, to stand so strongly condemned?

First, because its leaders have not been content with a full Christianity. They have made it more palatable by adding on the one hand, and detracting on the other. Not only has there been no attempt to check exaggeration: these have been



encouraged by the imposition of an attractive, but wholly false doctrine.

—It has added to Christianity the introduction of a belief that God will take charge of every detail of life and issue implicit instruction. The result is a tendency to forsake responsibility, to avoid decisions, and to dull, and eventually atrophy the power of reason, intelligence and common sense. There is absolutely no proof or reason to suppose that the sudden inspirations and ideas on which the Buchmanites act are indeed sent by God. There is every reason to suppose that they come from the same source—whatever that may be—as the ideas, thoughts, desires and wishes of the rest of the world. The Guidance doctrine is calculated to undermine character, stifle and eventually destroy the normal workings of conscience, and cut out almost every attribute of the mind and spirit that distinguishes man from the animals.

It must be remembered that personal guidance is to be checked—if the recipient wishes—with other members of the Group. On important matters it is referred to the Inner Team, with Dr. Buchman at its head. This one man could, if he wished, and if his Movement expands as he desires, have the control in any national or inter-

nation:  
Group  
countr

Whe  
check  
tions,  
main a  
large  
called  
matter:  
handfu  
enorm

Life-  
the re  
emotio  
by any  
fashio

Buch  
teachin  
“absol  
with “  
and th  
sensitiv  
that sc  
cases,  
flippan



## QUO VADIS?

national matter affecting the widely scattered Groups containing the "key people" of their countries.

When one remembers that no effort is made to check the wildest exaggerations or misinterpretations, one is forced to the conclusion that the main aim of the Group is to include at any cost large numbers of people living under this so-called Divine Guidance, which on corporate matters is subject to the interpretation of a handful of leaders. The potentialities of this are enormous.

Life-changing in practice is often no more than the recruitment of numbers of thoughtless or emotional people, only too ready to be "guided" by anyone or to be lured by any novelty or fashion.

Buchmanism, further, has added to Christian teaching by setting up an impossible standard of "absolute goodness". It has not been content with "Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and thy neighbour as thyself". The result, with sensitive temperaments, is a morbid introspection that sometimes leads to derangement. In other cases, the "absolute goodness" becomes a flippant misuse of words, in the same way that



the word "sin" is so often used to explain innocent pleasures. There is no sense of proportion.

It detracts from the Christian religion by its emphasis on the personal advantages to be gained, and by its efforts to avert and avoid an unpleasant remembrance of other people's poverty, sorrow and suffering. Many of the Buchmanite testimonies read like publicity for a quack medicine: "I have never had a better time"; "Efficiency is increased"; "I have always been very self-conscious and hope that this will be cured through contact with the Group." Occasionally one encounters a dissatisfied customer. I heard one woman say: "I have decided to surrender my life to God, but so far I have not been very successful in getting guidance." The leader of the meeting made no attempt to correct this astonishing point of view. She merely laughed, and said: "But you're hoping for the best." "Yes, I go on hoping," said the new patron of Buchmanism a little dubiously.

A House Party provides instance after instance of exhibitionism, of not merely unorthodox, but utterly unmoral teaching and the most grotesque misunderstandings of what Christianity means.

The  
shame  
When  
and co  
said :  
speak :  
RITY.  
taught  
I shou  
with th

A H  
And it  
Buchm  
has fail  
it will  
"absol  
on a p  
and dr  
favour  
reels o  
Canada  
does n  
is entir  
scathin  
the G  
discrin



## QUO VADIS?

There is a great deal of talk about sin, but any shame or sorrow for it is deliberately checked. When Dr. Buchman invited converts to stand up and confess at one meeting that I attended, he said: "Remember these three points when you speak: BREVITY, SINCERITY, and HILARITY." Members of his Group Movement are taught to be funny and jocular about their sins. I should like to know how that can be reconciled with the teaching of any religion.

A House Party is a little world in miniature. And it is the best example of the evils of the Buchmanite interpretations of Christianity. It has failed in its own little world, and as assuredly it will fail in the great world. It preaches "absolute honesty", and Dr. Buchman, standing on a platform, holds up a Canadian newspaper and draws attention to the streamer headlines in favour of the Group. He reads extracts: he reels off figures: he gives the impression that all Canada has been swept into the Movement. He does not show the other side of the picture. He is entirely one-sided. There is no mention of the scathing criticisms and denunciations that met the Group in Toronto alone. A careful and discriminating report was made by a committee



of thirty religious leaders in Toronto and published early in 1933. It sums up its findings in these words :—

“ Movements of this kind have their value, but they frequently leave the Church with more problems than they solve. They make few converts outside of the regular church membership, and frequently divert their allegiance to faith missions and other forms of pentecostalism.”

In the *New Outlook*, a paper stated to be “ Published under the authority of the United Church of Canada ”, there has appeared an article that contains one of the strongest condemnations of Buchmanism that I have encountered. It speaks of “ unblushing exhibitionism ”. The writer shudders to think of what is happening to the “ inner consciousness of the younger members of the Group, manifestly sincere and compelled to go through such performances night after night.” A meeting for ministers only, at which matters of sex were discussed, will abide as “ one of the hideous memories of a lifetime ”.

The Rev. E. W. Young, of London, Ontario, writes : “ While several of our leading ministers have declared themselves to be in fullest sympathy . . . the rank and file have hesitated in

giving  
and d  
and q  
man w  
lost in

You  
mixed  
man.

The  
the G  
Accor  
fied s  
feeling  
me by  
gusted  
the me

I ha  
contact  
univer  
univer  
The p  
honest  
copy.

You  
party  
will fir



## QUO VADIS?

giving their assent." He praises what is good, and does not hesitate to condemn what is bad, and quotes the effect of the Group on a young man who can "talk of nothing else": who "has lost interest in the Church to which he belongs".

You would not gather one word of Canada's mixed attitude if you listened only to Mr. Buchman.

The same thing applies to the descriptions of the Group meeting in our House of Commons. According to the Buchmanites it was an unqualified success. Here, however, is the general feeling of those who attended, as expressed to me by one member: "They were rather disgusted with the entire affair, and the majority of the members actually got up and walked out."

I have heard a leader of the Movement say that contact with the Group increases the efforts of university undergraduates in their studies. Many university tutors have a very different tale to tell. The propaganda of the Group is just about as honest, and no more so, as any other advertising copy.

You will find in the little world of a house party the same selfishness and egotism that you will find outside. It is "I, I, I" all the time.



The weakness of this new Movement and the reason why it will no more change the world than it has changed its own members, lies in the fact that it has not been content with simple fundamentals of Christianity. It believes it can improve upon these.

Only one thing can bring about the Kingdom of God. It is a changed spirit. And a spiritual development is a slow business. It takes all of a lifetime, and how much beyond we do not know. This is essentially a comforting thought. It means that man need not despair at repeated failures. He <sup>“</sup>falls to rise, is baffled to fight better, sleeps to wake<sup>”</sup>

When it comes to a spiritual change in the life of the world, rapidity is equally impossible. This spiritual change is taking place and is occurring more quickly than ever before. The cruder cruelties and injustices are now shocking to civilised peoples. Mercy and justice and truth are slowly developing. War is no longer regarded as a glorious thing. It is becoming thoroughly bad form. Poverty is not now regarded as the state of life unto which it has pleased God to call you or me or anyone else. “Thy Will be done” is not an acquiescence in all tragedy, but

a vig  
and  
every  
centr  
suffer  
heal :

No  
truth  
huma  
and r  
is eas  
in its  
ostrie

Th  
broug  
the r  
day.

Christ  
He sta  
as gre  
to the

If y  
critica  
determ  
you w  
a visi



## QUO VADIS?

a vigorous assent to all that makes for happiness and well-being. It might be written up over every hospital, every clinic, and every social centre, not as the resigned cry of those who suffer, but as the inspiration of all who teach and heal and work for the good of mankind.

No good ever came of shutting one's eyes to truth. The Group is blind to the knowledge of human nature. It cannot see any tough facts, and not least of these, the fact that nothing good is easy. It is blind because dust has been thrown in its eyes, or because it has chosen to adopt the ostrich policy of refusing to see.

The world owes a debt to Buchmanism. It has brought religion out into the open, and made it the most absorbingly interesting topic of the day. It has, at least, reminded many people that Christ's teaching—the Love of God and all that He stands for, and a responsibility to other people as great as that to oneself—is a practical solution to the world's problems.

If you go to a Group House Party, with every critical faculty working at its highest pitch and a determination to be untouched by [emotionalism], you will learn a great deal. You will take away a vision of what the application of Christian



teaching could mean to individual lives and to the life of nations. But you will leave behind the appalling evils of pure Buchmanism. Unless these are purged from the Movement it will not only fail, it will justify the condemnation of Mr. Reginald Lennard, Fellow and Tutor of Wadham College, Oxford.

In an article in the *Nineteenth Century* for November, 1933, he writes :

"For myself, I can only say that I have known Oxford for three years as an undergraduate, and have worked in Oxford as a college tutor for some twenty-two years, and it seems to me that, of all the influences and movements and fashions and opinions which I have seen at work in Oxford during that time, almost, if not quite the most depraving in its ultimate tendency, and the most insidiously inimical to the formation of fine character, is the Group Movement which Dr. Buchman has brought us from America."

Mr. Lennard sums up a great body of thinking opinion. The charge is the most serious that can possibly be made against any movement, religious or otherwise. If it is unanswered, Buchmanism must stand condemned as an insidious power of evil, using as its tools the hearts and minds and lives of men and women sincerely desirous for

good  
ultim

Bu  
only  
throu  
thoug  
or in

Th  
religi  
stand  
silver  
self-r

A m  
And  
toppl

Mr  
figure  
me :  
the p

Th  
whic  
dawn  
reign



## QUO VADIS?

good. To turn good into evil—will that be the ultimate end of the Buchman Group Movement?

Buchmanism has proved beyond doubt not only through the numbers of its adherents, but through the interest of its far greater number of thoughtful critics, that the world is not pagan or indifferent.

The nineteenth century saw the birth of the religion of materialism. In New York City there stands the great Chrysler Building, rearing its silver head into the clouds. It is dedicated by a self-made man to world commerce and industry. A modern temple dedicated to a modern god. And not so very modern, either. That god is toppling from his throne already.

Mr. Barney Baruch, who is an outstanding figure in world politics and finance, once said to me: "I shall not live to see it, but you will—the passing of this civilisation."

This twilight of materialism is a stark time in which to live; but it may be that it precedes the dawn of an age of spiritual discovery and the reign of the Living God.

THE END



...the ... of the ...  
...the ... of the ...  
...the ... of the ...  
...the ... of the ...  
...the ... of the ...  
...the ... of the ...  
...the ... of the ...  
...the ... of the ...

...the ... of the ...  
...the ... of the ...  
...the ... of the ...  
...the ... of the ...  
...the ... of the ...  
...the ... of the ...  
...the ... of the ...  
...the ... of the ...

...the ... of the ...  
...the ... of the ...  
...the ... of the ...  
...the ... of the ...  
...the ... of the ...  
...the ... of the ...  
...the ... of the ...  
...the ... of the ...

...the ... of the ...  
...the ... of the ...  
...the ... of the ...  
...the ... of the ...  
...the ... of the ...  
...the ... of the ...  
...the ... of the ...  
...the ... of the ...

of  
v  
t  
b  
i



THE  
OXFORD  
MOVEMENT

by  
J. Lewis May

10s 6d net

"The learned, but eloquent and ardent work of a man comprehending Newman and his friends as one could only comprehend them who has intimately shared all their experiences . . . I cannot conclude without a tribute to the power and beauty of Mr. May's prose. His book will certainly outlast the year that saw its birth."—Sir John Squire in the *Sunday Times*.

JOHN LANE THE BODLEY HEAD LTD



# NEWMAN AND HIS FRIENDS

by  
Henry Tristram  
of the Oratory

6s net

"A delightful addition to the Newman shelf from an original angle. It is written out of the heart of the Oratory and contains the last memories and traditions of Newman."—*Times Literary Supplement*.

"A charming little book which should be interesting, not only to Catholics, but to others who, without agreeing with Newman's religious views, are fascinated by the charm of a strangely fascinating personality."—*Sunday Times*.

JOHN LANE THE BODLEY HEAD LTD



AN  
ENGLISH TREASURY  
OF  
RELIGIOUS PROSE

Selected and arranged, with Introduction,

by

J. Lewis May

5s net

"Every page rings true because Mr. May understands what the true thing in religion is."—*Christian World*.

"Of wide range and excellent choice."—*The Guardian*.



JOHN LANE THE BODLEY HEAD LTD



# GOD AND THE UNIVERSE

A Symposium by

Rev. S. C. Carpenter, B.D. ; Rev. Father M. C.  
D'Arcy, S.J., M.A. ; Rev. Bertram Lee Wolf,  
Ph.D., M.A., B.Sc., B.D.

Edited by J. Lewis May

3s 6d net

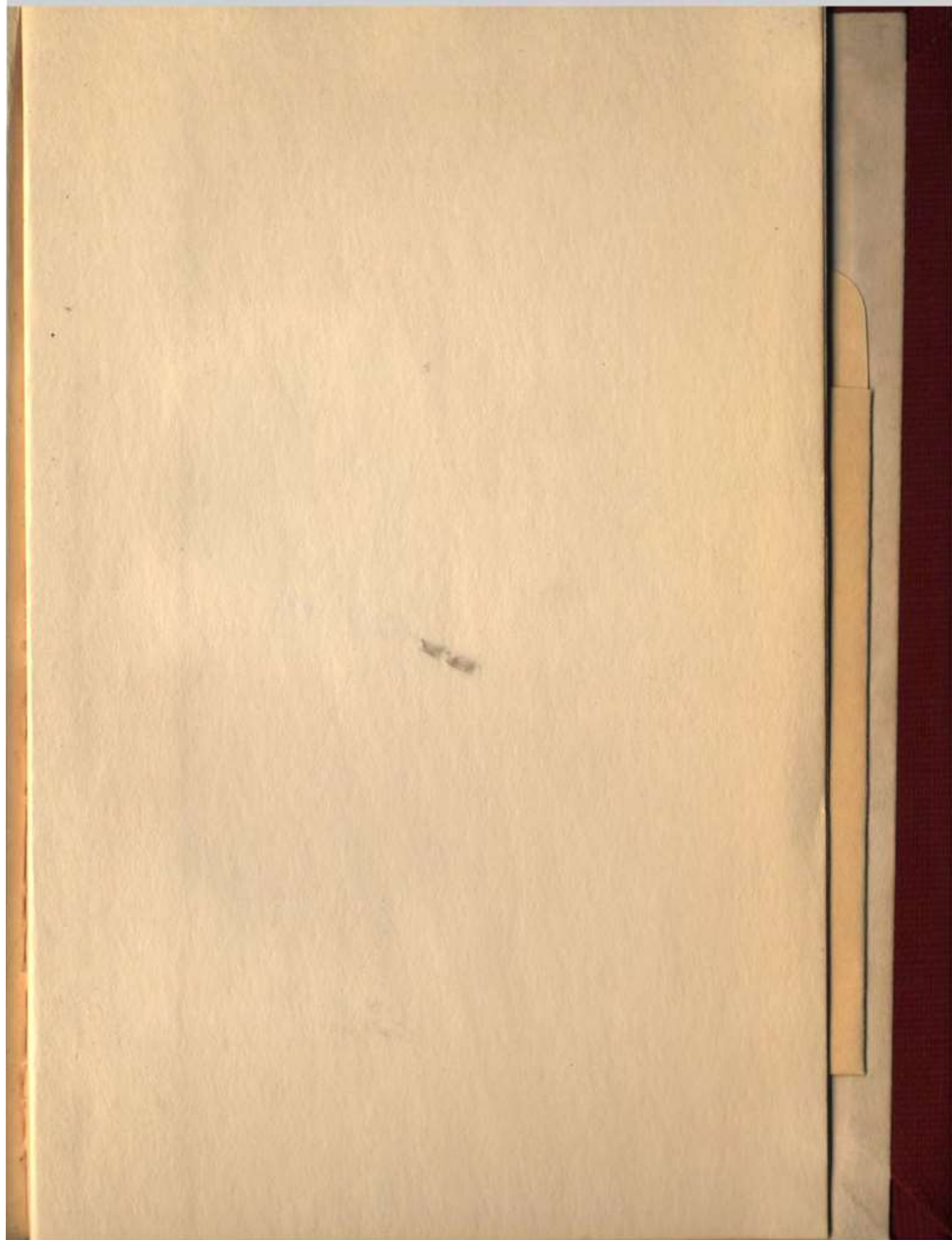
"This is just the book that teachers of religion and thoughtful laymen have been waiting for ; the cultured will find in it a closeness of reasoning that will command their respect and for the simple it gives a philosophy of life that is well within the compass of their understanding."—*Times Literary Supplement*.



JOHN LANE THE BODLEY HEAD LTD

*End*







# JOHN AND

## JOHN AND

JOHN AND

JOHN AND  
JOHN AND  
JOHN AND

JOHN AND

JOHN AND

JOHN AND  
JOHN AND  
JOHN AND  
JOHN AND  
JOHN AND  
JOHN AND  
JOHN AND  
JOHN AND  
JOHN AND  
JOHN AND

JOHN AND

JOHN AND  
JOHN AND  
JOHN AND

JOHN AND



