

The Letter

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The South African Adventure

A Miracle Working God
Abroad

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A FIRST CENTURY CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

The Groups

A First Century Christian Fellowship.

The Groups are a movement of life within the churches to make the principles of the New Testament practical as a working force today.

THIS IS A PERSONAL LETTER. It is addressed to members of a spiritual family of many nationalities scattered over the world. It is not intended for general circulation.

The contributors are of various churches, and their backgrounds were of every kind, religious, agnostic, atheistic, and frankly pagan. They are of different ages, and represent varying degrees of spiritual maturity. They have this in common, that in each the Christian life has been born or reborn through contact with a movement within the churches known as the "Groups," or "A First Century Christian Fellowship." Their mutual bond is not creed nor method, but a common experience of Christ.

The purpose of the "Letter" is to keep these friends in touch with one another. It aims not to mould opinion but to reflect experience.

The following statements of personal experience have been in every case written and signed by the people themselves for The Letter. We regret that space forbids printing all the statements submitted.

Introduction

The South African Adventure

UNDER guidance, five house parties were held in South Africa in 1929, one in each big center.

One Rhodes Scholar from Oxford took the Group message back to his university in South Africa in 1927. The following year the visit of the Oxford Group of seven to that university resulted in a widespread demand for a much larger group. This led to the visit of a party of nineteen people under Frank Buchman's leadership in July 1929, to work on a nation-wide scale.

The interest manifested was remarkable. Archdeacon Harris said that the Durban house party became a "City Mission". A thousand people attended the reception to the Team at Johannesburg. In Pretoria, a meeting was held in the City Hall without previous advertisement. The Hall was packed with eleven hundred people, many of them forced to stand, two hundred being turned away, including the late Administrator of the Province. At twenty-five minutes to twelve the meeting expressed a wish to continue though we had begun at eight o'clock.

It was a remarkable testimony to the influence of the many miracles of changed lives. One of the senior provincial officials said that he'd never seen such interest in a meeting, even in the fever of election time.

Though the Cape Town house party was held twenty miles out of the city, yet between six and seven hundred people attended regularly every day.

A work on this scale inevitably attracted the attention of the press throughout the country. It is only possible to give very limited extracts from the great quantity of favorable publicity.

The first four house parties culminated in an advanced house party held in Bloemfontein, restricted carefully to those who had been through a complete house party elsewhere. This made possible the training of permanent South African leadership. Another house party for first comers was held concurrently.

Two hundred and fifty people attended the advanced house party from all parts of the Union and Rhodesia. The boys of Plumtree School in Rhodesia subscribed among themselves the necessary money to enable five of their number to make the week's journey to Bloemfontein and back. Others traveled fifteen hundred miles to come. The heads of schools with their pupils, university professors and students, ministers and clergy and their wives, business and professional men were represented.

The culmination of those matchless days came with the memorable address given by Professor Edgar Brookes, the leading authority on Native Problems and a national spokesman for race questions. His address is given at the close of this issue.

After Frank Buchman's departure a team of twelve revisited the house party centers, to establish local groups and to develop local leadership. As an index of the effectiveness of the work, twenty-two groups were meeting regularly in Johannesburg. A combined meeting of the Cape Peninsula groups numbered five hundred people.

This important work is being faithfully done by the Rev. Garrett Stearly and a party of six now in South Africa.

By Edgar Brookes, M.A., D.Litt.,

*Professor of Political Science,
Transvaal University College,
Pretoria*

I HAVE been asked to put into writing some of my impressions of the work of the Oxford Group in South Africa. I very gladly do so; firstly, as a token of my deep gratitude to them for what they have done for me, and for us all; and secondly, in the hope that, under God's guidance, it may help others whose tradition, outlook, or experience, may happen to resemble my own.

It is best to begin from the centre—personal experience. Until one is right oneself, it is rather futile to talk about blessings to one's Church, one's Nation, or one's sphere of influence. Personally, the Oxford Group have brought to me a new con-

version, a new dedication. That is not in any way to repudiate my past religious experience, or the debt of gratitude that I owe to past movements, and to the organized Church. In the first flush of the newer joy, many who have been helped by the Group have been unfair to their Churches. The Group itself would, I am certain, dissociate itself wholly from such an attitude.

Ministers and others who may have felt hurt at what they wrongly deemed to be the Group's attitude in regard to their past work, would do well to dwell on their own actual faults, and not on the supposed faults of the Group. Such, at any rate, is my experience. It is true that our past work has been good up to a point, but it has been most imperfect and ineffective. The first challenge that the Group brought to me was in its name "life-changers", and the question that I felt I had to face was: "How many lives have you changed?" I was compelled to own that the Group had changed in hours, lives with whom I had been in contact for years: in some cases I did not know that there was anything specially wrong with them. There was, too, that fire of love for souls, which had been so poor in me—that love, without which we cannot hope to influence anybody. We ought, as God does, to love every soul as if there were no other soul in the world to love. The Group are "Great Lovers," to use Rupert Brooke's phrase: are we?

In my own case, the Group has given me strength to fight down and put definitely beneath my feet, a besetting sin never finally conquered before, though never completely conquering. It has re-taught me the meaning of surrender and of the Cross, given me new peace and immense new power, a new purpose and (perhaps, greatest of all) a new sense of comradeship in God's service, which makes the "Communion of Saints" no empty phrase.

I had ceased vitally to believe in God's intervention and interest in the *details* of life. Faith, without this belief, grows arid, intellectual, academic. The teaching of the Group on "guidance" was just what I needed to combat this type of practical agnosticism, and to me, to live the surrendered and guided life, has been the experimental proof of the truth of that teaching.

The guided life is a life worth living, of that I am by experience sure. Unbelief in God's guidance weakens the religious and practical life tremendously. The insistence on guidance is valuable as leading to closer communion with God, as fighting self-reliance, and replacing it with Christ-reliance, as encouraging humility and teachableness, as emphasising the freedom of the Spirit as against rigid rules, above all, as leading us to see that even beyond reason God rules and that the individual intellect is not the final arbiter of one's actions.

I had great difficulty at first in accepting "guidance" because I felt that it was anti-rational, and I felt that I must not and could not, as a thinker, a University teacher and a lover of philosophy, take up such a position. I did not allow for two things—namely, that God speaks often through intuition and emotion, without the conscious reasoning process, (e.g. falling in love, and why not falling in love with the Eternal Lover?), and secondly, that I was submitting my reason, not to something anti-rational, but to the Reason of the Universe, the Eternal Mind of which mine was a particle, the Infinite Wisdom which includes and transcends mathematical or logical reasoning, the Truth which is beyond, though it includes, the syllogism. The mystical life, which is so much more open to me than it used to be, is in experience not anti-rational, but supra-rational.

In the direct contact with the Wisdom and Love of God, comes the light and power needed to solve not only personal but national problems. As a passionate lover of my country, I believe and pray that the Group Movement will contribute in an immeasurable degree to release that spirit of conciliation, tolerance, affection, comradeship and justice—that spirit of Christ, in short, without which South Africa cannot solve its deep and difficult problems of race and colour, nor the world at large its varying difficulties, created by blindness of heart and sin. May God bless the Group Movement, and all other liberating agencies which His providence may release for our salvation.

A. H. Ashley Cooper

United Tobacco Company, Cape Town.

ON the 28th August, 1929, I was persuaded to go to a house-party at the Grand Hotel, Muizenberg. Now I knew it was to be a religious house-party, but I was also so certain of myself that I knew that nothing said or done there could change me.

The room allocated to my wife and myself was gloomy, the people looked to me all religious and gloomy and the moment I set foot in the place I had a feeling that I had been trapped. I immediately suggested that we should go home without unpacking, as we were, or rather I was, entirely out of place. However I put a brave face on it and went to the first meeting, and it was here that I saw that marvellous fellowship and happiness which was an absolute and direct challenge from Christ to me. But I refused to admit as much, and steadfastly held out against every thought and influence for six whole days.

The main obstacle to me was the question of sharing. This I was not only afraid of, but definitely refused to do.

There were many things in my life which I felt I could not possibly face up to and share—especially with my wife. But the conviction was coming to me more and more strongly each day that unless I was prepared to share and be absolutely honest, I would simply go away from that house-party a miserable nervous wreck and would never find peace again.

Now the four great points on which I had failed, and failed miserably, were honesty, purity, unselfishness and love, and it was a ghastly sight to see myself as God saw me, but it was even worse to show that picture faithfully to one whose regard and love had meant everything in life to me. However eventually I got sufficient courage to go through with it, and I can honestly say it has meant such a marvellous, new and greatly enriched love between my wife and me that we realize that only Christ Himself could have brought it about.

From then it has just been moving on from surrender to surrender and victory to victory and the prospect of a life brimful of joy, happiness and fellowship in the service of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

Mrs. Helen Ashley Cooper

My husband and I went down to the Muizenberg house-party, as we were feeling frightfully hard up at the time and my parents had offered to pay all our expenses, look after our son aged eight, and even take care of the puppy!

The first thing that struck me was the amazing way in which everyone spoke about themselves without apology or unnatural reserve. I had always considered it extremely bad form to do this, but soon found that it was just these vital personal stories which gripped my interest. I had given my heart to the Lord Jesus as a little girl, and from time to time had had a tremendous urge within me to win others, but to my knowledge had never been successful. Well, here was success with a capital S, all around me.

One night Frank Buchman was telling the story of Bill Pickle, and in parenthesis said that some Christians were just like little white mice running round in a cage, and that foolish sentence simply hit me straight between the eyes. It was the exact description of my life—I was small-minded for Christ, timid of others, caged by sin, and yet contented with my little bit of white fur. But, oh, to be some glorious winged creature, courageous, free, filled with all the fulness of God! And in my quiet time I read "Walk while ye have the light, lest ye be left in darkness." And so I surrendered my life afresh to Him, and did the thing that simply was not done—spoke about myself.

My husband also gave himself to Christ before the week was over and I can only say that after ten years of so called happy married life we have had a second honeymoon, and both feel that this is the only true and lasting happiness on which any marriage can exist.

Our little son has given his heart to the Lord, too, so that it is the most beautiful thing to know that we are indeed "all one in Christ Jesus."

By *W. H. Maxwell, M. D., Johannesburg, Transvaal*

I CAME in contact for the first time with the Oxford Group (who welcomed me none the less graciously for being a Cambridge man!) at the Stephanie House Party in Johannesburg, August, 1929. What I got there was to a large extent a new revelation. I had been a Christian "of sorts", that is with certain reservations, for the last 30 years, and religion had never quite ceased to mean a good deal to me, but my trouble was that of not a few—I had heard the call of God in my youth to *complete* surrender to Him but had failed to make that surrender. Incomplete surrender led to the inevitable result of drifting further and further away from God until at times religion, though I never quite abandoned its form, became very little else, and my life in consequence was disorganized, without a centre, without a vital experience of Jesus Christ.

Thus did God lead me, as if by chance, into that wonderful House Party. I listened, and it did not take long for me to realize that I had at last "come home", for here, without shadow of doubt, was what I needed, something I had "loved long since and lost awhile" but more crystal to me than ever it had seemed before, though this might well be because I was so utterly sick of sin and failure that there could be no hesitation now about surrender, full and unreserved, to the loving Christ that stood ready to "welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve, because *Thy Promise I believe!*"

The four cardinal points of the Christ-controlled life stood out now with mountain-top clearness—Honesty, Purity, Unselfishness and Love. *Complete* honesty and sincerity between the triangle, God, me and my fellow-man, had never before occurred as a practical possibility—much less as a vital necessity. But now, wonderful to relate, the process of "sharing"—as applied to sin—proved as easy (compared with its anticipation) as it was blessed in its results. The question of purity was no longer in doubt, sin not merely forgiven but actually overcome. Unselfishness became, not merely a rational result of Christ's indwelling Presence, but the actual essence of this personal religion; entire surrender to Christ means be-

coming, *ipso facto*, a Life-changer, without effort of one's own, for the very love of God became, no longer an abstraction, but a vital force in one's own heart. There is a delightful independence of theological dogma about all this: As F. B. puts it simply but forcibly—"When a man is honest with God, God floods in". He does! For the first time in my life an *unreserved* surrender seemed the only reasonable thing, and I want to state humbly but most emphatically that such full surrender has meant complete peace and happiness such as was unknown to me before. While one has everything to learn, my life is now a different thing from what it was because of the practical fact that, "It is no longer I who live"—(to quote St. Paul)—"Christ lives in me: the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself up for me". This makes "guidance", for the first time, a veritable real experience. Its full understanding may well take a lifetime, but surrender to Christ does convince one at once of the practical reality of the Christ-controlled life.

Mr. James Lang, Queens' College, Oxford

Headmaster, Grey School, Port Elizabeth

FOR some time I tried to decide what really brought me to the Port Elizabeth House Party—whether it was the sense of need (of that I was far from unaware) or the desire to test certain opinions I had caught regarding the Movement and its methods. Eventually I found it was neither: but for my wife I doubt if I should have gone, certainly not at the outset, so that I haven't even the credit of making up my mind to attend. We decided—at least I fell in with the suggestion—that we should take our daughter out to the Hotel Pollok, for she very much wanted to go. And so on the Friday evening we went out to dinner and thereafter attended the opening meeting. I don't think it took long to bring it home to me that this time I should have to make up my mind quite definitely. I had fought the question out at intervals for a year, always careful to leave the battle drawn. I found someone talking very straight to me when John Roots spoke of "pride in our

intellectual integrity” and the like, and when a few moments later I heard F. B. demanding to know whether I hadn’t it on my conscience to say something. I felt that there was precious little integrity in shirking a challenge like that. Honesty asked two things:—

(1) That I should say what I myself knew the Movement had done for boys of my own.

(2) That I should try to say plainly what I myself had come to think.

No. 1 was simple enough. No. 2 I thought I could do equally simply.

I was conscious only that I couldn’t do it—that much as I wished to be honest, I couldn’t be, for the reason that my criticisms sprang from fundamental dishonesty. They were a sort of smoke-screen to hide something wrong in me—from whom, it is difficult to say. However, the sheer ineptitude of my effort may have been fruitful, for as we went out one of the team asked if we were by any chance coming back, and once more my wife suggested, and I once more, but with a little more conviction agreed, that we should return on the Saturday to spend the week-end. Pride was really beginning to crumble and the urgency of things becoming plain. When I arrived on Saturday morning and he at once suggested an afternoon walk, I knew and rejoiced, even if tremblingly, that I had been brought up thus decisively. We set out after lunch and I was just all one wonder how I was to get on to the things that lay and had so long lain in my way. And even while I tried to hide my wonder with interested talk about the previous visit of the Group, I found the first painful step which I thought was for me, being taken by my new friend, and as he told me of difficulties of his own, God’s mercy seemed to fall about me just as the light lay about us that afternoon on the Marine Pier. What I had kept so carefully battened down for twenty years, just a plain brutal piece of sin, I found myself able to speak of for the first time to any living soul. I hadn’t thought it possible so to speak: now it seemed the opportunity one had all along been waiting for: the only fear, lest it should be let pass. But next I had to face the matter of sharing where sharing looked more like mortal wounding. That was what

held me neutral for a year, fighting, as I thought, against the possibility of hurt to someone else: that indeed, but as far as I was concerned, much more the possibility of hurt to my own pride. Somehow it came to me that it was Christ's mercy that had fallen on me through a man's sharing. That mercy would not carry things so far and then leave the rest to mere human handling. And so it was, for sharing was just the further revelation of the Love that sets us free. And that again was just the beginning, for there's a deal to share when one is nearly half a century old! But my sharing has just renewed and deepened and intensified the first experience, and now the supreme happiness is in sharing the things that are His and in seeking to share them again with our own little folk.

By Rev. E. Macmillan

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Pretoria

Late Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa

IT is now going on eighteen months since I came into touch with the Group Movement. If I were to tell all that has happened to me since then it would read like a spiritual Aeneid. I will not pretend that the going has been all smooth or easy, for if anyone thinks that this is an easy way to pay old moral debts he is mistaken. It is a simple way, the simplest of all ways, but it is not easy. One has to pay the price.

Some think it such an extraordinary thing that a minister of religion should ever go to sleep on his job, much less confess it. Or I am told that I am going back on my former spiritual experience. But without doing that surely it is permissible and possible for a man (albeit a minister) to have a new experience of Christ, so much more living and real than anything he has ever had as to be new in *quality*.

My spiritual life before I came on to this basis was intermittent—my faith, my prayer-life, my self-discipline; and under such uncertain and inconstant conditions how could I have looked for or found guidance?

Now there is that within me which keeps my faith constant. It is no longer a question of moods; it creates its own mood.

So with my prayer life; it rises like a fountain, spontaneously. It is no longer a matter just of saying prayers; in fact, I speak less to God than ever I did, but I listen more and longer to hear what God the Lord would speak.

And as for my self-discipline—well, I never seem to get to the end of it. The things one does get down to that one never suspected; and the things one is made to do and to surrender—things the rightness of which the average minister (and I suppose I was that before this new experience) never for a moment questions.

If Henry Drummond's teaching was ethical, much more the Group teaching. It is as drastically ethical, and its moral discipline is such hard going that I nearly gave it up after five months. I became suddenly critical of the Movement; I began to see its dangers—"the lions in the way"—but it only meant that I was suffering from sheer funk.

Now I thank God continually for the joy of going on, in spite of failure. And the flesh is no longer a trouble to me as it was. It is no longer a strain to be free from tempting thoughts. By habitual and natural yielding to Him in thought, feeling and impulse I can truly say I am coming to have the mind of Christ. But it all costs, though we never think or speak of the cost. The merchant who found the Pearl of great price did not hesitate or haggle over the cost. The cost is the value.

It will doubtless be asked what the effect of this change has been on my ministry and congregation. Why should there be this necessity for change? And how can a man be born when he is old? These collisions are inevitable. But the leaven is at work. As for the young people they are coming into the Movement in increasing numbers. We have eight Groups established and of these some have a membership of fifty to sixty, and are being divided up.

Other groups are being formed in the city in connection with other Churches. What we have we share; it is the only condition of having, and there is no question that the people are hungry—hungry for life.

“’Tis life of which our nerves are scant,
More life and fuller that we want.”

From a letter by the Lord Bishop of Bloemfontein

“My feeling about the houseparty is that I have caught a glimpse of a very vital and Christlike spirit, and I truly wish that all who can might share my experience.

“I am prepared to back them with all my power.”

WALTER CAREY, *Bishop of Bloemfontein.*

*From a Sermon preached by Bishop Carey in the Cathedral,
Bloemfontein—Oct. 20, 1929.*

Christianity in Everyday Life

Before you can understand the Oxford Group and their teaching, you must get a perspective of God's will, and plan, and scheme for mankind. The Oxford Group has got to be fitted into this, or else it is no good. Now God's scheme for the universe is written out plainly by St. Paul in the Ephesians. It is contained entirely in the word “Fellowship.” God wishes to be in “fellowship” with all mankind, Jew and Gentile, male and female, Dutch, English, Native, all alike and all equally.

But mankind has got involved in evil, which is nothing less than selfish “un-fellowship” with God and one another. To recover and save mankind, God spoke the Word—Jesus Christ, Who is the Reconciler of man to God and of man to man.

FINDING CHRIST

It thus becomes all important to find Christ, to belong to Christ and to be “in Christ, for in Him alone shall we be reconciled to the Father, if Christ is indeed the authentic and only Word which God spoke, i.e., God's appointed Reconciler of mankind. But when we are in Christ we have not found the End. God is the End, Jesus is the Way.

Thus, when we are in Christ, we are now in a position to realise fellowship with God and man. As regards God, our

fellowship takes the form of adoration, worship, and love. As regards man, our fellowship takes the form of service: we are to serve mankind. We serve men religiously by trying to teach them that unless they are in fellowship with God their life is meaningless, vain and unhappy. They must be right with God or else in a real sense they are lost. We serve them socially by seeing that they have all the conditions of a life worth living, i.e., decent homes, good wages, fair hours, good education and recreation. We serve them philanthropically by caring for the poor, the blind, the deaf, the lunatic, the criminal. We serve them politically by providing them with a good municipality, an honest government, and a spirit of co-operation between man and man and race and race.

Now we can see the place of the Church and of the Oxford Group.

The Oxford Group methods are: (1) A quiet time every morning in order to surrender daily to the Reconciler Jesus Christ, and to gain complete fellowship with Him and to gain His guidance and direction and blessing for the day. (2) A daily reading of Scripture which is regarded not only as a record of the past, but as God's daily living message for the soul.

So far for God; and they would go on to say that there are other ways of fellowship with Him such as vocal prayers, intercession, Holy Communion. But they stress surrender and the "quiet time" because they think these are most neglected.

Then for man; here they call fellowship "sharing"—you must examine your relationship with men. "Have I been hating anybody, injuring anybody, neglecting anybody? Am I failing to witness, either by testimony of my own new blessedness of surrender, or by a confession and acknowledgment of my sins against my brother, to the reality of Christ's fellowship with myself"?

"Am I seeing that my fellowman gets—to the best of my power—those conditions of like which make for decency, happiness, goodness, and real Christianity"?

"Am I passing on to him, the joy of my fellowship with Christ, and therefore with God and my fellowman"? And, of course, I should stress sacraments as the deepest kind of "sharing" with Christ, and one another.

Thus the Oxford Group is simply trying to re-heat a rusted iron.

But if they bring to us, firstly, the great truth of Fellowship—in Christ—as God's supreme plan for mankind; if, secondly, they bid us find in Christ complete fellowship with the Father; if, thirdly, they make us face up to our fellow-man and ask whether we are honestly red-hot to bring them to Christ and so to the fulfilment of God's plan for them—then I say "God bless them."

Mrs. Heywood Harris

Wife of Archdeacon Harris, Durban, Natal

I AM the wife of one of the Anglican Clergy in Durban—I had, of course, heard of this movement long before I had any idea that a Team would visit South Africa—I had read *Life Changers* and *Children of the Second Birth* and I felt that, though there was much that I did not understand and some things that I distrusted, yet deep down in the movement there was the secret of spiritual life. At that time I was beginning to realize I myself was desperately in need of some such awakening as I had been reading of in those two books.

The Team came to Durban—fortunately for many of us they stayed in the town itself, which enabled those who could not leave home at least to attend the meetings. I went to all the meetings I could and after a severe struggle with the "sharing" difficulty, thanks to the help of the Team, I made my surrender and found what we all find, that an experience of Christ transforms life and ourselves.

Since then life has indeed been transformed—it is life instead of existence. I myself am changed—even I can see it—from a superficially pleasant but fundamentally unfriendly person into someone whose instinct is to be companionable; from a person who had no spiritual experience to pass on, and would have shirked it if she had, to someone who, thanks to God's mercy, has had, and is learning more of, something worth giving and a real eagerness to give it.

So much I know. That there must be a real difference is shown not only in the thrill I find in this new life, the satisfac-

tion of the exercise of every power one possesses, the conviction that comes of real systematic discipline, but also in the fact that people talk to me now more freely than they ever did before, that my husband has asked me to do things such as he has never asked me to do before.

With all this new growth came the conviction that there was an enormous lot to learn of method, of principle, of life. That, thank God, I am sure one will always feel—that there are worlds of spiritual knowledge and experience still to be explored.

Then came the house-party at Bloemfontein, the most wonderful ten days that I have ever lived through, with its experience of what the Christian life lived among Christians could be; the people one met there of varying types and differing gifts; its deeper teaching of spiritual living and further reaches of surrender.

From The Cape Argus, July 13, 1929

In truth, Man is fundamentally and unquenchably religious. Even to-day, while he is not showing much interest in organized religion as seen in the churches, he is interested in questions of religion, even with those questions that go to the very roots of life, as the columns of the newspapers reveal from time to time. Doubtless that interest will be stimulated considerably in this country by the visit of a team of fourteen under-graduates due here from overseas on Monday. These young men believe wholeheartedly in religion and at some sacrifice of money and leisure they come to join in an effort to make religion more real and helpful and practical to other young persons. Theirs is a new and lofty crusade. They are not content that the Christian faith should be alive in their own hearts. Without bravado they are here to bear witness to the truth as revealed to them in an age of deadening materialism. There can be no sturdier testimony to the continuing vitality of religion than its resurgence time after time among the younger men, who feel the "shades of the prison house" beginning to close upon them and rebel in time against their fate.

From The Rand Daily Mail, Johannesburg

To the Editor, "Rand Daily Mail."

SIR,—So many hundreds of people, in various sections of the community, have become keenly interested in what is known as the Oxford Group movement, that it seems desirable to make some statement as to the present position of affairs.

The "Stephanie" series of meetings in Johannesburg closed less than a month ago.

Matters are developing in various directions, and the following short paragraphs will give some indication of the widespread and deep effects of the movement:—

A meeting held in the Y. M. C. A. on Sunday was attended by 40 men; starting at 9 P. M., it went on till 11 P. M. A "group" is to be started there as one of the results.

At one of the large boys' boarding schools very remarkable results have followed the visit of two members of the team.

In the Y. W. C. A. a group meeting is held on Sunday mornings at 9:30 A. M.

At the University there are many students who have been greatly helped. At least four groups have been started, among various sections of the students.

In Rosebank, Parktown North, Florida, Belgravia, Westcliff, Kensington, Hillbrow and other places groups are already working, or are in process of formation.

Articles by the Bishop of Johannesburg and the Moderator of the Presbyterian Assembly, and others, dealing with the subject, are appearing in the various church magazines.

Interesting reports are coming in of conversions of people who never attended the "Stephanie" meetings, as the direct result of those who were helped by that particular phase of the movement.

Plans are on foot to arrange a private meeting for members of the medical profession, for a frank discussion of the movement and its message.

Many people are realizing that the Bible is an extraordinarily vital and interesting book which fits existing needs and meets up-to-date conditions. They are enjoying the practico-mystical experience of the presence of Christ in every-day events, and proving the possibilities of a religion that really works.



ARRIVAL OF THE TEAM, CAPE TOWN.

Old quarrels are being settled, restitution made for wrongs done, a new sense of responsibility for other people is being generated, and many folks are discovering that there is much more in religion than they had ever imagined.

A new readiness to talk about God and the Bible, and the realities of life, without fear or hesitation, has become very marked in all sorts of unexpected places.

Members of different denominations are coming together in many of these groups and finding out, in simple and delightful fashion, how much they really have in common in the essentials of the Christian faith, and thoroughly enjoying such honest fellowship.

Preachers are finding deliverance from staleness, and learning that an unvarnished statement of recent, personal, vital experience will hold and move a congregation far more than any amount of ethical sermonising.

In these, and other ways it is quite clear that this work is inspired by God, that it has done much good already in our community, that its influence and power are dependent, not on men, but on the Spirit of Jesus Christ, and that, consequently, the movement must go on spreading and must be of real permanent value to all who receive and practise the message that it brings.

MEDICO.

By Rev. J. Proctor Lund

Pastor of Greyville Wesleyan Church, Durban, Natal.

“CHRISTIANITY in action”. This phrase helps to crystallise one’s memories of the wonderful ten days spent in company with the Oxford Group in Bloemfontein. There were so many experiences—thrilling, uplifting, humbling, revealing, that it is difficult to interpret them through the medium of the printed page.

For many of us who tarried there, life can never be quite the same again. A man cannot look into the eyes of Christ and be unaffected. Deep conviction of sin and a sense of unutterable need make Christ an absolute necessity, and then—when the barriers are down—a marvellous reality. Life’s whole aspect is changed by a tremendous experience of a real, vital, ever-present Christ.

And everything centred around HIM. In that Presence there was clear-cut honesty, at times painful in its utter sincerity. Sin was resolutely tracked down to its ultimate lair, in the will. Sin was realized as the great barrier and hindrance. No one generalized about it; sins were called by their right names, and those names are very ugly, but not as ugly as the fact so often hidden in the generalization! The need of the Cross became apparent; and how many to-day rejoice anew in its wondrous effectiveness!

EAGERNESS FOR BIBLE STUDY

What eagerness for Bible study! Groups of young fellows came together at all hours for definite Bible reading. It was as natural to pray together as it usually is to speak of trivial things. There was humour, natural and spontaneous, breaking out in all sorts of places, but there was the deepest reverence too, and Christ was very near.

From The Friend, Bloemfontein, O. F. S., Oct. 12, 1929

WHAT is the secret of the success of the efforts of the Oxford Group? Judged by the standards of the Churches the methods of the Group are unorthodox. Yet they attract representatives, actual and nominal, of nearly all denominations. The Group's ways are not those of institutional or dogmatic religion, yet the Group has the blessing of the Churches, and it is one of its principal experiences that people who join the movement almost invariably return to their Churches, or, if they have not left them, become more earnest workers in them. Hitherto, most religious revivals have depended largely upon mass psychology—upon the appeal to large numbers of people who have been swayed by the arguments, the personality, or the earnestness of the revivalists addressing them. The Oxford Group does not believe in mass work. Its appeal is to the individual, and its endeavour is to attract individuals of education, particularly young graduates from the universities, or people of standing who are in positions to come into daily contact with numbers of other people. These carry on the work of the Group after the meetings have terminated.

*Sister Frances Clare, C.R.
Community of the Resurrection,
Grahamstown, Cape Province*

OUR first interest in Life Changers among the Community of the Resurrection, Grahamstown, came some four or five years ago when a number of us read Harold Begbie's book, hurrying to pass it on to the next interested member. We talked it over together and wondered if we had not lost something of that evangelical simplicity of touch which was there bringing such signal healing to the sick soul beneath its impervious modern self-sufficiency. The initials "F. B." (once my own) have ever since stood to me for one who held a key whose use I wanted to share. It was therefore with a thrill that I discovered Loudon Hamilton's affiliation with the Group, as we travelled on the same boat last year. I begged him to call when the Group came to Grahamstown. Later (whilst on an up-country mission-station) I heard of the meetings in Grahamstown, and of groups formed in our Training College. These Groups, however, had little enough to start upon (only two or three half-hour meetings), and when I resumed my post in the Training College this year, they were in their second generation and seemed to have lost some of their original vitality. But something was still left, and a few students rose early for Quiet, and impressed one by their naturalness and openness in speaking of God, and by their indifference to what "people might say". Then a flying half-hour's visit from Frank Buchman, Eleanor Forde and McGhee Baxter gave us a little further insight.

When the invitations to the Bloemfontein House-Party arrived, it seemed very significant that within a few hours plans had been changed and all arrangements had been made for the attendance of Sister Dora and myself. This eager acceptance was doubtless due largely to the "accidental" fact that our Mother Superior had but recently travelled down from Bulawayo to Johannesburg on the same train as the "Team", and some conversation between them had forged a very real bond.

To what would this House-Party lead? Would He come in any fresh way to oneself? That one could not say, yet the week to come seemed big with undefined hopes.

Upon arrival, we plunged at once into a meeting of a kind entirely new to my "C. of E." background. Men and women were eagerly seizing their turn to give personal testimony to the coming of Christ into their lives, fearlessly facing the large assembly of both sexes and all ages, in a way which soon put my own tendency to embarrassment to a shamefaced flight. As meeting by meeting, and day by day, went by, the obligation "to think this thing right through" came more and more heavily upon us. A small Anglo-Catholic group comprising two Bishops, several "religious" from a men's Community, several "secular" priests, a married lady, and ourselves, talked it over together. "Have we not all this, and much more, in our own Church? Is it not all implicit in the Catholic tradition?" Our answer was somewhat thus: "Yes, we have in our Church a marvellous presentation of the luminous majesty of the Godhead, a wonderful expression of the Beauty of Worship, of Adoration, of Surrender to the Incarnate Christ; we have, moreover, a great organization for the administration of the Christ-appointed 'means of grace', including opportunity for confession of sin and access to trained spiritual direction. Further, in the 'Religious Life', we have the privileged opportunity of a life of complete dedication, worked out through the experience of centuries to extend to the minutest details of daily life throughout the twenty-four hours. Yet, granted all this, there is still something, which, though it may be *implicit* in Catholicity, (for is it not inherent in the Gospels?) we have yet failed to make *explicit* in our emphasis on other sides of truth." And, as we looked at the deeply sanctified lives of the Team, we became strongly convinced that here was a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit sent to us through "chosen vessels" for a great refreshing of the spiritual life of South Africa. It was for us to dig deep and widen our furrows to receive, that nothing be allowed to drain away from our thirsty land. As we became convinced of this, we knew also that this message of the group was true,—that each of us had to begin at himself.

Here, then, I must break away from party generalizations and speak of my own spiritual experience.

Coming from a life of periodic unbelief, tepidity, self-indulgence and great zest for pleasure, I had some years ago found great relief by turning from "Modernism" to receive the absolution offered by the Catholic branch of our Church. Thence had followed a wonderful experience of Christ, which could only be met by the complete surrender of one's life. The call seemed first to the Mission-field, indeed I almost bargained that it should end there, when a first hint came of a call to a more thorough-going surrender of all control over oneself. As it rose from a hint to a certainty, there had to go all the glamour of native-work in the Far East, along with many other cherished ideas of oneself. At the time it seemed as though every corner of one's being were wholly surrendered, to be used only to the Glory of God. In actual working-out, there had to be a slow, painful uprooting of the tares, as the clear light of the Spirit began to reveal in detail the many things which had to go. I once heard a true story of a small boy who, in response to a missionary appeal in the first week of term, tipped his term's pocket money—a sovereign—into the collection, and experienced a fine glow of generous enthusiasm; but the real cost came later when he could never join his friends at the tuck-shop, must turn a deaf ear to all subsequent appeals, and so on. A lovely little parable of the surrendered life in its early stages! It is then that we need the joyous generosity, when we begin to feel the cost,—when Christ has taken us at our word. Then comes that subtle temptation to take just a little back here, and another little bit there.

Actually the temptation comes very carefully disguised: a touch of preoccupation with the secular task, of reserve, or of official dignity; a lack of abandonment, of being quite "a fool for Christ's sake"; a little doubt or disappointment about an indifferent, pleasure-loving world's need of Christ, and about His limitless power to redeem and save; a watering-down of His message. Again and again I had been convicted of these things in some time of Retreat—and then slipped back.

There at Bloemfontein was a concentrated testimony to the world's crying need for the peace of God; of the miraculous,

unbounded power of Christ to satisfy this hunger; of His yearning for human instruments, so dead to self that they might be free channels for His grace to others. The outcome was not to be an isolated effort and service, but a great co-operative movement of all sects and ages, whose impetus might presently be felt throughout every race in our land.

Time has been short yet, but already we have been able to pass on the inspiration to many of our sisters, and to encourage one another afresh to give all, and to demand no less than all, for Christ's sake. Surely all our work must presently feel the impress of this new hope and life!

As I write, I am not so much looking back upon an episode of a few weeks ago, as looking forward to higher reaches of life and service for us and for those in our care, to be revealed to us step by step in the light of God's Holy Spirit. Perhaps some day I may be allowed to write a sequel telling of life on these new altitudes.

By George Daneel

Student at Theological Seminary, Stellenbosch, and forward in 1928, Springbok (All South African) Rugger XXV

IF I had to say just in a few words what the greatest truth is that the Oxford Group taught me, I would say it is that God could make me a life-changer. By that I do not mean somebody with a good Christian influence and helping people spiritually, but being able through Christ to change the direction of another person's life. At home religion was made very real to me and I will ever be thankful to my father and mother for the spiritual foundation of my life. It never, however, occurred to me in those days that I could hand on to others what I had received from Christ myself.

At last in 1926 came the entrance into the Theological Seminary. Somehow it made a difference, but the experience there did not come up to expectations. I felt that I wanted to do something for Christ and took part in all the religious work that I could, but it did not bring the peace that I expected it would. I remember very frequently talking things over with

my best friend and telling him that there was something lacking in my spiritual experience, but did not know what it was. Of course I know now that it was nothing else but a lack of victory over sin.

In my eagerness to do something for Christ I even went to a minister for advice on how to help some of my football friends. He gave me very good advice but unfortunately took me for granted as an out and out Christian, which of course I pretended to be. On two successive nights on a football tour to Durban I tried prayers with some of my friends but then fear crept in and I failed hopelessly in getting at the needs of any of them, returning with a sense of utter failure.

Shortly after this experience Jack Brock and Eric van Lennep came to Stellenbosch to spend a week-end. The freshness of their message aroused my interest, but it did not go deep enough to touch the root of what was wrong in my life. It was only when I met the Group in Cape Town that I faced up to the standards of Christ for myself. It meant going the whole way with Christ for the first time and brought that peace and release from the power of sin for which I had been looking for so long. Naturally one of the very first things I did was to write to my friend, telling him that I had found what had always been lacking in my spiritual experience.

Then for the first time I knew I had a message from Christ to hand on to other people. Life began to take a new aspect and there was an interest in people that I never experienced before. Witnessing at different groups to the wonderful power of Christ became a sheer joy. Then followed the different house parties and travelling with the team, and I saw miracle after miracle happening. But more than that, I found that Christ wanted to use me too in the same way and that he had a definite purpose for my life in doing for others what had been done for me.

I am tremendously thankful to God for giving me the wonderful experience I had with the Group and am still having. I am certainly looking forward to going back to the Seminary and sharing all my experiences with my friends there. I do think that most people never realise what we are up against. Theology is a wonderful thing but when it is divorced from life it becomes fruitless, just as formal religious practises, which are not in-

spired by the Holy Spirit. It is only honest to admit that during the three and a half years I studied theology I did not seem to get much out of it. I had very little spiritual experience of Christ, He was not real and vital to me, with the result that theology was still more unreal, in fact I think I studied it just to pass the examinations and enter into the ministry. I feel there are many today in somewhat the same position as I was, who desire for something more than merely a Christian experience. There is nothing wrong with theology, but what they want is a real message such as the Oxford Group brought to South Africa.

*From the Rev. Francis A. W. Rutherford
Priest of St. George's Cathedral, Cape Town*

IT seems incredible that a few short months ago I could have been the man I remember as having worn my clothes and answered to my name. I could imagine no one more unlike me than this man who twelve months ago was about to enter upon a new phase of his ministerial work. My rector had been appointed to the Deanery of Cape Town and had invited me to accompany him to the Cathedral as one of his assistants. Deep down in my heart I knew that I was a spiritual bankrupt, and it was with no little anxiety that I faced the future.

What a lot has happened this year! After a few months of futile labour in which I tried out several schemes that I thought might help to draw people around myself, (for that was my idea, to draw people to myself and to mould them after a pattern of my own) I met the Oxford Group. A miracle happened to me. After having been in the toils of of bad habits for a lifetime and conscious of playing a losing game, I have suddenly been plunged into a new world. No longer need I feel that sense of inferiority and failure which resulted from constant defeat in my daily life. My ministry has become what in my best moments I had always hoped it would be. Every day is crammed full of incident, and I am being used by God to help others. Sick souls are coming

along at all hours. I am seeing miracles worked before my eyes every day.

Formerly I had hardly a friend in the world upon whom I could rely. There were people who would pander to my weaknesses, but none who would consistently hold me up to the highest. Now I am surrounded by real friends, and live in real fellowship. Such a quality of life in and around me as I never dreamt existed. I look across the sea to England and America and I thank God for those who came across to us here to bring the message of freedom and release in Christ and I praise God for it.

*By Rev. F. D. Moorees, Th. D. Groningen, Holland
Student Pastor for the Dutch Reformed Church in
Transvaal, Free State and Natal, Elected to a
Chair in the Senate of the University
of Witwatersrand*

IN August last I made the acquaintance of the Oxford Group at the Stephanie Hotel, Johannesburg. My attitude towards them was distinctly critical, I prided myself on being a disciple of Karl Barth, and it seemed to me then that the practical religion taught by these men with its emphasis on experience was at total variance with Barth's definition of faith. This, however, was not the real cause for my dislike of the Group. I remember hearing Sherwood Day explain at the Bloemfontein house party that the spirit of criticism was usually symptomatic of a hidden need in the critic. That fitted my case exactly, I was in dire need. What really repelled me was the important place assigned to sharing. I shrank from self-exposure.

I had now for nearly a year been visiting students that were members of the Dutch Reformed Church in the northern provinces of the Union. The sum total of my experience was that I had not reached down into the life of a single person. Although I could argue with them pleasantly enough on religious and Biblical topics I avoided facing the moral problems in their lives and sedulously kept what argument we had on the intellectual level. Why? Because I disliked facing these

problems myself. They were still very much problems in my own life. Besides I could only proffer them the solution that seemed to me feasible: ignore or try to ignore these difficulties in your life. Grasp hold of and feed on the spiritual values revealed to us by Christ in the Bible. As you become morally and spiritually more enlightened evil will disappear out of your life. To this belief I was clinging as hard as I could and trying to instill it into the minds of my students. It seemed to me I could quite honestly call it: Christ the solution of all our difficulties. The solution, however, remained hypothetical. The spiritual values I was after continued to be spiritual values very much in the abstract and would not become realities in my life.

Meanwhile in the transparent atmosphere of the house party opposition slowly crumbled away as the real cause of my weakness and failure became increasingly clear to me. I had never surrendered myself fully to Christ, but had led a self-centred and self-indulgent life. One of my chief vanities was my allegiance to the theology of Karl Barth, which I had not really understood but held on to since it seemed to provide an equivalent for the living faith in Christ which I missed. My second discovery was that true surrender could take place only on the basis of an honest acknowledgment of failure. This meant sharing. My first attempt at this was amusing. When I had finished what I considered to be a candid statement of my case to F. B. he looked at me and said kindly but firmly, "You are still very much bottled up, the cork hasn't yet come out." As a matter of fact, the cork did not come until after the Bloemfontein house party. Since then sharing up to date has come to mean for me a simple though not always easy act of spiritual hygiene. In the first and second instance it had represented to me a real surrender. I had hoped somewhat feverishly that it would result in a miraculous change coming over me—that the old life would drop away and something totally new emerge. This did not happen. I had to, and still have to, learn daily to place my life unreservedly in God's hands for Him to refashion and use as He thinks fit. This by the way I now realize Karl Barth really means when he talks of obedience.

I now come to my third discovery, which is that surrender really means letting God consciously and intelligently have the direction of your life from day to day and moment to moment. This results in the expectant attitude of listening and in readiness to obey. Is not this Karl Barth's "warten und eilen?"

Life has become new for me. It has become big and full and purposeful. The Bible has become a hand-book of spiritual instruction and direction written especially for me. The cross is now really in the centre of all things. I feel a new responsibility toward my fellow men. God is often sending me squarely into their lives. Last, but not least, the joy of real spiritual fellowship! For this I am vastly thankful. These last weeks spent with the travelling team at Cape Town, The Strand and Riviera has been a time of supreme happiness. What is old is going, the new is coming. And it is all the doing of God who has reconciled me to Himself through Christ and has permitted me to be a minister of reconciliation.

Miss L. L. Meller

Headmistress, Girls' High School, Durban, Natal

ON the very day on which I sailed from Southampton a fellow-passenger drew my attention to man on board, who, he said, was noticeable on account of a vitality and happiness apparent to the most casual observer.

At dinner that night a neighbour told me he had just met an interesting personality, Howard Rose, who was on his way to South Africa to promote individual religion amongst university students. I guessed this might be the vitally happy man and found I was right.

Travelling by the same boat were two ladies, Renée Church and Marie Macbeth, who had been members of Calvary Church in New York.

A fellowship sprang up on board with these three as a nucleus, and I was invited with others to a Quiet Time. After a period of quiet Howard Rose asked me to say a prayer. I could not utter the sincere prayer the occasion demanded. I felt that I was shut out from God, and it gave me a great shock. I

realized that sin alone could raise such a barrier and felt a deep conviction of sin. I had made a decision for Christ, but had not surrendered self.

A year later Loudon Hamilton, one of the Oxford Group, visited Durban.

He was the forerunner of a team of twenty men and women led by Frank Buchman, who held a House Party in Durban which lasted ten days.

They shew a radiant happiness, for they live on the spiritual plane; they are lighthearted for they carry no burden of sin. They are bringers of joy, who give direction and peace to many unhappy, aimless lives.

At last I was able to make a full surrender and to learn that a re-birth through the power of Christ is a valid experience.

This brought a feeling of happiness and release from a tenseness and striving which had been painful and useless.

The Bible means far more to me than it did before. Enlightenment has come, even quite simple passages have a deeper meaning, and above all, the story of the Cross has again the poignancy it had for me when I was a child.

IT was a tremendous help to all Groups that so many of their members were able to attend the Workers' House Party at Bloemfontein. What a happy, busy time we all had there! F. B. led, and a platform talk he gave on Continuance in his inimitable style will always remain in my memory as the most helpful address I have ever heard. We all gained real inspiration through the fellowship, the Quiet Times, the Bible classes, the Platform Talks and the services. There was an unforgettable corporate Communion Service, where members of all the denominations present at the House Party joined together.

We came back from Bloemfontein having gained fresh grace and strength and a great deal of practical help in making our Group members real Life Changers.

The school Group is growing fast—Two of the Staff have joined and another is deeply interested. A change of life is apparent in many of the students—Some have had deep spirit-

ual experiences and we hope in time to have the greater number of our girls living on the highest plane.

The recent visit of several members of the Oxford Group has been a great inspiration to us. We can now realize something of what St. Paul's visits to his Church Groups must have meant in apostolic times.

From Lewis E. Hertslet, M. D., Florida, Johannesburg

I'M a doctor, 52 yesterday, father of six children, lay preacher for over thirty years, missionary for thirteen, church-officer, temperance advocate, social worker, and so on and so on.

For some years I'd been getting slacker and slacker in my Christian life and moral tone. The Group came along just in time. My wife and children found me most difficult to live with—everything was going wrong. I practically never prayed. The Bible bored me—though we still had family prayers.

We went to the reception, at the Selborne Hall. My verdict was "These chaps have got something I haven't, I want it, and I'm after it".

Next morning we went to the Stephanie House-Party—Vernon Snee took the Quiet Time, and Sherry Day gave the Bible Talk on "Naaman". I was Naaman!

I spent that Sunday evening writing out my case—Past History. Family History. Present condition. Symptoms (Sins, etc.) I left the Diagnosis and Treatment for John Roots to fill in, for I knew I'd got to see him somehow next day!

Monday afternoon we went to it, and I got right back to God—I went home singing, "My Friend's got hold of me again". After that my wife and I both got "Stephanitis" badly, went to all possible meetings. She got "deep-in" quickly, and we've both been hard at it ever since (four months). All the children at home have surrendered to Christ—and keep their quiet time every morning; we have a family group every Sunday morning before breakfast.

I never used to do any personal work, "It wasn't my job, I hadn't been cut out for it, I was a preacher, etc".—but now? Well, it just doesn't stop, and I don't want it to.

Of course, the Bible's a new Book, as everyone else finds. It hits and hurts, but helps and heals.

The Group work is a sheer joy, we have one on a Saturday evening in our house, the children have one, (which is now forming into two), my wife has one for girl guides—officers, and another for leaders (in town), there's the family group, and I go when I can to the business men's group in Johannesburg.

The movement here goes and grows—it moves with real vitality—which proves its origin in the mind of Christ.

*From Mrs. Lewis E. Hertslet, Florida, Transvaal
(Cambridge, M.A., and only Woman Wesleyan Local
Preacher in the Transvaal)*

ON Saturday, August 17th, 1929, I went to the Selborne Hall in Johannesburg. Although a busy church worker, and preacher, my religion had become so ineffective, and my disillusionment about life so bitter, that the only thing I really looked forward to was death. Even that thought was spoiled by the fact that I should leave behind me six children to wade their weary way through life.

The message gripped us all, and presently I realized that it was my own sin that was darkening all the landscape. This I faced up to and surrendered, along with all of myself that I then knew. The lovely ideal picture of Christ that I had been worshipping has been replaced by a real knowledge of Christ as Saviour and Master: my life is full of peace and sunshine, and God is using it, in spite of its long uselessness.

My husband has been similarly helped, and we have renewed the love that had worn very thin indeed, on a finer basis than ever before, for it, too, is surrendered to God.

The six children have all surrendered. The eldest daughter is a probationer nurse at the General Hospital. She gets up at 5:30 A. M. to keep her Quiet Time and is trying to win other nurses. Mary, a daughter of 16, got guidance along with David, aged 11, to start a children's group in our home. About ten boys and girls come, and these are being won one by one. John, aged 14, has surrendered and has to restore at school:

he is very reserved, but is opening up, and witnessed at the children's group. David is hard after his chum, and has restored at school. So has Felicity, the baby, aged eight. They all keep their Quiet Time and on Saturdays and Sundays we all share.

The children are all much more amenable, though by no means perfect as yet. They get convicted of their faults in their Quiet Times, and are much more friendly with each other.

It has been a real surprise to Lewis and me to find how they were all, even the baby, burdened with unconfessed sin and failure, and how they have been released by their surrender.

Our home is used freely for helping other folk to Christ, and we are all interested in the interviews that take place all over the place. In order to warn people off, if the conversation has got down to real business, we have a family signal. A casual rub of the nose means "Please keep off!" Even Felicity understands, nods her small head wisely and fades away. There are several nooks under the trees in the garden that have become very sacred spots, because there souls have come to the Second Birth.

By Audrey Sawyer, Cape Town

UP to a couple of years ago life had been a tremendous game—gay and free and rapid and bitter-sweet! Going from one pleasure to another—at home or travelling, always in the restless whirl of society-life.

Then the amazing thing happened. I met the Oxford Group. I saw the kind of life I wanted actually being lived in this modern generation and *by* this modern generation! There was pure happiness born of no selfish motive.

Theirs was normal, intelligent, happy living.

Gradually the realization came that the central figure of my life could be all-absorbed in One Who was great and beautiful—Christ.

This was their secret behind the life and power and joy—Christ at the centre of each individual life—guiding and directing every moment. This was the driving force within that

house-party—Christ performing miracles to-day just as He did so many centuries ago.

During those first few weeks with the Group I began to read the New Testament and discover a wealth of meaning—a far more intelligent philosophy of life than I'd ever imagined could be found there. To find the Kingdom of Heaven I knew I'd got to lose my little worldly kingdom and let Christ reign within me.

When I eventually arrived home my parents were amazed at the obvious change. First my father was most surprised when I appeared at breakfast!—my usual getting-up time being about 9.30, which meant he didn't see me till lunch. Mother was delighted with my "freshness"—six weeks of late nights, early mornings, and no midday siesta, and I looked as fit as a fiddle! She didn't remember any time in years when I'd looked so well!

After the Cape Town house-party I settled down to hard work—"passing on the good news". Four of us met for an hour every day to school ourselves in self-discipline and team-work, to pray and to get direction for our work. Later we developed daily Bible study.

Those Quiet-times were very wonderful to me—we seemed to come so near the Divine Presence, and feel the atmosphere alive with love and understanding and fellowship.

And I found it easy to talk to people; found there were others just as dissatisfied with life as I had been, though they wouldn't have admitted it for worlds if I had not shared with them first, tearing down all my pride and telling them the deepest things in my life—just where I had failed, just where life had seemed to fail me, my weaknesses that had been my humiliation. And oh the immediate response! The joy of finding another in just the same dilemma over life when I could tell the cure, the solution to every problem,—the Christ who had saved me.

Rt. Rev. A. B. L. Karney, Bishop of Johannesburg
(*from sermon reported in Johannesburg Star, Oct. 14, 1929.*)

"I went down to Bloemfontein rather critical, and I came back feeling much humbler than I went. I was profoundly touched."

Almost everything the members of the Oxford Group said, continued the Bishop, had been said by the Church for years, but he thought the Church was less successful because their surrender had not been so great as they thought it had been.

If the dangers of the Oxford Movement were guarded against, then their main points—the hour in the morning, the sharing with others of religious experiences, and the life changing—the main points of the Group's teaching—were lessons of the utmost value to the Church.

"Why we fail, especially with the young people, is that they feel that religion is a sticky, musty business," he concluded. "We must make it glorious. We must have something to give new life, and to give new hope."

By Norwood E. Coaker

Barrister, Johannesburg, Transvaal

THE invitation to the houseparty at Johannesburg came to me—I see now—as an answer to prayer. Just one year before, I had returned from ten years of wandering in the desert of agnosticism, whither I thought I had been driven by the inexplicable cruelties of the War and a shattering family bereavement. The truth was, of course, that I had gone thither through plain sinning. During that year there were periods of intense religious experience, alternating with times of the old doubt and difficulty, and above all, of fear,—that most crippling of the sins—fear lest I should again be driven forth. I had prayed that the way to be rid of certain spiritual disabilities should be shewn me; in particular, that the means should appear of becoming disentangled from a false situation initiated years before by a single falsehood, the consequences and complications of which had grown year by year.

The simple expedient of downright honesty seemed to my worldly mind impossibly hard.

These clear-eyed enthusiasts had the secret of release: that was plain after the inaugural meeting. But their methods and their terms were for anyone, of course, except a High Anglican professional man like myself.

Yet one had to acknowledge that there was nothing crass about the team, so perhaps the fault was not theirs. I frequented the house-party at intervals for some days, hungrily diffident lest I should be really "tackled." Elmer spoke at a crowded meeting of his vision of the Cross as part of the Christian's daily experience: others testified to the release from oneself and the help to others from sharing: on all sides was the challenge to live with perfect purity, honesty, unselfishness, and love. The fatal consequences of reserve, and of living in falsehood, became apparent.

Soon there came, quite unsought, an introduction to the man I heard speak of the Cross, a gentle talk, (no tackling, after all), the sight before my eyes of the self-crucifixion of one man that another might be released, and, inevitably, the release in reciprocal sharing, and then surrender. The Way so long sought and missed, yet surely promised to all who might truly seek, lay open.

A period followed, the most arduous in life, and yet the most triumphant, when old deceptions and feuds were cleared away: there was daily a perceptible growth in spiritual power, with opportunities, and, most marvellously, even the ability, to help others.

At Bloemfontein, six weeks later, the experience was enlarged. Clare Cloete, about half my age, showed how even a treasured grief might be a sin, a refusal and criticism of God's way. Thus the words "Thy will be done" took on a new and deeper meaning; and the significance was glimpsed of utter surrender—of reserve, of self, of possessions, of ambitions, of anxieties, yes, even of human relationships, with the dead as well as with the living. From the pursuit of a goal so grand and yet so simple, it were folly to turn away.

From a small meeting of persons interested, whom I asked to meet one evening in my chambers, there has grown a vital

and active group for business men, vastly outgrowing the accommodation I could offer. Many burdens have been lightened there, and several lives changed through its members. Nearly a dozen are now capable group leaders, and others are being trained by it. For helping younger groups in their initial work members of the Business Men's Group are in continual demand. A great field for personal evangelism is opened out in a city reputed more than commonly worldly, and workers are not lacking.

Sydney P. Watson, Pretoria, Transvaal

AS a boy I was brought up in a very religious atmosphere. My late Grandfather was the founder of a large Mission in this country and my father is a Minister.

At school I frittered my time away, trying to be the proverbial "minister's son". There was absolutely no reality in religion and I fell to every sin common to the average school boy.

The desire for seeing life was the real cause of all the scrapes and messes I have got into in the past few years. I started drinking; at first to be on a level with what I thought were the ideal companions, who would show me "Life", and then because I liked it.

This form of amusement slowly got a hold over me until I was miserable without it, and craved for the stimulating effects alcohol has on the system. Drink was followed by all the usual sins—gambling, fighting, bluffing and many much worse—all eventually leading me into debt.

I wandered from job to job, always looking for life and happiness, and always in my search for it sinking lower and lower into the mire.

All my faith in Christ had gone. I had proved in my own way the absolute impossibility of the existence of a Divine Power. I ran at the approach of the "Cloth" and hated the sight of the inside of a Church. I had become an atheist although I had been confirmed; the idea being to please and pacify my parents.

I took one seemingly unsolvable problem to a friend, who having patiently listened to what I had to say, referred me to a religious Group of gentlemen who were at that time in the middle of a house-party in Johannesburg. An interview was arranged during which I was astounded at the matter-of-fact way in which the three gentlemen talked of Christ.

All their talking and sharing, however, could not make me realize the presence of this Christ they spoke of or feel that there was any truth in what they said. It was only when I was left alone and faced up honestly to facts that I felt there was really a way out of it all, and that there must be a Supernatural Something that was able to make these fellows so openly honest and perfectly happy.

I yearned and longed for this Something, and it was then that Christ worked in me in a wonderful way. He changed my outlook on things completely, and showed Himself to me. I experienced one of the most gloriously happy and peaceful moments of my life—a feeling of absolute relief and release. I had handed over all my sins, cares and troubles to Him and He took that huge load from me. He took the knotted tangle I had made of my life and straightened out everything for me.

I distinctly felt then that He had called me to do a job that all my life I had run down, despised—that of a missionary. A little passage my grandfather used to read to me years before came back very vividly. It will be found in Acts 26: 15-18.

It is barely nine weeks since all this happened, but He has never stopped helping me over my difficulties and removing my temptations, and is always by my side, ready to help me up every time I fall.

Rev. Canon Herbert Coster

St. John's Church, (Anglican) Belgravia, Johannesburg.

I WENT to the meetings of the Oxford Group at the Stephanie Hotel, Johannesburg, and there I saw hundreds of men and women crowding in to listen to these people who undoubtedly had a vital message to give. In the past I have been unable to give that message with conviction because I

had only partly surrendered myself to God. I believed all I preached and taught, but I had not practiced it in my life, consequently, my message was without power.

Well, I came to the Stephanie night after night and I was convinced that the age of miracles had not passed; I saw men and women that I knew publicly testifying that they had made a full and complete surrender of themselves to Jesus Christ, and that they were finding Him to be a living reality.

For over thirty-four years I have been in the habit of regularly using sacramental Confession, and I shall always thank God for this wonderful means of Grace, but I have never known the joy of complete release and forgiveness because there had always been "some of self and some of Thee", there had never been the absolute surrender of myself, soul and body. I was genuinely sorry for my sins, I wanted peace and forgiveness, but I wasn't ready to pay the price and I didn't get rid of the roots of my sinfulness. My life was like a stream, my sins like weeds in the stream; in my confessions I cut down the weeds but I didn't eradicate the roots; I have now tackled the roots in my full surrender to God, consequently, I now know a joy and happiness unknown before.

I have learned much from the Oxford Group, and yet it is the old, old story of Jesus, and His love for sinners, enshrined in the Church and the New Testament for the past 2,000 years. I feel that during the course of years in the Anglican Church we have not sufficiently emphasized the importance of Conversion; we have not been taught to seek each day the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to spend a definite time each day in listening to the still small voice; and lastly, I know that if a man is converted he is bound to become a life changer, he longs to hand on the Gospel, the "Good News", to others, and he will be surprised at the number of people who are literally hungry for God.

As a Priest I ought to testify to the fact that during the past few weeks my daily offices of Matins and Evensong have become a positive joy, and of course the Eucharist has become something past description in mere words. Added to the normal means of Grace, i.e., prayer and sacraments, is the inestimable value of the Quiet Time in the early morning; this has to be

practiced before its true value can be realized. As a theological student I used to try to meditate, but I never succeeded; in the new method of listening to God, and writing down the thoughts that come, I have learnt what is, to my mind, the better way.

To those of you who have known me for so many years I ask you not to miss any of these meetings, you will not witness any hysteria or emotionalism, but you will see all sorts and conditions of men and women who know what it is really to have the "Joy of the Lord" in their lives.

Rev. Roelof Theron

Minister of Dutch Reformed Church, Alberton, Transvaal

IS there a sorer sight than a parson out of tune with the spiritual universe, constantly called upon to perform sacred duties while his inward life is in a muddle on account of be-setting sins? That was my condition for many a tedious month before the Oxford Group visited South Africa. Now, however much of a failure I was myself as a Christian, I could at once recognize a true Christian when I saw one. That very first night I was profoundly impressed by the young men and women of the Oxford Group. Never before have I seen such a splendid company of Christians—radiant, bubbling over with a deep, solid joy. They appeared to me to be so well balanced. They had enthusiasm without fanaticism, hilarity without levity, a tremendous, radiating, palpable love without sentimentality or affectation, a burning zeal without fuss or uneasiness. But what impressed me and others most was their absolute single-mindedness. They were "all out" for reality in religious experience and perfectly willing to sacrifice any thing to gain that reality. I saw at a glance that these people had actually realized what I was wistfully gazing at as an impossible ideal. And I felt a divine urge that I must gain what they had gained.

The first lesson the Group had to teach me was an uncomfortable one. To gain full release from very obstinate and imperious sins, they urge you to "share", or confess those sins to somebody you feel you can trust. I at once, and firmly,

decided not to do so. One of my besetting sins was not only ugly, but positively ridiculous, and I must at all costs keep up my ministerial dignity. No! However much I was going to coax my church members to share their experiences with me (for I saw the value of it) I was going to do no sharing from my side. I would just quietly slip out in the dark and square it all up with God in secret (how often have I done this in the past without permanent release). But God was not going to have it that way and I was just trapped into sharing in a marvellous way by God's merciful providence.

Circumstances forced me to take lunch at the Stephanie Hotel. I tried to get a place with a small party of Afrikaner friends, as up to then I could never feel myself quite at home among English-speaking people. But I came too late, and the only vacant seat was next to one of the quietest and yet one of the keenest workers in the group. It is absolutely certain I was so reserved that I would have gone up to any one of the visiting team for a chat, if I were not properly introduced, and I would of course never speak of anything else but the weather and such conventionalities with these strangers from a strange country. I tried to do so now at lunch table. But these people are bubbling over with their message, and the conversation flowed most naturally towards the spiritual miracles that were happening in the house party. I was deep in this awful business of sharing before I became aware that I was about it. Needless to say, we spent a long time alone and did not leave before we knelt down together. I not only found God as I have not found him for many a year, but I also found a human friend that sticketh closer than a brother.

I always knew that sharing or confession was a scientific method of gaining release. Psychoanalysis is just the technique of bringing to light the complicated repressions, contradictions, and hidden but poisonous memories of the sufferer. I knew all along that sharing was scriptural. Sn is then thrown out of the citadel and declared before God *ant man* to be an enemy. It will remain an inveterate enemy and continue to make attacks. But henceforth it is an open enemy, not a traitor disguised as a friend within the walls and secluded by secrecy.

As for sharing the glorious experience of God's pardoning grace, and telling people what we have received from God, everybody who has tried it or seen it tried can testify to its tremendous power to change life and character. "It is twice blessed; It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes"—A conviction is never really our own until we actively propagate it. What the world needs now as much as ever in the past is not so much a theory of salvation as a living proof of present salvation in the life and testimony of people actually saved. To see such people is to be profoundly stirred.

From Norman Price, Advocate, Pretoria

YOU have asked me to give you shortly some of my experiences with the group. I shall do so.

My background was one of confusion due to metaphysical reading and thinking, and I was pre-occupied with intellectual gymnastics. It would not be true if I said this did not help me, because it did. It solved some problems and eased others, but never gave any real relief or liberation. The problems had a habit of dissolving and then re-forming.

In this condition of mind I went to the Stephanie House-Party in Johannesburg at the end of August last. I had not been there long before I began to realize that I had not far to seek for the application of the phrase "whited sepulchre", and I did not like it; it seemed so personal and so unpleasant. The more I saw of myself, the less I liked myself, until it dawned on me that my real problems were not things outside of myself but my own reactions to these things, and I began to think I would like to change these reactions, quite selfishly, in order to ease the pressure; that meant, of course, to change myself or my own nature. Well, I did not see much prospect of that and I felt rather caught, like a rat in a trap. Then I was told that as long as I myself was in the centre and as long as I clustered all my attention around myself, I should remain as I was, but that if I would put Christ at the centre and let Him run my life, I should get away from myself and grow towards His likeness. So I decided to do that, not at once, but really after about six weeks' struggle, which was painful,

but worth while. During those six weeks I had to do some awkward and difficult things—really difficult, one of them almost impossible and dangerous, humanly speaking, but it turned out to be, even humanly speaking, the wisest and most thoroughly decent thing I had ever done, and I am glad I did it, because it was concerned with a very pressing difficulty, which has now disappeared.

I was also at the Bloemfontein House-Party, and this month I remained and worked for fourteen days with the Group. That has helped me a great deal.

I have not had any sudden and lasting sense of relief. It comes gradually as I work. But I know that many things have dropped from me. Temptations have become far less powerful, and there is gradually unfolded to me a real sense of the power and actuality of Christ.

By Donald McKay

Formerly a Durban Business Man

ABOUT nine months ago I met a fellow, a big fellow, who said that the highest quality of life one could live was life with Jesus Christ at the centre of it. I didn't believe in Jesus Christ but I did believe in that fellow's happiness. It was obvious. The second time I met him I realized that he had something that I had been consciously and unconsciously looking for for years. I had sought it in adventure, occupation, environment, love—and missed it. Sought it in social service and self-indulgence. I was unhappy, discontented, restless, defeated in sin and more than a little sorry for myself. He was happy, contented, at peace, purposeful and just radiated sympathy and love.

I went to a week-end camp house-party to get what he had got. He was there to run the house-party. I started off by telling him not to make any effort to convert me, for if he did he would meet with a very mixed reception. He took me at my word and left me alone—that peeved me. The camp came to an end with me still peeved, unhappy, disappointed. The big fellow and I were left at the camp site together waiting for a car to

get us to town. Everyone else had gone. After years of almost antagonism to religion—of denying God—sneering criticism of Christians and organized Christianity—I was faced with the task of going to an avowed Christian, and one who appeared to have little interest in me, and asking him to help me, or missing the very best that life had to offer. That is how I felt about it. All pride was against it, but pride had to go. It was not easy but I was just loaded up with sin; I was getting my life into a pretty hopeless mess. I humbled myself and shared with him and in my humility found Christ as my own personal Saviour. More and more every day I realize how pride does cut us out from the very best in life and how very much more there is to be seen and learned of the Kingdom of God from the angle of humility.

I left that camp very subdued but at peace. I knew that I had a lot to face up to and felt that it was not going to be easy but I did feel certain of victory. It was all very unemotional—just the accepting of a fact, the fact that it is only through complete surrender to God that real happiness and victory over self are found. I began to catch a glimpse of what “the peace of God which passeth all understanding” was. It was just that a lot of the strain of life seemed to have gone and I felt relaxed in the arms of God.

Sometimes I have failed and sometimes I have felt like running away from it all but I can't. For the first time in my life I have found something that is too big to play with and that I can't quit.

For me it has meant peace, contentment and power—the power really to help others. The price was the crucifixion of self. Self never was an asset at any rate.

It has meant fellowship too. I never really knew the meaning of this word before. It has meant a fellowship with my own family such as I had never experienced. Barriers that seemed unsurmountable between my brother and myself have been shared down and the bond between us today is Jesus Christ.

All the feeling of drift and failure has gone and today there is that feeling of purpose and usefulness that is always there when God directs.

By Stanley de Waal

Master in the Technical High School, Durban, Natal

At an early age I came into a realization of Christ, due to the influence of my parents. As a young boy walking to a farm school I often had the feeling that Christ was with me.

On going to the University I began to live for whatever enjoyment I could get out of life. My number of masks had been doubled or trebled by this time, because not only was I "bluffing" my professors, but also my friends, and my people and myself.

Throughout the last four years I knew that those convictions which I had had as a boy were still there, and I began to attend church regularly, searching for help. I wanted that power of Christ in my life. Christ was an ideal, but no actual power to overcome evil. Neither could I get rid of that unhappiness which was born out of past misdeeds and failures. I regularly read my Bible and prayed. From the latter I received help, but my Bible reading was done because I thought that it had to be done, and was a bore.

The very first thing that I noticed that evening at the Riviera Hotel, was that here were a group of people who were really happy, and possessed just that release for which I was searching.

At the end of that evening I was profoundly impressed and was really convicted of sin—past and present. I returned again the next evening after a very unhappy day. Then I had a talk with Garrett, which was the beginning of a wonderful friendship. He showed me that my past could become an asset for Christ.

That evening Christ gave me the power to tell the meeting what He had done for me that very day. I felt a strange feeling of elation and for once I felt a wonderful peace of mind. The masks had been pulled away and I had a feeling of freedom. I had surrendered everything, not counting the cost, and I felt filled with a love for Christ and for my fellow-beings, which I had never known before. The last few days of the House-Party were wonderful days to me. My scale of

values had been radically changed. The temporary things lost value and the eternal things stood out more prominently. God's spirit had really taken possession of me. Barriers were pulled down and Christ became a vital personality instead of an ideal . . . Christ gave the power of victory. My life, including my thought life, became clean, and since then Christ has given me the power to live a transparent life. God be praised.

I so keenly saw and now see, what is lacking in our educational system. Material things are so overemphasized and the education of man, the *real man*, so neglected, that the growing child, relying on his knowledge of the material, is an easy prey when attacked by temptation. He has no real power to resist. And when we see that soul coming to grief, we must not forget that our educational system is to blame. There is only one solution, and that is "Jesus Christ".

Rev. D. Gourley Thomas

MY first impression of the Oxford Group was that they had found what Dr. Jacks calls "the lost radiance of the Christian religion." I have never met more radiant people. They were happy without being professional. They smiled without being sickly. They could be serious without being solemn. They looked as though they lived at the secret source of every precious thing. Hermas wrote in his Shepherd, "the Holy Spirit is a glad spirit." The word used by him and by St. Augustine, so T. R. Glover reminds us, is that which gives us the English word "hilarious." It describes a type of life which is free from fear, which can afford to laugh because the fetters are gone, which is conscious of being on top of life and not under its heel.

This radiant group were a joyful illustration of it.

Another impression I received, almost as quickly as the first, was the sheer honesty of the atmosphere. Truth was at home in it. The slightest exaggeration, or the slightest depreciation, was impossible. Truth lifted her hand to hide her eyes the moment there was the slightest inclination to magnify or to minimise, and we all saw that hand!

Theology of Experience

And what about their theology? Were they orthodox, or heterodox, fundamental or modern? I didn't even give it a thought. Perhaps it wasn't as perfect as the professors might like it, nor what they might call "the ultimate theology." It was just the theology of experience, which will deepen and be modified as their experience deepens and is modified. Meanwhile, it had the ring of truth. What they had felt and seen they told with confidence, the Lord adding to them daily such as would be saved.

The Oxford Group Movement

A Message from Schools to Parents.

[*Drawn up at Bloemfontein house-party, by five boys from Plumtree School, Southern Rhodesia.*]

THE Oxford Group Movement was originated several years ago by Frank Buchman, popularly known as "F. B.", but the idea is as old as our calendar, for the Apostles put it into practice themselves. It was first brought to South Africa in 1928 by a number of students from Oxford, via Grahamstown, whence it has spread all over South Africa.

Now the idea of this message is to help you to be more intimate with your sons, and we hope it will bring you closer to God even as it is bringing them.

The Group Movement is the getting together of all concerned—and we are all concerned with the running of our lives—to discuss after due thought and prayer every difficulty in our lives, big or small. It is definitely a religious movement but it is religion in a new light—religion looked at from a new angle, a more practical angle. It is certain sides of religion taken and developed, and these are fellowship, (and fellowship is a part of religion); the principle of sharing all our troubles with a loving friend, which is confession; guidance of the Holy Spirit in all we do, which is the conviction of the will of God in us; and the complete giving of oneself to Jesus Christ like the joy of which there is no other. The result of this fellowship, friendship, comradeship, call it what you like,

is help, and that is something which we surely will not reject.

We would like you to know the aims and ideals of the Group Movement, the things in school life which it hits and hits hard, and they are all the things which will not pass these four principles:—

Absolute Honesty, Purity, Unselfishness and Love; and those things are such as these:—Ragging masters, foolish rivalry between boarders and day boys, smoking, corporal initiation, racial problems, cribbing, and of course petty thieving and lying, laziness in work, swearing, and most important of all purity. On the constructive note it aims to promote real comradeship in the school between the boys themselves and between the masters and boys; no longer will the masters have to fight to establish discipline, but instead, the boys will give it to them—this is an indirect result of the fact of the discipline entailed in having a long quiet time first thing in the morning, for that is the best time of the day and it should be given to God.

Christ must reign supreme in education and it is up to those who have entirely given themselves to Christ to see that this is so, not only in their own school but in others—this can be done in a practical way by sending Group teams round with Football and Cricket Teams, for it is only by winning others in our own school and in others that we can maintain a vital experience of Christ.

We would emphasise again that this is not a fancy religion but a personal, practical, everyday Christian religion which preaches the greatest doctrine of all—

Thou Shalt Love Thy Neighbour As Thyself

*Letter from a Boy aged 15 at Bishop's School, Capetown,
to the Rector of his Church*

Cape Province,

29th September, 1929.

“ . . . The Oxford Group have just visited school, Sir, and have established a group there of about 30 chaps, of which I am one. How glad I am they came Sir! I can't tell you how much light they have enabled me to see. If a fellow is in trouble now, Sir, I should be able to give him more than

a smile and a cheerful remark. I should be able to give him real solid help, I'd be able with Christ's Grace and help to enable him to see life in the light that I now see it through those chaps of the Oxford Group that came to school.

I'll just tell you my story, Sir. Three of the Group came on Monday and each told us how he himself had led a pretty aimless, purposeless sort of life until he had met some people who seemed extraordinarily happy. He realized that they had something he himself had not got, and in order to get it, had had a talk with them, and in a short time had made his surrender to Christ, resolving until his life's end to give himself entirely to Christ.

On Saturday I saw a clump of chaps talking together, and so out of curiosity went and joined them. I was immediately led away to a quiet spot by two university men, where they told me how before they used to drink, smoke and have every type of vile habit, self-indulgent or otherwise. They had then met the Oxford Group, immediately conquered all their sins, feeling as if an enormous burden had been lifted from their shoulders. They then made their surrender and since then they had been helping other fellows in trouble to do the same, inspiring many aimless lives with burning purpose, and that since that moment their lives had been gloriously happy and worth living.

I then went and had a talk with the Rev. Cleve Hicks, one of the group, confessed all my sins on the basis of dishonesty, impurity, deceit, etc., and felt a better man for it. Soon afterwards I made my surrender and since that moment my life has been all sunshine. The great idea is that once you surrender, you keep on winning others for Christ, that the only way to keep religion is by giving it away to others, that anything that separates us from God is sin, and has to be got rid of by bringing it out into the light, laughing over it, and being thus infinitely strengthened against temptation when it comes again. The idea is also to talk of your own sin and how you were cured by surrendering to Christ, where you know it will help others to make their decision. Sir, I'm perfectly convinced that the Holy Spirit has come into my life and is helping me to live like a true Christian.

The thing is that the first hour of the day, being the best, should be given to God. A man's spiritual life needs food, air, and exercise, i.e., Bible reading, a quiet time listening for God's guidance, and prayer. I find if I spend say 10 minutes on the Bible, five in prayer and about fifteen in quietly waiting, pencil in hand and jotting down the thoughts or intentions that come into my mind, at the end of that time I'm keen as mustard to carry out God's will which comes to me not only in the quiet time, but also at odd moments during the day. I usually jot down the guidance, to remind me to do it, and I find that if I carry it out I get more light and guidance as a result. Oh Sir, I'm perfectly convinced that Christianity as the Oxford Group teach it is *the* religion that works.

Most of the 30 fellows belonging to the school group have given up the most awful habits, and in Christ have found the power to withstand temptation and what's more, win other fellows for Christ. Oh Sir, it's just great—the good Christ can do in the world if looked at in the right light, the power and courage he can give to those who try to do His will, as He guides them. I believe my whole family will soon be having quiet times. I never realized Christ could come right into the centre of human life and there be a reality. Now I realize it in full force, and am so happy for it. It solves every problem—the League of Nations will soon be unnecessary I feel sure, if the Oxford Group visit every nation and Christ gives them understanding to impart his great truth in the outermost parts of the earth. Don't you agree with me that its *great*, Sir?

I expect you've already heard and learnt all about them and are rejoicing for it, but I can't help writing to you out of pure joy in the discovery Christ has brought me. Just to think that thirty n'er-do-wells, living an aimless selfish sort of life, could be so speedily transformed into determined soldiers for Christ, seems indeed a miracle, and now that I've joined them I'm determined to hang on to that discovery with all my heart and soul and by Christ's help regularly retain my Bible reading, quiet time, prayers and in short everything that binds me to him and helps me through Him to follow His will.

Sir, I can never thank you enough for all you have done for me. It was through your help and prayers that I pulled



PART OF THE TEAM, JOHANNESBURG.

through the difficulties I used to have with bad thoughts. Christ is a ripper isn't he? I hope this letter may be a help to keep Christ ever before you and a witness of his power and reality. It has certainly been a help to me writing it, and has confirmed the light He has sent me.

Ever your most loving friend". . .

Rev. J. B. Webb

Wesleyan Minister, Johannesburg, Transvaal

A NEW spiritual movement variously called "The Oxford Group," "The Buchman Movement," "The First Century Christian Fellowship"—has been spreading through continents for ten years and more, and promises to become the greatest spiritual awakening since the days of the Wesleys. It is certainly, in the words of Bishop Roots, of China, "the expression of the greatest movement of the spirit of Christ in our generation."

In the final resort, the only apologia of any spiritual movement is its capacity for re-making human nature. That will always remain the most convincing argument for what the Oxford Group are doing. On every hand this movement is being proven by its fruits—in rekindled hopes, transformed wills, and changed lives.

Douglas M. Buchanan, Advocate, Cape Town

I AM getting on in years, with by far the longer portion of my life behind me and by far the best portion in front of me.

My eldest son went to the Muizenberg house-party of the Oxford Group. I heard him talk about it but did not immediately realize the effect it was having and was going to have on our family, individually and collectively. One evening I had left my spectacles upstairs and as soon as I stated this fact all four of my children rushed to get them, whereas formerly a specific one had to be asked, and it was not unlikely that such child would suggest another was freer for the job.

My first impression was that life was going to be easier for me. It certainly is, but not in the sense I meant at the time, as now I fetch these spectacles myself unless I am guided to ask one of them, and I have to test that guidance to see whether it is not a suggestion of the devil playing on another weak spot of laziness, and when in doubt I fetch them myself!

On account of my children, I was recently invited to a small week-end group at Hermanus, and came into an atmosphere of such open and transparent honesty that it took my breath away and fairly hit me between the eyes and around the heart—in fact, I was completely knocked out. The basis of the Party was absolute honesty towards God, towards themselves and towards me. You could see every thought that was passing in their minds and in case you were too obtuse so to do they took pains to tell you.

Further, I could see that they were filling with a *joie de vivre* of such a quality as I had never experienced before, even amongst my best friends, and I have been very lucky in having a number of lovable and cheerful ones. Their lives were busy, though restful and guided, and I longed to be like them.

I realized that each member of the Group was overflowing with love for each other and for me as an individual and not just as one of humanity whom it was their duty to love.

I realized I had complete confidence in each of them, with the result that I was prepared to trust each one with my reputation or anything else. Perfect love casteth out fear. So whether I was sitting in a circle with the Group on the verandah, or lying under the trees on the sandhills in the midst of the Group, or while walking out to catch the next wave to surf on—one of the Group said one of the barriers that kept him from God in the past was . . . or one of the things that keeps on tripping him up and temporarily causing a lessening of the sense of the Presence of God is, for example, want of willingness to face the meaning of life, pride, selfishness, some occasion where seemingly God has failed him or her, laziness, lack of faith, etc., etc.—anyway, whatever it was, I frequently and without any embarrassment or realizing that I was giving myself away said that was exactly

my case, and often there would be a chuckle from another who had had the same experience, or even a hearty shout of loving laughter from the whole Group, and immediately bonds of fellowship were established. The result was that I personally found little or no embarrassment or difficulty in sharing with John, and if he had not been there I could have shared with any member of the Group.

However, if sharing presented no difficulty to my declaring for Christ, lack of faith certainly did, and mine was certainly no bigger than a grain of mustard seed, but the knowledge that my four children were each and all praying for me enabled me to take the plunge, and through the Grace of God I publicly declared myself for Christ. Though in my case there was no miracle at the time and no sense of being surrounded with light or anything of that kind, still from the moment that I did so speak in public my faith has grown by leaps and bounds and is continuing to do so as I see God's purpose working out in my own life and in the lives of those around me.

In my case my besetting sin was putting my family before God, which I had always looked upon as a virtue. I had lots of other sins, but this was the greatest barrier and the prime cause of my lack of faith. Since by the help of the Oxford Group and through the Cross of Christ I have been enabled to put God in His proper place in my heart, the family means more to me than ever before, and the mutual love and confidence and joy in each other has increased many fold, and I pray that all who read this letter and who have not already gained this experience may speedily do so.

Miss Minnie Meiring

*Headmistress, Eunice High School,
Bloemfontein, Orange Free State.*

I SHALL always consider having had the Oxford Group at Eunice as one of the greatest privileges of my life; they brought us a new vision of the reality of Christ, and showed us what a joyful, happy power a real, vital religion can be.

Our great question at present, of course, is "Will it last?" It will last, I confidently assert, in most cases, and even those who do go back will be the better for the uplifting experiences of those ten days.

The Oxford Group always says "share". What I have to share in regard to them is that I agreed to their having the School during the Michaelmas vacation, as my interest had been aroused by what I had heard of them, but I received them armed to the teeth with criticisms,—most of them, I confess, second-hand ones! I had unique opportunities for studying the Group as I invited them to have tea with me every evening, and then they were in and out of my office a good deal by day as well. But their walk and conversation disarmed all criticism, and soon I found myself envying them their serene happiness and their intense spiritual power. From a child I had known the Holy Scriptures, and my religion has always meant much to me, but mine was a selfish religion and I had not learned the secret of sharing. Our friends of the Oxford Group have told us the old, old story in twentieth century language, and brought us a vivid realization of what a Christ-filled life may be.

We were indeed fortunate in being able to keep four ladies of the Group at Eunice for the first week of the new School term. Their work among our girls was very richly blessed. About ninety of our boarders were converted during that week, and the Spirit has been moving mightily ever since as well. A good many small groups have been formed for fellowship and Bible study; these meet twice a week at half-past six o'clock in the morning! The girls frequently ask me to visit one or another of these groups. These meetings in the sweet morning air, before the work of the day has begun, are indeed an inspiration and an incentive. We have a general meeting of all the groups every Sunday evening; thus far we have had fresh testimonies at every meeting, for the girls are most enthusiastic about bringing in their friends and getting them also to share in their new-found joy.

Rev. J. Martin Dower

Minister Congregational Church, Pretoria

FOR twenty-nine years, prior to coming under the influence of the Group, I had served in the Christian ministry, and would have resented it had the accent not been laid upon the word "Christian". I prided myself on belonging to the "Back to Christ" movement, while the largest and best section of my library was in the class marked "Christology". A friend gave me three large notebooks in which she had transcribed sermons she had heard me preach in Grahamstown, and it pleased me that in each book she had written as a motto,— "Thou, O Christ, art all I want." Sure enough: I preached "Christ", under a host of titles, such as "Friend", "Ideal", "Teacher", "Example", etc. I began my ministry in three different churches with the text,— "I am determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." I have recently examined those sermons to discover that the note "and Him crucified" was not the point of emphasis. And with shame I realize that it is somewhat symptomatic of the twenty-nine years. Not that I failed to take "The Cross" and "The Atonement" for themes. But my treatment was intellectual rather than the expression of a vital personal experience of the Saviour: I was of the "once-born", and while this is something to be devoutly thankful for, it is to lack that intensity of a vital experience of the redeeming power of Christ which comes through conversion.

So much for background. One morning in the winter of 1928 I was invited to meet the first Team of men who visited South Africa. I had already read "*Life Changers*", and was favorably impressed with what I read—but nothing more. When an invitation to the House-party in Johannesburg reached me I treated it with scorn. But one Monday morning I met a girl of my congregation who had been for the week-end to the House-Party. What it had done for her was only too evident in her radiant face and glowing speech. On leaving her, I said to my wife, "We must go to this, or we will be missing the Bus." Frankly, let me say that what I feared was lest we should lose some of our young people who found

in the Group what was not in our Church. We went, in the most critical, prejudiced, hostile spirit possible. Most of the meetings left us stone cold. But the genial friendliness of Sherry Day at dinner thawed us a little, and the meeting for ministers with F. B. set my conscience working. Neither of us got what we ought; for the simple reason, (let it be frankly confessed) that we were dead scared of being converted, and having to face the consequences. We were still hostile, but the hostility was now rather of souls fighting against the striving of the Holy Spirit. From the public meeting held here in Pretoria we returned most uncomfortable, to spend a sleepless night. I got up early with an intense consciousness that something was about to happen. And it did, so simply as to be indescribable. There came to me, as clearly as though a voice had spoken, the words, "The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin." Away went all my prejudice as, quite simply, I said, "Lord, I accept that." And immediately all the burden of past sin and failure that had been crushing me seemed lifted off my heart, and an intense sense of the living, personal Christ as Saviour flooded heart and soul with light and joy and peace. Thus, I became of the "second-born".

Limitations of space prohibit recounting all that this has meant to me in my personal life, in my home, in my church, and outside relationships. "It's great". I took an early opportunity to testify to my church, and preaching has been a wholly different matter since. The effect has been just what Christ was among men—dividing them. Some have "received the word with joy", have gathered themselves into groups, and are entering more and more into the glory and power of a surrendered life for Christ. Some have been antagonised. But remembering one's own prejudice and hostility, one is not surprised nor hopeless. And, indeed, the hostility is breaking down under the quiet pressure of the Holy Spirit, Who is most evidently at work in the Church, and the unanswerable of the numerous miracles of grace that have been wrought here in Pretoria.

By Ronald Graham
Master in the Grey School, Port
Elizabeth, Cape Province

LIFE had become a cul-de-sac. Philosophy after philosophy had been weighed in the balance and found wanting. Pleasure had become dust and ashes in the teeth; seeking after a new sensation itself had begun to pall. I was restless, discontented, fastidious, critical of everything and everybody, no less of myself, I admit. Christ was an emotion, not a reality. I believed in human sympathy and human service, that

“The art of being kind
Is all the sad world needs.”

But to put it into practice and reach the deeper need of one's fellowmen was an unknown art. The power to give something real was not there. And no wonder: chaos and disunity within, dissipation of mental and emotional forces, thoughts out of control—thoughts that made one shudder that they were there and thoughts that one felt must sometime express themselves in action—a terrifying prospect! Selfishness with the most subtle face of unselfishness—hating discomfort and suffering around one because it made for personal discomfort. A baffled search for the beautiful,—a will-o-the-wisp that led one by devious ways and in dangerous places—that was settling into scepticism and scorn. Vision and inspiration gone out of one's life-work, drive and the will to do fast going too. A cul-de-sac.

Then (July, 1928) came a devoted fellowship from Oxford—normal, attractive people who spoke as naturally—(and more sincerely)—of Christ as we of the latest book, radiating a quality of friendship that one had longed for and found less and less in proportion as one had increased the circle of one's acquaintances. Then fireside talks of the deep hidden things, of barriers burned away by the flame of Christ's love, of the consecrated life and the peace that passes knowledge; something that penetrated to one's deepest need, revelation in a flash of the source of all one's unhappiness, sharing, release, and in-flooding of a happiness before unmet with, a confidence unknown, new vistas of real, helpful work opening.

Then a year of growth—slow and with many backslidings because of a faith unequal to the demands of the new life, so that the Pollok house-party was timely. The same wonderful atmosphere vibrant with power and love and especially a morning Bible Hour the motif of which was Corinthians XIII. A vivid memory of a day lit with a love transcending any human experience at every turn, many confused issues cleared, confirmation and a new promise—“not the spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.”

Since, many doubtings within, betrayals without, falls—but “forward on one’s knees with hands up to Christ, not on one’s back with toes turned up” (as one member of the Bloemfontein House-Party aptly described it)—always with the knowledge to turn again Home means cure and comfort, peace and joy and life once more; always the beloved Voice of that tremendous Lover:

“All that I took from thee I did but take
Not for thy harms,
But that thou mightst seek it in My arms . . .
Rise, clasp My Hand, and come!”

And the joy that comes from yielding to that divine pleading, the power to live, the life of power, the vision to see the King in His Beauty!

*Rev. Howard Young, Sunnyside Wesleyan Church
Pretoria, Transvaal*

I was not at first prepared to pay the price by sharing my deepest problems with another. A sense of need, however, forced me to do so during a twenty-four hour visit to the Johannesburg House-Party in August. There I saw for the first time many areas of my life, that ought to have been surrendered to Christ. Increasing need took me to the Bloemfontein House-Party, where I saw more fully that surrender to Christ involved a complete dethronement of self in absolutely all life’s relationships and problems. It was made clear that Christ demanded the surrender of one’s pride, personal ambition, reputation, and in fact one’s whole personality down to its deepest levels had to be laid before the Cross. This demand for full surrender

with its concomitant willingness to make reparation is literally a self-crucifixion. I made that full surrender. I have to learn to make it daily; but the result is that Christ is able to use me as He wishes. He has used me before often, in spite of myself; now, through this shared life I have the victory over sin that private confession did not give and the Holy Spirit is able to use me in winning people one by one for God. The deep seated ambition of many years is being more than realized for the Holy Spirit is himself organizing our Church life on a basis of winning souls for Christ. It is the Lord's doing and is marvellous in our eyes.

*What the Oxford Group Movement Has Brought to our
Sunnyside Church*

It is in weekly inner groups that the new life in each soul is nurtured. Here occurs the deep sharing of the successes and failures of the daily life, men with men, women with women; here each member is held rigidly to the discipline of the quiet time by the loving fellowship of the other members, and here the Bible is naturally referred to as the great source of teaching and inspiration that it is. The members need no urging to study the Bible, as in many Bible classes: they have an insatiable hunger for its food. It is in these inner groups, above all, that the work each member does in winning others for Christ is reported, for the new life stagnates if it is not passed on to someone else. The real convert must be at work in the life of some other person if he is to retain his own vitality. Here under the guidance of the Holy Spirit the winning of others to Christ is corporately planned. Thus honestly sharing our lives together, the Holy Spirit plans our work for us, and if we are loyal He produces the results sooner or later in changed lives.

It is our present glad experience that "He adds to the Church daily them that are being saved". Right before our eyes our Church life is being vitalized.

This Oxford Group is no special "stunt" or new sect. Having found the New Testament quality of life, its members have passed on that life to us, and it is winning its widening way as an integral part of our Church life. We have a vision of our

Church as individuals being led one by one, by the power of the Holy Spirit into a dynamic Christian experience, welded together into an honestly sharing fellowship and going to win others for God.

We have often prayed for revival. It has come in unexpected ways, but in such ways that we followers of John Wesley should surely be among the first to understand. Naturally, quietly, one by one, in real power, our people are surrendering to the claims of Christ, and allowing God's Holy Spirit to use them in bringing others into the Kingdom of God.

By Rev. Gilbert John Chambers

Assistant Curate, St. Anne's Church, Maitland, C. P.

I am convinced, from experience with my last Confirmation class, that Confirmation classes can only be run on Group lines. I am sure that where such classes are so run there will not be that awful drift away after Confirmation, which every earnest Catholic priest is concerned to prevent. They themselves must learn to do our work, and it is my experience that some of them can do it much better than I can.

The Oxford Group brought me two Sunday School teachers and we are now working throughout the school on Group lines. This I had found my hardest work, but after six weeks the whole tone of the school has been changed. The children are tremendously keen and have the most wonderful guidance. I marvel at the natural way these two teachers share, under guidance, with the children and at the way they immediately won their confidence. My school now is what every good school ought to be, with the pupils eager to come, loath to go. It ought to have been like that before, but it wasn't.

There is much more I wish I could tell. This is not an end, it is only a beginning.

Morris Morgan, Barrister, Johannesburg

THERE were two reasons why I went to my first meeting, a reception for the "Oxford Group" at Johannesburg. I had no attractive engagement for that evening, and a friend with whom I happened to be dining was anxious to hear these

people. I was also curious. At Oxford I had been hostile to Frank Buchman and his followers. Oddly enough, as it struck me for the first time that evening, I had never seen that gentleman. I had not attended any of his meetings and no one had ever given me an authoritative explanation of his views. My professional instincts were revolted and I generously concluded that I ought at least to give him and his followers a hearing. In that spirit I went to the meeting.

From the moment I set foot in that room things began to happen. The first person to speak was a man whom I had known well at Oxford, and who, according to my standards, had no right to mention the name of Jesus Christ. His words captivated me. He told that eminently respectable audience the truth about his old life, and then, without embarrassment, proceeded to relate how a vital personal experience of Christ had made all the difference. I immediately decided to stay on and hear the others. Especially I wanted to see this man and find out some more. It was just possible that he was telling the truth. While I stayed some fourteen others said much the same thing in different accents.

At the end of that evening I had come to certain conclusions. Frank Buchman and his men belonged quite definitely to one of three classes. They were either arch hypocrites, or consummate actors, or real Christians. The last possibility made me shudder, and as soon as I could tear myself away from the meeting, I made my way to the nearest hotel.

The following day I was very uneasy. While on the one hand I was anxious to discover whether or not my Oxford friend was sincere in his new-found belief, on the other, it might prove dangerous to attend the house-party. I therefore decided to stay away. That night, however, in a spirit of alcoholic tolerance, I found myself at the house-party. Once more I heard and recognized the uncompromising gospel of Jesus Christ and again I grew more and more uncomfortable.

The time had now come for me to test the sincerity of these young men. I asked two of them to dine with a friend and myself at one of the Johannesburg clubs. Put crudely, my idea was that after my guests had taken a few drinks, we should

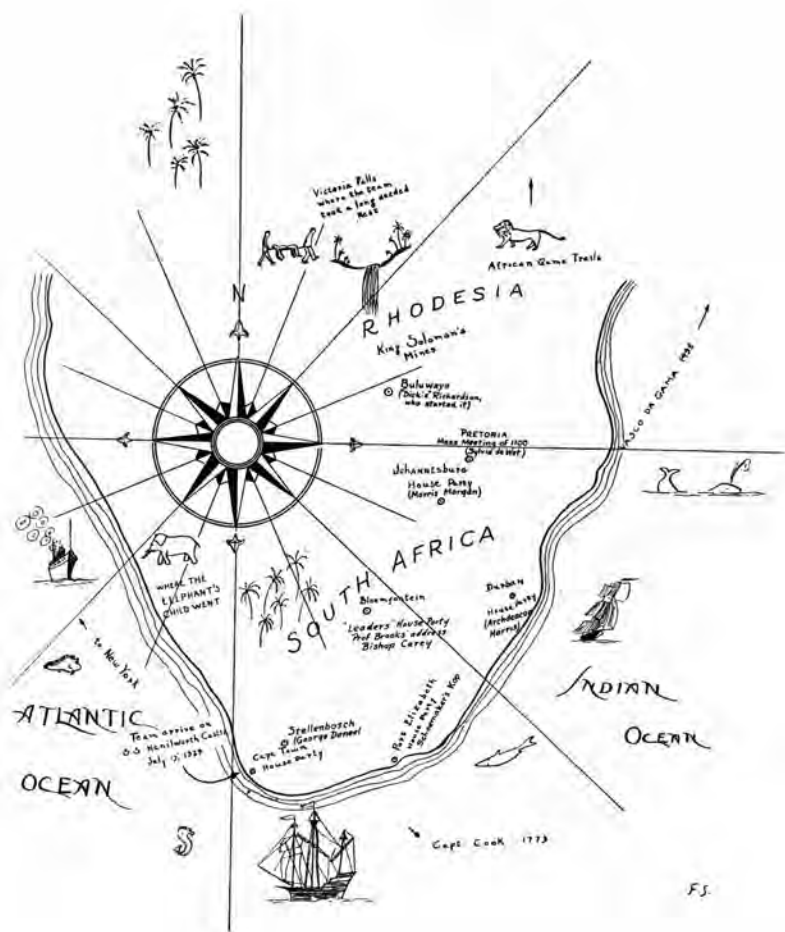
all be let into the secret of their attitude. They came to dinner and were not disappointing. They certainly told us the truth. Meanwhile my friend and myself told very little truth but we dined extremely well.

The upshot of that evening was that, after a late party, I staid the night in the hotel where the house-party was being held. Next morning, filled with remorse, I called on John Roots to express my regret for the previous night's events. In his bed-room I was surprised to find him asking me whether I ever prayed. I was still more surprised, when, upon receiving my assurance that I was not in the habit of doing so, he invited me to pray with him then and there. My position as you may imagine, was unbearable. Naturally I refused to pray. He then invited me to read my favorite passage from the New Testament, and, before I realized what was happening, I found his Bible open in my hands at the 9th Chapter of St. Luke, and I was reading out the 57th verse. I was glad when I reached the end of that chapter. Then, as never before, I realized that I was being challenged by the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. Knowing that, but hoping that discussion might not be quite useless, I remarked dishonestly that I thought Christ was unreasonable in His attitude towards the man who wanted to bury his father. I then took my leave as rapidly as I could. Though I succeeded in avoiding John, there was no escape from the conviction in my own heart. After some days of doubt, fear and misgiving, I was given the courage to be honest both with man and God, and from the moment when I was able to pray "Lord I believe, Help Thou mine unbelief", life has been really worth while.

Address of Dr. Edgar Brookes

*Professor of Political Science,
Transvaal University College, Pretoria*

NINETY years ago over the veld in the spot where Bloemfontein now stands there could be seen moving northwards a great column of cattle and wagons, with which went a body of hardy pioneers, men and women, who were



seeking new homes and a new country. We all feel proud of those old Voortrekkers—of their courage, endurance and faith.

When I was seeking guidance as to how to handle this subject this morning, a text from the Epistle to the Hebrews came into my mind: "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went . . . For he looked for a City that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." Those old Voortrekkers had that simple and invincible faith, and they went onward with all their faults (and I daresay they had faults) and all their virtues (and I am sure they had virtues) to seek such a City. They planted the seed of civilization. They made it possible for us to come together here this morning in this place. They were looking, in their own way, for an ideal City—a State that seemed ideal to them—whose builder and maker was God.

We of English descent now and again may feel a little jealous that it was not *our* ancestors who took part in that heroic onward movement. But we here this morning, all of us—and we represent all South Africa, every calling and profession, all the Provinces, all circles and all races—are spiritual Voortrekkers, adventurers of God. We have gone out, "not knowing whither we went." Not to know where you are going! That was a terribly difficult thing for me to understand! The Oxford Group have given me the impression that they understand eternity better than time. To a man who is accustomed to work to a schedule, it seems rather annoying not to know where you are going next or what you are to do next. But, speaking more seriously, we have set out here on a journey, and we do not know, any of us, what the end of the journey will be. We do know that we are not going to rest satisfied until we have founded in South Africa that City whose Builder and Maker is God.

It is true that we do not know what is going to happen. Last Sunday in Pretoria I heard a very fine sermon preached by the Bishop on Christian Reunion, and it seemed then as if, perhaps, by wise planning, Reunion might come some day

in the future. I do not think that any one planned the wonderful Reunion which we had in the Cathedral this morning. We must go further. Ecclesiastical Reunion must lead us to National Reunion. We want, alike in Church and State, unity in Christ. We have been learning a new lesson at this House-Party, and that is to be ourselves honestly and sincerely and to surrender ourselves to Christ. We must surrender not only as individuals, though that is the first and most fundamental thing to do. Our Group life must also be this. We must surrender as Churches, as races, as nations.

I do not know if any of you have political or civic aims or ambitions. I have had, and still have, them. (Please forgive this frank avowal, and what is to follow. When the early Christians received the Gift of Tongues, the unbelievers accused them of being full of new wine. We within this movement are not full of new wine, but the effect has not been dissimilar. Like drunken men, we have forgotten to be self-conscious. Everyone in this room is, I believe, willing to be a fool for Christ.) Well, if ever I go into political life, I want to try this method out, and I want to appeal to those with similar aims to do the same thing. We must carry our surrender with us into our Church life, our civic life, our national life. You must see there is no escape from it. I want you to think what a wonderful thing it would be if only one person in politics—even in politics—lived a surrendered life. Supposing there were half-a-dozen men so minded in politics: how wonderful it would be (if I may permit myself the vision) to see them gathering together from the different parties in Parliament for a daily “quiet time” in one of the Committee Rooms of the House of Assembly. No doubt they would be the despair of the Party Whips, but they would be the hope of South Africa.

We do need the spirit of Christ in our national life. This has been a kind of passion with me for years. It is because we have not taken religion seriously enough that it has seemed to be impossible. Many of those who were religious, and deeply religious, thought religion was a matter to be kept apart from national life. Those statesmen who amended the South Africa Act a few years ago builded better than they knew.

We now follow the meaning of the new Section 1 of the Act: "The people of South Africa acknowledge the Sovereignty and guidance of Almighty God." *The guidance of Almighty God.* We now know what that means.

We have all sorts of problems in South Africa. Now a problem may be defined as something which is going to be solved, and we can all of us assist in this solving process. We have first of all the problem that was raised last night—the problem of racialism between English and Dutch-speaking South Africans. What are we going to do about that in this House-Party? Everyone of us is individually going to do his best, but it is not going to be done very easily or without sacrifice. May I illustrate by one point? Our Dutch-speaking friends have been courtesy itself during this House-Party regarding the use of their language. They have remembered that many here were unilingual. Even as regards this morning's exceptional bilingual service, it was we, the English-speaking section, who suggested it and asked for it. I want to tell you that you must ask God's guidance about learning Afrikaans. What a difference such a gesture of comradeship would make! I realize that it is not everybody's duty to learn it. Some are well on in years, some find real difficulty in learning a new language, even more in speaking it. But is there anybody here who has been too lazy to learn Afrikaans? Is there anyone, perhaps, who has been too proud? Is there anyone perhaps who has been disinclined to do it, and who has not surrendered that disinclination? I am not sure that it is everybody's duty, but you all know whether it is *your* duty.

Half a century ago, Argentina and Chili were about to go to war about the boundary between their respective territories. Suddenly a great inspiration came to those two nations. They went to arbitration instead of fighting, and the matter was settled amicably. Argentina gave to Chili the cannon she had bought for the war. Chili melted them and from them fashioned a great statue of Christ, 18,000 feet up in the Andes, with the inscription, "Sooner shall these eternal mountains crumble into dust than we, the men of Argentina and Chili, shall break the peace which we have sworn at the feet of Christ, the Redeemer." Why could we not put the same thing into South African terms? Why could we not say: "Sooner

shall this limitless veld pass away, sooner shall this endless sunshine cease than we Afrikaans and English-speaking South Africans shall break the peace which we swear here at the feet of Christ, the Redeemer.”*

I should like us to take that vow away with us into our homes. We have sworn it here, and it is part of our surrender.

I am now going to talk to you about something harder than that—That is the relation between white and black.

What is our attitude on the native question? Is it right? There is no question on which I have spoken more than on the Native question. I have offered detailed plans, advice, even in the days of my callow youth “solutions” of the Native problem. I do not do this today. That is a wonderful thing about this movement: we have not to tell people what to do, but to ask them to let Christ tell them what to do. The Native question is one in which the surrender operates. It is going to be a hard tussle for many of us. Do not think that I say this having at the back of my mind a particular programme as to how to handle the Native question. I know no longer. But I do know that we must handle the Native question as Christ would do it if he were here, and that we dare not do anything less than that. I know that is a duty, and I know that our surrender is incomplete until we have bowed to “the guidance of Almighty God” on this question. Our public, like our private life, is simple, lived in His spirit: with God’s guidance there lies a clear path before us. We have but to tread it. Withersoever His guidance leads, we must follow. We want to have not only Christian South Africans, but a Christian South Africa. Nothing great can be built on prejudice, hatred or fear. There is only one key—that is the solution of love, and obedience to the demands of Christ . . . I want to ask you as you go away from this House party if your surrender is complete. We shall meet from time to time in the future

*At this stage all present spontaneously rose and took the vow. Later the Afrikaans version was put on the blackboard, reading as follows:—“Eerder sal hierdie grenselose veld verdwyn, eerder sal hierdie eindelose son ophou te skyn, dandat ons Afrikaansen Engels-sprekende Suidafrikaners die eed van vrede sal verbreek wat ons hier neem by die voete van Christus, die Verlosser.”

and this Native question will effect us in many different ways. Let us face it in the spirit of the Group Movement.

There remain other problems—the Coloured problem, the Indian problem, the poor white problem. There are people who will surrender to God on the Native question and who make reservations about the poor Whites, or *vice versa*. There are people who will submit to God's guidance on everything but the Indian problem. They try to do a sort of bargaining with God—to offer him, in Raoul Allier's phrase "equivalents" instead of surrendering their whole selves.

Natives and others are calling for Christ and we can bring Christ to them. We can remove the physical barriers of bad housing and inadequate food. I do not say that these people cannot be brought to Christ, despite such barriers, but it would help very much if first of all they were fed and housed properly. We can remove the *mental* barriers by giving them education. We can remove the *spiritual* barriers, either by direct preaching of the gospel, direct missionary work, or indirectly by living Christ in our individual and corporate life. White South Africa should represent Christ incarnate to the Natives. Not only have we failed to do it. We have actually been a stumbling block.

We want to give Christ to South Africa, to every corner, of our national life. We want South Africa to be a great area of Christian union—working together under God's guidance, with love, and a determination to build here in South Africa that City that hath foundations.

EDGAR BROOKES.