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## NEWSPAPER MANAGER TURNS REVIVALIST

### FROM "SUNDAY EXPRESS" TO EVANGELISM

("Era" Special)

THERE will be published to-morrow an extraordinary book called "For Sinners Only" (Hodder and Stoughton), written by A. J. Russell, one of the shrewdest and most knowledgeable minds in Fleet-street.

\* \* \*

Mr. Russell was closely associated with the growth of the "Daily Express" and "Sunday Express," and devised and carried through many of the costly and spectacular circulation stunts which made those newspapers successful. He was responsible for the great "Sunday Express" rise in circulation that accompanied the serial publication of "All Quiet on the Western Front."

Another of his stunts, the "My Religion" series, to which a number of famous novelists and one unknown writer contributed in the "Daily Express," is responsible for Mr. Russell's book, because the interest which the "My Religion" series created brought him into contact with the Oxford Christian Fellowship movement, a group, or groups, of modern "preaching friars."

\* \* \*

This contact, though established by Mr. Russell for the sake of securing another big newspaper stunt, gradually led to his own conversion, until, as it would appear from his book, he became a preaching friar himself!

Several chapters in his enthralling book are devoted to his

experiences as a group revivalist in America, in campaigns relying for their maintenance on "prayer and faith" alone.

It is a remarkable story that he tells, practically a record of "guided" and miraculous conversions among all kinds of men and women in the many countries to which the Christian Fellowship movement has spread, under the leadership of a personality known as "Frank," the originator, and, as it would seem, the "soul," of this astonishing movement. "Frank" goes to and fro in the earth like a modern Saint Paul.

\* \* \*

These Oxford revivalists believe in "quiet times": i.e., intervals of prayerful communion, in which they write down their thoughts in the belief that such thoughts have the character of spiritual guidance. They also believe in "Sharing," i.e., the confession of sins one to another. The book abounds in recitals of this form of witness, but there is no witness so amazing as that of Mr. Russell himself.

It is a far cry from the management of the "Sunday Express" to active participation in a movement which seeks to parallel the apostolic conditions of the first days of the Christian era and the communion of early saints.

"For Sinners Only" is an impressive, and even disconcerting, book, and its reaction on our times may well be profound.

G. A. A.