

"More and More Spreads and Grows"

Success of the Group Movement

"Everyone has heard at the present time of the Oxford Group Movement, of its rapid spread, and its remarkable achievements. . . . There is something of the spirit of prophecy in it which sets before the world a vivid picture of the realisation of God's will in the human heart."—*The Bishop of Oxford.*

Society and the Movement.

An indication of the remarkable way in which the Oxford Group is permeating all sections of English public life is afforded by what appeared in the "Londoner's Log" of the *Sunday Express*. Viscount Castlerosse, a Roman Catholic, is responsible for this page of social gossip. Here is what he says of the Oxford Group.

"Society" is an easy thing to sneer at, and yet "society" matters. It sets the fashion, and fashion is an important thing. . . . On the other hand, I notice a counter-attack arising which I welcome.

It is called the Oxford Group Movement. I know precious little about it.

All I know is that it seems to be alive and gets into its ranks the young people who are fervid folks.

The old Churches go on droning basic truths, but this is a new and simple appeal to the elements of Christianity.

I will never join the movement, because, bad as I am, I am and always will be a Roman Catholic, and as such I am spiritually immobile from the point of view of doctrine.

We Papists are a spiritually superior lot—almost, if not quite, as arrogant as the Jews.

I wonder if London is going to be fired by this new movement—personally I should not be surprised if it were.

You laugh?

Supposing fellows like you and me had been living in Rome a couple of thousand years ago. Do you think we would have taken Christianity seriously? Not on your sweet life! Why, we would have sneered at it.

Yet the Cæsars are dead and Christ lives.

House Party Results in America.

"To say that over a thousand were present at the house-party gives you little idea of the influence in American life that those people are having throughout the country to-day. At Briarcliff and even since they have been witnessing to the joy and victory, peace and power that Christ gives them hourly. Carl Vrooman, former Assistant Secretary of Agriculture under President Wilson, joyfully told how his own life had been changed and how hope was his now, for he saw a band of life-changers who would turn the scales of moral decline and heedlessness to God into obedient service for Christ, in government, business and family life. I wish all women could have heard the striking testimony of his wife and how they both agreed that sharing in Christ settled problems of caprice, terrors of the 'Red,' and 'Friendly' disputes. I wish you could have heard the gay, deep-minded and convincing witness of an undergraduate from one of our women's colleges and her father's compelling testimony. Her brother is carrying on in Edinburgh while preparing for the ministry.

Recently he won a leading atheist student leader to Christ, because this God-denier saw the life he wanted. The family far or near united as a team for Christ.

"An advertising man and his wife, who had three young daughters, went to a house-party where they both made thorough-going decisions. A few days later one of the girls aged eleven said, 'Mother, I would like to go up and kiss all those people at Briarcliff because they have done such a good job on you and daddy.'

"Later, while at a friend's home the friend's mother was very much upset over something that had happened, and after more or less of a scene turned to the little girl and said, 'I hope you don't have things like this in your house.' 'We used to,' she replied, 'but mother has a new system now.' On being asked what the system was she replied, 'She tells us that if we obey God and trust Him for everything He will take care of us—and He is doing it.'

THANKSGIVING FOR UNION.

Sunday, October 2, is to be observed as a Day of Thanksgiving for Methodist Union in Great Britain by the people of the three bodies concerned. The Church in this country will join in the thanksgiving. Special reference should be made in all our services and Sunday Schools. Let all our members, adherents and Sunday School scholars be invited to join in the celebration. With our thanksgiving let us unite earnest prayers for a great spiritual quickening throughout the whole Methodist Church.

ERNEST TITCOMB,

Acting President of the Conference.

Testimonies in England.

A girl from Egypt, whose motto had been "miss nothing," said she felt "like a swimmer in the Dead Sea with a pair of waterwings." She has since been instrumental in planting half a dozen centres of vital Christianity in Cairo. A Brigadier-General in an important command answers criticism of this challenging message by remarking that it is "by their fruits" and not "by their views" that ye shall know them. A lady who had come like a "prickly porcupine needing a spring-clean" and had been "going towards the future with her head turned to the past," found release from fear of witnessing. Formerly she had sheltered behind the Apocryphal text: "A silent woman is the gift of the Lord!"

A Baron from Holland said that he had been trying to keep up appearances and "save face." He had been, he said, too proud to be honest about himself with other people. As a result, he stated, a young diplomat may still be in the grip of alcohol. His son here was further freed from self and lack of love and witnessed after his father.

The mother of a now changed prodigal spoke of the rush of spiritually hungry

people to her home. She had been forty years a Christian without power to propagate her experience. Nowadays she was having tea-parties of sixty in her home, the guests arriving two hours earlier than expected and staying till late at night to find a maximum experience of Jesus Christ for themselves and their friends.

Commissioning 150 Witnesses.

At five o'clock one Sunday evening Mansfield Chapel witnessed perhaps the most significant act that Oxford has seen since the days of the Reformers. Over five hundred people who had found at the Oxford Group house-party release from innumerable worries and problems joined in a united service of praise, witness and the commissioning of 150 "Witnesses." It was truly the rising tide of Revival.

Roland Wilson said that this Sunday was historic for England in that there was no record of a hundred and fifty men and women ever having gone out together in this way before. North and South, and East and West, they were to honeycomb England with the one object of changing lives and homes, churches and communities, through the Holy Spirit's power. A changed England was the key to a changed world.

The dedication and commissioning of the teams consisting of 150 young men and women and of all the house-party for Spirit-led action and witness was the climax of the service. Bishop Linton stood before the congregation, whose silence meant even more than their words, when they declared, "I will be His witness," and then—"We will be His witnesses." As the Bishop said, the representative act which followed symbolised the act of the entire Group in offering self and substance to Christ.

The Movement and Methodism.

There are, writes Sir Ronald W. Allen in *The Methodist Recorder*, I know, here and there men who have been brought in touch with the Oxford Group Movement and been tremendously influenced by it, but so far Methodism seems to have held aloof from it. In regard to the laity this is explicable, seeing that the Movement has not sought to catch the public eye; but one could wish that our ministers, especially the leaders, would make an intensive study of it. My own investigations have not yet gone far enough to enable me to express a final opinion, but I cannot help feeling that, if Methodism could capture its secret, we should witness the re-birth of which you write. To reply that the Movement is only preaching what Methodism has always stood for, leaves unanswered the question why one can "deliver the goods" and the other apparently cannot, and condemns both the critic and Methodism. There is the further consideration that the Movement is reaching a type of man and woman who in general has scarcely been touched by Methodism's appeal. Why should such things be? The question demands an answer if we are to make any headway. . . . We cannot continue as we are. We are being weighed in the balances, and unless Methodism is re-born very soon we shall be found wanting.

Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ only, can solve the race problem. For some reason, however, which should never fail to move us with awe, He does not accomplish this wonder work apart from human instrumentality.—*Dr. John Mott.*