

Good God, it works!

GOOD GOD, IT WORKS!

an experiment
in faith

**Garth
Lean**

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DEDICATION

to the memory of my mother who died
on Christmas Eve, 1973, aged 98, no saint,
but growing in faith and grace right to the
end which is her true beginning.

'I am convinced that with the experimental method we could have a new flowering of faith that could reshape our civilisation.'

Sir Alister Hardy F.R.S.

'It is a hope. Perhaps it is even *the* hope : for without this spirit which brings men together in a complete moral transparency there is surely no alternative to the vicious circles of deception and mutual revenge.'

Gabriel Marcel
Member of the Institute
of France.

Introduction

'Faith by Experiment' was the title of a chapter in the last of three books which the late Sir Arnold Lunn and I wrote together. This book is an illustration of that theme.

Many still think the words 'faith' and 'experiment' incompatible, or even contradictory, for they associate 'experiment' with science and assume, as I once did, that science has made belief in God impossible. This is nonsense. 'Even a cursory glance at the revolutionary trends in modern science', writes that brilliant agnostic, Arthur Koestler, 'is sufficient to show that the strictly materialist world view, which is still dominant in sociology, the behavioural sciences and among educated laymen, has in fact no leg to stand on; it is a Victorian anachronism'.¹

The fact is that science has neither proved nor disproved the existence of God. Some scientists, like the Princeton biologist Edward Conklin, think 'the probability of life originating from accident is comparable to the probability of a dictionary resulting from an explosion in a printing works'.² Others think the opposite. But anyone who says

that science makes belief in God untenable is scientifically out of date.

At the same time, it must be admitted that the assaults of science and philosophy upon the Christian creed have left their mark. Although an overwhelming majority in every poll say that they believe in God,³ the churches have lost their authority. People will not take truth on anyone's say-so. They want to seek and find for themselves.

It is here that the experiment of faith is so relevant. Barbara Ward, in her *Faith and Freedom*, points out that 'if science is known by result – and this is where its certitude rests – so, too, are the truths of religion'. She admits that the experimental tests of religion are more delicate and unstable than those of science because the raw material – the heart of man – has not the implicit obedience to the law of its own nature which is observable in metals and minerals. 'Inconveniently but gloriously, it has a free and unconditional element. Again and again the experiment is botched. Yet where it is triumphantly concluded – in a Buddha, in a Lao-tse, in a St Francis of Assisi, in a St Peter Claver or a John Woolman – the experimental proof of religion shines forth with a light no less clear than that of science.'⁴

I maintain that the ordinary modern person, no less than the saint, can experiment in his own life and that, however often we botch our experiments, we can thereby find sure grounds for faith. This book describes some of the experiments I have made and observed in the last forty years. They are drawn from the experience of my own family and of people personally known to us, often through our association in Moral Re-Armament. Others have made – and are making – similar experiments in their own surroundings, and each must tell what he knows, if the great exploration in which we all share is to move forward.

This book is not an autobiography, but a theme illustrated from life. Documentation for quotations and assessments appear at the end of the book. In several cases fictitious names have been substituted for obvious reasons.

GDL

The shocking experiment

As I walked back into college, my friend Jackman greeted me warmly. 'Where have you been, Garth?' he said. 'I have been looking for you everywhere.'

It was, I knew, a moment for truth. 'I've been making an experiment,' I replied. 'I've given God control of my life.'

Jackman looked stunned, as well he might. He had had no hint that I was moving that way – and I had not known it myself when I had last seen him. 'You damned fool!', he shouted.

Any other experiment would have been respectable. This one was shocking, a dark dealing with the unmentionable. For we were men of our time and, as Charles Morgan the reigning novelist of the day remarked, the prudery which forbade our grandparents to mention parts of the body was applied in our generation to things of the spirit.¹ To speak of God seriously, in our circles, was an acute embarrassment.

That encounter was the beginning of my journey into faith, a journey which still continues forty years later. They have been years of adventure, and still are. For the

faith I seek – and, in some measure, attain – is not just a comfort, still less a refuge. It more often takes you into the eye of the storm than out of the swing of the sea.

It is a two-edged sword for the changing of world conditions, two-edged because that change must start in oneself. It shakes the selfish, disturbs the comfortable and infuriates the materialist, and I, by nature, am all of these.

I have seen such faith change the motives of capitalists and cure a guerrilla fighter's hate. I have observed it reconciling enemies and bringing peace between warring communities. Most clearly I have glimpsed it shining in the lives of others, in whose company I have been privileged to travel.

Faith is a gift, but it requires our co-operation. For me the journey into it has been a series of experiments. Each one incurs a risk, and faith flags unless such risks are taken day by day.

My dictionary defines experiment as 'a procedure adopted without knowing just how it will work out'. Also, as 'an operation carried out under determined conditions to discover or verify a theory, hypothesis or fact'. Both definitions apply. The 'not knowing' makes life interesting and the discovery of the necessary 'determined conditions' provides stability. If the experiment does not work, one can generally find where it went wrong – and try again.

Sir Alister Hardy, the Professor Emeritus of Zoology at Oxford, believes the religious instinct is as fundamental in man as the sexual, and much less understood. He has established a Religious Experience Research Unit to explore it. He suggests :

Experiment to see if it works. However unlikely it may seem from one's rationalistic upbringing, try the experiment of really imagining that there is some element that one can make contact with beyond the

conscious self. Have that amount of faith and see. . . . Somehow, in some extraordinary way, I do believe that there is a vast store of wisdom and spiritual strength that we can tap in this way, something which is of the utmost importance to mankind.²

It was in just such a tentative spirit that I set out on my journey into faith.

Indeed, being of a sceptical nature, my approach has often been more akin to that of the clergyman who came upon a parishioner swearing profusely as he vainly tried to crank his car into life.

'Tut, tut, my man,' he said. 'You must not use God's name in vain. That's for prayer.'

'All right, all right. You pray – and have a swing.'

Driven to it, the vicar prayed and set to. The engine started at once.

'Good God, it works!' cried the vicar.

The hunger marchers started it

I was driven, most unexpectedly, into my first experiment. It was the arrival of the Northern Hunger March in Oxford which did it. That was in October 1932.

Seen from today the Oxford of those days may seem a pool of halcyon calm, but it felt anything but tranquil to us at the time. There were three million unemployed in Britain that year and most of us, if we thought at all, felt guilty at having it so good when others were having it so bad. Successive governments, Conservative and Labour, seemed unwilling or unable to do anything about it. In 1932, too, Hitler's storm-troopers were intensifying the action which made him Chancellor the following January. With the example of Mussolini's dictatorship before us, the fear of war was abroad again.

It was, no doubt, the shadow which these events cast before that had made many of the brighter spirits just ahead of us at the universities turn to Communism. Auden, Spender and Day Lewis among the poets and many of the young Cambridge physicists took that road, as well as a number of then less publicised people like Burgess, Maclean and Philby. 'No one who did not go through this

political experience during the thirties,' writes Cecil Day Lewis in his autobiography, 'can quite realise how much hope there was in the air then, how radiant for some of us was the illusion that man could, under Communism, put the world to rights.'¹

There was generosity as well as naïvety in this illusion. He and his friends were eager to destroy a system which promoted unemployment, even though their own pleasant way of life might be destroyed in the process. 'For me, at any rate,' he adds, 'the positive beliefs I was moving towards in the early thirties did not ramify from any central faith; they were rather substitutes for a faith, heterogeneous ideas which served to plug "the hollow in the breast where a god should be".'

Day Lewis attributes this empty hollow to his disillusion with the sermons preached in the Sherborne School chapel. I was there a few years after him, so I know what he means. Some parsons preached Christianity as a great adventure but looked singularly unadventurous. No one seemed to make faith practical – to show that it made any difference to how people lived or that it could alter events in the real world. So by the time I reached Oxford I, too, was disillusioned with Christianity and was looking, in the odd moments when I was not too busy enjoying myself, for some other meaning for living.

Life was, indeed, pleasant. Of my college, Worcester, not far from the station, someone unkindly said, 'C'est magnifique, mais ce n'est pas la gare'. We who knew its gardens and lake with the playing fields beyond regarded such remarks as jealousy revealed. Like so much in Oxford, it retained its magic – the slanting evening sun on mellow stone, the scent of chrysanthemums under its medieval cottages, endless talk with friends, games taken more cheerfully and work with less pressure than today. One Worcester man said to a friend of mine as they went into

the Examination Schools to write their Finals, 'Roger, we would not be in this mess now if we had done that steady half hour's work a day'. Few were as indolent as that, but it was a gentleman's life even if you were no gentleman.

I had come up with an Exhibition in history and was reading law. My father, a Cardiff solicitor, had died when I was ten, and money was not too plentiful, but his brother and partner, Uncle Ross, was helping out. There was a family firm to join if I wished, and meanwhile I could do enough things moderately well to be in the small swim of the college. I had played cricket and rugby for Sherborne, and college teams were below Sherborne standards. I got on better in the literary societies, then fashionable, than in the Union. My first and last speech there was reported in *Isis* by Tangye Lean in one terse sentence: 'Mr Lean, it is to be clearly understood, is no relation of mine, none whatever'.

Into this situation burst the Glasgow hunger marchers. They camped at Oxford for the night on their way to London. It was an event which powerfully focused our guilt at our own purposelessness.

Many people went to meet them. I did not, but I was aware of their presence. I travelled to London on the day they reached the capital – to see not them but a girl friend. She was the sister of a cricketing friend of mine. I had met her at Sherborne, and when I needed someone to write poetry about, she was the victim available. Later, in a boat on the Medway, she told me she was fond of me. I was not sure I was in love with her, but I was head over heels in love with love. That, to my way of thinking, was the only experience left worth having. So I gladly went on with the relationship. On this occasion I was taking her to a theatre in Shaftesbury Avenue.

The evening paper placards, as we went into the theatre, announced that the hunger marchers had arrived at Hyde

Park. I did not go and see them because I felt ashamed. My aims were personal aims. Nothing that I planned for my life could conceivably help to lessen their sufferings. But though I dared not meet them face to face, they dominated the day. The unease I had so often felt on seeing the unemployed standing on Cardiff street corners suddenly grew to a nagging preoccupation.

I took my girl friend to her train. Somehow the day had been a flop, for both of us. As I crossed in the underground from Waterloo to Paddington, it suddenly struck me that I was being no more fair to her than the nation was being fair to the hunger marchers.

In the Oxford train I met two undergraduates who had walked into London with the hunger marchers. They were both Communists. When I asked them what was to be done, they were precise and fervent. They told me how their commitment had estranged them from their families. I admired the fact that they were ready to sacrifice security and some ease for their beliefs, and left the train feeling that I must, if I were ever to respect myself, find some way of making my life relevant to the needs of other people.

My new Communist friends sensed a convert and came to see me each day in the week that followed. I was impressed by their zeal, but doubtful of their logic. They talked much about the exploitation of the workers but were contemptuous of any doubts about exploitation in personal relationships. That was bourgeois. The two things were quite unconnected. But were they? That day in London had made clear to me that what I needed was an answer to both personal and social problems. It was a tall order, but would anything less satisfy?

Six months earlier my mother had read a book called *For Sinners Only*,² an account, by a journalist A. J. Russell, of his meeting with the Oxford Group. These

people spoke of social and international change, but based it all on personal change. They asserted that God could alter human character, and even that He could guide men today, as He was said to do in the New Testament. When I read the book, I had rejected such ideas as impossible – but registered privately that if by any chance they were true, they would compel action.

I knew something of these people. There were some in college. When I first arrived at Worcester, a Sherborne friend had pointed out the most notorious of them, Kit Prescott, and said: 'Beware of that man. Don't you go pious.' 'Don't worry. Nothing is less likely,' I had replied.

I had avoided Prescott, but I could not escape hearing of him, for one way and another he was a talking point in college. Extraordinary tales were told of how he got into Oxford. And he came in for a lot of ribbing. He was very short-sighted and was said to navigate through Oxford traffic by 'faith and prayer'. One felt he needed both as he bicycled down Beaumont Street in the rain, his eyes blinking, one hand on the handlebars and the other holding aloft an open umbrella.

Sometimes, however, one heard grudging admiration. Our solitary rowing blue, W. H. Migotti, had been, as Prescott admits, much bullied by him at school. 'The change in him is amazing,' Migotti told me.

During the days after my trip to London, I often thought of having a talk with Prescott, and in the end I plucked up courage to do so. We had tea in his digs. It was not till much later that he told me he had been praying for me daily for some time and had that morning refused another date because of the unlikely thought that he would spend the afternoon with me.

By way of breaking the ice, I asked Prescott how he had come to Worcester. His father, he said, had offered

to send him to Oxford after school, like his brothers, but he had chosen instead to learn languages on the continent and to go on to a promising job provided by his father's friend at Thomas Cook's. Abroad he had given himself up, in a cheerful way, to what he called 'riotous living', and this had continued in London. Then, very unexpectedly, through his sister Dorothy, he had 'changed'.

So far it seemed a standard story of conversion, even down to the 'riotous living'. What interested me was what followed. For one of Prescott's first thoughts when he asked for God to guide him was to resign from Thomas Cook's and come to Worcester College, Oxford.

'I saw a mountain of snags,' he told me. 'I had never been very bright at school and, since leaving, it is safe to say, had never read a book, rarely written a letter and only glanced at the pictures in the newspapers. To pass an entrance examination, quite apart from getting a degree, seemed to me impossible.'

'Then there was money. I had saved nothing and my father, I knew, felt he had done his bit. Where was cash for three years at Oxford to come from?'

However, the thought was so clear and persistent that, in spite of his parents' horror and his boss's warnings, he decided he must put it into action.

Then the coincidences began to happen. An old family friend, hearing of his change, wrote that she would like to help with a small annual sum. And on the very day that he went to say goodbye to his boss, he had a letter announcing a wholly unexpected legacy of £200.

So fortified, Prescott made a date with the Provost of Worcester, 'Jackie' Lyss, a dry, spare stick of a man, not given to enthusiasm. To him Prescott said that he felt 'led' to come to Worcester and thereafter to undertake 'religious work'. He warned that he felt quite unable to sit an entrance exam and that he could only pay his fees and

keep by 'faith and prayer'. He added that he wanted to come up at once, in the middle of the year, instead of waiting for nine months as would be usual.

Lyss kept muttering 'Most irregular, most irregular', but finally sent him to the Bursar. A few days later Prescott heard that he had been accepted on his own terms. 'So far I have always paid my college bills on the day I received them,' Prescott added.

Prescott's story – and the modest way he told it – emboldened me to tell him what was going on in my mind. I told him my hopes, my fears – and my failures. I was more honest with him than I had ever been with anyone. What did he suggest?

'God will give you the solution to your own problems and the power to help other people – if you will pay the price for it,' he said.

'How do you know?' I asked.

'Because it has happened to me,' he replied, and told me about his smoking. He had been smoking fifty cigarettes a day at the time of his first experiment and soon after had had the thought, 'Stop smoking'. 'I started trying to cut it down. That failed hopelessly. Then I tried will-power. Again, failure. Then I resorted to ardent prayer accompanied by dramatically disposing of pipes, cigarettes and all other sources of temptation. Still, fruitless. Then someone said to me, "Let God deal with it". "Asking" and "letting" were different, he said. I began to see that, whatever I told myself or others, I was really determined to go on smoking. So I started to pray to want to want to give it up. Then I came to the point where asking and letting became the same thing. I did ask. And I have never touched a cigarette since.'

This interested me because it was not slick or easy. Smoking was no problem with me. But there were other things that were.

'If you put right what you can put right, God will put right what you can't put right,' Prescott added.

'But I don't believe in God,' I replied.

'Then you can make an experiment,' Prescott said. 'If you give as much of yourself as you know to as much of God as you understand, you will find He takes over.'

I sat silent, a bit bewildered. Finally, I said I felt like a man on a high-dive board over a swimming bath at night. I could hear people saying, 'Jump in, it's fine', but did not know whether their splashing was in the bath or in a bucket. Was there any water in the bath?

'You won't know until you jump,' Prescott said.

So I jumped. I gave the little I knew of myself to the near-nothing I knew of God. 'If you'll tell me what to do, I'll do it,' I said to Him. All that came were two things I already knew. I had stolen a pound from one of my brothers, and read the private letters of another. Small things, but important to me, for the good opinion of those brothers was the most important thing in my life. Also, it is hard to wrong someone and be at one with them. My first job was to try and put these things straight.

In the college lodge as I returned, I encountered Jackman with the result that I have told. 'You damned fool!', he shouted after me as I passed on to write those letters. They took time, and I had just finished when there was a tramp, tramp, tramp and most of the rugger XV, headed by Jackman, burst into my room to dissuade me from my suicidal course. That settled it. My resolve was not very firm, but I was not going to be put off by that lot of roughs.

Just about this time I put out a cartilage in my knee and was much in my room. In those dreary November days, doubts would assail me. Faith was far from constant. It came slowly. But I began to notice certain differences.

I found I could work without dreaming. Habits which had dogged me fell away. Above all I began to find I could care for people – and not just about what they thought of me.

The greatest help was the practice of ‘two-way prayer’ to which Prescott introduced me. ‘So often we treat God like the butcher,’ he said. ‘We ring up and order a pound of steak, to arrive by eleven, and let it be tender. Then we ring off before any instruction can be given in return. But God might well have something he wanted us to do.’

‘When St Teresa of Avila listened, she was told, “There are many hearts in which I would gladly speak but the world makes so much noise inside them that My voice cannot be heard”,’ Prescott added.

He said the best time to listen was in the early morning before the day crowded in and that it was helpful to write down any thoughts that came, suggestions which, I later discovered, St Francis de Sales and St Augustine had made long before him. ‘Half an hour’s daily listening is essential, except when you are very busy,’ wrote St Francis. ‘Then a full hour is needed.’³³

St Augustine begins his *Soliloquies* :

‘I was a prey to a thousand thoughts and for many days had been making strenuous efforts to find myself, myself and my own good, and to know the evil to avoid, when on a sudden – was it myself? was it some other? was it without or within me? I cannot tell. At all events, suddenly, it was said to me :

‘“If you find what you are seeking, what will you do with it? To whom will you confide it?”’

‘“I shall keep it in my memory,” I replied.

‘“But is your memory capable of treasuring up all that your mind has conceived?”’

‘“No, it certainly can not.”’

‘“Then you must write.”’³⁴

Was this a suspension of reason, a flight from thought? No, said Prescott. It was true that sometimes – and to some people very often – there would come ‘an arresting tick’ or an inspiration akin to that of artists or scientists,⁵ something ‘suprarational’. But his day-to-day practice was rather to examine all the known facts about any situation, and then submit his conclusions to God. More not less thought was needed, but objective thought. So much normal thought started from self-interested stand-points. If your life was given to God and your thought was submitted to Him, it was likely, at the least, to be less ego-centric and self-seeking.

As a further insurance against self-delusion – for some have been deluded by thinking their thoughts to be God’s thoughts – Prescott suggested that one should check any thought by the standards of absolute honesty, purity, unselfishness and love.⁶ But if still in doubt consult others whom you trust and who have greater experience of seeking God’s will.

I began to try this, and one of my first thoughts was about a man in college on whom I had played a shabby trick. He was a scholar from a Grammar School, and had a strong country accent. He was ragged by the snobbish public school element in the college. Publicly I had always scorned such prejudices, but behind his back I was not averse to exploiting them.

This man had sometimes played rugby, rather indifferently, for the college. At the beginning of that term, I had, as secretary of the ruggar club, put up a notice, intended for freshmen, asking those who wished to take part to put up their names and qualifications. I had headed this list, in an assumed hand, with his name and, as qualification, the words, ‘Old Colour’. This caused amusement in the college, and pain to him.

A few days after my talk with Prescott, I thought of

this – and felt that I must try to put it right with this man. He was quite unaware who had done it, and, when I apologised, was furious. ‘Go to hell,’ he said.

That experiment did not seem to have been a great success. A few days later, however, I had the persistent thought that I should ask him to have coffee with me that evening. He angrily refused.

‘You have a perfect right to feel as you do,’ I replied. ‘I just wanted you to know that my apology was a part of an experiment I am making, an attempt to get my life straight. I think it is beginning to work.’

He stopped in his tracks. He looked at me for a moment, and then asked if we could walk together. We walked round the quad perhaps twenty times, while he told me how lonely and despairing men like me had made him. ‘I have got nervous. I find I can’t work properly. I’ve felt I must break out somehow.’ He seemed in the mood to do something a bit desperate.

He decided that evening to make the same experiment that I was making. His change was obvious to everyone. Next term he got a first class in his first examination followed by another in his finals.

It was the first time in my life that I had really helped someone.

Huxley and after

Meanwhile, Margot Appleyard, whom I was to marry fourteen years later, was half a mile away at Somerville College reading Botany. We did not know each other, but she, too, made her first experiments in faith during that same month.

Her family was Yorkshire on both sides for two hundred years. Her grandfather was a Leeds stone-mason and master builder, as my own was a tin miner. Her father was the only child, and everything went into his education. He was the first registered student of the infant University of Leeds, on the governing body of which he later served.

At the end of the first World War, her father quit the civil service – he had been an R.F.C. factory inspector – because his next boss was to be a woman. Looking round for an enterprise with a future, he plumped for the motor trade. By luck or good judgment, he picked the winners among the thirty or more early manufacturers.

He was a man of energy and resource. When a fire destroyed his Albion Street premises, he reopened that same afternoon on another site. The business prospered, and the family moved to the Manor House at Linton-on-

Wharfe, near Wetherby. They were blackballed from the local tennis club because he was 'in trade'.

Margot was the eldest of four children in an unusually close-knit family. Every week-end they went walking in the Dales, and they knew every dipper's nest on the River Wharfe personally, a study her brother, Ian, still continues. Each winter they went to Switzerland for the skiing, at which both the boys reached Olympic standard. When they hurtled down the steeper slopes, and her sister Jenny, closing her eyes, followed their course, Margot and her parents trundled down, zig-zag. Margot's courage was of another order and the family rate it high. After all, she married me.

Margot's father was ambitious for his eldest. Driving into Leeds to the High School, he rehearsed her in her thirteen to nineteen times tables. She went to Leeds University while waiting for Oxford, a tough place for girls to get into at that time. Typically, the operation was planned with far-sighted strategy. Botany, in which there were only eighteen students a year, was thought to be the easiest subject on which to enter. The plan succeeded, and Margot joined a small but brilliant company, most of whom are now teaching in one university or another.

By the time she reached Somerville, Margot was an agnostic. This was due to the impact of current scientific 'certainties' on one who had no personal experience of God. Her father was a Methodist local preacher, and she loved and respected him. 'I did not revolt. But it was not real to me. I looked round the congregation in chapel and thought, "These people believe in God and I don't know what to believe, but they don't look happier than I am".'

She read Julian Huxley and J. B. S. Haldane with their dogmatic assertions that everything could be explained in terms of chemistry and physics. Huxley lectured at Leeds

during her year there. His scintillating mind and personality finished the job for her. 'Haldane and he were obviously better scientists than I would ever be. If they said there was no God, that was good enough for me. I still went to chapel so as not to hurt my parents. I just thought they were lucky to know so little science.'

One September Sunday the Appleyards went to Dr Leslie Weatherhead's church in Leeds. An attractive personality and one of the great and popular preachers of the day, he always drew large crowds. The congregation were startled when, in place of his usual dazzling performance, he simply said that he was ashamed that he had been drawing such crowds but changing so few. He had read a book which had opened his eyes to himself. It was called *For Sinners Only*.

Back in Oxford, Margot discovered that a friend had a copy of that book, so she borrowed it. It interested her enough for her to ask the friend to take her to a meeting. 'There were about fifteen girls there. They talked very naturally about practical things which had happened to them. Three things struck me. One said she had stopped quarrelling with her sister – and I had broken a hairbrush on Jenny's elbow a few weeks before. Another could now get up in the mornings – and I was always the last down to breakfast in college. A third said she had lost her self-consciousness, and I was paralysed by mine.

'As they talked, it flashed into my mind that I could make an experiment. I could do everything these people suggested and if God was there, there was a chance that I would find Him. If he wasn't, I'd lose nothing. So that night – 29 November, 1932 – I knelt down in my room in college and gave my life to God. It was the first time I had prayed on my knees since going to boarding school eight years before.'

The next day dawned wet and cold, and Margot won-

dered why in the world she had been such a fool as to start that experiment. But as a scientist she knew that an experiment can only be expected to work if you fulfil the conditions worked out in past experiments. So she pulled herself together and, as someone had suggested, read the Sermon on the Mount, and then tried listening to God for the first time. A list came to her of the things which would have to go out of her life – and of other things which needed to come into it – if she were to let God rule.

‘That day, amazingly, I found that I was different in several ways. I seemed suddenly to have lost much of my self-consciousness. I had to go and see the college secretary that morning, a thing I hated doing. Someone offered to go for me, but I thought, “If what I did last night was real, I shouldn’t mind this”. I went and was free. I felt like walking on air. An even worse ordeal for me had always been to read my weekly essay to my high-powered male tutor. But again I was somehow liberated.’

Margot had many friends in college. They used to say when depressed or bored: ‘Let’s go and see Margot. She’s got plenty of cushions, and good cigarettes – and never talks about anything serious.’ That same evening one of them said to her: ‘What’s happened to you? Your face is quite different.’

Margot told her she had given her life to God. ‘Do you think He would do anything for me?’ her friend asked. ‘I’m so worried about my home. My father has thrown my brother out of the house.’

‘Why don’t you give your life to God and see what happens?’, Margot replied, and she did. The vacation was only two weeks off, and when she got back next term she said the family situation was transformed.

But before that she brought Margot another friend – a brilliant girl who was terrified of examinations. Already

she was quaking about her finals that summer. She too made the experiment, and her fears left her. She got a first and a university job.

Next day a third friend came to see Margot. She was a leading light in the S.C.M. and had been at school with Margot. 'What's wrong with my Christianity?' she asked. 'I've known you for eight years and have never been able to help you. You meet these Oxford Group people and within a week you are so different that all the college is talking about it.'

She, too, made a new start. And Margot knew that something beyond herself was at work.

'From time to time doubts would attack me,' adds Margot. "'You are just deluding yourself," I'd think. "This is just your own mind talking to you." The temptation was to go into a long intellectual discussion with myself. At this point I came across the story of the epileptic boy cured by Jesus, and how his father said: "Lord, I believe. Help Thou my unbelief." I decided I would say that each time a doubt assailed me – and see what happened. This I did, at home that vac, and during the next term – bicycling down The High, getting up or whenever doubt struck me. After six months, I suddenly realised one day I had not had to say that for a month. I was now certain that God existed.'

Meanwhile Margot had told her father and mother what she had done. They were delighted. But when, at the end of that year, she told them she wanted to give all her time to working with the Oxford Group, they were less certain. Margot had earlier planned to continue at Oxford, researching into plant diseases. But after examining a variety of Oxford blue-stockings, she had decided to join her father's business. She had planned always to have the latest sports car and be dressed to match. Her father was deeply disappointed at her new plans. But,

above all, he wanted to be sure she was sure of her calling and would not regret it later.

'All right,' he said. 'You can work with them for six months. Then you must give me six months.'

So, after six months' working in London, Margot went on a cruise with her parents via the West Indies through the Panama Canal to Honolulu and San Francisco. On their return to Europe, the Appleyard family set out once more by car and boat via Italy to Egypt and Palestine. On the boat on the way back across the Mediterranean, she told her father she was more than ever convinced she should work with the Group. It was a blow to him, but he now was satisfied that she knew her mind.

The year following, I too started working full time with the Group – in Northern Ireland, and there I got to know Margot. We fell in love quite soon, but did not marry till after the war. That, however, is another story, and I must return to life in Oxford in the early months of my experiment.

Oxford with Worcester Sauce

So, in the spring of 1933, Margot and I found ourselves in the growing company of the Oxford Group in Oxford. Each day, at half past one, anything from eighty to a hundred undergraduates and a few dons met for three-quarters of an hour in the Old Library at St Mary's.

The Oxford Group did not aspire to be a new church or denomination. It was simply a group of people who had banded together to try and live the Christian life without compromise. It was not so much a movement as a stimulus which set people on the move.

Its initiator, Frank Buchman, whom I had not met, had defined it as 'a programme of life issuing in personal, social, racial, national and super-national change'. 'A dynamic experience of God's free Spirit is the answer to regional antagonism, economic depression, racial conflict and international strife,'¹ he added in Geneva in January 1932. The aim of our meetings at St Mary's each lunchtime was to carry the experiment of faith further in our own lives and out into the world.

The world was, by now, quite aware of the existence of the Group. A three day 'exposé' in the *Daily Express*, in February 1928, had alleged that 'members of the cult during the meetings hold hands in a large circle and, one after another, apparently "inspired", make a full confession of their sins'.² The writer did not state that he had heard any such confessions, nor did he give a single name of anyone who so confessed or who claimed to have heard such confessions. Eleven prominent Oxford dons, who had attended the meetings, promptly denied the charge in a letter to *The Times*.³ But since these articles were the first written about the Group in a national newspaper, they got into the cuttings libraries of every newspaper and were copied by other journalists.

Others took a contrary view. 'To be attacked as a corrupter of public morals,' commented *The Bystander*, 'is the first sign that a new religious force is making itself felt,'⁴ and the Archbishop of Canterbury announced that 'the Group was doing what the Church of Christ exists everywhere to do'.⁵ The Editor of the *Church of England Newspaper* declared, perhaps a little intemperately, that it was 'taking England by storm'⁶ and the Canadian Prime Minister gave a luncheon for his cabinet to meet thirty of our immediate Oxford predecessors to whom he said: 'Your influence is being felt in every village and city, even in the remotest outposts of the Dominion. You are making the task of government easier.'⁷

All this added to the spice of life, but I was, at the time, more concerned with the first stages of my own experiment. It was an immense help to have so many new and more experienced friends. Among dons Professors Grensted and Streeter, Alan Thornhill and Julian Thornton-Duesbery, and among students,

Roland Wilson, Ken Belden, the Goulding brothers, Harry Addison, as well as Kit Prescott, gave me priceless help.

At this stage I had no personal relationship with Christ. There were many Christian doctrines in which I did not believe, and some which I actively disbelieved. My former girl friend, who was a sincere Evangelical, had sometimes spoken to me of 'the Blood' and doctrine of the Atonement. The result had been heat rather than light, even, I fear, a sense of nausea. In fact, the discussions I had had with Christians had entrenched me in my doubts, perhaps because I was too proud to admit myself wrong in argument.

Seeing my predicament, Kit Prescott suggested I should leave aside intellectual discussion and start to seek a relationship. 'Hang the doctrines you do not understand on a hook, like a suit of clothes – and let them hang until you have got a bit of experience,' he said. When I returned to them, he thought, I might have a different perspective. Jesus had said, 'If a man do His will, he will know of the doctrine whether it be of God.' Also, 'when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth.'

The immediate need was to continue my practical experiment. Barbara Ward, in her comparison of science and religion, writes that the result of the experiment of faith is 'scientifically certain' if it 'is carried out under clinically pure conditions – as it has been in the life of the best and purest of mankind'.⁸ Of course, I was – and am – far from being in that category – and no man can purify himself. To produce 'clinically pure conditions' might seem a hopeless task. But an obvious step towards establishing purer, if not pure, conditions seemed to be to start putting right those things in my life which I knew to be against God's will and which were in my power to

correct.* But would this help establish a relationship with Christ? Was not that, rather, a matter of emotion? 'No,' said my new friends, 'of obedience.' 'If a man loves me,' Jesus had said, 'he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our abode with him.'

I had made a start with putting right certain obvious things which could be put right 'at a stroke' – a return of money, some apologies – but to recognise and turn away from deeply ingrained greed, pride or self-seeking was another matter. This is where I found the standards of absolute honesty, purity, unselfishness and love – a rough and challenging summary of the Sermon on the Mount – so helpful. There was no list of do's and don'ts handed to me. The standards presented an objective point, like the North Star, by which to judge my position. And like the North Star, an absolute standard is never reached. As one advances a little, it recedes beckoning, presenting always a new challenge.

I had given what little I knew of myself to the near nothing I knew of God. Knowledge in both spheres grew – and still grows – together. To see a little more of God sets a searchlight on oneself. To know oneself better forces one to God for forgiveness. Christ becomes real when one admits one's need.

*B. H. Streeter in *The God Who Speaks* shows the irresistible logic of this: 'We all know at least one thing in our lives which is not right: and what is meant by wrong or sin, except thought or action which is contrary to God's will, that is, God's plan for us? Until and unless he has straightened out that wrong, it is profitless to ask what may be the next item in God's plan for him. If, however, we are ready to conform to God's plan in this one respect in which we know it; then experience shows that "the still small voice" of "the Beyond that is within" will tell us the next thing that God wishes us to do.'

The first giving of myself was a leap in the dark, an experiment. As evidence appeared that the experiment was working, new experiments became necessary. It was one thing to put right an unfair relationship – and quite another to put the sex instinct under God's control and trust Him to provide a deeper satisfaction, aiming at absolute purity and not what I could get away with. Equally, with career. Was I willing to reject ambition or comfort as deciding motives in what I should do?

More immediately, the historic choice between Christ and family presented itself. We had always been a happy family, and I owed a great deal to my brothers who had been such splendid companions to me as I grew up. I was five years younger than the youngest of them and must often have been a pest. Yet they played games, took me on holidays and treated me as an equal, sharing with me the books they were reading and the expeditions they were making.

One morning I read Christ's stern words: 'I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother. . . . And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father and mother more than me is not worthy of me.'

I was working in the Codrington Law Library that morning, but, between the legal cases, these words came thudding home to me. Did this mean that my dearest relationships, those with my mother and my brothers, would be revolutionised? Even that we would become enemies? Clearly I had to be ready for that. It was a shattering realisation. I could not work until I had gone across Radcliffe Square to St Mary's Church and given this, my dearest possession, to God too.

The next vacation there were, indeed, clashes. Sometimes it was because of my brashness or stupidity. But there were also occasions when my new commitments had

to take precedence over family expeditions. A family holiday had to take second place to work in the East End of London. Our affection for each other was never broken, but it is hard when a new authority comes in and disturbs the settled pattern. It caused pain at the time, to the others and to me, but in later life my mother often said how glad she was that I had stuck it out.

Meanwhile, at Worcester, things were getting lively. We had the reputation of being a heavy drinking college, and much of the drinking took place in the Buttery after dinner. Kit and I strolled in one night and ordered a pint of milk apiece in a silver tankard. The milk was brought in glasses. We protested. Why must we be content with Woolworth's glass while the others had their beer in college silver? 'Discrimination against milk drinkers,' we said.

Why this light-hearted demonstration – which did not spring from any aversion to alcohol – caused such commotion I do not know. But after that people started coming round quietly and asking what had happened to me. A few – often the most unexpected – began their own experiments, then more and more. After a bit, some of the more sporting elements in college started a sweepstake on who would be changed next.

We came in for a good deal of chaffing and reciprocated in kind. One day, shortly before the 1933 Boat Race, Kit and I spied an *Oxford Mail* poster which proclaimed 'Oxford Stroke Changed'. That word 'changed' meant only one thing in Worcester, and we thought the news should be communicated to our rowing men without delay. We acquired several copies of the poster and got back to college in time to nail them to the doors of the leading rowing men, so that it would confront them on their return for lunch.

Next day, the *Oxford Mail* poster read 'Another Change

in Oxford Crew'. So we repeated the operation. It cannot be said that this immediately 'changed' many rowing men, but it kept things lively.

Shortly before Kit went down, the Provost took him aside and said, 'I want you to know that I think you have changed, for the better, the atmosphere of the college.'

Meanwhile, the idea that God might have a plan for the world had kindled in me a hope at least as 'radiant' as that which Day Lewis was experiencing through Communism. My problem was to believe that this tremendous conception could logically affect something as insignificant as me and my affairs.

The man who helped me with this was B. H. Streeter, then the Provost of the Queen's College. A leading New Testament scholar, he also wrote on philosophy, history, psychology, comparative religion, ethics and mysticism, not to mention old chained libraries ('the only book of mine which will last'). His mind had that restless, questing quality which particularly appealed to us undergraduates. 'I can never believe a thing merely because I want to believe it, however much I may want to,' he used to say; and of one of his books, 'I only know I enjoyed writing it—the hue-and-cry after new discoveries, the follow up of hitherto unnoticed clues . . .'. He was also a 'character', with his enormous feet, his forked beard and twinkling eyes, and that unique half-sniff, half-laugh with which he debunked himself and any self-importance in others.

One day I met 'B. H.' by chance on a hill near Hereford. There he treated me to a tutorial which can, for brevity, be summarised in the words he later wrote in *The God Who Speaks*. 'To affirm that God exists, what is this but to say that we believe that the Universe is not the product of blind chance but is controlled by a purpose?' he said. 'It is a contradiction in terms to say that God

exists but has no plan. And to say that His plan can only contemplate the big outline and not also the minor details is to reduce His intelligence to the scale of ours. It follows from the nature of God, if there be a God, that He differs from man precisely in the fact that He can give attention to everything, everywhere, always and all at once.¹⁰

My own infant experiments seemed to fit in with this argument, and, as I began to read the New Testament seriously for the first time, it became obvious that this was Jesus' own conception. 'The very hairs of your head are numbered. No sparrow falls to the earth without your Father knowing.' The men in the Acts of the Apostles clearly believed not only that God had a plan, but that they could be told their immediate part in it. Philip was told to go and wait on a certain road and, when he got there, to mount the running board of the Ethiopian Finance Minister's chariot. Peter was instructed, against all his inclinations, to accompany a Roman sergeant to the house of an officer of the occupying army. Ananias of Damascus was ordered to go to the assistance of Saul, the man sent to arrest him, and Saul, become Paul, was directed where and when to go on his journeys. I found fifty-one references to a guiding power in the Acts alone. Most of them were detailed instructions and when men made the perilous experiment of obeying, far-reaching changes in men and events resulted.

In history, too, I came across examples of wise men who believed they were guided by God. Socrates believed it, as firmly as the Old Testament prophets. William Wilberforce, soon after making the experiment of yielding his life to God, wrote in his early morning journal: 'God Almighty has set before me two great objects, the suppression of the slave trade and the reformation of manners.' It was a fight, but he achieved the first, and much towards the second, in his life time.¹¹ Abraham Lincoln wrote: 'I

have so many evidences of God's direction that I cannot doubt the power that comes from above. I am satisfied that if the Almighty wants me to do or not to do a particular thing, He finds a way of letting me know.¹²

Streeter pointed out that God's plan is not a rigid plan, but one more like that of a general staff in a developing battle, a plan flexible enough to take new circumstances into consideration. Thus, however often we frustrate it through our indifference, obstinacy or folly, it is still there ready to be applied to the situation we – and all mankind – are in at any moment.¹³

Is the journey really necessary?

What relevance have these experiments of forty years ago in the 1970s? Is faith in God still necessary in an age when men have, according to Dr Edmund Leach, 'become like gods'? Is this experiment still worth making?

In an essay entitled 'Wanted a New Pleasure', which was widely read in the thirties, Aldous Huxley wrote that the world needed a new drug. 'If', he speculated, 'we could sniff or swallow something that would abolish solitude, atone us to our fellows with a glowing exaltation of affection and make life in all its aspects not only worth living, but divinely beautiful and significant, and if this heavenly, world-transfiguring drug were of such a kind that we could wake up next morning with a clear head and undamaged constitution – then, it seems to me, all our problems would be wholly solved and earth would become paradise.'¹

I once discussed these matters with Huxley in the flat he then used in the Albany, and he agreed that some people already had this thing, and that its name was Faith. He preferred to continue his search through drugs, with some personal satisfaction if we are to believe his widow's

account, but with the result that many young people were encouraged to take a journey which did not end up in paradise.

In the seventies another brilliant humanist, facing the graver threat of man's total self-destruction, has sighed for another wonder drug. Arthur Koestler contrasts the explosive growth of human knowledge with the standstill, or deterioration, in man's moral capabilities. While the former has taken off like a jet plane, 'the ethical curve shows a pronounced downward trend, marked by two World Wars, the genocidal enterprises of several dictators, and new methods of terror combined with indoctrination, which can hold continents in their grip.'²

Koestler concludes that man's native equipment contains a built-in deficiency which predisposes him towards self-destruction. He specifically states that spiritual rebirth could meet this deficiency but, despairing of such rebirth, looks for a new drug to control man's brain and 'harmonise emotion and reason'. But he confesses to a fear that people will be 'disgusted at the idea that we should rely for our salvation on molecular chemistry instead of spiritual rebirth' — a wise disgust when one knows how dictators could use such techniques. Is it not more realistic to work for the necessary spiritual revolution in us all?

Dr Leach's point is more general. Science, he says, offers us 'total mastery of our environment. Men have become like gods and should behave as such.' But he adds, 'Unless we teach those of the next generation that they can afford to be atheists only if they assume the moral responsibilities of God, the prospects for the human race are decidedly bleak'.³

Exactly: and how, if he abolishes God, does Dr Leach plan to make his man-gods as good as they are powerful? Science has wrought great marvels, but the attempt to put it in the place of God looks sillier as day succeeds

day. What sane man would now write, as Bertrand Russell once did, that 'science can enable our grandchildren to live the good life by giving them knowledge, self-control and characters productive of harmony rather than strife'?⁴ The knowledge that science brings has not, alas, increased our self-control or improved our characters.

One might listen more attentively to Dr Leach if the militant atheists who largely dominate Western culture were in fact revelling in the certain joys which a recent President of the British Humanist Association forecast when he coined the slogan 'H for Happy Man' for his recruiting drive.⁵ But this is far from the case. Thus, Kenneth Tynan, author of 'Oh! Calcutta' writes of modern theatre shocking us into 'awareness of our new and grievous plight, awaiting death in a universe without God, ungoverned by reason and devoid of purpose',⁶ and Mr Francis Bacon, whom many consider Britain's greatest living painter, mirrors that despair in his pictures. 'Man now realises that he is an accident, that he is a completely futile being, that he has to play out the game without reason,' Bacon explains. 'You see, painting has become – all art has become – a game by which man distracts himself.'⁷

One is reminded of Solzhenitsyn's description of the artist who 'imagines himself to be the creator of an independent spiritual world, burdens himself with the act of creating and peopling this world, accepts complete responsibility for it – but breaks down, because no mortal genius is capable of withstanding such a burden'. That artist finally 'lays the blame on the eternal disharmony of the world, on the complexity of the distraught human soul, or on the lack of comprehension of the public'.

'Another artist,' Solzhenitsyn continues, 'knows there is a higher power over him and will work joyfully as a

small apprentice under God's heaven, although his responsibility for everything he paints and draws, and for the souls who apprehend it, is even greater. In failure, and even in the lowest depths of existence – in destitution, in prison, in sickness – the consciousness of this steadfast harmony cannot forsake him.⁸

Solzhenitsyn's words ring with the authority of experience. Dimitri Panine, who was in prison with him for five years and is portrayed as Sologdin in *The First Circle* writes, 'Our link during those years in prison was a faith as strong and firm as steel. It might be called a decision to obey God's will. Because of it we did not know what fear was, and never lost our sense of calling.'⁹ Can one doubt that a faith which stands such a test is worth seeking?

'In a universe without God,' wrote Andre Malraux, 'life is absurd.'¹⁰ The human inconveniences which flow from such a conception are legion. It is hard, for example, to envisage any renaissance of the arts when artists have given themselves over to despair. If life is absurd, there are no great themes left to develop. Nor is there any reason why human beings should treat each other with compassion. With the abolition of faith, civilised life as we know it falls apart, and who can doubt that it is doing just that?

Dr Bryan Wilson, Professor of Sociology at Oxford and himself an agnostic, sees religion as 'a moral capital debt that is not being serviced'. He doubts whether 'our type of society will effectively maintain public order, without institutional coercion, once the still persistent influence of past religion wanes even further'.¹¹

And, on a wider canvas, Dr Maurice Strong, the United Nations Secretary General for the Environment, says that 'pollution is a symptom of a far deeper malaise which can only be cured by a moral and spiritual revolution so

far-reaching that it changes our life styles and gets shot through our industrial and political system'.¹²

The rebirth of faith, then, would be convenient on public, as well as private, grounds. But it will not happen just because it is convenient. It will only happen if men find it to be true. Hence the relevance of experiment.

Faith is even more obviously needed now than in the thirties. But it must be a practical faith which changes the characters of men.

The incompleat angler

The most important thing which I learnt at Oxford was how to begin to become a 'fisher of men'. I was not good at it, nor am I today. And that was and is no drawback. For it is God, not any man, who changes people. And, as someone said, 'God often works in spite of me, sometimes through me, never because of me, nearly always independently of what I do.'

The worst pitfall is conceit – to think that one is good at it, or can change people by some psychological technique.

Another pitfall is fear. So often I shrink from saying or doing what is needed to help someone else see himself – or God – more clearly. I do not want to risk losing the friendship of the other person, or I fear his tongue, particularly if the person concerned is cleverer or more powerful than I.

The important thing is to try to be a clear channel through which the Holy Spirit can work. To know what God has done for me – in exact not theoretical terms – is essential, for that will give others courage that He can do as much or more for them. But the need is to listen to the other person and to help him to listen to God. And that is always an adventurous business.

Fifty of us from Oxford experienced some of that adventure during the Easter vacation of 1934 when we went to the East London borough of Hackney. Like many undergraduates of the period, some of us had had some slight touch with the East End through the youth clubs run by schools and colleges where one went – sometimes a little patronisingly – to ‘get to know the other half’. This expedition was something quite different. We went to learn the rudiments of Christian revolution – and to offer those we met an equal part in it. We had no idea what kind of a reception we would get and were quite nervous. The expedition was particularly poignant for me because of the part which the hunger-marchers had played in my first decision. Would what I had found stand up to the realities of East London?

I stayed at a Toc H hostel with a brilliant young graduate, a prominent Christian in the university, who was investigating us to see if we were Christian enough for him. He came to Hackney to watch us in action. Each morning at six a.m. we used to climb out of bed and listen to God together. I also told him my day to day temptations – a process which surprised him but united us.

The King’s Hall, the largest hall in Hackney, had been taken for three nights soon after our arrival from Oxford, and we were out to fill it. We knew no one locally. How to go about it?

It soon became clear to some of us that the ‘caf’ was in those days the unit of society – and so two of us asked a policeman which was the toughest caf in Hackney. ‘The Wellington,’ he replied. ‘We go in there in pairs.’

So Ian Sciortino, a tall St Edmund Hall man, and I went to the Wellington and asked the man behind the counter who was his toughest customer. He motioned us to a large young man playing darts at the back of the caf. So we approached him.

'Have you seen any tough guys around?' Sciortino asked him.

The young man drew himself up to his full height, as though to say, 'You are in the presence,' and barked out, 'What do you want?'

'We are starting a revolution – and we want people to help,' he replied.

'What kind of a revolution?' he said.

'The kind which starts inside you and goes on until this whole rotten mess is cleared up,' said Sciortino.

'Good,' said our new friend. 'I like revolutions. I'll come and throw the pineapples for you.'

I escorted Al – for that was his name – to the King's Hall that night. As we left the Wellington, he said: 'If this show's on the ribs, I'll scam. But if it's on the level, I'll fill the hall for you.'

'On the ribs? What's that?'

'Don't you know anything?' he answered. 'On the ribs. When you go to a party and there ain't no eats and the beer's flat.'

The thing which interested Al at that meeting was a company director who had, when he decided to live differently, paid back a sizeable sum to the Income Tax people. 'It's all right,' he said. 'I'll bring the gang tomorrow. Meet me at the Wellington at 12.'

When we got there next morning, we found that Al had just finished writing a notice on the Gang Board. It read: 'Gentlemen of the Tatlers. We are invited to an evening tonight in the King's Hall. Your Secretary was there last night and found it a top-hole show. Be here at six o'clock. Don't let the Tatlers down. Pineapples to be left behind.'

The gang's full name was the Tin-Ring Tatlers: Tin-Ring after the greyhound stadium where some were unofficial bookies, Tatlers because it sounded nice. Al was evidently the moving spirit. He told me he was generally

called 'Lino' because he was always on the floor financially – and often, after a party, physically.

At six about ten assorted characters were waiting. There was Al's lieutenant, Ariel Fred, who owned an Ariel motor bicycle. Mr Wu, it seemed, had just come out of prison. There were a midget and a giant, and several others. Sciortino and I had brought a number of our friends, including the graduate who turned out to be skilled on the penny whistle. He piped us through the streets to the hall – and we noticed that two policemen kept pace with us on the other side of the road.

After the meeting, Al took me on one side. 'If I were to start listing what I should put right, it would take a roll of my father's wall paper,' he said.

I said that God often told people a few places – or even one place – at which to begin. Had he had any ideas?

He told me a number of things which I will not relate here.

But the two things most on Al's mind were his father and mother. His father was a painter and decorator in the smallest possible way. He used to push his hand cart past the public library where the Tatlers stood leaning against the wall. To be a Tatler you had to be a 'gentleman of no fixed employment', and so Al could not be seen helping with that barrow. Now his thought was to push the barrow and help his father.

Al's mother had always said that, although she had two unemployed sons, neither had ever stolen money from her. This stung Al because he knew it was untrue. He saw at once that he must put this straight with her.

'You will need God's help for that,' I said.

'Garn,' said he. 'I'll just go and tell her.'

But when I met Al next day, he was crestfallen. He had tried several times to summon up the courage to tell his mother, but failed. Now he was ready to ask Christ's

help. He did so – and when I went to tea with his family before leaving Hackney, his mother said it had brought great joy to her. ‘We are poor, but if we’re united we can manage,’ she said.

Meanwhile, my friend the graduate had been talking to Ariel Fred. ‘What did you do with him?’ I asked. ‘I gave him a straight Bible talk,’ he said. ‘Good,’ said I. ‘Did he need to put anything right?’ ‘How should I know? His sins are between him and God,’ the graduate replied.

They were, indeed, and they stayed there. We never saw Ariel Fred again, but the graduate when he asked God why he had been so ineffective with him learnt something about himself. He began to see that he could not help Fred because he had not been honest about – or made restitution for – certain of his own shortcomings. The graduate gave his life to God in a new and practical way. At about this time he was approached to become an assistant to the then Prime Minister. Instead, he chose to continue – without pay or position – the work of world-changing through life-changing. He gave brilliant and selfless service and affected many lives and situations for good.

This expedition was one of many to East London. Some of my friends settled there for the next years, often sleeping on floors, or, in the case of one young Wykehamist, on two chairs in an unemployed leader’s kitchen. The men we touched became no less impatient at the lot of the unemployed in those grim years, but they found a purpose and a personal dignity which proofed them against turning to violence with Mosley or being thrown, by reaction, into the arms of the Communists. Tod Sloan, a friend of Keir Hardie’s in West Ham who described himself as ‘a watchmaker by trade and an agitator by nature’ was typical. He said, ‘This is the revolution that matters – the change in human nature – and it does happen.’

American adventure

As my Oxford finals approached, the question of what I was going to do in life became more and more pressing. I was all set to become a solicitor. During the previous year I had applied to be articled to a large London firm. The senior partner, a former President of the Law Society, had agreed to take me on, but in the back of my mind I was not quite sure about it.

By now it was clear to me that I was in something bigger than a revival. Buchman called it a 'revolution' which aimed at 'a new social order under the dictatorship of God, making for better human relationships, for unselfish co-operation, for cleaner business, cleaner politics, for the elimination of political, industrial and racial antagonisms'.¹ And several events had begun to make me think that such a revolution might be possible.

In December 1933 I had been present in a committee room in the House of Commons when Carl Hambro, the President of the Norwegian Parliament, addressed some 130 M.P.s. Hambro was a Churchillian figure and a force in the League of Nations on which so many hopes still rested. Hambro said that he thought the work

Buchman and his friends were doing was more important than most of that done at the League. He continued that whereas politics was the art of the possible, statesmanship was to make possible tomorrow what was impossible today. This could best be done by changing the characters of men and so altering the mental climate of nations.

Hambro's words opened up the exciting possibility that people like me, and not just politicians, could have some part in altering history. I wanted to do that, whether as a lawyer or working all my time with the Oxford Group, and growingly I began to think that, perhaps, the latter alternative might be right. Of course, there were difficulties. Money was one of them. No one working full-time with the Oxford Group was paid a salary. Nor were day to day expenses forthcoming. People did it at their own risk. My father had left me a little money, but nowhere near enough to keep me. People said that 'where God guides, He provides', but I had no personal experience of it.

My family naturally cautioned me against such a rash undertaking. One of them, in a laudable effort to warn me, said: 'You'll only fall back on us one day' – which tickled my pride as much as my fear. Though never in want, I had always been fearful about money since hearing my mother say, shortly after father died, that there was nothing left in the bank.

I was very undecided – and sometimes worried; and my friends would do nothing to make up my mind for me. Once I went to London with the idea of getting Buchman to give me a lead. He simply said, 'Don't strain, Garth. It will come clearly to you, one way or the other, if you wait.'

In the end I decided to try working with the Group for just three months. The London solicitors agreed to keep my place open until after that – and my family generously agreed that I must do what I felt right. At the end of

that three months I no longer had any doubts. It was as though all the other doors in my mind had closed, and I was on a straight path.

It was during these months that I began to feel that I was meant to spend much of my life writing – or rather with writing men. For it occurred to me, at the same time, that I could do more by helping others, abler and better trained than myself, to write what people needed to read, than if I took a newspaper job or withdrew to an ivory tower and tried being an ‘author’. I did not think of it as a public relations job, still less of getting publicity for a movement. Rather it was a commitment to get to know and understand journalists, in the belief that those who attempted to live by objective moral standards would best give objective news and comment to the public.

In Belfast, I was used to help a sub-editor on the *News-Letter*, who had serious human problems, and this led to friendships with Harry McKee, its editor, and the Sayers brothers who edited the *Belfast Telegraph*. Back in England, I saw a lot of Arthur Baker, the chief of *The Times* Parliamentary Staff, and that great if martinet-like Editor-in-Chief of the Press Association, Henry Martin. Reginald Holme, of New College – the hero of the *For Sinner's Only* story ‘A Motor Club Blows Up’ – was a daring and amusing companion. We went to Scandinavia together. The changes in such seasoned editors as Frederick Ramm in Norway, Carl Henrik Clemmensen in Denmark and later Hermann Salomonson in Holland convinced me that Frank Buchman was right in saying that journalists could, without sacrificing objectivity, become ‘heralds of a new world order’. Ramm, Clemmensen and Salomonson were all three to be killed by the Nazis during the war.

In the autumn of 1936, Buchman invited me to join a team he was taking to the United States. In the weeks we were there with him, he took us to Washington and New

York, to Maine, Michigan and Massachusetts, meeting his friends, unknown and well-known.

After two months, Buchman left for England, leaving me in the States for another six. One week-end I visited a friend on Long Island, and was put to sleep in a beach hut down by the shore. During the previous two years I had worked with Margot in Britain and had fallen deeply in love with her. I had said nothing to her, but she was much in my mind. That night, as I lay awake listening to the gentle lapping of the sea, the thought came with quiet and certain insistency that I would marry Margot, but not for many years. I was not to speak to her in the meantime or make any attempt to bind her to me. I saw a picture of a straight, uphill, empty road. It was not what I wanted, but I accepted it.

One day in Washington, soon afterwards, George Marjoribanks, a Scots friend, and I called in at the now defunct, but then very much alive, *Times Herald*. There we met Frank Waldrop, the personal assistant to the publisher, Mrs Patterson, who was herself the sister of Colonel McCormick, the famous – some said infamous – publisher of the *Chicago Tribune*.

Frank was a debonair chap, every inch the young newspaper executive about town. When he gathered what we were up to, he said he would like to take us to see J. Edgar Hoover, then and until his death in 1972 the head of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. 'Just for the hell of it,' Waldrop said.

He introduced us to Hoover as 'people who always got their man', an exaggeration which caught Hoover's interest.

'What do you mean?'

'You arrest men. They change them,' replied Waldrop.

'What kind of men?' Hoover asked me.

'Journalists, mostly,' I said looking at Waldrop.

'My God,' said Hoover, 'they are the bane of my life. If you can change three of them while you are in America, I will give you a medal.'

'Agreed,' said I, 'but they may not change the way you want them to.'

In New York I met a man in Reuters, who was in a mess. He got out of it – which interested the chief Foreign Affairs columnist of another news agency, whom I will call Fraser. Fraser asked an American friend of mine, Dubois Morris, and me to lunch.

Seeing we were young enough to be his sons, Fraser tried to shock us. He told us of the tough newspaper world of New York, stressing his drinking and womanising. 'Why should I want to change?' he added. 'I've got all the women I want, all the money I want, all the drink I want.'

'Yes,' said Morris, 'and you're empty.'

Fraser went back to his office, and we began to pray about him. The next Saturday, when I was listening to God in the early morning, I had the thought, 'Spend this afternoon with Fraser'.

I rang him up. He said he was busy that afternoon. But though he said 'No', he meant 'Yes'. Suddenly he said, 'All right, be at the office at four'. I was, and he took me across Madison Avenue to a hotel.

'I'll never forgive you for what you've done to me,' Fraser said, as we sat down.

'What's that?'

'You've made me feel damned uncomfortable.'

'Perhaps it's about time.'

'I'm not going to change,' he said aggressively.

'I never asked you to,' I replied.

Over tea, Fraser began to tell me about his life. The son of a Presbyterian Minister in New England, he had gone early into journalism. He had been a war correspon-

dent on the Western Front during World War I, and after that, chief of the agency's London Bureau. He loved writing and hated administration, and so had gone back to New York to be a foreign affairs analyst. He was the first man to do a signed daily column on foreign affairs for the agency. It went to over a thousand papers across America and the world.

While in London, his first wife had died. He had met and fallen in love with a young English actress, and they had married. They now had two young children.

Fraser was in love with his wife, Dorothy, but he was married to his column. All the years I knew him he was going to get a few days ahead with it. He never did. He did not write quickly, and it is hard to get ahead with a foreign affairs column.

He sometimes neglected Dorothy. He was often away and was pre-occupied when he was at home. Six months before I met him, he had come home from a trip to South America. They had had a quarrel. She said she was tired of being left alone so much. He fired back. She flashed back that he was not the only pebble on the beach. He was furious.

Dorothy took the children to England to her parents. Fraser, with the dour self-righteousness of his kind, felt she alone was guilty, and swore that if he ever discovered the man in the case, he would break him.

To forget Dorothy – and, in one way, to revenge himself upon her – he was chasing the girls and drinking heavily. Some people in the office said he was losing his grip. He denied this, but I could see that he was worried all the same.

Beside this man of the world, my experience of life was meagre. I knew nothing of the world of affairs in which he moved, nor, amazing as it may seem to today's sophisticates, had I ever slept with a woman. But I knew

the pull of greed, resentment and lust as well as anyone, and had found that there was a power which enabled me to resist temptations which had beaten me before. I told Fraser this – and also that I believed that God had a plan for each man, which meant fulfilment, not frustration.

‘I’m not going to change,’ Fraser announced belligerently as we parted.

‘That’s your funeral,’ I replied.

Three mornings later, at seven o’clock, Fraser rang up. ‘I wanted you to know I’ve squared things up,’ he said.

I asked when we could meet. He said he’d see me in a week’s time. ‘Until then, you can do any long-distance work you like’ (he meant prayer). ‘But no short distance work. I want to see how it goes.’

We met as arranged in a Turkish restaurant, Fraser, Morris and I. He told us he had been drunk the night after I had seen him and the next night too. On the third morning he had woken with the certainty that God was there. Three clear thoughts came forcefully to him: ‘Stop drinking. Stop smoking. Stop womanising.’

‘It’s odd,’ he told us. ‘You never said any of these things were wrong. I just knew they were wrong for me.’

Since then he had been to the same parties, met the same women and carried an open packet of cigarettes in his pocket. He took it out now and showed it to us. ‘I haven’t wanted any of them,’ he said. Nor, as a matter of fact, did he do any of these things till the day he died 25 years later.

We suggested that he might need to think where he was to blame with Dorothy. He didn’t like that idea.

‘I’ll never forgive her,’ he said.

‘It may be you who needs forgiveness,’ we replied.

Three weeks later Fraser telephoned me and asked me to pray for him. ‘I’m in terrible trouble,’ he said. I went round to his rather sleazy hotel. He was in bed with

lumbago – and in some mental stress. He wouldn't tell me what was wrong. All he would say – and he repeated it over and over again – was: 'It might have happened in a play.'

Into my head, unbidden, rushed the thought that he had discovered the third person in the triangle – and that it was his close friend, a distinguished-looking official of Fraser's news agency whom I will call Crofts. At the same moment, Fraser said: 'You know what it is, don't you, Garth? Go and deal with it.'

No further word was spoken. I was in a dilemma. Should I go home and leave Fraser to get out of his own mess? Or should I play my hunch – and go and suggest to a man twice my age, a man who was a high official of a great news agency, that he'd been having an affair with his best friend's wife? I was frightened, but I decided I had to take the risk.

I went to the bar where Crofts generally took lunch. We talked. It was true, and he was terrified. He knew Fraser intended to break the other man if ever he found him. Indeed, Fraser had often told him so. He knew Fraser was a dour, determined, unforgiving man, and believed that he could get him turned out of his job if he complained to the head of the agency. For the atmosphere was less permissive then than now. Also Fraser was a big man and might be violent.

That evening I took Crofts to Fraser. They talked alone. To their astonishment, they were still friends at the end of it. Fraser came to see, in the next days, how he had treated Dorothy. He wrote to her in England, asking her to come back to him.

In the middle of the Atlantic – there was no airmail in those days – a letter from her crossed his. 'For the sake of the children,' she wrote, 'could we not have one more try?'

Dorothy returned to him, first alone, and then with the children. They rebuilt their home.

The change in the Frasers caused comment in a society where homes often break and are seldom mended. Secretary of State Cordell Hull asked Fraser about it. President Roosevelt heard of it. Next time that Fraser went on a world trip, the agency sent Dorothy with him. A second honeymoon, they called it: though one on which he filed his 800 words a day.

Fraser's words kept their nip, but lost their acid. He wrote on, year after year, till his retirement. He was, perhaps, the most widely-read foreign affairs analyst of his day. Now that the chip was off his shoulder, he wrote calmly and constructively. After retiring he and his wife accompanied Buchman when he took a team of two hundred people to India and Pakistan.

Incidentally, I wrote to Edgar Hoover, after three months, offering to introduce him to four journalists who had begun to be different. I got a nice letter back, but no medal.

That next summer I returned to Europe – first to Holland where 25,000 people crowded the vast Utrecht Vegetable Market for a Whitsun Assembly. The Dutch Nazi Party had also planned a rally in Utrecht over Whitsun. It was a flop, and Reichsführer Alfred Rosenberg, Hitler's chief ideologist, dubbed our meetings a 'part of an election campaign against the National Socialist party'. He claimed that we 'spread the slogan of "moral and spiritual rearmament" which was used by all democratic governments to create military re-armament against Germany'.²

Later in the summer, at a large conference in Oxford, I was working with Margot and others on a conference newspaper. One day, down by the river Cherwell, she and I began to talk about our feelings for each other –

which was, for me, a deliberate disobedience of the direction I had received that night some months before in Long Island. I became too preoccupied with the desire to marry Margot immediately.

So when, six weeks later, a cable came from America asking my help with a single issue magazine they were bringing out there, I was extremely reluctant to go. My friends warmly agreed that I should go, and my own guidance concurred with them. But deep down I felt this trip was not so much a commission to do a job of work as a stratagem of God or man to part me from Margot.

The magazine was called *Rising Tide*, and was a pictorial in the style of *Life* and *Picture Post*. Buchman and some of his friends, with me on the perimeter, had worked long and lovingly upon the English prototype, and some of the Americans were busy producing a slightly adapted equivalent in New York. I was to take a vital packet of photographs for this operation and help with the editing. I was so preoccupied with my distaste at going at all that, on leaving Waterloo for Southampton, I forgot to take the packet from the man who was seeing me off. I only missed it after the boat had sailed, and was more than relieved when the packet was brought to me when we were well out in Southampton water. Someone had chased down from London by car and just caught the pilot's launch.

When I reached New York, I found my friends there busily 'adapting' *Rising Tide* to the American situation. This involved diluting the force of the original quite a bit. In my mood of listless self-pity, I readily acquiesced. I was happy to bury myself in the work, and delighted when the then Managing Director of *Life* expressed his admiration of the product. 800,000 were printed and most of them sold on the bookstalls.

In fact, I was feeling quite pleased with myself by

Christmas Eve, when I received a sharp cable from Frank Buchman. It read, as far as I can remember: 'Bitterly disappointed your failure guiding policy Rising Tide, making perfect instrument garish. Glad am not coming to America. Would be difficult. Frank.'

This cable first plunged me into a violent internal debate of self-justification. But I began to see that I had let the preoccupation with Margot and the opinion of men like the *Life* executives become far more important to me than a relationship with Christ and the job of giving such truth as we had to America.

I began to see that, far from being a basically good man who needed just a little polishing up sometimes here and there, I was selfish and self-seeking through and through; that it was my deep inner core, the essential Garth Lean, which needed Christ's redemption. The thought came: 'You are like a woman who hugs her baby until it suffocates. That is what you have done with your love for Margot. You destroy what you treasure most – and others suffer from your neglect.'

I decided to go to Christ for cleansing and forgiveness – and that same day received a generous letter from Buchman which must have been posted in Europe a week before when I was still in the throes of reaction. He never mentioned the matter again. And when I returned to England he greeted me as if I had had nothing to do with what was, for him, a major disappointment, and for me a trust betrayed.

The great listener

In those middle years of the 1930s I got to know Frank Buchman and I was to see a good deal of him, with interruptions, during the next twenty-five years. How to describe this many-sided, single-minded, ordinary yet quite extraordinary man?

That he passes one test of greatness no one can deny. Although now more than twelve years dead, he is as live an issue as ever. His name, even casually mentioned in conversation, still brings vivid reactions, for or against. His self-appointed enemies still feel compelled to attack him. His friends are as sharply aware of his continuing challenge.

One of the pictures of Buchman which I find most revealing is that drawn by the Swedish literary critic, Herbert Grevenius. Grevenius had written of Buchman on hearsay as, 'a pocket Caesar issuing his dictates from afar with self-assumed power and perfection'. Then, in August 1938, *Stockholms Tidningen* sent him to report a large Swedish conference.

'Well, I never knew Caesar,' he wrote, 'but I don't think he was in the least like Frank Buchman. It is not his lightning smile which forms his secret. His epigrammatic

sayings, his briskness, his ability to hold a meeting in his hand and yet disappear into the background – none of these really tells you anything about the real Frank Buchman.

‘Look closely at a photograph of him, and you will see something in his expression, a sort of listening apart, and for once the camera does not lie. Sit a few days and study his face, and you will be amazed how often he appears to be questing, at a loss, not to say helpless. And he does not try to conceal it. His enormously active life is built on one thing only – guidance, for which he is on the watch every moment. He is a sail always held to be filled by the wind.’¹

Buchman would have emphatically repudiated any idea that he was a saint, but he was certainly more sensitive to the direction of God than any other man I have met. Hundreds of well-authenticated stories could be told of his going, seemingly for no reason, to what proved to be the right place at the right time, of his knowing what was happening on the other side of the hill or of his pre-vision of events. They would vary from the most personal matters – going to a room to find someone dangerously ill or sending people home, against their inclination, to find that they were desperately needed, to the booking of a theatre in San Francisco, six months before it was known that the first UN Conference was to take place there, because he felt a particular play would be needed in that city at that time. Coincidence? Telepathy? Extrasensory perception? Buchman preferred to say that ‘definite, accurate information can come from the Mind of God to the mind of man – that is normal prayer’. And, after a time, one was forced to believe him.

He was also sensitive with people. ‘I once asked God to make me sensitive,’ he told us. ‘I often wish I hadn’t. It is so painful.’

With people, too, he was a great listener. Many times I went to him – or took people to him – with problems on which, from his experience, he could easily have given advice or direction. He seldom did. Rather he listened to us – and then had us listen to God. That way the solutions which came were our own, and we acted on them more whole-heartedly.

Some commentators – particularly those who did not know him and who used the word with a sneer – spoke of him as a ‘charismatic leader’. That was never my impression. He was, on the surface, a far more ordinary man – a man with a tremendous sense of humour, no small talk and one to whom people of all kinds felt they could tell anything. He could, when you knew him, be painfully incisive, not to say frightening. Equally, he could be tender, when one least deserved it. But his mood was entirely divorced from any idea of the impression he was making or of his own convenience. He was always trying to find what God wanted said or done at that precise moment or for that particular person.

I first saw him in the back row of the gallery of the Randolph Hotel ballroom at Oxford in 1932. I had strolled up Beaumont Street from Worcester College that evening, undecided whether to go into an Oxford Group meeting there. ‘If that man ahead goes in, I will,’ I thought. He did not, but I did. I climbed to the little gallery to avoid being seen by any college friends who might be present.

The gallery was full, but an alert, powerfully-built man gave me his seat. Later I realised it had been Buchman – and still later that it was typical of him. He seldom led meetings, but was generally there.

We first exchanged a few words some months later when he brought a German bishop to Oxford. Some thirty of us were there to meet them outside someone’s digs in Keble Road. Buchman was amused, I remember, by an

attack upon us in that week's *Isis*. To me he said something about the potential he saw in all of us. There was nothing startling about it, and nothing even faintly charismatic about him. My impression was that he was friendly, really interested in each one of us and that he enjoyed life.

His obvious concern was that we should make clear to the bishop that anyone, even he, could change. He was the notorious Bishop Hossenfelder, a leader of the Nazi-orientated German Christians. Considering the fact that many of us had come from the near-Communist background of those years, Buchman was taking quite a risk in bringing him up to see us. Clearly, however, he was out to change, not please, the Bishop and expected us as Christians to do the same.

Hossenfelder was a plump, cigar-smoking little man with an enormous cross on his breast, who cut the appointment Buchman had made for him with the Bishop of Chichester to go to a German *bierstube* he had discovered near Victoria Station. Certain of the British Christian leaders criticised Buchman for bringing him to Britain, unaware, it would seem, that he hoped they would play their part in changing him. To a theologian who protested that he had allowed 'that hopeless fellow Hossenfelder to damage his (Buchman's) reputation', Buchman replied: 'It is not a question of this man's past, but of his future. What might it not mean for the future of Germany if, by the Grace of God, he should see a maximum message of Christ incarnate in you; and you might be the human instrument to effect that mighty change.'²²

'The Oxford Group,' he added, 'has no reputation in that sense, and for myself I have nothing to lose.' I am reminded of John Wesley's retort to his fussy brother, Charles, on a similar occasion: 'Brother, when I devoted to God my ease, my time, my life, did I except my reputation?'²³

For Buchman, nothing was a public relations operation. Early one morning in Milan a few months before he died he said that he lived for one thing only : to bring a real experience to every person he met – including the man who was just going to bring him his breakfast.

He really meant everyone. A journalist, who was with him at the time, records that he did in fact pass on an experience of Christ to several workers in that Milan hotel, and the last person he was used to change in this life was the maid who cleaned his hotel room during his last brief illness at Freudstadt. I lost him once on Copenhagen railway station. He had darted off to see a boot-black with whom he had talked on a previous visit. In Berlin, in 1956, a Canadian friend of Buchman's was approached by a shabbily-dressed old man. 'You were here with Dr Buchman in 1936, weren't you? Do you remember me?' he asked, producing a tattered visiting card with Buchman's name on one side and on the other the words, 'To Max – friend and fellow-fighter, Frank,' in Buchman's writing. 'I was the lift-man at the hotel,' the old man explained. 'Every night, however late he came in, he used to talk to me. He saved my home which was breaking up because I was gripped by drink.'

But the unique thing about Buchman was that he aimed to turn whole communities, even whole nations, Godwards. His first attempt to affect a whole nation was in China in 1916 and 1917. There he was used to change President Sun Yat-Sen's right hand man, Hsu Ch'ien, and the President himself said of him, 'Buchman is the only man who tells me the truth about myself.' A dozen of the leaders of the new China began to work with him in the conviction that, in Hsu Ch'ien's words, 'We need a lot of little Abraham Lincolns in China. One is not enough because from the President down to the lowest official there is

dirt and corruption. The Christian faith alone will save China by tackling these moral evils.' Before the task was well launched, however, Buchman's sponsor, Bishop Logan Roots of Hankow, received a letter from the trustee of the fund which was backing Buchman suggesting that he be given no money but be sent on leave. The Bishop agreed. Six years later the trustee sent an apology to Buchman. A clique of missionaries, who resented Buchman's challenge, had known that the trustee, although a married man, had had a series of mistresses. They had blackmailed him to attack Buchman. Meanwhile, Bishop Roots had realised his mistake. He worked with Buchman for the rest of his life.

If Buchman's aim was to redirect the course of Chinese history, he failed, as indeed he did again when, before the Second World War, he worked through a change in certain German church leaders to stem the mad march of Nazism. At other times, he succeeded, as when in Norway he initiated what was called 'the greatest spiritual movement since the Reformation'⁴ and 'became the catalyst which made possible the united Norwegian church resistance to Nazism';⁵ or when, in the 1950s, he played an important part in reconciling France and Germany. But the words 'failed' and 'succeeded' are, of course, wildly inappropriate. For he was concerned only with bringing 'a maximum message' to people and situations – and watching what God created through them. 'I do nothing. God does everything,' he often said.

Buchman was no respecter of persons. An internationally-known businessman asked him, 'What do I need?' 'Three things,' Buchman replied. 'Humility, humility and humility.' To a football international, the idol of his generation, who complained that he could not help people, Buchman said :

'Perish every fond ambition,
All I've sought, and hoped, and known.
Yet how rich is my condition,
God and Heaven are still my own.'

'He said it four times very slowly,' the footballer told me. 'He didn't say anything else. It was a turning point for me.'

His relations with royalty were equally salty. He always gave them respect and was unaffected by whether their fortunes waxed or waned, as Prince Richard of Hesse, who was with him when he died, and King Michael of Roumania have testified.⁶ But his association with them was on the same basis as with anyone else. 'Did you meet those princesses?' he once asked Roger Hicks as he came into his room in London. 'Yes.' 'How were they?' 'Very angry.' 'Well, I thought they would be,' said Buchman. 'But I told them the truth. If I can't have fellowship with them on that basis, I don't want it on any basis. Let's get on.'

Hicks, who was at Worcester College a few years before me and went from there to a teaching job in India, met Buchman in the early thirties. His father had left him more than comfortably off as regards money. Realising, after giving his life to God, that his money was not his own, but merely his in trust, he offered Buchman his whole fortune, some £25,000, for his work. Buchman refused. 'Now that you are free from the false security of money,' he said, 'God will show you how to use it. I have not got time to spend your money.' Hicks could not get him to take it.

Two days later, Hicks returned to Buchman with a cheque for about a tenth of the sum he had previously offered. 'Frank, I've had guidance to give you this,' he said. After a moment's reflection, Buchman accepted it.

'Tell me,' Hicks then asked, 'how will you spend it?'

'I have thirty-two people going to Canada with me next week,' answered Buchman. 'I have reserved the passages, but have no money with which to pay for them. This will be the first claim.'

'Let me get this straight,' said Hicks. 'You believe you are guided by God to take thirty-two people to Canada. You have no money. You pray for money. Along comes my offer of what you need and a good deal more. You turn it down. Why?'

'It would not have been right for you,' was Buchman's reply.

Buchman always conducted his world-wide work on this basis of faith and prayer. He never confined his enterprises to the money, if any, which he had in hand or to what he could reasonably expect. When the treasurer of his work in America wrote warning him, on one occasion, of the large sum needed for one project, he replied :

I am grateful for your business caution but I want you to move with me and the people of America in the dimension of what needs to be done, not what we think we can do. I want you to help me always to live at the place where I rely not on what I have but on what God gives. It is such freedom and it works.

I wish you all the joys of Christmas, and the peace and the trust of the Christ Child for you and for yours and all with you.

Ever gratefully and faithfully,
Frank

In thirty years, I only once heard him anxious. 'I know I should not fear,' he shared with some of us one morning, 'but I do wonder how we'll make out.' Yet he did, and he left neither reserves nor debts.

Buchman was not one to be satisfied tomorrow with

what was happening today. He kept a freshness of approach on into his eighties. A Swedish editor wrote in 1971 that his speeches read like the words of 'one of today's young Christian revolutionaries appealing to everyone of his own age with prophetic passion and power'.⁷

When, in the middle 1930s, he had been used to create what Malcolm Muggeridge, then far from favourably inclined, judged the only successful revival of recent years,⁸ he became profoundly dissatisfied with the result. He felt that the urgency of the hour called for something far larger than revival. He also hated the way some who had found new life through the Oxford Group were settling down by the stern to enjoy its fruits and fellowship instead of living to meet the challenges of the new age. Some of his people turned back at that point. His own attitude was shown in a speech at the assembly which Grevenius reported.

I am not interested, nor do I think it adequate, if we are going just to start another revival. Whatever thoughtful statesman you talk to will tell you that every country needs a moral and spiritual awakening. That is the absolutely fundamental essential. But revival is only one level of thought. To stop there is inferior thinking.

Unless we call for something bigger than that we are done for.

The next step is revolution. It is uncomfortable. A lot of Christians don't like the word. It scares them. It makes them goose-fleshy. That's where some of your critics come from – goose-fleshy Christians with armchair Christianity. What the Oxford Group will give this and every nation is a spiritual revolution.⁹

From this further searching came the expansion of the

Oxford Group into Moral Re-Armament which was launched in East Ham Town Hall, London, in 1938. The title owed much to Buchman's concern with the need for a moral and spiritual rearmament to match the material armament then in progress. It was taken up by leaders all over the free world, and the *Saturday Evening Post* attributed to it 'an important part of the credit for the fact that, since Munich, British morale has improved as fast as her fighting machine'.¹⁰ This was a by-product rather than the aim, since it was still everyone's aim to avoid the oncoming conflict.

Later, as the world moved into an ideological age, he raised his bid yet further.

'Today,' he said in 1945, 'we see three ideologies battling for control. There is Fascism, and Communism, and then there is that great other ideology which is the centre of Christian democracy. We need to find an ideology that is big enough and complete enough to outmarch any of the other great ideologies. Until that time comes, men will flounder. They will not find their way. But when the Holy Spirit of God rules the hearts and lives of men, then we will begin to build the new world that all of us long to see.'¹¹

Some Western democrats shied away from the word ideology and thought that democracy needed no such coherent passion, philosophy and plan to inspire it. But as year follows year and those possessed of an ideology, whether in industry, education or internationally, out-think the ideology-less democrats, the shallowness of that thought is revealed.

Others scoffed at Buchman for presuming to think that such an ideology could be produced. But the two main ideological centres of his day did not scoff. They accepted that another ideology had been put in the field. Thus, Himmler's Gestapo in a 126 page analysis of his work,

written in 1939 and published in 1942, stated: 'With unique perseverance and tenacity the Oxford missionaries attempt to place the economic, social, cultural and political structure of the nations on a Christian basis through the endless minute activity of the cure of souls. They encourage their members to place themselves fully beneath the Christian Cross and to oppose the cross of the swastika with the Cross of Christ, as the former seeks to destroy the Cross of Christ. The Group constitutes an attack on the nationalism of the State and has quite evidently become its Christian opponent.'¹² And Moscow Radio stated, 'Moral Re-Armament is a global ideology with bridge-heads in every nation in its final phase of world expansion. It has the power to capture radical, revolutionary minds.'¹³

It was remarkable to see Buchman, a man brought up in a different age, deal with young revolutionaries. His approach was 100 per cent positive. 'Can Marxists pave the way for a greater ideology?' he asked in the Ruhr. 'Why not? They have always been open to new things. They will go to prison or die for their belief. Why should they not be the ones to live for this superior thinking?'¹⁴

In the early fifties many hard-core Communists came from the Ruhr to his conference and training centre at Caux in Switzerland. It was the life they saw lived at Caux which attracted them. 'I have sung the Internationale all my life,' said one of them. 'This is the first time I have seen it lived.' These men were life-long atheists, and their first step was often to try, in their own strength, to live up to the absolute moral standards, which they recognised as a right aim, without God. One such was Max Bladeck, for twenty-six years a Party member, and then the Chairman of the Miners' Union in his town.

The Communist Party was in a difficulty. For years its strategy had been to infiltrate other bodies, but now it was being infiltrated. Here were hard-core Party members

who said that they had found in the absolute standards the logical next step for the Party. In the end the Party expelled forty of its West German Executive for 'dealings with a contrary ideology',¹⁵ but meanwhile it did all it could to discredit those who had been to Caux.

His former Party colleagues knew that Bladeck's weakness was drink. They managed to get him drinking and sat him next to a particular woman. He fell into compromise in his cups. At once, all over the Ruhr, the Party pointed at him and said, 'See what hypocrites these Caux men are.' Bladeck was so ashamed that he wrote Buchman asking that none of Buchman's friends should call on him. 'I have betrayed you,' he said.

Buchman, who was in America at the time, cabled back as follows :

'Man-like it is to fall in sin;
Fiend-like it is to dwell therein;
Christ-like it is from sin to rise.

"The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." The biggest sinner can become the greatest saint. I have faith in the new Max. Sincerely, Frank.'

That cable shattered Max's core of atheism and cynicism. He saw he needed help - that he could not live a new way in his own strength. Faith was born. Soon afterwards he and all his family were baptised.

Buchman had been wise not to insist on belief in God earlier, when Max was not ready for it. As Paul Kurowski, Max's fellow Communist who made that first journey to Caux with him, said, 'I had never met a man like Buchman. There was a peace, a love and a great humility. He never tried to convert me. He never tried to answer my anti-religious points. He just had faith in the best in me, as he did in everyone.'

On occasion, however, when such caring had earned the right to do so, sharper words were employed. The Tolon Na, then President of the Northern Territories Council of Ghana, a Moslem chief of immense dignity, relates how Buchman turned to him one day and said, 'When did you steal last?' 'This struck me like a depth charge. My heart leapt into my mouth,' the Tolon Na continued. It was the turning point of his life.

How did Buchman enlist those who worked close to him? Of course, it varied infinitely from person to person. The case of Oliver Corderoy is interesting.

Oliver first came to Caux in uniform just after the war. After a few days he made a less than enthusiastic speech, saying he wanted to investigate it all further. Buchman said with a twinkle, 'So I'm on trial?' Then he invited the young man to go with him to America, drive his car and generally work as one of his aides.

From time to time over the next year, Oliver would state that he would like to have his freedom, for when you were working as aide to Buchman it was a twenty-four hour job and you naturally had to go where he went and do what needed doing. One day in Paris, Buchman said, 'I'm leaving for Italy this evening and shall not need you any more. Help me get off and then you are free.' Oliver got Buchman off to the station, and then had what he describes as 'a serious quiet time'. 'Up till then, I had gone where Buchman went,' Oliver explains. 'Now I had to decide for myself.'

The thought which came was, 'Stick to Buchman'. So Oliver quickly packed his own bags and took a taxi to the Gare de Lyon. He panted up the platform behind Buchman who suddenly turned and roared at him, 'What are you doing here?'

'I have had one of your damned quiet times and had the thought to stick with you,' Oliver replied.

'Jump in,' said Buchman.

'I will go and get my ticket,' said Oliver.

'I have got it already,' Buchman replied. 'You see,' he added, 'I cannot have people with me by invitation. They have to volunteer.'

Later that night Buchman said to him, 'Promise me never to be afraid of me. I must have people's correction.' Oliver promised. Sometimes, in order to keep fear back, he would raise his voice and almost shout at Buchman. He would say, 'I think you are wrong there, *Sir*.' Some of Buchman's older friends were much annoyed with him for his opinionatedness. But Buchman would insist, 'Let the boy talk.'

Buchman hated people trying to please him. But he would not make it easier for them by cooing at them, perhaps because he sensed that that would not cure them of the temptation to suck up to people in general. It was not easy to break through to a fearless relationship of give and take with him, and too few of us did it as a constant. If you did, you came in contact with a white-hot flame of devotion to God which searched out your own motives and demanded further and ever further change in yourself. But you also found a very human comrade who was open to change himself.

You could never tell by rota how Buchman would take you. For some years after I joined him, he was amazingly tolerant of my conceit and outspoken dissent. In Copenhagen, when I had just left Oxford, I remember telling him that he was mishandling a newspaper proprietor whom he had known for years. He thanked me gravely. A year later, when I was editing a conference report about his work, he sent a friend mildly to suggest to me that I might include something he, Buchman, had written and which I, in my self-confidence, was not sure merited inclusion. Another suggestion he made I turned down with

some heat. 'Your contribution has been so great that I readily give way,' he said, with an irony which, at the time, escaped me.

Later, however, he must have decided that I could take more solid food. When I disagreed with him on quite a trivial point, he put his finger on one of my basic characteristics. 'The piggishness of possessiveness' was his pungent phrase, and he reminded me of it in season and out, until I at least began to recognise the symptoms of it when it arose.

Buchman, when I first met him, was a physically vigorous fifty-four. At sixty, I described him in an American newspaper as 'six feet tall, strongly built and clean shaven. He is disciplined, alert, full of vitality. You carry away an impression not of his features, but of the life which animates them.' He was, in fact, in no way handsome. His nose was large. He once said of it, 'God knew what he was doing when He gave me my nose. He did not want anyone to be attracted into this work by me, but only by Him.'

During the war, in America, he suffered a stroke and was thought to be dying. He called his friends round him and divided what little he had in the world among them. Surprisingly, he survived. As he came out of his gravest period of unconsciousness, he murmured, 'I saw the outstretched arms of Christ and they were wonderful.' Later, he said, 'I had to decide whether to go or stay, and I had to stay. There is work to be done. I will have twenty more years.' He did, almost to the day.

From that time he could never move around without assistance. Yet he travelled round the world several times, often having to be carried up steps or wheeled about in a chair. He was often in pain, sometimes irritable or bad-tempered, occasionally deeply discouraged, though seldom showing it. This period, however, was the time of his

greatest flowering. It included the vast assemblies, year by year, at Caux and Mackinac Island, Michigan, and elsewhere to which people streamed from every continent — people of every station and background and religion. It was the time when the reconciling work was done between France and Germany,¹⁶ and between Japan and her former enemies, for which he was decorated by the various governments.¹⁷ During this time he also played a major part creating the change in people which helped Tunisia, Morocco and other African countries to obtain freedom without bloodshed.¹⁸

‘As a moral ambassador,’ wrote the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* on his eightieth birthday, ‘Frank Buchman enjoys, far beyond all national borders, almost universal trust. His selfless rôle of mediator, mostly unseen by the public, is again and again called upon. This man who without sentimentality, without oratorical gifts, nevertheless fascinates his hearers, has become more and more the conscience of the world.’¹⁹

Yet, throughout, Buchman’s concern was primarily with individuals. What did he say to them? I think of two — the President of a country and a young man just coming into his work.

The President was President Magsaysay of the Philippines, the man who, perhaps, did more than anyone to re-establish that country after the war. Buchman, on his way back to Europe from Japan with a group of a dozen friends, had breakfast with him one morning. The President’s aide, Major Agerico Palaypay, writes that, afterwards, Magsaysay casually remarked to him, ‘I have just met some unique and interesting people who have brought us answers instead of loading us down with problems.’ Some time later, the President told him, ‘Since I have applied what Buchman told me and acted on the basis of “*what* is right not *who* is right”, things have been

much simpler.' 'I assured him,' adds Palaypay, 'that if he practised that in politics, he would be politically ruined. The opposite was actually what happened. For as he accepted what was right, even from the Opposition, and as he denied things to his own Party that were wrong, it won him great respect.'²⁰

To the young man who came into his room bringing him a cup of tea, Buchman said, 'If you are going to work around here, you please start living by the Cross and not by rules. Do you know what that means? Well, we will discuss it together.

'Do you trust the God you serve? Feel He is absolutely reliable? Absolutely reliable? You have got to get to the place where you prefer Him above all men and things.

'"Lovest thou me more than these?" He said that. Can you answer, "Yes"?

'My boy, that is where you have got to get to. Without Him, don't cross the threshold. With Him, travel the world. It is true: "He walks with me and He talks with me and He tells me I am His own." Do you ever have that sense? You should. It's your birthright.

'I advise you: make absolute honesty your policy. Don't think avoiding sin is the goal of life. Some do, and a damn dull job they make of it. You have got to have a true sense of the direction in which you go all out. Do you have it? What is your speed? If you are moving fast, the dirt does not stick. Same with sin.

'Are you smothered in miracles? You ought to be. They are not rationed, you know.'

It is remarkable that one who spoke with such forthright Christian conviction should have been a magnet for people of other faiths. When five Buddhist Abbots came from Burma to celebrate his eightieth birthday, their leader, U Narada, Secretary of the Presiding Abbots Association, said, 'A personality like him comes once in a thousand

years';²¹ and the Ayatullah Haj Modjtahedi from Iran said, 'I saw in him a man of God, and I discerned that his spirit of faith and close attentiveness to the Voice of Truth is singularly strong.'²²

Buchman's detractors are in this difficulty – the more they point out his defects, real or imaginary, the more they prove that he was right in thinking that the Power which worked through him was not his own.

Howard's beginning

Buchman had long foreseen the coming of World War II. As early as 1935, he had returned from Germany saying that the country 'smelt of war'. Of course, we hoped against hope that it could be averted, and even thought that the massive campaign of moral re-armament launched in 1938 might have some part in averting it. An exaggerated sense of our own importance? Perhaps. But it turned out that we had nowhere near so high an estimate of our own effectiveness as the Nazis seemed to have.

We knew, of course, that our literature was banned from entering Germany in 1936 and that our meetings were under surveillance there.¹ We knew, too, that General Ludendorff's newspaper had complained of our 'sweet poison seeping over the borders into Germany' from Holland and Scandinavia.² We did not know that the headquarters of Himmler's Gestapo had already in 1939 composed the 126 page report already mentioned in which we were described as 'the pacemaker of Anglo-American diplomacy' and supplying 'the Christian garment for world democratic aims'.³

Our aims in Britain, as we faced up to the war situation, were more modest. Would the experience of faith which we had gained stand up to wartime conditions? Could we who had, long before the war, enlisted in a service as exacting – and certainly more permanent – than the army make a real contribution to the national effort?

The Minister of Labour, Mr Ernest Brown, had said that we full-time workers were in a reserved occupation because of the nature and importance of our work. So each of us had to decide individually what part to play. Some full-time workers and most of our best part-time workers enlisted in the armed forces. About thirty of us decided to carry on our full-time Moral Re-Armament work.

One aspect of this work in Britain was a campaign, undertaken by over 550 civic leaders, 'to make the morale of the country impregnable by creating men and women in every sphere who base their lives on Christian principles of honesty, purity, unselfishness and faith'. The Mayor of Swansea 1939–40, Councillor John Martin, described its impact on a typical city :

This campaign was directed in a very practical way to meeting the needs of our community. The 'Call to our Citizens' which I was pleased to sponsor, reminded people of the unfailing strength in which Britain has always turned in time of crisis. A manifesto, 'Women and the Home Front', pointed out the simple application of the principle of unselfishness in matters of shopping, hoarding, avoiding waste, and was issued by my wife at a meeting of leading women citizens in the Guild Hall. Just before my year of office ended, the Mayors of Llanelly, Neath and Port Talbot joined me in publishing that excellent message on Morale – 'How To Play Your Part'.

Swansea has since suffered cruel bombardment, and our people have shown a magnificent spirit. That spirit, we know, is rooted in generations of deep Christian faith; but I believe no small part was played by the Oxford Group in pointing men and women back to those spiritual foundations of high morale.⁴

The Lord Mayor of Bristol, then known as the most bombed city of Britain, sent out 50,000 copies of the Morale message. *The Bristol Evening Post* commented: 'What better proof could be shown of the ever-increasing moral and spiritual re-armament of our city than the conduct of our people in the present troubles . . . this mobilised spirit of Bristol, fortified by today's timely action, is a force of unmeasured power. It will give the energy to win the war and the touch of sustained genius to build a new world when the present troubles are passed.'⁵

When this campaign got under way, it met with a powerful counter-blast. Between August 7th and 31st, 1940, the Communist *Daily Worker* eight times attacked various Mayors for issuing the Morale message, a reflection perhaps of the fact that Berlin and Moscow were still allies and that Britain was, in Communist eyes, fighting an imperialist war. In the same period, the man who wrote the original *Express* articles in 1928, who was now a columnist there, four times made similar attacks and a *Daily Herald* columnist did much the same. The pattern became known to us as the Merry-Go-Round.

An event which may have done something to stimulate these August attacks was one in which I was involved. Later the *Daily Telegraph* was to write of it: 'There seems, indeed, to have been few more remarkable conversions since Paul of Tarsus set off for Damascus'.⁶

It began one afternoon in June 1940, soon after Churchill had become Prime Minister, when Mrs Edith

Ducé, the secretary of the General Manager of the *Express Newspapers*, came to see me.

Mrs Ducé was an able and sensitive woman of fifty-five, who had some months earlier decided to let God change her way of life. As the General Manager's secretary, she was at the centre of things in the *Express* office in Fleet Street, and had been prone to use her inside knowledge for gossip. She had now stopped gossiping. This pleased some, but annoyed others, and she became the target of some not-so-mild persecution. Sometimes she used to go into St Bride's church at midday to gather courage, and sometimes she liked to talk to someone after the day's work was done.

On this June afternoon, as we walked in Green Park, she talked not of herself, but of Peter Howard. 'I think you ought to see him,' she said.

Howard, it seemed, was at a point of crisis. For seven years he had, under Lord Beaverbrook's personal tuition, built up a highly successful political column. He was a 'knuckle-duster' type of journalist. 'My philosophy,' he was to write later, 'was that to attack public men was more amusing and of more service to the community than to defend them. When I punched, I punched to hurt.'⁷ Seldom did a Sunday go by when some Cabinet Minister was not to be seen in the *Sunday Express*, transfixed by the nib of Howard's pen.

But now Lord Beaverbrook had joined the War Cabinet. So Mrs Ducé's boss had told Howard not to write on politicians any more - 'as long as the old man is in the Government'. Howard was furious. Although he was writing leaders and articles in all three Beaverbrook papers at the time, the political column was his power base. He felt that his career was in ruins. And Mrs Ducé, the buffer between him and her boss, bore the brunt of his displeasure.

'I've told Peter that you could help him,' concluded Edith. 'I expect he'll give you a ring.'

But did Howard want to be 'helped'? Or was he looking for someone to take the place of the politicians as a victim, in his column? Most of my friends advised caution. 'Don't touch him,' said Arthur Baker of *The Times*. 'If you touch pitch, you'll get black.'

I myself had only met Howard once, though I had known of him at Oxford as a handsome fellow of great dash and humour, the man with the thin leg who had, amazingly, gone on to captain England at rigger. He had also been an enormous executioner in the O.U.D.S. production of Flecker's *Hassan* during my first year up. I had met him once for a few minutes at the *Express* sometime in 1938, and had found him courteous and not unfriendly. The next morning in my 'quiet time' I had had the unexpected thought that one day he would work with us, and it was the memory of that thought which decided me to ignore Baker's advice, should Howard ask to see me. Next day he did, and we arranged to meet for tea in a Fleet Street cafe.

The thought I had as I jogged down the Strand on the 96 bus was to tell Howard one story – and then leave. So when we were settled in to tea and tea-cake, I told him about the change in the American journalist, Fraser. Then I got up and said I had to go.

'What?' said Peter. 'We've hardly started yet. When can we meet again?'

'Do you really want to?'

'Yes.'

So we fixed to have lunch on the following Wednesday, and I felt that I had at least escaped from impalement on his pen for one more week.

Vincent Evans, then of the *News Chronicle*, lent me his flat in the Temple for that lunch. I spent a lot of time

thinking and praying about it, for I knew it could not be gulp and go this time. The only clear thought I had was: 'Tell Howard that he is as selfish as hell. When men are dying to keep us safe, his only concern is that he isn't allowed to write about politics.' As this was all I had got, I thought I'd better use it at once and see what happened.

So, as we sat down to lunch, I said: 'I had a thought about you this week.' That interested him. 'It's just possible that it came from God,' I added. Now he was fascinated.

He had come to lunch determined to get material for an exposé of the Group, and this sounded promising. I told him my thought. In his heat, he seemed to forget the interview. 'What do you suggest that I do about it?' he said.

'You ought to change,' I answered. 'At a time of crisis like this, the country can't afford to have men in your position with such a small aim.'

'What do you mean?' he replied. 'A man can't change just like that.'

'Of course, he can,' I said. 'God can change you, and whenever you like.'

'But I don't believe in God,' he answered, as though that settled the matter.

'That doesn't alter God's position in the least. He doesn't depend on whether you believe in Him. He is either there or He isn't, and you can easily find out.'

I added that you did not have to believe in electricity to find out if it was there. All you had to do was to turn on the light switch. He seemed interested and asked me how I had first made my experiment in Oxford, eight years earlier.

While we talked, I was praying for direction, for what to do and say next. For I was aware that this talk might easily fizzle out in half a column of ridicule in the *Express*,

and I knew that humanly I could do nothing to prevent it. Howard was cleverer than I and had a great newspaper behind him.

The thought which came to me, with compelling force, was to ask Peter to pray with me. I thought this was crazy. I saw the headline, 'M.R.A. man prays with me'. So I resisted the thought. Yet it kept coming, and in the end I knew I had to risk it.

'There's a very simple way of discovering whether God is there or not,' I told Howard.

'What's that?'

'If you ask Him to come into your life and change it, He will either come or not. If He does, you'll know. If He doesn't you can always go back to the way you live now.'

There was a long silence.

'Well,' I gulped. 'Would you like to ask Him now?'

To my astonishment, Howard said he would, and got down on his knees in Vincent Evans' King's Bench Walk flat. I followed.

Just then, there came a heavy foot on the ancient oak staircase leading to Vincent's and other flats. Howard leapt to his feet. I stayed where I was. The steps went on past our floor. Howard got down on his knees again, and began to pray. I don't remember his exact words. He asked God, if He was there, to tell him what to do – and he would do it.

Peter, as he soon became to me, has written that he went through with this because he thought it would win my confidence and open to him the inner workings of M.R.A. for his articles. I think there was more to it than that. But, in any case, it is dangerous to talk to God if you don't mean it. He is apt to take you at your word.

We walked out through the Temple into Fleet Street. 'What happens next?' Peter asked me. I said that I spent

the first half-hour or hour of the day praying and listening to God. Why didn't he try it?

Peter describes what happened in *Innocent Men*, which was published in April 1941 :

'First thing in the morning, on the day after my meeting with Garth Lean, I set myself to listen to God. I sat with a piece of paper and a pencil in my hand to record what thoughts I had.

'My feeling was one of repugnance over the whole business. Something in me was set and firm against the affair. Yet I persevered for two reasons. I knew that Garth Lean would ask me if I had listened to God and what I had recorded. And I wanted to worm my way into the full confidence of Lean and the other Groupers, so that I could find out the whole truth about them.

'At the most I looked upon them as bright red hedgeberries – attractive in certain lights, but probably poisonous.

'Well, I sat and waited for God to give me a message. I was disappointed to find that the messages I received were of the most ordinary and pedestrian character. On my piece of paper I recorded as follows: "Write home. Write to nanny George (his childhood nurse). Try to be as helpful as possible in the office. You have no reason to be bitter. You are too ready to make fun of other people and gibe at them."

'All this can be dismissed as the sort of thoughts which might come from a man's own brain who decided to sit and listen to God. Though it is certainly worth recording that at this time I myself was not at all convinced that I had not first-rate reasons to be bitter.

'Then I had the thought: "Pay Sergeant Smith the five pounds you owe him."

'Now here again this thought may be explained as a

subconscious thought of my own. Yet as an experimenter I was beginning to get more interested than irritated by this business of listening to God.

'The circumstances of Sergeant Smith's five pounds were as follows :

'He was a little fellow who used to bicycle round the streets of Oxford in the early morning, when I was at the University, massaging the legs and backs of rigger players and passing from one to another all the rigger gossip.

'Sergeant Smith charged five pounds a term for his services. I paid him the five pounds for eight terms consecutively. The ninth term he massaged me as usual. But I left Oxford without paying him.

'He never, so far as I can remember, sent in a bill. I never gave the matter consideration for almost ten years until I had this thought about the payment of five pounds as I sat "listening to God".

'Some people may explain it away as a subconscious thought of a debt which had been nagging at me all those years. I do not think so. I did not worry very much about £5 debts.'⁸

Peter sent the money to the sergeant. The next day he got another thought: 'Pay back £150 to the Educational Grants Committee.' The fact that he at once did so seemed evidence that he was taking his experiment seriously.

Then he began to get other 'guidance' – directive rather than just corrective. He records :

'When the air raids began, I was frightened, but foolhardy. Thus, although I felt alarmed, I goaded myself to stand out in Ludgate Circus and watch the bombardment when the first mass daylight raid on the London docks came our way.

'Soon after promising Garth Lean to listen to God, I received a message that if I trusted myself to God there

was no need to fear. But that to go about the streets unnecessarily when a raid was on was wrong.

'Explain it as you like, I have not from that moment felt over-alarmed in air raids.

'Then during last autumn, when the invasion of this country by Hitler seemed imminent and the air-bombardment was in full operation, I was deeply worried about my family. My wife and children (three of them, all at that time under seven) were in Suffolk in a cottage. At any time of any day or night it seemed possible that the Nazis might attempt to land troops on our island. East Anglia was an obvious landing place.

'I could not decide what to do with my family. I thought of moving them to Cornwall. Then to Cumberland. For a time I even played with the idea of shipping them to safety in America.

'Garth Lean suggested that I should submit the whole issue to God. I felt this to be a faintly ridiculous suggestion. But anyway I sat, prayed for guidance and listened. Very soon came the thought clear and urgent: "Let them stay where they are. Let them stay where they are. Have faith. People are feeling jumpy everywhere just now. Other people in your Suffolk village cannot get away. It is up to people like you and your family to set an example of commonsense and confidence."

'My family have been in Suffolk ever since. Whatever the outcome, I place this fact on record. From that instant I have not again had a moment of real anxiety and worry as to whether they should change their quarters.'⁹

At about this time, Peter asked me down to Suffolk for the week-end. I accepted, and we journeyed down early on Sunday morning, after he had seen the *Sunday Express* to bed and slept the night in the office. On the way down it became clear that Peter had not told his wife, Doč, anything about his experiment and was 'kicking

himself for being such a goat' as to invite me down, as the whole story would be bound to emerge.

Doë met us at the station in the dog-cart, and we drove to the near-derelict farm which they had bought a year before. Then, while Peter walked round the farm with his foreman, Doë and I pulled turnips. As we pulled, we talked, and it rapidly appeared that Doë, in fact, knew as much about experimenting as Peter. She had secretly read *For Sinners Only* which Peter had left in their cottage. She had started listening to God on her own account and had made up a row she had had with the village washerwoman. She was eager to know what to do next.

At this point Peter returned from his walk. Nothing more was said until the next morning before breakfast, when Peter brought Doë into my room and said, in acute embarrassment, 'Well, Garth. You'd better tell Doë what we have been doing.'

'I don't have to,' I replied. 'She has been making the same experiment herself.' Then we all three listened together.

The rebuilding of Peter's home into one of the happiest and most creative that can be imagined is described in his books, and more recently by his daughter Anne Wolrige Gordon in *Peter Howard, Life and Letters*. There was, as he relates in *Innocent Men*, a period of some weeks when he would not see me because he was unwilling to carry out some guidance – to be honest with Doë about one particular incident – which constantly came to him. This caused me no anxiety, for I knew that Peter's contract was not with me, but with God. In due course he obeyed – and the road ahead was clear.

Meanwhile, in August, M.R.A. was coming under frequent fire in Fleet Street, and particularly in Tom Driberg's column in the *Express*. Peter told me one day

that he felt he should write an answer to Driberg and get it printed in the *Express*. He wrote it, but the *Express* would not print it. Arthur Christiansen, the editor, said bluntly that he liked Driberg's attacks and would not print any answer. This led Peter to write *Innocent Men* – the name prompted by *Guilty Men*, the famous anti-Chamberlain book which Michael Foot, Frank Owen and he had written over the Dunkirk week-end and published under the pseudonym Cato. Peter had given me a copy in the first week of our acquaintance, while the authorship was still a secret, inscribed 'This book is splenetic like me'.

The publication of *Innocent Men* led to Peter leaving the *Express*, for Dick Plummer, who was temporarily in charge, forbade him to publish it – and he felt that 'the publication of the truth about a great world movement was more important than the fate of one journalist, even a journalist so important to myself as me'.¹⁰

Peter's income dropped overnight from one of the highest of a journalist in Fleet Street to nil. He returned to Suffolk to try and support himself and his family on his near-derelict farm. By now, the medical examiners had confirmed that I was unfit for military service, so I was able to spend most of the next three years with him there. It was, indeed, an adventure of faith for all of us. Doë was a rock of courage, and within a couple of years Peter had raised the farm into the 'A' category. It also became a centre of new life for hundreds, who visited it from all over Britain.

After the war in Europe ended, Peter went to America, with Roland Wilson and Lawson Wood, to meet Buchman. It was he who, over the next fifteen years, helped Peter to develop from being a brilliant and genuinely Christian individualist into the great spiritual leader which he became.

From the first they worked closely together. But there

came a period of four years during which, as Howard relates, Buchman would have little or nothing to do with him. 'From one day to the next,' he writes, 'Buchman bolted and barred every door and window in our relationship. Nothing I could do was right. Publicly and privately, in and out of season, I was rebuked and assailed. Buchman was determined that I should turn to God alone and to no human authority for my foundation in life.'¹¹

A bishop, who read of these incidents in Anne Wolrige Gordon's book, protested to me recently that he could not understand Buchman's conduct. 'It is never right so to humiliate a man,' he said.

This recalled to me the way St Ignatius Loyola treated his closest companions during the years before he died. Pedro Ribadeneira, the friend and first biographer of both Ignatius and Laynez wrote :

'What most astonished me was his treatment of Father Laynez. Our Blessed Father assured me that there was not a man in the Society to whom it owed more than to Father Laynez . . . and he had told the Father himself that he designed him to be his successor. Yet during the year before he died he showed so much severity towards this Father that at times it made him completely miserable. I had this from Father Laynez himself. So miserable used he to feel, he said, that he turned to Our Lord and asked : "Lord, what have I done against the Society that this Saint treats me as he does?"' The reason for it was that the Blessed Father desired to make Father Laynez into a saint, and to inure him to hardship with a view to his being General, so that from what he had himself gone through he might learn how to govern others.'

Ribadeneira adds: 'He helped each one to advance according to his strength and capacity. To those who were children in virtue he gave milk, but the more advanced received from him plain bread, and that he

handed to them roughly. As for the perfect, he treated them with even greater rigour that they might run the more swiftly to their goal.¹²

No one would call either Buchman or Howard perfect, and they would have repudiated such an adjective more pungently than anyone. But Buchman did have this faculty of giving to each of us the treatment we needed, no matter how much pain or inconvenience it caused him to do so. 'The apparent harshness with which Buchman dealt with Howard at this period,' writes his daughter, Anne Wolrige Gordon, 'was, in reality, a measure of his trust in him. Howard had asked Buchman to help him. He saw in Howard the possibility of great leadership, coupled with weaknesses of pride, conceit and a dependence upon man's approval. Buchman was out to produce a man whose blade was sharpened and whose life was freed from every human attachment.'¹³

This period came to an end around Easter 1950. Howard wrote, 'I had had two clear thoughts, "Live absolute purity for God's sake. The heart of this idea will be your permanent home for the rest of your life"'. This represented the same cutting of all human security which Buchman faced when he gave up his paid job. It might mean never going back to my home or my country again. It meant being ready for anything and everything God demanded.'¹⁴

Howard made those decisions and said nothing about them. Soon after, as he walked down a passage, he heard Buchman's voice behind him, 'Just like old times, isn't it Peter'. For the next eleven years, till Buchman's death, the two men worked together as one man.

Buchman built well. For Peter developed into a Christian statesman of remarkable sensitivity, vision and effectiveness.

'Apple'

Margot's brother, Geoffrey, was killed in action on July 13th, 1943. So the sorrows of war came very close.

Geoffrey was a man of many graces – and much ability. At Cambridge he had got a First in Engineering, and captained the Caius College Boat Club and the University Ski Team. He took the Oxford and Cambridge ski team to Norway and beat all comers there, and in Switzerland on his 21st birthday won the Roberts of Kandahar, the premier down-hill race founded by my future friend, Sir Arnold Lunn. Shortly before the war, Dr Leslie Weatherhead said, 'If a visitor dropped from Mars and went to each country to see what the earth's inhabitants are like, and if I had the chance to say whom he should meet in England, I would suggest Geoffrey Appleyard'.¹

As 'Apple', a pioneer of super-mobile commandos after Dunkirk, he won a D.S.O. and M.C. and Bar. When he appeared for his third investiture in eleven months, King George said, 'What, you here again so soon?' Mr Churchill stated that his and his friends' raids on the German coast, in the dark days after Dunkirk, had forced the Nazis to

double their guards all along the coasts from Norway to Spain. He described their work as 'the Steel Hand reaching from the sea to snatch the Nazis away'.

A typical exploit was when ten of them entered an unfriendly port at midnight and stole the Italian liner, *The Duchess of Aosta*, and a transport ship. At the personal request of Field Marshal Alexander, Apple landed from a submarine on the Mediterranean island of Pantellaria, then said to be the most heavily defended island in the world, and reconnoitred it before the Allied invasion. The M.T.B. captain detailed to pick him up was told he was going to meet the most important man at that moment in Europe and was disappointed that it was not Churchill.

Then on the night of July 13th, 1943, Apple – who should have been on leave – went in a plane due to drop some of his men into Sicily. The plane never came back. Strangely it was Peter Howard's brother John, himself later killed at Arnhem, who closed the plane door on him that night.

Geoffrey had always been intrigued by the change in Margot. From time to time he would appear at this gathering or that, and I got to know him well.

Early in the phoney war, Geoffrey went to France with the British Expeditionary Force. On his first long leave, he took a girl he was fond of home to Yorkshire. Margot was there and he told her about the men under him in France. He had become much attached to them and many had come to him with their domestic problems, some with homes breaking up. On the last day of the leave, Margot said to him, 'You can give these men the faith which will answer their problems.'

'I can't give them what I haven't got,' Geoffrey replied.

Meanwhile, in the tiny flat I then had in Shepherd's Market, guidance came to me that this would be a decisive day in Geoffrey's life. I was also told to prepare a parcel

of books for him to take back to France, books which, in his present frame of mind, as far as I knew, he would not want to take. So I packed the books and went to meet the Leeds train at King's Cross.

The train was two hours late, and when he arrived Geoffrey explained that he must take his girl friend home through the blackout, and then hurry to catch his train for France. 'I can just make it,' he said. I returned to the flat with my parcel of books undelivered.

Just after midnight, as I was praying for Geoffrey, there was a knock at my door, and I clattered downstairs to find him outside. 'No train till 6 a.m.,' he said. 'Can I come in? I want to talk.'

He came in and we talked for two hours. We listened to God together, and ended on our knees. Then he slept for a couple of hours and I saw him to his train, taking those books with him.

From France he wrote to his parents: 'You know that grand hymn, "Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide" – well, that moment to decide has come to me and the day I left home and the night I spent in London I made the great decision that I shall never regret, I know – that of giving my life to Christ.

'I have tried running my own life on my own principles and standards long enough, and not made a very startling success of it. So now I am going to run my life on God's standards and in the way He wants me to run it and so try and do my bit in the remaking and moral re-arming of the world.

'One of the things which has "changed" me more than anything else is the realisation of the amazing amount of love there is in our house, the tremendous amount of love you two have poured out for us. . . . I feel too as though I have let Margot down long enough, have let her stand on her own long enough, through not having the courage

to take this step before. I'm tremendously grateful for the way she has always stood by me.'

'Don't fear for me, Garth,' he wrote to me. 'I'm going the whole hog and I'm going to be just as obstinate for Christ as I was obstinate and afraid of coming to Him.'

'From this time on,' commented his father in the book he wrote about him, 'Geoffrey relied greatly on God's guidance and help at all times.'

A few months later, before Geoffrey came on leave again, the German Blitzkrieg broke through the French at Sedan. In those days when maps of the enemy's whereabouts were useless and there was often no touch with senior officers, he had many chances to try out this 'guidance' in action.

One day, for instance, he was sent to meet ten lorries at a certain bridge and lead them into Dunkirk. When he reached the bridge, only eight were there and the bridge was under heavy fire. He sent the eight on and got into a ditch to think what to do. Should he follow them? But if he did, wouldn't people think he was afraid of shellfire? And what if the other two turned up with no one to meet them? He turned to God for direction.

'Follow those eight lorries at once' – the thought came clearly and insistently to him. He got into his car and went after them. When he caught up, they had missed the road and were heading straight for the German lines. Later he heard that the other two lorries never came to the bridge, but were diverted by other orders. The bridge itself was blown up half an hour after Apple crossed it.

On the beach at Dunkirk, Apple had a strange encounter. He was sent sprawling as something hit him hard in the middle of the back. As he lay, his mouth full of sand, thinking, 'Well, I've had it,' a voice sounded in his ear – 'I say, I ff-feel a bb-bloody coward, how about you?' It was Gus – later Major March-Phillipps, D.S.O., M.B.E.

– with his characteristic stutter, who was to become Apple's commanding officer and most intimate friend. Back in Britain they hatched the idea of a small mobile force, much more mobile than the Commandos, which would raid the enemy coasts not once a month, but every night. They were instructed to go ahead and pick their own men. Among them were Geoffrey's boyhood friend, Graham Hayes, the Free Frenchman, André Desgrange, and Anders Lassen, the Dane who later won a V.C. and M.C. with two Bars. All these men lost their lives before the end of the war – Graham being shot by a Nazi firing squad at Le Fresne in Paris on the same day that Geoffrey was lost over Sicily.

The motto of Apple's outfit was 'Who dares, wins' – to which they added, 'And who does, swims'. One of his last letters home said, 'It is not the spirit of Safety First that will save Britain, but it is the spirit of adventure, of giving instead of getting, of clean living and physical fitness, of comradeship and unity and, above all, it is God's spirit – of that I am sure'. Such words may taste strangely to some jaded palates today. But they are worth remembering as the beliefs of many who gave their lives to make our present freedom of choice possible.

We met many who said that Geoffrey had shyly told them of his new experience. This was what he found hardest to do. 'I would rather face any physical danger than tell people about the faith that is in me,' he said to Margot once. He did it because he knew that the British, who seldom lack physical courage, would need moral courage to win the war and save the peace.

People appreciated it. 'In some ways,' wrote one of his fellow officers, 'Geoffrey represented about my ideal of a Christian, chivalrous and courageous manhood, coupled with a great spirit of adventure and charm'.

Margot misses him still, though she has never ceased feeling close to him, with memory undimmed.

Harvey scoops *The Times*

Being debarred from military service on medical grounds, I was able to continue the work in which I had enlisted long before. From 1941 onwards I worked on Peter Howard's farm. I also sometimes got to see my family in Cardiff, and there a series of events not unconnected with the war developed.

It began with Harry Harvey, a dockyard labourer whom we had first met in the early thirties when he was unemployed. Harry was a tough little man, a sprinter with a cauliflower ear acquired while boxing. But unemployment had sapped his spirit. He stayed in bed till eleven, collected his meagre, means-tested dole and spent his life in ill-fed idleness, punctuated by brawls.

In 1935 he came to a camp we held in the Midlands. 'On the last Sunday morning there,' Harry wrote later, 'I got up at 5.30, meaning to have a walk round the field and my Quiet Time. As I stepped out of the tent I came face to face with a cross, just two pieces of wood, put there to have Communion around later in the morning. That cross was the thing that got me. I sat down in front of it. I was just overwhelmed, tears ran down my face and

a lump came into my throat, and a figure appeared hanging on the cross. He hung there just as He must have done 2,000 years ago and something told me I was partly the cause of it. I promised as I sat there that I would go back to Wales and try to make up for some of the time I had wasted.'

The first thing his wife, Nell, noticed was that he was up early bringing her a cup of tea in bed. And he kept it up.

After a year or so, Harry got work as a labourer at the Barry Graving Dock. The war came, and one day he found himself elected shop steward for the Transport and General Workers' Union in the dock. This took place by accident – or, perhaps, by malice aforethought.

The steward at the time was an enormous, jovial fellow named Percy Harris. His philosophy of labour relations was endearingly simple. 'I walks round the yard, monarch of all I surveys like,' he once told me. 'And if anyone says "Boo" to me, I stops the works.' This was not too unusual in the bitter between-the-wars atmosphere in Wales, but in wartime, when speed in ship repair was a matter of life and death, his conduct came under suspicion. There was talk of police investigation, and he thought it prudent to withdraw into the ranks for a time. He asked Harry to take on the job, thinking, as he explained to me, that Harry with his talk of absolute honesty would be bound to make a mess of it. 'Then they'll want me back,' thought Percy.

Harry did, indeed, talk about honesty. And he was voted in unanimously on that basis. The Managing Director, Colonel Frank Beavan, was interested. 'What's the matter with this yard?' he asked at their first meeting.

'Wangling,' Harry answered. 'Wangling from top to bottom.'

'What's to be done?'

'Honesty, absolute honesty – and that starts with you and me.'

Beavan was amazed that no complaints reached him from Harry's Union during the next six months. 'When a fellow comes to me with a grievance we at once get down to it,' Harry wrote at the time. 'When I have told him how I used to live on the "get" but have now started to "give", it has helped in every case up to now.'

Sometimes management was to blame. One day, three months after Harry took over, a section of the men went on strike. The foreman was furious. 'I've stopped their pay from 11 o'clock and I won't employ them any more.' The men happened to be in the right, but the foreman would not budge. Finally, Harry had the thought: 'Tell him the pig story.' So when the foreman drew breath, Harry said, 'My friend, Will, keeps pigs. He used to be unkind to them, but one day he thought that pigs too might have feelings. He began to treat them fair, and their weight went up.' Then Harry added, 'Men are superior to pigs.'

The foreman looked at him. 'I'll reinstate the men and pay them time lost,' he said. 'And I'll remember about the pigs.'

A little later, Percy Harris came to Harry and said that this foreman had been rubbing time off his card.

'Have you been booking time you have not worked?' asked Harry.

'Well. . . . Yes, sometimes.'

'That's dishonest. Come on, Percy, you'll have to apologise to the foreman.'

At first the foreman put on self-righteous airs. 'Now then,' said Harry. 'You and I aren't always honest.'

The fact was that Percy did sometimes book time he had not worked, but this time he had really worked that extra hour. After it was cleared up, he booked straight. It spilt

over into home life. Next week, when the grocer gave him double rations, by accident, Percy returned them to the shop.

Beavan was amazed at the change in Percy. He asked Harry how it happened and soon the men began to notice a difference in Beavan's own manner. He came round the yard more, and took the trouble to talk to them.

Meanwhile, the Government was alarmed by the delays in repairing ships in the South Wales repair yards, then the largest in Britain. Destroyers damaged in the fight with the U-Boats were taking far too long to get to sea again.

The trouble centred on the skilled men, the boilermakers, who, remembering the grim years of unemployment between the wars, refused to use new and better tools or to reduce the size of gangs on the job. They would not use pneumatic riveters, unless the size of the teams was left intact. All negotiations failed, and the House of Commons Accounts Committee investigated the matter.

Through Harry, Sydney Cook (a fellow Cardiffian working with M.R.A.) and I had got to know Colonel Beavan. Beavan told us about his relationship with the regional secretary of the Boilermakers, Jack Jones, with whom he, as chief negotiator for the employers, had had many duels. 'I have done everything to try and get alongside him,' Beavan told me. 'He lives near me, and we both keep Dalmatians. I found out where he took his dog for a walk of a Sunday and met him "by accident" with my pedigree bitch, thinking perhaps I could arrange a match between them, and so meet him on common ground. It was no good. There was a fight, and my bitch bit Jones. After that, things were worse than ever.'

Jack Jones, his successor Alderman C. A. Horwood of Cardiff tells me, had good cause for his suspicions. 'Beavan was an impossible man,' he says. 'He made us furious. So arrogant and superior, always out to score off us.'

Jones himself was also a bonnie fighter. D. R. Prosser, then the editor of the *Western Mail*, whom we consulted, told us he was a 'a giant of a man'. 'Anyone who knows the hundreds of fights which he has made for his men knows Beavan has the fight of a lifetime on his hands,' he said.

Cook and I told Prosser that we believed a solution was possible. He consulted his close friend, Frederick Rees, the Principal of University College and Chairman of the Ministry of Labour's area committee on industrial relations. 'He shared my scepticism,' D. R. wrote me recently, 'but he agreed with my newspaperman's dictum that the possible sometimes emerges from impossible places. We agreed to do nothing to discourage you.'

One day in 1941, Colonel Beavan 'phoned me in London and asked me to come and see him in Cardiff. I had the thought to go on a certain train, and went along to have tea in the dining car. The man I sat next to told me that he was a Special Commissioner representing the Minister of Labour.

'Are you going down about the Boilermaker business?' I asked.

'Yes,' he replied. 'I preside over the official enquiry tomorrow at the City Hall. Unless we make progress – and I don't think we will – the Government will take over the industry.'

As I got into my family home, the telephone rang. It was Colonel Beavan. 'Can I see you tomorrow morning before the meeting?' he said. 'I have been trying this listening business which Harvey talks about. I've had a couple of ideas.'

We met next day at the Park Hotel, and walked out into Cathays Park. 'My thought is to give Jones all the advantages,' Beavan said. 'That I should offer to speak first, instead of manoeuvring him into doing it and then

pulling his case to pieces. I am going to try being dead honest, as Harvey says. I feel like a man starting a golf championship with only one club—a niblick. Will you pray for me?' He told me the difficulty he had had in getting his colleagues to authorise his new line. And off he went.

He told me afterwards that he went straight into the room where the Court of Enquiry was to be held, and went up to Jones and shook hands. He offered to speak first, and the proceedings went so well that, after a couple of hours, the court agreed that Beavan and Jones should be left to work out an agreement together.

Beavan and Jones met at Beavan's house in Dinas Powys. 'The lawyers,' Beavan told me later, 'had provided me with a complicated draft, running into several pages of cautiously guarded legal language. I saw at once that Jones would not wear it. He would suspect a trap in every line. So I tore the lawyer's draft up in front of him, and said, "Let's put down as simply as possible what we have agreed".'

The draft that emerged consisted of five points, no one of them consisting of more than two or three sentences. It provided that there should be no redundancy and no victimisation. It also agreed to the introduction of pneumatic tools. It involved give and take on both sides, and took account of the wartime national interest.

The drafting took an hour, but when it was finished Jones felt reluctant to initial it. Beavan did not know what to do, as the atmosphere got more and more tense. Then he had the thought to leave the room, and leave Jones alone in it.

The Colonel was going on to a Home Guard parade, and was in uniform. When he came back into his office, he found Jones trying on his staff cap. They began to laugh. This broke the tension, they initialled the draft and

it was duly put into force. The Secretary of the National Boilermakers' Society later told me that it was one of their best agreements.

Meanwhile, the House of Commons Select Committee had concluded its investigations. On August 23rd, 1941, it was a main news item in all the newspapers. *The Times* editorial, headed 'Intolerable Position', read:

There is a man, in an important ship repairing area, a trade union district delegate, who is held responsible for delaying the repair of ships. He has fined members of the union who work overtime without his permission, and has required exorbitantly high rates of pay from the employers when he has given his consent. The same district delegate has been primarily responsible for resisting the introduction of pneumatic riveting which would expedite repairs; and, when pneumatic riveting has been permitted, there has been insistence on the retention of unnecessary men in the squad – wasting a class of labour in very short supply. These facts are brought to light by the Select Committee on National Expenditure in a report which is summarised today. On the first point the Committee says that 'Many efforts have been made to remedy what is an intolerable position in wartime' and all have failed. It is indeed intolerable.

How does it come about that such a state of affairs has been tolerated at all and who is the trade union official who has power to hold up the repair of the ships that are our lifeline overseas? . . . A grave injury is being done to the nation, and whoever has allowed it to continue must share the responsibility of the principal offender . . . Now who will see that what is intolerable is made impossible?

Whether such one-sided condemnation was just or not, it was the theme of practically the entire Press. And

The Times, in its best tradition, had the grace, two days later, to print a further story which, after summarising its leader of Saturday, stated :

Inquiries now made show that the statement referred to a position which prevailed in the particular area before the signing of an agreement which was reached nearly a month ago by co-operative action between the trade union and management concerned. The agreement provides for the unrestricted use of pneumatic tools. These tools are, in fact, now in operation in the area.

Other points of criticism brought forward by the report of the Select Committee were, it is understood, fully met in the agreement.

The story behind the settlement never came out, though D. R. Prosser wrote the Members of Parliament for Cardiff about it. 'The story,' commented Prosser, 'tells the power of just one good man in a naughty world – that damned fellow Harry Harvey.'

Getting married— and after

Margot spent the war in Cheshire, at Tirley Garth, a large country house made available by its owner, Miss Irene Prestwich, so that the administrative work of Moral Re-Armament could be evacuated from London under blitz. Margot and six other girls transformed the gardens and grounds into one of the most efficient market gardens in that part of England. It was said that their leeks and lettuce were the best in Liverpool market, to which Margot transported them at or before first light in an ancient lorry.

The wage was £1.50 a week for eight hours a day and four on Saturday, the work was tough. Tennis courts and terraces are not ideal for ploughing, and their only implement was an 'iron horse' hand tractor, a real brute. It was apt to hoist its driver skywards into the magnolias surrounding the tennis court as she clung to its long handles. When the day's work was done, Margot and her colleagues would rush through supper, and turn to the writing of articles then syndicated to two hundred weekly papers or to print the news letter which went to hundreds of servicemen all over the world.

Tirley Garth, throughout the war, always housed a community of fifty which grew to over a hundred most week-ends when servicemen on leave and workers from the wartime industries of Yorkshire, Lancashire and the Potteries arrived for conferences. The land girls had enlisted to serve there in order, at the same time, to maintain and develop this centre on which so many depended for life and growth. Even their two weeks annual leave was generally spent at Tirley, and servicemen said that the voluntary discipline there—starting with an hour's listening before the day began—was tougher than in the services.

Fifteen older women had given up their own homes and moved to Tirley where they carried the bulk of the cooking and cleaning. Their unity was not the least of wartime achievements. 'Fifteen of you getting along together! You sure have something to tell the world,' said an American colonel. The secret of the spirit in the household, which might today be called a commune, was honesty—honesty with and about oneself, the attitude which says, 'I don't like you today. What's wrong with me?'—plus the knowledge that change is possible. St John put it: 'If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.' Margot and her friends were also sustained in their purpose by the changes visible in their own and their visitors' characters—and, in Margot's case, by a determination to fulfil the vision in her brother Geoffrey's last letters.

With the war's end, Tirley became a centre from which the resurgence of British industry, so much of which was situated within fifty miles, could be assisted. The coal industry was the particular focus, starting with the North Staffordshire miners' leaders who had come to Tirley during the war. Ernest Bevin was saying, 'Give me the coal

and I will give you a foreign policy'. Many independent authorities bore witness, in the next three years, to the assistance which Tirley gave him to that end.¹

One evening during that first peace-time Christmas of 1945, when some of those at Tirley were sitting around a candle-lit tree, Margot had the sudden thought that she and I would be together by the following Christmas. 'It dropped into my mind like a golden apple falling from the tree,' she told me later.

In the months that followed several of her friends became engaged and her younger sister, Joyce, married Peter Wood, a major back from supporting Tito's guerilla forces in Yugoslavia.

Still nothing happened. Then, on the morning of May 18th as she came in from the garden, she thought with certainty: 'Garth will come and propose today'. That evening I arrived, and six weeks later Frank Buchman married us in the local Methodist church – during a break in our action in the Yorkshire coalfield. When Margot telephoned him from our honeymoon, he asked, 'What's it like?' 'Oh, its wonderful,' she replied. 'Well, see it stays wonderful,' said he.

It has – and we do not regret the twelve years of waiting, although we would not suggest that others should copy us. God's timing is not our own – and is always original. I have known people who really tried to live under God's direction get engaged days or weeks after the idea first struck them, just as others have stayed apart for a long time. But I have never known a marriage, undertaken under guidance, break up. And they number in hundreds, indeed thousands.

There were, I suppose, special circumstances in our case. In the thirties, our work often took us to different continents, and during the war it did not seem the time to make personal plans or start a family. But the basic

reason for delay was that it did not seem until 1946 to be God's will.

It was not always easy. In the first year of the war after we had been thrown together over Margot's brother, Margot began to feel that I was taking too large a place in her thoughts. 'My mind revolved around whether I would get a glimpse of you. My days were bright or dull by whether I had a letter, however business-like.' We were wordlessly sliding into a dependent relationship, and Margot sent me a message through a friend that this must cease. I remember feeling, in those days of London Blitz, that I would welcome any bomb which came my way.

By and large, however, these were years of freedom and creativity for us both. We proved, as so many have done before us, that feelings can be sanctified and used for other people. Also, that there is no need, as many say, for young people to have intercourse or even an exclusive relationship in order to feel alive.

A Swedish friend of ours, an attractive girl of 21, wrote recently :

'Purity starts with a personal sacrifice, but permissiveness ends up in much greater personal and national cost. Purity is a gift of God which becomes greater and greater. Impurity is grabbing for something for which, as soon as I have it, the demand gets greater and greater.

'You do not have to try impure living to know that it does not satisfy, but you do have to try purity to know that it does satisfy. What do you do when you have decided that, but temptations still come? When you fall, or are near to falling? I can do three things: I can give up and fall, or I can try by my own effort to force myself up and out of it; or I can turn to God. And when I choose the third alternative I find again and again that God says I need to open my heart much wider to everybody. Purity and care go together in my life.'

That was also our experience. We did not always live up to it; but we knew the way to find freedom by living for others and enjoyed rich years apart.

Perhaps the waiting had to be long in our case because I took so long to leave the whole matter permanently in God's hands. But we both agree that no time was wasted. So many of the problems which break marriages - or lead to them becoming dull and desolate - had been solved before marriage, and ours has become richer and richer as each year passes.

Not that we don't have difficulties. Both of us are strong-willed and I, at least, am opinionated. So often Margot would make a suggestion which I would pooh-poo as stupid, only to find on reflection that it was sensible, indeed far better than my own idea. Before long I had adopted it as my own, without acknowledgement. I had to learn to say 'sorry', and mean it - and I still often need to do so. St Paul suggested that 'each humbly consider the other the better man', and it is a sovereign recipe for marriage.

Complete honesty is important. Marriage did not, for example, stop me desiring other women. The progress of any temptation is the look, the thought, the fascination and the fall. If you can catch it between the look and the thought - and be honest with oneself and each other - the fall never comes.

We have had to learn and learn again that the only full satisfaction is in God, and that we have no demands on each other. Once in our early married life, I went to work in India for eight months. I did not want to leave Margot and our children - Geoffrey six and Mary not yet one - and I was resentful at parting, and little help to those with me. As I listened in Bombay one morning, I had the thought: 'This can be the happiest day of your life.' I resented that thought even more, for, if it could

come true, then it would seem to argue that Margot, too, could be quite happy without me, and that we could be happy apart indefinitely. When I accepted it, however, I was happy – and so was she.

It is not always easy for a wife to decide where her duty lies, if her husband and children are in different places. Earlier in the year in which I went to India, I spent six months in Germany and asked Margot whether it might be right for her to join me for a bit. Mary was seven months old and, although she would be well cared for, Margot found it very difficult to decide whether to leave her. She saw the need in Bonn and looked forward to being with me; but as the day of departure came near, she felt that she just could not face leaving Mary. Finally, she got on her knees and told God her misery. She stayed there for some time, quietly waiting. Then a thought came so clearly that it seemed as if it were spoken: 'Now you have the smallest possible idea of what I feel for every single person in the world who is separated from me.' She felt she was allowed to share a tiny part of Christ's sufferings. 'From that moment, I had no doubts,' she told me when we met in Bonn. 'I felt complete peace about leaving.' In Bonn she was used to help many people.

It is precious to know that there is always a Third Presence Who can solve any disagreement – and meet any other need. There are days when one or other, or even both of us, wake weary or dull or rebellious. We can help each other to find the cause, to get it straight and to go into the day refreshed. If we never enter a day with any shadow of division between us, little discords do not pile up into big ones – and we can face anything and everything that comes.

This is particularly important for the children, especially with young children, as we have seen again and again with our two – Geoffrey born in 1947 and Mary in 1952.

Children are past masters at spotting rifts between parents and dodging through them. If there is competition for the child's affection, for example, then the child gets its way — and inevitably becomes insecure. 'A child is horrified by anarchy, by a world without rules and by total freedom,' wrote John Crosby, in *The Observer*. 'The real truth is that the permissive age is a flop with the kids themselves.'² They are also horrified, and shaken, by parental disunity, even if they make use of it.

We discovered quite early that if we could together find out what was the most pressing need of a child at any one moment, then that need could soon be satisfied. To nag a child is cruel and ineffective. To nag him on many points at once, perhaps because they irritate us or disgrace us before relatives or friends, is doubly cruel and terribly confusing for him. But if one knows some one thing which is his next step in character and concentrates on that, then it can be solved quickly and almost painlessly.

At one point Mary was always whining. There were plenty of other points where she, like us, could improve, but we were clear that this was the issue of the moment. We decided to let everything else pass, but to be firm on this one point. We said to her, 'Mary, you will never get anything by whining.' She knew we meant it and were united — and whining stopped, within forty-eight hours, never seriously to return.

In our youth, psychiatrists often spoke of 'deprived children', children who felt deprived of parental love and were marked by that lack all their lives. Such children, of course, still do exist. But just as common today are parents who live in terror of being deprived of their children's love. So they dare not cross their wills or refuse them something they want. The result, funnily enough, is that the children generally become unhappy — and, as years pass, fulfil their parents' worst fears. After writing this

chapter I read that Dr Spock, the apostle of parental permissiveness, has come to think the same way and has bravely admitted that his teachings have had disastrous results.³

Geoffrey says that one of the most important times in his life was the day when Margot realised with sudden force that her task was not to make him love her, but to help him to love God. It happened as a result of one of our biggest family rows ever. We were then living in a country cottage, as I was recovering from some heart trouble. Geoffrey was being awkward at the time, teasing Mary incessantly. This was going on at lunch one day, and I lost my temper and told him to go upstairs. He would not move. I got up and tried to make him. Margot, who was afraid I might over-exert myself, intervened and hit Geoffrey across the face. Geoffrey stormed out, and ran into the garden. From there he threw stones at the window. When Margot went out to get him to stop, he hit her for good measure.

This brought us all up short. When we got to talking, we discovered that Geoffrey's trouble with Mary was that, being away at boarding school, he thought that we had come to love her more than we loved him. We had been quite unaware of this – for it was not so. Also Mary, who had been away from him for a year, kept following him around and demanding his attention. This he found infuriating. It was amazing how quickly these feelings got sorted out when we were honest with ourselves and each other.

In the course of those days, Margot had to speak very straight to Geoffrey. And it was then that she realised that she had been pulling her punches with him in order to keep his love. Actually, this time brought them even closer together. They have been even fonder of each other, though more independent, ever since.

Scandinavian smörgåsbord

In September 1954 Margot and I were invited to Scandinavia, with our children. This was a great joy to us, after the two years I had spent in Germany and India. Geoffrey was seven and Mary nearly two. I had been away from home for most of her life and now I went ahead to Stockholm to await them. How joyful it was when Mary saw me across the airport hall and came running, crying, 'Daddy! Daddy!'

It was the first experience we had had of the whole family going into a situation together. We were invited to live in a house in Stockholm, together with a dozen people of different ages and backgrounds. As at Tirley, though on a smaller scale, it was a kind of commune, before communes became popular. And it was a chance to live an answer to the problems of human relationships which seem, in an acuter form, to plague most of the communes one knows.

In addition, we lived for shorter periods, during the next two years, in all kinds of homes in the four Scandinavian countries. That is one of the fascinating things about the life of Christian revolution. You get to know

country after country from inside through the people who work with you and the homes in which you stay. This does not seem to happen to the average British diplomat. In Sweden once we met the British Ambassador at the Midsummer Night party at the island summer home of a friend of ours. What astonished me were the rhapsodies which the Ambassador and his wife went into about being in a Swedish home. I thought this must just be politeness, but one of his staff told me that their world was often bounded by the cocktail round and the official reception. Sometimes, alas, contact is even more restricted. The British Minister in one Arab country complained that he had sent out four hundred invitations to his annual reception – and received only one reply. He had never been in an Arab home.

Margot and I had each been in Sweden, Norway and Denmark before the war, and she had twice visited Finland. We had many friends in all four countries, and at least knew enough not to lump them together as one homogeneous, or harmonious, Scandinavian mass. History has left its legacies of affection and dislike, for at different times Sweden and Denmark have each dominated the other, and Sweden has ruled both Norway and Finland. Also, Norway and Denmark were in the last war, while Sweden was not. Finland and Norway feel closer than any other pair of countries, because each has had stubbornly to fight for its independence.

I asked Olavi Laine, the head of current affairs for Finnish TV, how he would describe the four countries in one sentence. 'Have you a daughter?' he asked. I admitted I had. 'Then, she should marry a Norwegian – they are so handsome – buy her house in Finland, furnish it in Denmark and live in Sweden,' he said. 'Norwegians eat to live. Swedes eat to drink.*' 'And Danes live to eat,' a Dane said with typical self-deprecation. To us each

*A Swedish law forbids the buying of alcohol in public places, except with food.

country has its charm. The Danish sense of humour, Norwegian independence, Finnish 'sisu' – the courage, persistence or obstinacy which carries them into and through crises – and Swedish generosity under a mask of formality are qualities we came to know and appreciate.

Sweden, by those middle fifties, was firmly fixed in Western mythology as the welfare paradise on earth. Certainly its people were better provided for, from the cradle to the grave, than any other I knew, and to this day they possess the most evenly-spread riches of any country. But one of the first things we read on arrival there was Prime Minister Erlander's lament that, in spite of all his party had done for them, they were not a happy people. There was certainly a high suicide rate and violent riots had recently broken out in Stockholm, when youths had stoned the police – an initiative which, like other Swedish phenomena, was to appear elsewhere in the next decade.

Some of our friends had got to know four of the leaders of the gang who had started that first battle with the police. They found that they were just bored with a society where every security was provided and where every experience – sex, drugs and such like – was apt to have been sampled and to have gone stale in one's teens. Our friends put to them that an experiment in faith would be much more exciting – provided that it did not stop at the personal, but went on to affect society. They agreed to make the attempt – and are still our friends today. They broke out of the 'new totalitarianism' of which Roland Huntford wrote in his much debated book.¹

Huntford's theme was that Mr Erlander's Labour Party had found a way of introducing a new totalitarianism whereby everything and everybody was controlled and people were coaxed to conform by a liberal supply of welfare and sex. Anyone who has been in Sweden knows this is a gross exaggeration, but if you substitute 'an amoral

intellectual establishment' for the 'Labour Party' you get nearer the truth. There was a period in the fifties and sixties where such people largely controlled the mass media in Sweden and knocked down anyone who suggested any but a materialist solution to the nation's ills.

This materialist establishment was anxious to eliminate what it considered to be the threat of Moral Re-Armament. The initial impact of the Oxford Group throughout Scandinavia had amounted, in one view, to 'the most far-reaching spiritual awakening which Scandinavia has experienced this century'.² I have already mentioned its effect in Norway before and during the war. Similarly, the Danish Primate stated that it had brought Christianity back to the workers and the intellectuals³ and Bishop Gulin believed that its Aulenko Assembly, in 1938, had reconciled leaders of the two sides of the Finnish civil war in time for them to fight together in the desperate winter war with Russia.⁴ The *New York Times* was one of the papers which remarked on the way the new spirit was inspiring some of the leading writers of Sweden.⁵ But by the time we arrived in Stockholm the materialist establishment had adopted what Gösta Ekman, now one of the editors of *Svenska Dagbladet*, describes as 'a deliberate policy of silence, concealment and denigration'. As a result, 'what the inspiration of the Oxford Group meant for Christian revival, for a new direction in culture and in the arts, and as a source of moral strength in the resistance to Nazism had been submerged'.⁶

Travelling from country to country in our two years there, it was clear that 'submerged' rather than 'eliminated' was the word. Nine Swedish bishops had just paid tribute to its continuing influence in 'introducing firm moral standards and spiritual inspiration and thereby creating new positive possibilities in personal, social and political spheres',⁷ and in the cultural realm painters like

Lennart Segerstrale of Finland, Victor Sparre Smith of Norway and Valdemar Lorentzon of Sweden were carrying on the tradition.

So life was full of interest. One January evening in 1955, for example, several of us were having dinner with Christian and Rigmor Harhoff in their flat in Copenhagen. We were there to meet Ole Bjørn Kraft, the leader of the Conservative Party and a recent Foreign Minister, on his return from an M.R.A. Conference in Washington.

Kraft was telling us of the dramatic solution, at that Conference, of a ruinous industrial dispute between the management of National Airlines and its pilots. He also referred to a number of larger international problems which had been affected. 'I have seen some of the most difficult problems in the world – the sort of problem we discussed fruitlessly at the N.A.T.O. Council when I was Chairman – moving towards solution,' he told us.

One of us asked him what was Denmark's most urgent current problem. 'The tension with Germany about the treatment of the Danish minority in Schleswig,' he replied at once.

The Danish minority had several specific grievances. Whereas the German minority in North Schleswig (which polled only 9,300 votes in the 1953 election) was represented directly in the Danish Parliament, the Danish minority on the other side of the border (which polled 42,000 votes in 1954) was not represented in the Schleswig-Holstein Land Parliament. This was because German parties had to obtain at least 5 per cent of the total votes cast in order to gain seats in national or provincial Parliaments, and the Danish party had not gained that percentage of the Schleswig-Holstein vote. There were also educational and cultural injustices. The Danish minority were allowed their own schools, but the land government subsidy had in their case been reduced from 80 per cent to

60 per cent of cost per pupil, and since the Danish higher certificate was not recognised in Germany it was difficult for students educated in those schools to get into German universities. Also, since Danish degrees in medicine, law and so on gave no right to practise in Germany, parents in the Danish minority whose children wished to become doctors or lawyers had either to send their children to German schools or to send them to be educated in Denmark, with the result that they would have to remain there. So the Danish community in South Schleswig was being deprived of its intelligentsia. The whole affair re-kindled bitternesses that went back to Bismark's annexation of Schleswig-Holstein in 1864, bitternesses greatly exacerbated by the German occupation of Denmark during World War II.

Mr Kraft explained to us that, after a critical debate in the Danish Parliament on the previous October 19th, the Foreign Minister, H. C. Hansen, had raised the matter at the N.A.T.O. Council in Paris three days later, and Dr Adenauer, who was present as an observer, had immediately taken it up by 'phone with the Schleswig-Holstein Government. At first it had seemed that everything might be settled, but negotiations ground to a halt because the Germans insisted on the process starting with a draft minorities treaty, a thing to which the Danes with their experience of treaties between large and small nations, was irrevocably opposed. Now a solution was urgent because the decision whether to accept Germany into N.A.T.O. was coming up for ratification in the Danish Parliament again. That decision had already been twice postponed because of the minority problem, feeling was running high and the Director of the Danish Foreign Service, Mr Nils Svenningsen, had publicly warned that if the problem was not solved, ratification could not be taken for granted.⁸

We asked Kraft whether he thought this question could be helped towards solution by the same means he had seen operating in Washington. He was doubtful. However, we could not escape the fact that God could speak as clearly in Copenhagen as in Washington—so we all sat quiet, listening together.

After a while, we told each other the thoughts that had come to us. As so often happens when a group of people listen together, one thought supplemented another, and the idea formed between us that Kraft should seek a private meeting with Heinrich Hellwege, the leader of one of the small parties in Chancellor Adenauer's Coalition and a Member of the Bonn Cabinet. Hellwege and Kraft had never met, but both had been to Caux.

The idea was more unusual than it sounds. Kraft was not in the Government. In fact, he was leader of the Opposition. Also, he had no reason to enjoy visiting Germans. During the war, when he was one of the top leaders of the Danish Resistance, he had narrowly escaped assassination. At seven o'clock one evening he had answered the doorbell at his Copenhagen home, only to be shot and left for dead by a Nazi gunman. Minister Hellwege, it was true, had always been anti-Nazi, but he was still a German. So Kraft's decision to meet him was not a wholly easy one.

After dinner that evening, a 'phone call was put through to Bonn and, next day, the reply came that Minister Hellwege would be glad to meet Kraft in Hamburg on January 30th, a Sunday ten days off. In the meantime, Margot and I returned to our Stockholm base—and the Krafts came too, for the Nordic Council, consisting of the political leaders of the four Scandinavian countries and of Iceland, were meeting there. There Kraft spoke to H. C. Hansen, who approved of his unofficial approach.

Kraft asked me to accompany him to Hamburg. On

Saturday, January 29th, the day before the proposed journey, Mrs Erlander, the wife of the Swedish Prime Minister, was coming to lunch to meet Kraft, and I drove down to central Stockholm to pick him up. I noticed that all the flags were flying at half mast, and wondered why.

When Kraft joined me I found out. 'I can't come tomorrow,' he greeted me. 'The Danish Prime Minister died in his hotel here this morning. I will have to return to Denmark and speak on the radio.'

I thought of Hellwege, even then driving up the autobahn to Hamburg, but there was nothing to be done. There seemed little hope, yet I felt that something might yet work out. So we did not cancel the meeting.

Sure enough, that evening Kraft phoned to say that he had managed to record his broadcast and to arrange matters so that he could come to Hamburg. We left early and reached Hamburg for lunch.

My friend and fellow Cardiffian, Sydney Cook, was with Hellwege and translated for him. The four of us sat down to lunch together. It was rather a tense moment. Hellwege wisely started the ball rolling by asking what Kraft had seen in Washington.

So by the time when, half an hour later, the conversation turned to the Danish-German border situation, an atmosphere of trust had been created. Kraft explained Danish exasperation and the dangers to the N.A.T.O. alliance. 'We do not want a formal treaty', he said. 'We want a new understanding and assurances that discrimination will cease. Perhaps simultaneous and independent declarations could be made on both sides.'

The matter seemed new to Hellwege. He explained that the 5 per cent law had been introduced to stop the superfluity of splinter parties which could destroy democratic government, but agreed that the Danish minority was a special case. After a full talk on all the issues involved, we

listened to God together. 'We Germans, who have deeply wronged Denmark, must take the initiative,' Hellwege read out. 'I must go back to Bonn at once, see the Chancellor and ask him to take action.'

Kraft and I flew back to Stockholm. When we got there we discovered that the airport had been fog-bound all day. We were told that our early morning plane had been the last out of the airport – and that our returning one was the first allowed in. A coincidence, presumably; but I was reminded of Archbishop Temple's saying, 'When I pray, coincidences happen. When I don't, they don't.'

Hellwege had set off immediately after lunch for Bonn. He saw Chancellor Adenauer on arrival and the Chancellor, who had already experienced the help of Caux in reconciling France and Germany, took immediate action. On the next Wednesday, February 3rd, *Berlingske Tidende* announced that the Government had received an invitation to send a delegation to negotiate in Bonn. H. C. Hansen, who had just become Prime Minister, declared that he thought the German initiative 'very valuable, particularly as it had been given in the knowledge of the Danish opposition to a treaty and preference for declarations'.

Negotiations followed, and came to a happy conclusion on March 29th. The solution has been officially described as 'one of the most, perhaps the most, significant event in Danish foreign policy in the fifties',⁹ and, as lately as May 27th, 1969, Minister President von Hassel of Schleswig-Holstein claimed that the agreement was the most liberal to be found anywhere in the world (*Berlingske Tidende*). Professor Troels Fink, one of the Danish delegation at the talks, wrote in 1968, 'Relaxation of tension after 1955 was easy to discern. It has been good to see that, after over one hundred years of war and suspicion, old quarrels

can be healed and the people of the region have been able, in spite of inner tensions, to settle down to an harmonious daily life together.¹⁰

In May that year Kraft asked Hellwege to speak at a mass meeting in the K.B. Hallen, Copenhagen. He was the first German Cabinet Minister to visit Denmark since the Occupation. And in March 1956 the two statesmen spoke together at a similar meeting in Hanover, where Hellwege had become Minister President of Lower Saxony. On that occasion, Hellwege said, 'It was on the basis of M.R.A. principles that Kraft and I, a year ago, won through to the unity which contributed to solving the Danish minority problem in Schleswig-Holstein, and so made possible the agreement which was signed by Prime Minister Hansen and Chancellor Adenauer'.¹¹

Kraft is anxious not to exaggerate the importance of his initiative, but it does seem to have played a significant part at an important moment. The official Danish Foreign Service History states: 'It was not easy for the Danish Government to take a new initiative. It had to wait, but the time of waiting was not long. In January a feeler was put out confidentially from the German side about the possibility of negotiations taking place aiming not at a treaty, but at one-sided, independent declarations. A change took place. A positive answer was conveyed from the Danish side. The question was now taken up officially. This happened immediately the official German invitation was received in February.'¹² These confidential soundings – and the official invitation – sprang from the meeting between Kraft and Hellwege.

The mass meeting in Copenhagen, at which Minister Hellwege spoke, was in part a send-off for Mr Kraft who was joining a world mission which took 200 people and Peter Howard's musical play, *The Vanishing Island*, to thirty countries where it played to vast audiences. By

the winter of that year, this mission had circled the globe and returned to Finland, where Prime Minister Kekkonen saw it together with U Nu, the Burmese Prime Minister, who happened to be there. From Helsinki it came to Stockholm. On the first night, in the Royal Opera House, with King Gustav Adolf present, there was a standing ovation.

The Vanishing Island was attended by controversy wherever it went. The play presents two countries, the island of Eiluph'mei a Western-type democracy worshipping materialism, and the mainland of Weiheit'tiu,* a totalitarian dictatorship. The faults of both sides were, as an American writer in the *Manila Evening News* pointed out, 'exaggerated to the point of burlesque, but it is burlesque with artistry'. 'The tyranny and ruthlessness of the Communists are laid on with a very heavy hand, but is still convincing,' the writer continues. 'The materialism and smugness of the democracies are overdone; but every thinking American will appreciate the pointed barbs. The exaggeration is, of course, deliberate. The people who directed this musical are entirely capable of subtlety. They have been wise enough to gauge the capacity of their world-wide audiences to appreciate subtlety. The cast is spirited and sincere – dedicated, in fact – but fanatical? Not in the slightest.'

In several countries the American and the Soviet Ambassadors sat in the front of the stalls together – and reacted with the same delighted recognition of the picture of the other side and the same coolness at the portrait of their own. In Sweden the public loved it, but, for some reason, much of the mass media took against it. They particularly fastened on a scene in which the citizens of Eiluph'mei held an election which resulted repeatedly –

*Pronounced 'I Love Me' and 'We Hate You'.

and in spite of a little mild cheating – in a dead heat. Such a thing could never happen in a sophisticated democracy like theirs. To suggest it proved that Howard was no democrat. Within ten years, funnily enough, the parties were so evenly matched in the Swedish Parliament that issues in many committees were tied and had to be decided, as the Constitution laid down, by casting lots, and only in 1973, when the election brought 175 seats to each side, has Sweden decided to reduce the number of M.P.s from 350 to 349 to prevent ties in the future.

At the time, however, it was no laughing matter. The Swedish Press made a dead set at M.R.A. – and some fair-weather friends and many sincerely interested people fell away. Others demanded that we answer every accusation made, oblivious of the fact that the papers had no intention of printing any answers. I found this time hard going. It was not only, I fear, that I saw homes which had been reunited falling apart again as their faith was undermined, and young people sinking back into sex-soaked ease which so soon became unease. I resented the work I had been engaged upon being destroyed, and my 'success' being nullified. And perhaps this frustration, aided by ever more self-effort to try and repair the situation, was one reason why I fell ill. For now I began to get those warnings in the chest which a specialist diagnosed as the family heart trouble coming to the surface.

Most male Leans, for many generations, seem to have died before they were fifty, according to the headstones in Gwennap Churchyard in Cornwall where my forbears are buried. My grandfather – a tin miner who at the age of eighteen signed his liberty away to a Chilean mine-owner but who later owned the mine and returned to marry in Cornwall – died of a heart attack aged 46. My father went the same way before he was fifty.

It was decided that we should go to England for a

holiday – and it was while travelling in the train there that I had my first real heart incident. This put me in hospital for six weeks. Then we settled in a cottage in Surrey lent to us by friends.

What to do with fear?

What to do with fear? That was the question which confronted me as the weeks lengthened into months in that Surrey cottage. Since coming back from hospital, I had had two more incidents which had sent me back to bed. I did not seem to be making much progress. During the London Blitz I had little or no physical fear, probably because I am deficient in imagination. But now I was up against it.

I had often known fear before. I had been very afraid of people and of what they thought of me, of making a fool of myself (*making* a fool of yourself? B. H. Streeter used to ask) and of other things. Peter Howard once wrote me of his discovery about fear :

Fear for me is a tremendous help. It is always a shining signpost to the Cross. It represents always for me a fear of not getting something I want or of losing something I mean to keep. It is, of course, the lackey of ambition.

Many times a day the Devil tempts me with simple points like: 'What will so-and-so think?' 'Is this

present venture going to be recognised as successful?' 'Who will pay the next lot of bills?' But fear leads to faith if at that point I am firmly decided to be guided by God and not the Devil. Christ knew fear when He prayed till the sweat ran down His face like blood.

In the early days I learned a lasting lesson about fear. When I got to the Farm after the break with the *Express* I was literally mentally paralysed by fear and it went on for weeks. It was not just the fear of financial failure at the farm, it was the fear that all my friends would say, 'He made a mistake. We told him so.'

One morning, sitting like a frozen dummy waiting for guidance that never came, I had this very simple thought, 'If you were not fear-gripped what would you do today? Now go and do it in My strength and power.' Since that time I have often been afraid but I have never been afraid of fear. It is the normal compliment the Devil pays to people of whom he is frightened to try and immobilise you.

I had been through those early days with Peter on his farm and had, often and in a measure, found the same experience. But in the new, inactive circumstances of illness, I had to rediscover it. Then the thought came to me that what I was demanding was a return to full health – and to know when that would be. When ill before, whether with a cold or after an operation, I had always been able to say, 'In a week, in a month, I shall be well and be able to go on as before.' I demanded that knowledge now. And with the demand came a resistance, a hatred of being helpless, of being a trouble to others, of losing control. Out of this realisation came some lines which I here append not because they are good poetry,

but because friends have said they have found them helpful:

Fear is the friendly finger of my need
 Pointing past helplessness to sure release.
 Without its prompting I might never heed
 My want, my lack, my utter nothingness.
 There wisdom lies – and if I turn with speed
 The certain power of God is set in motion;
 But if I wait, a hundred evils breed
 Wrong action, faulty judgment, loose emotion.
 Quick to be honest – then the terrors flee
 And in a moment peace and courage come.
 That which I feared to lose or not to gain
 Is gladly given, and sweet contentments dumb
 The tumult of my mind, and I am free.
 So in a dusty land begins the rain.

Strangely, it was when I stopped demanding health that fear disappeared and health began to return.

Later some other lines came:

Fear is a liar, poisoning today
 With fantasies of what may come tomorrow
 Until each joy is shadowed by a sorrow
 And, dreading it, we leak our lives away.
 If we have wife and child, we fear to part;
 And if we long, we fear we won't attain
 And, snatching at it, even as we gain,
 Forfeit the heaven, the harmony, the heart.
 Fear is a liar. Truth is that God moulds
 Our days in love and with the same precision
 As He makes wing for flight, or petal folds
 Within a sheath, or shapes an eye for vision.
 He hands us strength to welcome what is right—
 Then, swift and sudden, hurls us our delight.

It is customary these days to scoff at the Victorians – and especially at Victorian biographers – because of their death-bed and illness scenes. I sometimes think that it is our fear of death rather than their morbidity which riles us. Certainly I have found that it is often when I am helpless or in fear that I have learnt most.

I learnt something else during that time in Surrey. It was precipitated when an old friend and colleague called unexpectedly at the cottage, and I felt I could not see him.

This man and I had worked together for nearly twenty-five years. We had been through tough times together, and I owed him a lot. I would have said that I had a real affection for him. But when, out of the goodness of his heart, he travelled down from London to see if he could help us, I just felt I could not see him. There he was, in the next room of that tiny cottage, a few feet away, but he had to leave without seeing me.

I did not immediately face what this meant. But later – some months later – I realised that under the surface I was bitter towards this man. I asked God where and when it started, and a vivid picture came back to me of an evening during the war in the Hampstead home of a certain film star. This actor had shown some interest in finding a life of faith, and I had taken my friend to spend the evening with him. As it progressed, starlets drifted in and the film star embraced them in a way which seemed, to the layman, anything but perfunctory. This did not worry me. In fact it rather appealed to me, but not to my colleague. He told me on the way home that my work in that quarter was a waste of time. His theme was that I should spend more time helping those who had already started to change to go further – something I certainly needed to do.

At the time I felt restricted by this counsel. I made a

mental note that he was over-cautious and did not appreciate what I was trying to do.

Still, we got on quite well through the years and if we disagreed, there was either a brisk passage of arms, or I suppressed my feelings. I put down any difficulties between us to a difference of temperament or even of calling. He was a shepherd, caring for the spiritual life of those around him. I saw myself rather as an adventurous fisher in rough waters.

But now I realised that ever since that evening in Hampstead I had been building up a picture of him which excused me and preserved my self-respect. Every time he did something in those long years which seemed over-cautious or bureaucratic, I filed it away against him. Whenever he did things which showed his adventurous mind, I disregarded them. So by the time he came to see me in Surrey, I had a wholly unreal picture of him, almost as an enemy. And it was only then, when I was too weak to put on my usual act, that I faced that there was something wrong.

When some months afterwards I was ready to listen, God told me that the right word for my attitude was 'hatred' and that I must apologise without reservation. An hour later I met him in the street and had the chance to do so. He met me with generosity. I have not always agreed with him since then, but the hatred has not returned. We have worked together and enjoyed it.

This has been a lasting lesson. When I first made the experiment of faith, I was quite unaware that I had ever hated anyone. When I had lain awake mentally debating with someone who had thwarted me or when I desperately resented what seemed to me an injustice done to me or someone else, I had called my sentiments by sweeter names. But when I got to know myself better, I discovered that I

was extremely prone to hate anyone who crossed my will or seemed to slight me. Nor was this characteristic abolished 'at a stroke' – not even by that Surrey experience – though it has been far less frequent.

The most recent example was when, some years ago, I felt slighted by someone whom I had helped to write a book. I had worked hard for many days upon it. Gratitude had been expressed and, I am sure, felt. Then a rumour reached me that the author was criticising me to third parties. I was furiously resentful.

Just at that time our son, Geoffrey, was leaving to spend nine months in Australia. He had recently learnt to drive and drove us up to London on the day of departure. He did not drive quite as I thought he should. He was – very wisely – over-cautious, and my sitting beside him, nursing my black mood, did not make him less nervous. Soon I had transferred my grievance to him. I lost my temper and so ruined that day for him and for Margot. For hatred, whether it is against a person, a race or a class is indivisible. It starts against someone you dislike, but soon spreads to those you don't dislike or whom you think you love. That is one reason why hatred is so self-defeating. So often a man begins by hating men of a different class or colour – and ends by hating many of his own. It harms the hater more the hated.

This may all seem trivial, except for the fact that hatred – and a brand more virulent than mine – frustrates the functioning of so many human institutions. Take for example the Labour Government of 1945–51. After a study of some recent biographies of its members, Francis Hope, the brilliant left-wing journalist tragically killed in the 1974 Jumbo disaster near Paris, wrote :

All tell the same story : the builders of the New Jerusalem hated each other's guts. Gaitskell said of

Wilson that he would lead the Labour Party 'only over my dead body'. (A prophecy exactly fulfilled.) Bevin called Morrison 'that dirty double twister', Bevan said he was a 'fifth-rate Tammany hack'. Morrison loathed Attlee, Bevin loathed Dalton, Crossman loathed Bevin, Attlee loathed Crossman . . . It is sad to read of their consuming mutual jealousies, not just because one had previously created an oleography of socialist fellowship, but because the British people deserved a little better in 1945 (and in 1964) and one of the reasons why they did not get it was because their elected leaders were at each other's throats.¹

This example is not given from any party spirit – Mr Hope thought that Conservative Cabinets have similar problems, but conceal them better – but to remind myself that my own failures are often reflected in more important places. I cannot expect public men to change if I do not.

My illness was in many ways a blessing. Margot once said that very often in life she had been led to take a step which seemed suicide to happiness but which, when undertaken for God's sake, led to new life. 'You think you are going into a prison cell, but the cell door opens unexpectedly on a prospect wider than you could conceive.' So it was with my illness.

I could not rush about and do many things at once. So I learnt to do fewer things and do them better. To start with it was just one or two letters a day. They were laboriously written, but they came from deeper thought – and they helped people more deeply than the many I had rushed off before.

People who came to see me often seemed to find something new and deeper. Perhaps my experience of being

helpless gave God more of a chance with me – and with them.

Also, I began to write books. In the twenty or so years since leaving Oxford, I had helped many people write books. In the days after Dunkirk, for example, I helped Daphne du Maurier gather the stories of ordinary people in wartime Britain which she told in *Come Wind, Come Weather*², a book which sold some 650,000 copies in a few months and which did much to steady a people under attack. Later Peter Howard asked me to help him with some of his books.

Now, shut away in Surrey, I started writing a book of my own. It was a series of brief biographies of people who had tried to apply Christianity in public affairs in Britain between 1780 and 1914. The names – Wilberforce, Shaftsbury, the Tolpuddle Labourers, Sir Henry Lawrence of Lucknow fame, Prince Albert, Cardinal Manning and Keir Hardie – came to me in a quiet time. As I read of them – and the necessary books seemed to turn up almost without my looking – I found they fulfilled the prescription. The book was published under the title, *Brave Men Choose*³, and ran through fifteen thousand in hardback before going into paperback.

Student revolutionaries

After the illnesses of 1955, we could not travel as much as before, and we felt we should seek a home of our own, a more settled base, for the first time in thirteen years of marriage.

When we asked God where it should be, the thought was 'Oxford'. Margot's immediate reaction was to resist this, for neither of us felt up to Oxford intellectualism. But as we thought about it, the idea made more and more sense. We had given our lives to a world-wide work, and the whole world comes to Oxford. Also, we had each been helped in our first experiments in faith by an older couple who were living in North Oxford. Perhaps we, in our turn, could help others.

So we set to work looking for a house. This was not easy, but we were lucky to find one just when Margot's father had made some money available to us.

It soon became clear that the world did indeed come to Oxford. Before the sitting room was ready, a delegation from Kerala, South India, thirteen strong, came to see us. They were a cross-section of the communities who had, that year, united to frustrate the attempt of the Com-

minist State Government to turn the schools into organs of propaganda. They were led by Mannath Padmanabhan, the 82-year-old leader of the Nair community. Another of them was a Mr Abraham, the registrar of the University of Travancore in South India. Over the mantle-piece of the little study into which we crowded after dinner was a painting of Margot's family home in a Yorkshire village near Leeds. 'I've been there,' said Mr Abraham immediately. It turned out that, while studying in Leeds, he had been invited to Sunday lunch by Margot's father, who was a Governor of Leeds University.

I had been at Caux with this delegation and had got to know Padmanabhan. He was a shrewd old man who spoke only Malayalam. He could only speak to us through his secretary, but he watched everything. After three days, he said: 'There's a rare atmosphere here — a kind of purity. The thing which puzzles me is that it can happen with so many Christians present.'

Someone asked him why. 'To us,' he replied, 'a Christian is a fat Englishman with a cigar in his mouth, a girl on his arm and a bottle of whisky in his pocket.'

Unjust? The prejudice of the centuries? Perhaps, but, also, observation of our nominally Christian nation. It gave me the same jolt as when a Burmese newspaper headed a story on one of our conferences: 'In Caux Christians behave like Buddhist gentlemen.'

The Keralans were followed by many others. There were the five Buddhist abbots sent to Caux by the Presiding Abbots' Association of Burma. They sat, cross-legged, in a row on our bay window seat, and dispensed wisdom. One don, reputed to be one of the most brilliant talkers in Oxford, came to meet them with his son of five. He was a man with whom it was difficult to argue, or even to make a point; for he had developed the technique of including at least three ideas in every sentence so that it

was hard to isolate the one you wished to challenge. But on this occasion he was silent. Sitting on the floor before the abbots, he asked simply: 'Have you anything to say to me?'

U Narada, the leader of the party, fixed him with a piercing eye: 'If you want your son to do what is right,' he said, 'you must do what is right yourself. For example, if you do not want him to smoke you must not smoke yourself.'

The don was silent. 'How did he know?' he asked me as I drove him back to his college. 'I am a chain smoker and I know I should stop.'

The abbots did not eat between noon and sunset, so we served them two meals, one at 5 a.m. and the other at eleven. Traditionally, they were not allowed anywhere near a woman, a discipline slightly modified to meet the needs of foreign travel, but maintained in that they thanked Mary, aged eight, for her hospitality – and gave her a Burmese bag which she still uses – but did not recognise or even say 'goodbye' to Margot.

We took them to see the Lord Mayor of Oxford. The Lady Mayoress said to me, 'What wonderful faces they have. If we lived like them, would we look as peaceful?'

Many other parties have come to us – Brazilian dockers and shanty-dwellers, German miners, Egyptian students, leaders of black and white in South Africa. People from 85 countries appear in our visitors' book. You never know when you get up in the morning, who will be in the house by nightfall.

The atmosphere in the University has changed in many ways since we were undergraduates. To generalise is always dangerous – and particularly so in Oxford where the scene is always shifting; but here are some of my impressions for what they are worth. The teaching is as good as ever, and the average undergraduate works harder.

There is far less snobbery except, perhaps, of an inverted kind, and the young are more concerned than we were with the outside world and those less fortunate than themselves. A major change which I noticed, returning after twenty-five years, was that senior Oxford often seems to have abandoned the attempt to deal with the whole man – spirit and character as well as mind. Dons will take infinite care of anyone who has got into trouble but many do little or nothing to stop them getting into it. This is no doubt in part due to unwillingness of many undergraduates to be ‘looked after’, whether by parents or teachers. But a freshman said to Margot in that first year, ‘If only one don would say that it is not necessary to sleep around to be normal, it would be such a help,’ and many more have said the same since. It used to be said that Oxford should be a ‘a focus of culture, a school of character and a nursery of thought’. The first and third survive better than the second, and do they not, ultimately, depend upon it?

The modern view is that the don’s only concern is the intellectual development of the student. And in an age when, in the words of one submission to the Franks Commission on the future of the University, ‘many dons conceive it to be their duty to shake their pupils to their intellectual and moral foundations without giving them anything to take the place of the convictions they have destroyed,’¹ the result is not always happy. A. L. Rowse may put it too high when he writes that ‘Oxford takes away one’s hope and saps the vital thing in a man which might accomplish something’. But for many it is ‘the home of lost enthusiasms or lost solutions’.² One is given the impression sometimes that it is mature and intellectual to live overwhelmed by problems, while to attempt solutions is naive.

Two recent impressions are the shrinkage of the

militants' horizons and the decline of the humanist trend. Whereas, a few years ago, the issues stirring the Oxford militants were world-wide, now they seem to confine their demonstrations to local matters – the disciplinary system, whether they can have a central students' union, the level of their grants and so on. And whereas, when we returned to Oxford, the Humanist Society – and humanist generally meant atheist – was the largest in the university, boasting, once, 2,000 members, today it is relatively tiny. Students are more open to hear and discuss spiritual solutions than for many years. Professor William Barclay, the prolific translator and commentator on the Bible, summed up for me the current attitude to Christianity as 'tremendous interest, little commitment'.

Settling in Oxford, we hoped that the experience of the thirties might be repeated – that scores of young men and women in any one year, might be enlisted to work for this world-wide revolution. This has not happened. Perhaps the battle now is more sharply drawn. No doubt, we are less dedicated than we should be. For whatever reason, the 'through-put', to use an unattractive word of modern technology, has been a stream, sometimes a trickle, rather than a flood. All the same, people have gone out to work in every continent.

There was Patrick, a breezy Etonian and keen oarsman, who used to charge into the house during his last summer term and ask questions. He had been interested by the change in a school friend, and he wanted to get points straight, but never to stay long enough to get 'caught'. Finally one day he stayed long enough to listen to God with me. He was planning to volunteer for two years with the Falkland Islands Dependency Survey, though I did not know it. When we listened, the thought struck him that he should not go on the expedition as he was just using it as an escape from deciding what to do

with his life. 'It was like a blow with a hammer, and all the more of a shock because we had not discussed it,' Patrick told me years later. But when I asked him what had come to him he said, 'Nothing at all.' He asked me what I had thought. 'That you would be at Caux this summer,' I replied. That was impossible, he said, because he had other plans. From that moment, however, his enthusiasm for the expedition waned, and he did come to Caux. He has brought new life to many young men, and is today married and doing in Cambridge what we try to do in Oxford.

Tom was another oarsman. He brought his successful crew to our house for his twenty-first birthday, and it was his zest and quality of life rather than just his rowing ability about which they spoke. He was not a great scholar – he failed at least one exam – but the college kept him on because they valued his influence. He became a successful young executive of British Railways before electing to work full-time. He and his wife and child are now in France.

Another man was Rob, the son of a Fenland market gardener, who came up to Christ Church with a physics scholarship. Tom and I met him over lunch in the Union dining room and got talking. He was a sincere Christian, but without hope of affecting other people or the larger world. After a good degree, he became a graduate apprentice at Rolls-Royce, one of the ablest, they said, that they had had. Then he too felt a call to full-time work. He is now in Australia.

Thirty-two Rhodes scholars come to Oxford from America each year – and mostly return to take up significant positions in their own country. During the Kennedy regime, it is said, some Americans were alarmed lest Harvard men had too many top jobs in Washington; but a survey of senior posts revealed that the University with

the largest representation was Oxford. We have been privileged to meet and entertain many Rhodes men. Two of them are Steve and Dick. Steve went to India during his Oxford vacations, and, after taking his B.Litt., decided to work with us. He has since married Catherine Guisan, a charming graduate of Lausanne University whom he met in our house. Dick, being on the naval reserve, was called to fight in Vietnam and worked for two more years in the Pentagon. After that he was, while still under thirty, asked to head an advanced planning section there with a high salary and golden prospects. He had just married Evelyn, a graduate in anthropology, and the prospect was alluring. But they both felt they could do more to answer America's deeper needs – needs since highlighted by Watergate – if they gave their whole energies to this work, for which they, like the rest of us, get no salary.

Another friend was a brilliant young African who, before coming to Oxford, had been secretary to his country's President and then editor of one of its leading newspapers. In his early thirties, he decided to take a degree in politics and economics at Oxford.

We saw quite a bit of him – sometimes more, sometimes less – during his three years there. I often wondered whether we had been any use to him. Then, about a year after he had returned home, a letter came. 'I cannot thank you all enough for what you did for me at Oxford,' he wrote. 'I have found the strength that I can no longer be bribed by threats or flattery.' He was now back in the President's office in charge of rooting out corruption in the country.

One October, as the new academic year was starting, a young South American in a Ché Guevara beret appeared at our house and introduced himself as the son of a trade union leader whom we had met during I.L.O. meetings

in Geneva. His name was Paul, and he had been engaged in the radical student movement in Venezuela and Guyana. He had come to Oxford for a two year course in politics and economics.

'We in the guerrilla and radical movements are failing,' he told me. 'We have relied on military force, a commodity of which the more reactionary Governments have more than we have. I want to find a new kind of force. Perhaps Moral Re-Armament is what I am looking for?'

It happened that Rajmohan Gandhi, the grandson of Mahatma Gandhi and editor of the Indian weekly *Himmat*, was coming to Oxford that week with a group of Indians, and that they were speaking in Balliol College Hall on 'Moral Re-Armament - Better than Violence'. I invited Paul to come and hear them.

Balliol had been chosen because it was the revolutionary focus of the day. The college of Jowett and Milner, of Macmillan and Heath, had become a centre of radical thought and action. Riots were not uncommon, and much damage to college property and tradition resulted. Old Balliol men deplored the situation, and not least the then Dean.

On the night of the meeting, the Dean, who had made the hall available, was alarmed to observe what he considered the more unruly elements in the college moving in force from the college bar to the hall. Unknown to us, he unlocked a door behind the dais from which Gandhi would speak and himself sat outside the door, ready to fling it open and let the speakers out ahead of the assault which he confidently expected.

He was amazed when the audience, which included advocates of violence from Africa, Asia and South America, listened for 90 minutes in complete silence while Gandhi and his friends spoke. No one moved until one of Gandhi's student colleagues said that he had always de-

nounced the Indian politicians as corrupt, but had had to face that he was corrupt himself. At the word 'corrupt', three white students lumbered to their feet and stumped out of the hall, banging the door behind them. No one else stirred.

Gandhi described how character changes in certain politicians had led to the harmonious creation of Maghalaya, a new state in North East India where the Indian press had expected a Vietnam-type situation to develop. The Governor of Assam, B. K. Nehru, had said that 'seldom have such far-reaching constitutional changes been brought about with so much goodwill'.

'You in Oxford can be God's hi-jackers of history,' Gandhi said. 'You can turn the plane of world events from its disaster course to a better destination. Why should we accept race war in America, division in India, apartheid or dictatorship in Africa, poverty in South America, when the changing of men could avert them?'

A new sensation stirred the audience when a French student described how he had kidnapped the Rector of his university and exposed him to an insulting student meeting. 'Our aim was to increase violence in France as much as possible. My family despaired of me. I liked that. I wanted to destroy them too. I thought that extremely revolutionary, though I must admit that during that whole year nothing really changed because of me. There is nothing new in carrying a knife and living with no restraints.'

The Frenchman told how he had given up drugs and had apologised to the Rector and to professors whom he had prevented from lecturing for two months. 'I have found a really creative way,' he said.

The questions, when they came, were genuine and incisive. Paul was one of those who asked them. Others came from black South Africans, from Asians, from Sierra

Leone and Ireland. Could changes come without violence?

'Have you tried listening to God and obeying?' Gandhi asked.

'I have prayed,' said a black South African, unable to return to his country.

'Good. But have you listened and obeyed?' insisted Gandhi.

The talk went on until the lights were turned out. Next day some of the audience, Paul among them, came to our house to talk further. He decided then to make the experiment of faith—something he was reluctant to do because of disappointment with his own Church back home.

Three months later, he spoke in our home to twenty from his own college: 'I am a revolutionary by circumstances and choice. So much around me is wrong, inhuman and intolerable that I must be committed to the struggle to change the world. It is precisely because of this that I have become interested in the experience of these people, in their serious attempt to practise the four absolute standards of honesty, love, unselfishness and purity. It is because they are not lost in the comfort of this home, and the easy, selfish career with which their Oxford degrees could have provided them.

'To those who are eager to change the system, I ask, "Who will be most effective in changing corruption: the honest fellow or the dishonest fellow?"' The experience of the four standards can cleanse and heighten my revolutionary mind. Unless I can straighten out my own double standards, and bent life, I can never honestly be totally committed to changing the world.

'To be revolutionary is one thing, to continue being revolutionary is another. In South America we say that for most students revolution is a fashion; when they leave,

they change to a new fashion. The freshman is immediately radical or revolutionary; in the second year he becomes a Marxist-Leninist; in the third he becomes dissatisfied with Bolshevism and so becomes Fidelist or Maoist; in the fourth he becomes more disillusioned, and graduates as a bureaucrat. The only guarantee of being always revolutionary is to practise the four absolute standards. Lenin once said, "In each of us there is a bourgeois waiting to come out". Certainly it is a fight between the evil part and the good part of our natures. I believe we can overcome the evil. Try this experiment.'

After leaving Oxford, he took a job in Toronto in order to get further training with the Canadian forces of Christian revolution. 'I intend to use Canada as my base for the next five years,' he wrote in 1973. 'In these years I hope to move through our Americas and possibly India and Ethiopia and Nigeria to get enough growth of character and commitment and faith. What happens after that God knows, but that is my "five year development programme".'

One of the interesting things in Oxford has been to work with the Boobbyers – Brian, the former England rucker international, and Juliet, a talented artist, who came with their young sons, Philip and Mark, to live in the neighbourhood.

We are fifteen years older than Brian and Juliet, and we are different in many ways. Their courage and enthusiasm are a challenge to us, and they must many times think us cautious and lacking in originality. If so, they are right, so often their faith is stronger than ours, and their courage is immense. We, in our slow-coach way, sometimes think their plans are un-thought through. How do such people work together?

In January 1752, John and Charles Wesley, and nine of their closest colleagues, signed a remarkable document,³

set out in John's neat hand with typical thoroughness. It reads :

- 'It is agreed by us whose names are underwritten :
1. That we will not listen or willingly inquire after any Ill concerning each other.
 2. That if we do hear any Ill of each other, we will not be forward to believe it.
 3. That, as soon as possible, we will communicate what we fear, by speaking or writing, to the Person concerned.
 4. That till we have done this, we will not write or speak a Syllable of it to any other Person whatever.
 5. That neither will we mention it, after we have done this, to any other Person.
 6. That we will not make any Exception to any of these Rules unless we think ourselves absolutely obliged in Conference so to do.'

It should not be necessary for colleagues to sign such a declaration, but the sentiments in it are as sound today as they were then. If practised, they would transform most boards of directors, trades unions, churches and cabinets the world over. For myself I am trying to live by simple principles : 'No judging others. No gossip about others. Be open, without preconceptions, to seek the Holy Spirit with others, whoever they are, whatever their background or experience or age. God is no respecter of persons. His will may be shown through the youngest, the oldest, the dullest or even the cleverest - wherever there is faith and obedience.'

Judging and gossip have nothing to do with the Holy Spirit. They are, with me, devices for making me seem big at someone else's expense.

The best recipe for teamwork which I know is contained

in 1 Corinthians 13 – and it is a healthy exercise, now and then, to read verses 4 to 8 aloud, substituting one's own name for the word 'love';

'Garth suffereth long and is kind; Garth envieth not, Garth vaunteth not himself, is not puffed up. . . .'

Need I go on?

Is the generation gap compulsory?

Not long ago I went to a reunion dinner. There was, of course, a certain amount of talk of 'the old days', but by far the most frequent topic was the unsatisfactoriness of children, the difficulty of understanding them, the near-impossibility of getting on well with them: in fact, the generation gap. My impression is that this is often the case wherever two or three parents are gathered together.

The topic is, also, not uncommon when the younger generation foregather. And the conclusions they reach are more worthy of study than we older people are inclined to believe. 'Even the offspring of the intelligentsia,' said Mr Roy Fuller in his inaugural address as Professor of Poetry at Oxford, 'revolt by way of dropping out of education and so forth, perhaps because they see their parents more and more obsessed by gadgets of affluence, and less and less convinced that anything can be done by way of principle and belief.'¹ Or, as the *International Times*, the organ of the Underground, more pithily puts it, 'Realise that the older people drink and get high and feel great, and you do other things and get high, and they spit on you.'²

But is the generation gap compulsory? Our daughter Mary, who has just graduated in history at St Hugh's College, Oxford, says it is not. Her brother Geoffrey, who is a journalist on a daily newspaper, agrees with her. We have been lucky in our children – and in honest friends who have helped us at difficult points in our life together – for it is a fact that we are more united today than ever. But that is a condition which comes by change, not by chance.

The first necessity for Margot and myself has been to realise that, left to ourselves, we are poor parents. One of the times when this came home to us most forcibly was when Geoffrey at the age of eight went away to preparatory school. We were living and working in Sweden at the time and, after a year with us there, he joined a school near Worcester. Unhappy letters began to arrive. 'I hate it here,' one read. 'I have to get up and dress in twenty minutes, and make my bed with never a crease.' I had been unhappy during my first terms at boarding school and was inclined to think it the natural contrast with our happy home; but some friends of ours who lived near Worcester and were keeping an eye on Geoffrey for us wrote to us firmly that they thought Geoffrey's unhappiness was our fault.

We did not, at first, welcome their letter, but we could not deny that it was true. Geoffrey was a dreamy boy. Putting on his ski boots in the hall of the multi-family house in which we lived in Sweden would take so long that one of us would often intervene and do up his laces for him. It had been the same with making his bed, keeping him amused and jollying him out of moods. We had not prepared him for a world where he had to stand on his own feet and where sulks or tears did not win friends or influence people.

When Geoffrey arrived in Stockholm for the Christmas

holidays, he announced, 'I'm not going back.'

'Oh yes, you are. You have no choice,' we replied. We told him we felt we had been to blame for his unhappiness and asked how best we could help him prepare for next term.

After some thought, Geoffrey replied that it would help if he practised getting up and making his bed in twenty minutes, exactly as at school.

All went well for three days. Then, Geoffrey was two minutes late. I told him so, and he flew into a temper of tears. 'It's Mother's fault,' he shouted, with some justice. 'She made me change my vest when I'd got it on.' As he became calmer, I explained that I did not mind him being late; but I did mind the way he took being told. For it was these eruptions of fury which provoked other boys into the ragging and jeering which made him miserable.

Geoffrey descended into a deep mood which lasted through breakfast and beyond. Margot, in an attempt to jolly him out of it, took him out for a walk in the snow-covered island of Djurgården where we lived. Still Geoffrey sulked. Then, suddenly, it dawned on Margot: 'You fool. There is no one to do this for him at school. Leave him to get out of it himself.' So she said, 'Well Geoffrey, I'm going home. Come back when you're feeling better,' and home she came.

Geoffrey did not come back for several hours, and Margot had to resist the temptation to go and find him. When he did appear, he looked quite different. That night, when he and Margot were praying together, he suddenly said, 'Please God help me never to get in a mood again, because I know when I'm doing it and I only do it to make others as miserable as I am myself.'

At that time Margot used to go over the day with Geoffrey by means of the five finger game. The fingers

stood for five soldiers – honesty, purity, unselfishness, love and obedience – and, of course, parent and child started before them completely on a level, obedience being to God. Each would show the other how many soldiers were still standing at the end of the day. For several days, Geoffrey's soldiers one and two were flat, but then for two days they were standing upright. Praying at the end of that second day, Geoffrey thanked God for his help, and then suddenly added: 'And while I am about it, I might as well decide to enjoy school.' He told our Stockholm household this the next morning. There happened to be a teacher present who hated his job. He said that if Geoffrey could enjoy school, so could he, and he has since.

When Margot told the headmaster about Geoffrey's decision, he replied, 'I don't want to discourage you, Mrs Lean. But the second term is always worse than the first. We'll just have to hope for the best.' But by half term, he had written, 'Geoffrey is quite different this term. The transformation is unbelievable, and I can take no credit for it.'

Geoffrey by the age of eight, had had certain definite experience of God's power in his life. Two-way prayer – listening and talking – comes naturally to very young children, if it is natural to their parents. They find faith and trust quite easy – often embarrassingly so. One night, in a thunderstorm, we were called to Geoffrey's bedroom at the top of the house. 'I want to ask God to stop this,' he said. Margot began to explain that you could not ask God to stop things like thunderstorms, but that you could ask him for courage... Geoffrey waved such sophistries impatiently aside. 'God,' he said, 'stop it at once.' Amazingly there was no more thunder, and Geoffrey turned over and went to sleep.

Guidance, of course, assumes that parent and child are under the same authority – God's – and that obedience is

to Him. When Geoffrey was six, the year I was in India, Margot took him and Mary, then only one, to Tirley Garth where Margot had spent the war years. The wife of one of my friends, then working in Iran, was also there with their son, John. Margot suggested to Geoffrey that John and he should room together, enabling the mothers to do likewise. Geoffrey objected: 'John is always so right and always so wise. We'd do nothing but quarrel.'

'Come, come,' said Margot a bit piously. 'It takes two to make a quarrel.'

'There'll *be* two, that's just the point,' replied Geoffrey with passion.

Finally, mother and son decided to listen. They wrote down their thoughts. Geoffrey read out: 'He said, "John is a much nicer chap than you think. Ask him into your room."' And he began immediately to clear a cupboard for John's things. They have been friends ever since.

Meanwhile, in New Delhi, I saw a lot of an Indian Member of Parliament and his family of five sons. The boys asked me how one could listen to God, so I asked Geoffrey to write and answer their question. Margot sent me his reply:

'Here is Geoff's reply to your letter of today asking him to explain guidance to the Indian children. It was dictated at bedtime, with much careful thought, and entirely unprompted at any point by me. The punctuation – particularly the brackets – is his own.'

'That how you have guidance is you get some paper, or you could do it in your head and not write it down on a piece of paper; and you keep very quiet. (If you have any young ones who kind of scream, just go into another room.) And you listen, maybe. And if you listen very quietly, you'll hear not exactly a little voice – you suddenly get a thought. I would do it with lots of people together

and then you are quite sure it's guidance. The best thing is to get up in the morning early to have guidance for the day. Maybe if you have got any poor friends you may think of things to make them happy, or lend them one of your books or something.

'And when you talk about M.R.A. there are four standards. And these are what the four standards are :

1. Is Honesty. If you told a lie or anything, that's not being very honest. So if you do say a lie, it's M.R.A. to say sorry.
2. Another is called Purity. Not to say any naughty words unless you need to. Not to say these words. And that is Purity.
3. Unselfishness is that when you are selfish it's kind of being greedy. (Well, in case you haven't heard, in M.R.A. we have, not really, but a kind of a leader, called Frank Buchman. Most of the grown-up people call him Dr Buchman. And he has a little thing to say, 'If everyone shares enough and everyone cares enough everyone will have enough.')
4. Then the next is called Love. Love is to like people.

'This is for the very young people.

'Well, if this letter arrives in the morning maybe after school, if you have one, go into a room and think about it. If it arrives in the evening at bedtime, I would have a little bit of guidance and ask whoever looks after you to listen with you, because I'm sure *they will know*.

'The grown-ups had better learn how before the children get this letter because they'll be so eager to try.'

'Here,' added Margot, 'Geoff wanted me to add a piece to tell the grown-ups how to listen but I said you were doing that and you and he were the team. He is intensely interested in it all, so report progress to him. He added, "I put in that part about listening with a lot of people so

there wouldn't be any nonsense and anybody saying just what they liked!"'

It is, of course, no good forcing guidance on a child. He has to want to have it. He may give it up for a time. He will certainly give it up if the parent does not want it for himself, and is not ready to be as ruled by God as he expects the child to be. And, in any case, a time will come when the child has to decide for himself what kind of life he wants to lead. Geoffrey first decided at the age of twelve at one of the international assemblies at Caux. He had heard two hardcore Mau Mau men state that they believed changing people was a more effective way than killing them, and this made a deep impression. 'This has been a turning point in my life,' he said. We were inclined to take that statement lightly, but it was quite true.

At public school this meant standing against the prevailing trend on a number of points. For a time it meant loneliness, and even sometimes petty persecution. This was painful to him, and to us. But, later, his contemporaries turned to him, and in the meantime he had learnt to stand by himself with God, a lesson which has been invaluable in university and the newspaper office. If you can stand for something at a public school, you can do it anywhere. And if you don't stand for something these days, you will fall for anything.

Mary is a quite different character from Geoffrey. She is, he says, the clever one of the family, and certainly she has gained more academic recognition, winning open scholarships to her boarding school and to Oxford. She is less naturally enthusiastic, less gregarious and very sensitive to people. This makes her worry more about what people think of her – like my mother she can be distrustful of herself and is apt to think people may not like her – but it also makes her aware of others' needs. She never

forgets a friend, is practical about the house and creative.

She was born two days after Christmas, when we were living for a time with another family in a delightful house in Wimbledon. Boxing Day happens to be my birthday, and as we sat talking together, the mother of the other family said that the child coming would be 'a daughter of the revolution'. This proved true in many ways. At that time I was a bit dug in to London and had refused an invitation to go and work in India. Margot, for her part, was enjoying the idea that this second child would start life in a small home with a garden in which to take the air and dry the nappies rather than a large London house, containing twenty or more people, such as Geoffrey had been born into. But while Margot was in hospital, it was put to us that we were needed back in the very house where we had been with Geoffrey, and I transferred all our things there so that she could return to it. Mary's coming, too, had made me so grateful to God that I made a new commitment, and within a couple of months I was off to Germany, followed by India and Scandinavia, as I have told. Mary seemed quite at home in the larger set-ups where she lived, in London, Cheshire and Stockholm successively.

Her approach to her first school was novel. On her fourth birthday, after opening her presents, she said: 'There is something else which happens when you are four.' We all guessed without success, until someone mentioned school. 'Yes,' said Mary. 'School. You go to school and you kick the teacher.'

Listening to God came to her quite naturally, as it does to children, if given half a chance. She had asked Margot what we did, sitting up before breakfast, so Margot thought carefully how to explain it all. The best way, she decided, was to say it was like the radio - thoughts came without seeing the person speaking and so on. But Mary waved

her aside and insisted on starting doing it. She found the idea of listening to God far easier to accept than the theory of the radio.

It was not until she was six and we moved into Oxford that Mary lived in a smaller home. New people, as I have told, were always in and out, and Mary sometimes found it difficult to understand that such people might, at times, have a better claim on Margot than her. It came to a head one evening when a charming woman professor from Nepal was coming to supper. Margot told Mary that she would bring Mrs Joshe to see her but that someone else would say the final good night, as we would be having supper. Mary flew into a tantrum. 'I don't want to see her. *You're* my mother, I want *you*. I hate all these people who come into *my* home and take *you* away.'

Margot explained that it was not our house but God's and that we wanted to make this woman, so far away from her own children, feel at home. Mary calmed down and accepted this, and gave Mrs Joshe a real welcome. In the next months they became friends, and from then on she has always played her part in making our house a home for others.

Not long after that, Mary, quite unprompted, said that she wanted to start living nearer to the standards of honesty, purity, unselfishness and love. She began to tell Margot, sometimes with real difficulty, things which had been on her conscience. Sometimes one wondered whether she was bothering too much about trifles, but Margot remembered how she had been troubled as a teenager by a sense of guilt for a lie she had told to her parents in childhood – a lie which had led to her sister being punished instead of her. And, in fact, from that time, Mary took a real step forward in freedom. In these days when psychiatrists spend so long and earn such fat fees unearthing the secrets of one's childhood, it may be no bad thing

to have a way of resolving things simply in childhood in the home, so that they never develop into real problems.

Geoffrey and Mary were good friends and had many adventures together. When they were thirteen and eight respectively, a People's Declaration, setting out the Christian solution to our national problems, was being signed by thousands of people all over Britain. Geoffrey and Mary decided to take it round, house to house, in the Jericho district of Oxford, a near-slum area now being rebuilt. They each took one side of the street.

Geoffrey rang one door bell, and presented the Declaration to the alert young man who came to answer it. 'You won't want me to sign this, I'm a Communist.' 'You're just the kind of man we want,' replied Geoffrey. 'Come in,' said the young man.

Geoffrey fetched Mary, and they found themselves at a cell meeting of the Young Communist League. The young man was an official for the surrounding counties.

A lively discussion ensued. Geoffrey's line was that he wanted all those present to be more, not less, revolutionary – to start with themselves and to apply absolute moral standards. Mary, never backward in giving her opinion, weighed in as time permitted.

'The session ended,' Mary remembers, 'with our host saying he wished he could be as sure that he would be alive in ten years time as he was that Communism would then be running Britain. Geoffrey replied that he thought God could and would be running Britain.'

The young man signed the Declaration and, a few days later, came round to see me, because he was so impressed with the children's fighting spirit.

Going away to school was not easy for Mary; but she felt it right to go. If anything she had more initial difficulty in making friends than Geoffrey. With her, as with him, people changed their view in later years. A friend and

she, who had been to Caux, volunteered to tell the whole school about that conference. They did so. Afterwards, the headmistress told us, 'They would never tell Mary and Jane, but other girls tell me how much they admire their courage.' When she left school, Mary, to her astonishment, was given the annual Winifred Spooner Award for 'courage, independence of view and generosity of mind'.

It was just about a year before this that she gave her life to God. It happened on her seventeenth birthday. So many people of her generation were revolting against their parents that she had begun to wonder whether she ought to do so as well. As she listened in the morning she thought, 'The fact that your parents are living the life they do is no reason why you should not do so too.'

Later, she wrote me: 'The generation gap is not compulsory. Usually, on the side of youth, it is caused by rebellion against parental authority or against the parents' materialistic values. But people on the whole stop at reacting. They don't try to change the situation.'

I asked Mary at about this time what listening to God meant to her. She replied: 'Giving God a chance to speak. If He doesn't, it usually means one has limits on what one will let Him speak about. At its least it gives a chance to see the day in perspective before it begins, which is very frustration-saving. At its best, it provides a goldmine of deeper understanding of God, oneself and the world, and of what to do next. It is a rock of security in a life when we are sometimes allowed no other security.'

If I were asked what is the best way to have a united family, I would say not to worry about unity but to find a purpose which is large enough to need everyone. When we start trying to be happy as an end in itself, we soon fall out. And when we parents settle down to middle aged comfort or indulgence, the children soon get bored or disillusioned.

In her last year at school, Mary realised that she was about to spend a month at home with Margot and me, without Geoffrey and without the breaks which had come in most holidays. The thought, she says, horrified her. In her quiet time on the first day home she had the thought, 'Do something together for someone outside the home every day.' That idea rather horrified *us*, and particularly Margot who felt she would be let in for a lot of extra cooking. However, we took it on together.

The first days took planning – who to invite to meals, what to give them to eat and what, if anything, we could do which might make them feel, on leaving, that they had received something worthwhile. The first two were Oxford friends of Mary's. Then a mistress and some girls from Sherborne were found to be in town. Some friends of a friend called in. Then, after three or four days, God seemed to take control. A well-known TV personality came in and gave his life to God. One of the then Shadow Cabinet called and talked over something which might help in Northern Ireland. Undergraduates, trades union men, a publisher, a businessman or two, all kinds of people flooded in.

Meanwhile, Margot and Mary were kept working in the kitchen. Two women cooking together, even – or especially – if they are mother and daughter, sometimes have problems. Margot reflected that she had never done any cooking at her own home because she was so slow in comparison with her own mother that she got discouraged. Her thought on the second morning was, 'Allow yourself the luxury of being wrong at least once a day' – an idea she interpreted as being ready to recognise that she was wrong and happily to accept it: not always to think the way she thought something should be done was right. This freed Mary to be creative and Mary voted it the most satisfying holidays she could remember.

Honesty is the bridge over the generation gap. Not long ago, Geoffrey was making an important decision about his career. He happened to be several thousand miles away, and someone said to him, 'Have you examined your motives? Confusion comes from compromise. Clarity comes from change.' He did examine his life and motives – and almost immediately the course he should take in his career came clear.

He was good enough to write us about this process – and his conclusions – with complete honesty. Margot replied telling him what she had been learning herself, but my letter was confined to perfunctory gratitude. Geoffrey was bitterly disappointed, and when we met again told me frankly that he felt divided from me and that he thought there was a dead hand on our relationship – mine. And we stayed divided, however much I tried to change my outward conduct, until I let God tell me why I had been so stiff and perfunctory with him. The fact was that his honesty had hit some of my motives – my love of security, my use of his success to boost peoples' opinion of me, my desire to control what he should do. When I was honest about these deep character traits in myself and asked God to change them, we were immediately reunited. The generation gap is often an honesty gap in us parents.

The decision on which Geoffrey had been pondering was whether to try for a job with the *Yorkshire Post*. As he tells himself in the next chapter, he decided to do so. In the last five years, as he relates, he had been given many chances there to campaign on important local and national issues. What he has not said is that, following his recent campaign to clean up the rivers of Yorkshire, all the twenty-five firms and local authorities which he named as polluters initiated improvements within a year. For this work he was awarded the Glaxo Fellowship for the Pro-

vincial Science writer of 1972, the Yorkshire Council of Social Service Press Award for work in areas of social concern and second place in the I.P.C. Young Journalist of the Year competition. But I will let him tell his own story.

Son's progress

by Geoffrey Lean

'Are you a volunteer or a conscript?'

I was 18 and the speaker was our next door neighbour, a scientist of alert and penetrating mind.

I could honestly answer that I was a volunteer.

True, my parents had brought me up with clear standards of right and wrong and to know and experience God's guidance. I am grateful that they did. It certainly gave my childhood a richness, stability and happiness that many of my friends envy.

But never once did they put pressure on me to commit myself to their way of life – and every initiative towards it was left to me.

The adventure of their way of life and its relevance to what was going on in the world was a powerful magnet. I took each step in learning how to live because I saw that it had worked for them and for other people I met.

All the same I rebelled at 16. Partly, I suppose, it was because I wanted to be sure that my life-style was my own decision, that I wanted clearly to register my independence. But partly, too, it was that I wanted to control my own life rather than to put it into God's hands. I had

gone through a good deal of mockery for my beliefs at school. I realised that to live under God's control would always involve me in controversy, and the desire to be popular is strong in me.

And yet I realised the importance of the work of Moral Re-Armament and wanted to win the approval of the people I respected who were committed to it. So, in rebellion, I became more involved than ever in M.R.A. activities, while shutting off my connection with God – except in emergencies! The result was, of course, a complete denial of what M.R.A. was all about.

There was no pressure, no preaching and no recrimination from my parents. They helped me explain what I felt, and then left the subject alone – at the same time making no secret about what they believed, and in no way moderating the way they lived. The initiative for my final decision came from me and, I think, took them somewhat by surprise.

For by the time I left school I had become dissatisfied. I felt that I was not effective, because I had no idea of how to help anyone find a satisfying purpose in life. And I was unhappy that I could do nothing about my own nature and had no sense of peace or of the companionship of God.

All this suddenly poured out of me one evening in London as we were walking from a theatre to the house where we were staying. My mother and father gently helped me to understand that peace, effectiveness and satisfaction came only from giving your will and life into the hands of God. And in the sitting room of our friends' home I simply prayed that God would take control.

It was a very tentative and hesitant first step – but it was the vital one. For God, I found, takes you at your word. All sorts of things began to come my way – and I cannot remember a bored half hour in the nine years that

have passed since. Nor can I remember once regretting my decision.

Within a few months two things happened that threw me out of my depth and into a new reliance on God's guidance – I went up to Oxford, and I fell in love.

Judy was then 18, wild, warmhearted, Irish and on her first visit to England. She had just left school in Dublin, where she is still a legend as the most uncontrollable pupil of her day. Somehow she was persuaded to spend two weeks at a conference for young people in the grounds at Tirley Garth.

'I'll go,' she said to herself, 'but they are not going to get me into their old Moral Re-Armament.' And she fixed up with all her friends that they should write her once a day to cheer her up, and keep her resolution firm.

But they soon began to get unexpected letters back. For Judy had been thrown off balance by what she found. She quickly decided that this was how she wanted to live.

A few days after this happened Judy and I were working in the office of the daily conference newspaper. We ended up alone in the office for a couple of hours in the afternoon and got talking. I felt this was a girl to whom I could tell anything, and she would understand, and one who would always expect the best from me.

A month later when I was searching for God's guidance in the morning, I had the clear thought that one day Judy and I would get married. During the next six years there were long periods when we saw nothing of each other – we spent much of the time, in fact, on different continents. But there were times, too, when we were unexpectedly thrown together. And as the time went on I found, to my amazement, that I wanted Judy to become the person God wanted her to be even more than I wanted her to marry me.

It seems a strange way to run a courtship, and it was

not at all what I expected at the beginning. But it was faith-building, peaceful and even joyful at the time, and looking back, it seems to have been the best way to have gone about it.

That October I went up to St Edmund Hall, Oxford. Again I felt out of my depth. I believed that what happened to students at Oxford greatly affected the world, as so many of them ended up leading their countries. I wanted to be used by God in the situation – but it seemed an enormous pool to dive into. So I asked God to tell me which particular area of university life I should become involved in. I got the answer that I should work in university journalism.

Ever since I was fourteen there had stolen in on me the conviction that my life-work would be in journalism. Oxford seemed a good place to start. So on the first day of term I set out to find a magazine on which to begin. I went along to a meeting for freshmen of *Oxford Opinion* – then a strong rival of *Isis*. As in every interview I have had since, I made no secret of my basic beliefs. An hour after walking through the door I had become the only freshman on the editorial board.

So there was success, it seemed. Two days later I arrived at the magazine's office to find that *Oxford Opinion* had folded because of two libel actions provoked, before I joined it, by the first issue of term! Even in Oxford's tradition of constantly rising and dying magazines my quick up and down career must be something of a record.

Later, I edited what was then the university's main political magazine, and began to write regular paragraphs for *The Times* Diary. It was fun to be in competition with professional journalists, and it eked out my grant. It was helpful, too, when I came to look for a job.

This was not as easy as I expected. With my natural conceit (a condition which education at Oxford does not

generally alleviate) I had assumed that any London newspaper would snap up a young graduate who had already worked for *The Times*. So I left my applications for a job until far too late.

I saw various people in Fleet Street who were encouraging, but told me to get training in the provinces first – and so I applied to the *Yorkshire Post*.

Again I was far too late for that year, but they encouraged me to apply a year later. In the end it worked out, despite myself, in the best possible way – for I decided to work for a year full-time with Moral Re-Armament. Just after I had taken that decision the *Yorkshire Post* had a vacancy and offered me an immediate job, as did the B.B.C. news department in Birmingham. But I clearly felt I should stick to my decision and turn down both offers, trusting that jobs would still be available when I returned.

I am glad I did. The year meant an immense widening of my horizons which was a great help in journalism, and it knocked many of the traits off me – including some of my conceit – which would have made me quite intolerable as a beginner in a newspaper office.

I spent the first months of it in Europe and England at the time of student militancy following the Paris riots. My friends and I had many adventures meeting university authorities and the radicals and presenting the more permanent revolution of M.R.A. Many were fascinated by it, and in some cases solutions were found to intractable problems that were commanding the headlines. Perhaps I got a little too involved in the subject – as I found when I travelled from Paris to England just before the day of demonstrations on October 28th which had been heralded as the start of the revolution in Britain.

My hair had grown somewhat and at Dover the customs officer asked me what I had been doing in Paris.

'Working for Moral Re-Armament,' I said, thinking that if anything would get you through the customs, that would.

'Who is he?' asked the officer, more suspicious than ever.

'Oh, it's a revolution that . . .' That was all I needed to say. He searched everything.

After some months I was invited to go and work in Australia. I went out by way of India and back through Singapore and Ethiopia.

In Australia I learned much, working with journalists and students and also in some of the toughest industrial situations in the country. In one new town which had been built as an industrial showpiece, but which had become a byword for strife, a new relationship was established between management and labour as a result of the visit of the group with which I was working.

I also learnt more about caring for individuals. I met a young man who had been living a hippy-type existence for some years. He asked me what I was doing, and was fascinated by this commitment which seemed to him neither a surrender to the Establishment nor a dropping out of the kind which was proving less than satisfying. He began to tell me about his life – drift, and brittle relationships, all going back to a hatred of his father. 'I have told you more in a day than I've told four psychiatrists in two years,' he said. He seemed to break out of his muddle and left me to find his father. I heard later that their relationship was put on an entirely new basis.

The months flew by, and soon it was time to reapply to the *Yorkshire Post*, if I was going to do it. I did not know what to do. I felt drawn and committed to journalism, but also that the work I was helping with in Australia was important. For some weeks I felt very torn.

Finally I got together with two older men whom I respected and asked for their advice. They said that often the thing to worry about was not which alternative was right, but what one's motive was. They mentioned some of the things in my character that might be standing in my way. I reacted – but, thinking it over, realised that it was true. That night I decided to be different, and put things right with people I had treated badly through an inflated idea of my own importance. The next day I was absolutely clear that I should go home and try for the *Yorkshire Post*.

My decision was then, and still is, to live out Moral Re-Armament as a newspaperman. It meant no relaxation of standards. Absolute honesty, absolute purity, absolute unselfishness and absolute love (not a sentimental softness, but a passionate and genuine caring for people) are, in my view, no bad standards for a newspaperman.

The editor of a TV programme who recently approached me about a job asked me whether they were not a handicap for a journalist. I replied that I found them the greatest help – for if I knew myself, I saw others more clearly and was not so easily fooled.

He asked, perhaps testing me, whether a newspaperman did not have to be cynical.

I said I felt that the cynical reporter was often as naïve as the starry-eyed. One sees all good, the other all bad. Healthily sceptical, yes, but not cynical.

The editor agreed that this was also his experience.

As I joined the *Yorkshire Post*, I was determined to try and be a responsible and constructive journalist. Perhaps because of the mockery at school, I suppose I expected a hard battle. What surprised me – it should not have done – were the high standards and outlook of my colleagues and superiors. In fact, my hardest battle was to reach their standard. The temptation for a young journalist is

to try and make a story better than it is, so that he seems to be better at his job – perhaps by saying a man is furious when he is only angry or angry when he is annoyed. That was a battle I fought through in my first year, and my older colleagues were a great help.

John Edwards, the Editor of the *Yorkshire Post*, sent me for three months to a weekly in the same group to learn the trade. I really loved my time on the *Goole Times*, based in the small, friendly port at the inland end of the Humber. Ernest Butler, the Editor, put me through the round of magistrates' courts, council committees and inquests, and also helped me develop a style for feature writing. He gave me a flying start.

Back on the *Yorkshire Post*, I was lucky again, for the paper has a tradition of giving everybody a chance of doing the big stories, and of not having favourites. Thus, on my first day, I was given the story that eventually turned out to be the splash – though the best work on it was done by two journalists who joined me once the size of the story was evident. And within two weeks I had had a successful campaign.

Another job that came my way during my first year was to walk 86 miles from Ilkley to Bowness in Windermere through the Yorkshire Dales. A well-known writer and walker had suggested that Yorkshire hospitality was dying out. My job was to check this. I called in at farmhouses for the night, asked for a glass of water in a pub that barred hikers, demanded late lunches and breakfasts, and even lay down in a river so as to be able to present myself to a high-class hotel with dripping clothes. Everywhere I was treated marvellously. Together with the conversations I had with the country people on the way it made a fascinating experience, and a popular series, grandly head-lined 'Lean's Long Walk'.

During these years I found, too, that I was very naturally led to people in need of help – it could be a colleague, a man I had met through my job, or someone who had nothing to do with it. Each time without pushing, I found that they wanted to talk with me. Some began to find new ways to run their lives.

In December 1971, I began to get the thought that this was the time to propose to Judy. We had not seen each other for over a year, but it became possible, just before Christmas, to be in London for a week-end when she was to be there. I was quickly clear that I wanted to propose. But I was frightened. For I had no idea what her answer would be, and if she said 'No' the castles I had built in the air over four years would have tumbled.

I proposed at 5 p.m. that afternoon. She could give me no answer immediately and, after half an hour, the door-bell rang. It was a young man who was coming to take her out to dinner with him and his fiancée. As she got into the car Judy said to her friend, Peter, 'That man has just asked me to marry him'. Peter laughed. 'Good heavens', he said. 'Does he know *I* am already engaged!'

As Judy drove down to Herne Hill she was wondering what answer to give. She now felt little or no love for me. But at the end of the drive she felt certain that God wanted her to say 'Yes'. So, in a gigantic step of faith, she borrowed 2p from her friends and phoned me up to say so. I went round for the evening and the four of us celebrated.

But Judy's trial of faith had only begun. She used to wake up in the morning thinking 'What have I done?' At the same time she felt certain that it was right to marry me and trusted that love would come.

After about a month it did, and it grew over the six months of our engagement. We were married in Cork on a grey June day, but just as Judy said 'I will' the sun

burst through the clouds for the first time during the morning and flooded the church.

She says: 'It was very good that I had to say Yes to Geoff and stick by my promise to him in this way. For one of the troubles with us Irish is that we are so governed by our feelings. It was right for me to take the biggest step of my life on the basis not of feelings but of what God told me to do.'

We spent much of the engagement apart and I found this difficult. I had to be in Leeds for my work, and Judy was doing important work helping to try to bring peace with justice in Belfast. It was at a time when bombs were going off all over the city and when many passers-by were getting hurt or killed. Her work meant that she went into areas where there was likely to be shooting. My guidance was that she would not be hurt, but I was still frightened. Several times after an explosion I would be on the verge of ringing up our news desk to see if they had a casualty list, and I rarely missed a news bulletin.

I kept trying to get her to say when she would leave Belfast. Each time that I thought I had got her away from it, she would have guidance to go back. I hated it. Finally, I insisted that we have a month in Leeds together to look for a house—a reasonable enough demand, I thought, in the middle of the boom in house prices when houses were so hard to find.

A few days before she was to come for that month, she said she must spend most of it in Belfast. She was to look after two small children, so that their parents could go to Canada. The parents were Protestants who had become reconciled to the Catholic community. They were part of a group from both communities, who had been asked to go to Quebec to help unite the fiercely divided community there. In working together, it had been found, the Irish themselves gained the understanding which would

be needed if ever the province was to find peace. I saw the importance of this project, and of Judy's supporting role, but I reacted furiously. We would only have one day to look for that house. Still, in the end, I agreed.

So, in Leeds, we started by looking for a flat, thinking that we could house-hunt after we were married. We could not find one at under £15 a week – then about half of my gross wage. In the evening of that one day, sitting disconsolately down to dinner, we saw a small ad. in the evening paper offering a house that sounded marvellous. I rang up the owner who said he could show no one else round that night. But when I told him that my fiancée was leaving for Belfast by a plane at 7 in the morning he relented.

As soon as we walked through the door we knew that this was the house for us. The owners were enormously kind, but it was up for offers and we knew that there were other people interested who would be able to outbid us. We thought it was right to try to buy it.

Next morning I went round and made our offer. To my surprise, the owner said 'The house is yours'. He said that he and his wife had really wanted the house to go to what he called a 'deserving case'. They proved the most perfect people to buy a house from, leaving it spotless and with the garden fully planted up. In one day we had found what we probably would never have come across in a month, had we not decided that it was right for Judy to go to Belfast.

We have now had two years in that house, and we could not have found a better one for our needs. We have tried, like my parents, to make it a home for many others besides ourselves. And during this time I have been learning the basic skills of being a campaigning journalist, lately as the *Yorkshire Post's* Environment Correspondent. We have run several campaigns including ones on the

scandal of Yorkshire's polluted rivers and on provisions in English law which prescribe imprisonment for people who tell the public who is polluting the environment.

Personally, I am grateful for the campaigning spirit in journalism at the moment – epitomised by the *Sunday Times*' work for the thalidomide children, the *Guardian*'s investigation into poor wages for black people working for British companies in South Africa, and the exposure of the Watergate affair. A strong and probing press, acting responsibly, is a vital bulwark for democracy, a defence against corruption, and a crusader against evil.

I believe that there are still further reaches for newspapers in the public service. They can point to approaching problems and help to solve them by the right presentation of the facts. Take my own field, the environment, for example. At present we have a world where one third is killing itself from the pollution caused by affluence while the other two thirds is half dead from lack of resources. There just are not the resources for the whole world to live up to the standard of America, or even Britain. We will have to accept a cut in our standard of living. This involves such unselfishness that, as Dr Maurice Strong says, 'there will have to be a moral and spiritual revolution'. Governments may shirk putting these facts across. The press can do it – not by polemics but by an honest portrayal of the situation.

We can do more, for, despite the pace of the profession, pressmen have a greater chance for detached reflection on issues than do politicians hemmed in by crises and political pressures. They can put forward ideas which stimulate and inspire statesmen. That is what the great leader columns have always done – and the *Yorkshire Post* among them.

Then a newspaperman going into a situation can be a catalyst for solving it while in no way prejudicing his duty

to report the facts impartially. Because he is detached and comes from outside – yet goes to the heart of the situation – he can, as he meets the people concerned, dispassionately present the opposing point of view and suggest solutions. An instance of this was the way a Dutch television reporter, based in Rome, helped pave the way for agreement between the warring German- and Italian-speaking communities in the South Tyrol in the later sixties.¹

Of course this all requires high standards from journalists. At its simplest a man who cheats on his expense account has not much to say in exposing corruption in local Government. Nor is a man run by bitterness likely to produce dispassionate copy. A campaigning journalist must make doubly sure that his motives are straight and that he is really honest – and fair.

Judy and I have made many mistakes. But we are committed to what God wants and career, security, sex, and even the right always to be together, are secondary to it. That is our decision. It sometimes leads us to do things that seem foolish at the time. Soon after we were married we felt that it was right to turn down an approach made to me for a prestigious job outside journalism carrying a salary of some £8,000 a year (I was only earning £2,000 at the time). In retrospect it was the right thing to do – though it was a step in faith at the time. Our decision can mean 'living on faith and prayer' as much as if we were not in a job, for a provincial journalist's salary is small, much smaller than is needed for the kind of life Judy and I lead, with the travelling and entertaining entailed in our commitment. When we have a surplus we need to be equally in God's hands about how we use it. No decision has been easy, but when we have obeyed God every step has worked out perfectly. We would not live any other way for all the world.

AUTHOR'S NOTE: Sydney Cook and I summarised the story of the journalist's part in the South Tyrol settlement in *The Black and White Book* (Blandford 1972, pp. 59-60). We wrote:

In 1968 a TV reporter was sent from Rome to cover the escalating conflict between the German-speaking minority and the Italian majority in South Tyrol (Alto Adige).

This conflict had been smouldering for fifty years, ever since the area was given to Italy after the First World War. Now the bombings and burnings had erupted again.

The TV reporter found the railway lines guarded by Italian paratroopers and the South Tyrol capital, Bolzano, alive with uniforms. He interviewed the leaders of both communities and their supporters.

He found each side – and the factions within them – blaming the others; each determined not to give way, yet secretly longing for an end to violence.

The unexpected thought came to him: 'You are meant to do more than report this conflict. You can help resolve it.'

He persuaded politicians of both communities to go together to the revolutionary centre at Caux, Switzerland. Six other joint delegations of politicians followed them there in the next eighteen months.

'After the return of these German- and Italian-speaking politicians, I observed that a change had happened to them,' the Bishop of the area, Dr Joseph Gargitter, commented in July 1969. 'Suddenly I heard from their mouths things never said before.'

Within a year agreement was reached – an agreement since ratified by all parties. *Il Giorno* of Milan (8 May 1971) stated on its South Tyrol page: 'From those meetings at Caux came the new spirit which has made

possible an effective solution to the problems of Alto Adige.'

The story is told in more detail by the journalist concerned in *Plus Décisif que la Violence* edited by Gabriel Marcel (Plon, Paris 1971).

What about money?

One kind of experiment which militant atheists have been unable to explain away is the act of faith in pursuance of the belief that 'where God guides, He provides'. A well-attested example of this principle at work was that of George Muller, who died in 1898 and whose story is told in *The Life of Trust*, a book which is quoted at length in William James' *The Varieties of Religious Experience*.

Muller, in the course of his life, distributed two million copies of the scriptures, equipped several hundred missionaries, built five large orphanages in which he educated 121,000 orphans. He received and administered a million and a half pounds sterling, and left at the age of eighty-six an estate worth £160. Muller never ran up bills and never bought supplies for which he could not pay on the spot. God provided, but only just what was needed and only just in time. Muller wrote :

'Greater and more manifest nearness of the Lord's presence I have never had than when after breakfast there were no means for dinner for more than a

hundred persons: or when after dinner there were no means for the tea, and yet the Lord provided the tea; and all this without one single human having been informed of our need.²¹

This was a frequent occurrence with Muller, as even the most casual reading of his diary shows. In the two years between August 1838 and August 1840 there were fifty occasions when he and the orphanages were penniless or had not enough to pay their way for the day.

One donor suggested that the scientific agnostics of the day, T. H. Huxley, Tyndale and the rest, who proclaimed prayer a waste of breath, might like to try how long they could keep an orphanage going with over 2,000 orphans without asking anyone to help.

Through the centuries, both before and since the time of George Muller, Christians of all communions have had comparable experiences to his. Mother Teresa of Calcutta who, between 1952 and 1966 alone, picked up 18,435 destitute and dying people from the streets and breathed life back into half of them, is a well-known modern example. Another is the Sisterhood of Mary at Darmstadt, Germany of which I wrote in *Christian Counter-Attack*. A further experiment on a smaller, but growing, scale of which I have personal knowledge is that of the Offensive Junger Christen of Bensheim, Germany. They run their commune of upwards of fifty persons, which takes in guests from all over Europe and spearheads an offensive in many parts of Germany, on these same principles. Some groups who come there for training pay their way, others cannot—but that is never a criterion of reception. Often they do not know where the food for the next meal is coming from. Yet they raise large sums to help change people and conditions at crisis points of the world.

In 1970, at a time when they had massive needs for their own community, they raised £30,000 for work in India; in 1971 £10,000 for the shanty dwellers in South America; in 1972, nearly £20,000 for four projects in Bangladesh, Pakistan, Ulster and South Africa. And they rebuilt their own once-derelict houses and changed the lives of hundreds of young people on the way. When I was there last, two girls previously in the German cast of *Hair* were working with them, as well as a number of young people who had been cured of drug addiction.

Moral Re-Armament, as I have indicated earlier, is financed in the same way. None of its workers are paid a salary, nor are any of its world-wide enterprises budgeted on the basis of what money is in hand or expected. Travelling forces, which may comprise dozens or hundreds of people on any one mission, undertake what is, as far as they can see, the most daring will of God in the confident hope that money will be provided on time. So far – though a fearful man like me often has doubts – these hopes have not been disappointed.

These are cases of groups or institutions. What takes place with individuals? Earlier in this book I have told how amazed I was when Kit Prescott came to Worcester College, Oxford, because he felt that God had guided him to do so and how he existed there, paying his bills on the day they were received, through 'faith and prayer'.

That is over forty years ago, and Kit is married and still doing the full-time Christian work to which he then felt called. He has no more human security now than then. When I asked him last year, his total fortune was £43. He had just decided that day to respond to an urgent call to go to South Africa and Rhodesia to work there. This would cost him and his wife, Joyce, well over £1,000. He relates what happened:

The day after we finally decided to go, I had a letter from an Australian businessman whom I had not seen for fifteen years, enclosing a cheque for £176. 'I thought you might have some special needs just now', he wrote. So we proceeded to make our travel preparations. In the month before we left, eighteen gifts of money arrived—from a window-dresser, a B.B.C. technician, a retired teacher, a lawyer, an architect and a civil engineer to mention only a few. On the day we were leaving we were still £100 short. It arrived, from unexpected sources, just before we left.

When Kit and Joyce got to Cape Town they set off for Pretoria in their rather ancient car, which they had brought from England. They wanted to see a man called George Daneel. A hundred miles north, in open country, the cooling thermostat packed up and they were stranded. A double disaster, this seemed, for they were far from anywhere and had little or no money for dawdling on the journey, let alone for expensive repairs. Finally a Boer farmer came along who kindly towed them to the nearest village, De Doorn.

'Are you on holiday?' he asked.

'No. We are working with Moral Re-Armament,' said Joyce.

'Oh, then you will know George Daneel. His niece is married to the parson in this village we are going to.'

Kit remembered that they had met her father, and when they called, the parson insisted that they stay with them for the week it took to repair the car. They even lent the Prescotts their car to return for two nights to Cape Town where Kit found a telegram telling him to collect R.100 from the Post Office. They returned to Doorn with enough to pay for repairs, and left for Johannesburg.

A series of coincidences? Perhaps. But they happen so frequently to him that Kit prefers to regard it as God's care for someone who, however haltingly, is trying to do His will.

When Sir Roy Pinsent, the Birmingham commercial lawyer, first became interested in the life of faith, he was examining everything with a critical lawyer's eye. He talked of taking his wife and two friends to a conference in America. Kit, in order to encourage them, volunteered to escort them.

Pinsent knew that Kit was a zero capital man. 'How will you pay your fare?' he asked.

'If it is right, God will provide,' said Kit. 'You go ahead and book five tickets.'

Sir Roy did so, and every time they met in the next month, he asked Kit how money for the fare was going. Kit had to admit that little or nothing had come in yet.

Finally, four days before they were due to leave, Pinsent cornered him at a reception which they were both attending. Kit admitted the situation was unchanged. 'Don't worry. It will be all right,' he added, feeling anything but sure inside. While they talked on, someone slipped an envelope into Kit's hand and departed without interrupting their conversation. Kit opened it and found inside a cheque for more than his ticket. He handed it straight to Pinsent. 'His face was a study.'

Pinsent became convinced. He is now ninety, and has operated ever since on the basis that his money is not his own, but God's, which he holds in stewardship. His adventures would make a book in themselves.

These particular incidents are not really as remarkable as the way that Kit's – and thousands of others' – daily needs have been met through forty years of undramatic work. He – and they – have never had a salary, and have

seldom had recourse even for expenses to any central fund.

I asked another friend, Charis Waddy, who was also at Oxford with us, how she has managed. Charis is a scholar, the first woman to study Arabic at Oxford, where she obtained a first before taking her doctorate at London University. She naturally got a good job teaching in Palestine and was all set for an academic career, when she too was led to give her full time to work with M.R.A. She says :

In thirty-eight years, I have never missed a meal, though often down to my last penny, and I have always been able to go where I felt God called me to go – whether to the next town or to the other side of the world.'

Her principles have been :

1. Always give to others promptly when led to do so, however short she is herself.
2. Keep up to date on all debts. 'Nothing is more apt to stop the flow of God's providence than not paying debts because it will leave one without money.'
3. Never ask for money. 'Often it is people one has been used to help who help one financially, but it is not right to ask for oneself. When I have asked for money it has been for others.'
4. Be grateful to people and to God.

She comments :

Faith and prayer produce realism, but of a different kind from the restrictions of 'I can't afford it'. If I had gone on that I would never have done anything in the last thirty years. There is something unaccount-

able in the way it works. It has something of the arithmetic of the loaves and fishes.'

It has indeed. When I was in Brazil in 1973, Antonio Falcão, a docker from the Northern port of Recife, told me a typical story. Antonio had in the early sixties been for many years a secret member of the Communist Party. His instructions were to stay under cover, which raised problems at home, for his wife could only assume that his unexplained absences were due to his having another woman. Finally and falsely, he had to confess that this was so, and only the children kept the parents together.

Then Antonio's life was deeply changed. This reunited the family – for he told his wife the truth – and was a factor in transforming conditions in the port, where gang warfare stopped and pilfering went down so drastically that the port store was able to cut its prices. Antonio and three of his docker friends decided they must take the new-found life to a large town in the North, the centre of the Peasant League country.

They went by bus and addressed a large meeting of workers. Afterwards, when everyone had gone home, they found themselves in the street outside the hall, with no place to sleep and without anything in their pockets. They had forgotten to tell anyone of their condition. So they stood in the street and asked God for guidance.

The amazing thought which came was 'Go to the largest hotel and order a good meal'. They did so, but Antonio says that his tasted like gall and wormwood because he could not help thinking of the approaching moment when the waiter would present the bill.

At the other end of the dining room, there was a party of four men eating dinner and evidently enjoying themselves. Antonio asked the waiter who they were. 'That's the mayor and some friends,' was the reply. 'They come

every week.' Antonio and his friends decided they might as well go over and pay their respects.

'Welcome,' said the Mayor. 'What are you doing here?'

'We came up from Recife to tell people about Moral Re-Armament,' said Antonio.

'Moral Re-Armament. Excellent,' replied the Mayor. 'Waiter! These men are the guests of the city for as long as they stay.'

Our daughter, Mary, proved these principles for herself in Scandinavia. By this time Margot and I had inherited a regular income and were able to be on the other end of this money process – sometimes to help others who were in need. We also gave Mary enough to cover all her needs when she decided to spend the months between school and university with M.R.A. in Norway. She lived in a large home, containing upwards of a dozen people and, as the centre of our work in Oslo, doing a great deal of entertaining. Mary helped with the children, and then took on the cooking, and as her Norwegian improved, the buying of the food.

'Often at breakfast there was nothing in the kitty, and we would pray together around the table,' says Mary. 'One morning, for example, we only had Kr.8 in the housekeeping purse, and the cleaning lady was coming and would cost Kr.53. We all emptied our pockets, but there was not enough to see us through. We prayed – and we ended the day with Kr.100.'

'Doing the shopping was an experience. Everything, and especially meat, was far more expensive than in England. We rarely had meat except when there were guests, but when there were guests, however, we always gave them the best we knew, whatever the state of the household purse.'

'I had often heard talk of God providing before, but did not believe in it or reject it. But during those months

I learnt to rely on God – and not to move away from Him when things seemed easier. Once a princely Kr.1000 arrived, and I thought, “Thank heavens we won’t have to pray for several days”. But it was gone within a day because a large payment was also due. I will always be grateful for what I learnt in Oslo.’

Discouragement denied

Any attempt to live radical Christianity arouses opposition. Sometimes this is due to the mistakes of people like me – and they are many. But there is also the opposition of those who hate radical truth for personal or ideological reasons. Such opposition can be both determined and subtle. It often deceives good and clever people who are themselves a little removed from the battle. I think, for example, of a prominent man in my own Anglican Church, a man of great learning, whom Margot and I met some-time ago.

We were taken to see him by a friend of ours, a woman writer who had been under his spiritual direction. She had lost her faith, and life around her had begun to fall to pieces. Then, partly as a result of coming to our home, she found her way back to God. The problems around her began to clear up, and she insisted that we should see her spiritual director. She felt that he did not quite understand our kind of work.

The prelate received us in a setting of great beauty. He was kind, but a little ill-at-ease. He seemed to regard us as a couple of oddities who had, unaccountably, been of

some service to one of his ewe lambs. He soon set to work cross-examining us.

'What makes you think,' he said, 'that you are absolutely honest and absolutely pure?'

We said that we were convinced that we were not, but that we found that unless we *aimed* at absolute moral standards, we became progressively more soggy, morally. Christ had said, 'Be ye perfect'. We also quoted the American philosopher, William Hocking, who said, 'It is a mark of the shallowness of Western life that it should be thought a conceit to recognise an absolute and a humility to consider all standards relative, when it is precisely the opposite. It is only the absolute that rebukes our pride.'¹

The prelate continued: 'Why do you think that every thought that comes into your mind comes from God?'

'What makes you think that we do think that?' we replied.

We said we understood that Christ had promised the Holy Spirit to His followers and that we thought we were more likely to discover what God wanted us to do if we gave time to pray and listen to Him. We did not think that all our thoughts were from God, but we were pretty certain we would do even worse if we did not listen to Him.

I could guess by now from where the prelate had got his strange ideas about us. A much-publicised book, making these very points, had recently been circulated to Churchmen by some of our critics. Sure enough the next question was: 'Why do people – and even Christian people – hate you so much?'

'The fact that we are hated does not prove that we *are* in the great Christian tradition,' we replied. 'But if no one hated us, that would prove that we could not be.'

There was a long silence. Then the prelate said, 'I see. You mean it is the offence of the Cross.'

We said we could not judge, but that it might be so. We added that we had frequently made mistakes, both in explaining what we did believe and – which was more serious – with people. But that with certain kinds of critics, like the one from whom we thought he might have absorbed his odd ideas, it was the places where we had been right rather than those where we had been wrong which had accounted for the backlash.

I might have mentioned that Archbishop Temple, twenty years before, had once asked a friend of mine much the same question in a similar situation.

My friend made no reply. After a silence, the Archbishop answered his own question. 'You do aim for absolute honesty and absolute purity,' he mused. 'There is always the stung conscience.'

Lennart Segerstrale, the distinguished Finnish artist, once said that the function of a Christian artist is to create art which is dangerous to evil. Jesus and those who have followed him most closely, like Paul, Francis and Wesley, were dangerous to evil. It was not that they spent time denouncing people, but that those living by wrong standards felt condemned by their own consciences and hit back.

I am often asked whether I do not sometimes get discouraged when opposition arises. The answer is 'Yes', though it should not be. Ignatius Loyola said in later life that he had come to the place where if he heard that his Order had been suppressed, he would only need a few minutes' prayer to restore his peace of mind. But, alas, I am no Loyola.

The hardest time is when one sees the tender shoot of faith in someone trampled to extinction by a fellow Christian. There was one young man who came to lunch on the first Sunday of his Oxford career. After lunch he lingered, and asked shyly how one could find a faith.

That was the first of several talks, which ended in his giving his life to God. In the course of them, he told me a bit about himself. His father had died. He did not get on well at home. During his last vacation, while drunk, he had got a fifteen-year-old girl into trouble. When we listened to God, he had the quiet thought that he should give up alcohol – something which I had not mentioned.

After some weeks, this young man decided he would like to be confirmed. So he went to his college chaplain. The chaplain was a young man who seemed to think that anything but his particular breed of Anglicanism was rather second class, if not heretical.

My young friend told him how he had found his faith – and the chaplain averred that this was most unfortunate because M.R.A. was heretical. He plied the young man with sherry, pooh-poohing his scruples and deploring the enthusiasm of thinking that God could put a thought into your mind.

The result? My young friend was never confirmed. The debunking of those of us who had helped him to faith was enough to turn him back to old habits, but also enough to turn him against the chaplain. We saw each other sometimes. He ended his university career in a rare old muddle.

I made a date with the chaplain. It transpired that he had very little faith himself. 'What is needed is a Communist take-over,' he said. 'That would purify the Church.'

'Could not a new commitment to Christ purify the Church?' I asked.

'No, no,' he began, looking anxiously towards the door. And at that moment there was a tramp, tramp, tramp on the stairs, and an elderly don came panting into the room. He was apologetic that he had been late. Evidently he had promised to protect the chaplain. After that we

talked of the pros and cons of a road across Christ Church meadows.

Have I ever been tempted to quit? Again, 'Yes'. So far, the commitment I made forty years ago – and the unmerited goodness of God ever since – has held me. But I know the temptation. It can come when one's first commitment is to something or somebody other than God.

It can be to an idea or a movement. 'To love the idea of Moral Re-Armament is no substitute for the love of God Who washes us, sets us free and sets us to work,' said Buchman. If one's loyalty is to a movement, one can despair when it is attacked, or hate those who attack it. A human loyalty produces a human response.

A subtler temptation is a demand for success – not success all the time, but for some success, some results to show. I say it is subtle because, in one sense, a Christian who is infectious does see people naturally catching faith from him – and if one does not, it is no bad thing to ask oneself what has gone wrong. But if I *depend* on success, then the temptation, when things get tough, is to lower the standard, to leave out the prickliest challenges of truth, in the hope of selling more goods at a cheaper price. That way lies quitting without ever knowing it – until deadness intervenes.

Another temptation is to put a relationship with any other person in first place. Buchman, as I have mentioned, fought with startling energy against anyone becoming so dependent – and above all against anyone becoming dependent on him. He thought the over-regard of any person to be impure. The temptation is greatest with those near and dear to one – a wife or husband, parents or friends. But it can come up with anyone.

Once in the later thirties I walked with Buchman from Eastbourne station to a hotel where we were having a week-end conference. 'Would you say there was any homo-

sexuality among your Oxford friends?' he suddenly asked.

'I'm sure there isn't, Frank,' I replied.

'You don't think that some men dominate others and others like to be dominated? You don't think some of you have friendships which come before your friendship with Christ?'

'Oh yes, that of course,' I said. 'But what has that to do with homosexuality?'

We walked on in silence. Then Buchman said, 'Of course, you were unable to help that artist'.

He was referring to an artist whom I had met two years before. He was a man who made no secret of his dependence on physical intercourse with men. He had come to some meetings and been fascinated by the changed lives he had observed. Subsequently we saw quite a bit of each other.

This artist took me to dinner at his London club and told me his problem, as though he half hoped and half feared being freed from it. 'It started when I was young and saw my mother being knocked about by my father. Later X (a celebrated writer) assaulted me. Now it is my way of life.'

I told him how I had been freed from dependence upon certain habits myself, and suggested that God could free him too. But he did not respond. I dropped the subject, for I felt flattered by this man's friendship and wished to retain it. Later I introduced him to Buchman. We had half an hour together, in which the artist did most of the talking and did not reveal his problem in words. Nor had I told Buchman. But the artist must have known that he had met someone who saw through him and could not be flattered. He had gone away and launched vicious attacks in the Press against Buchman. Buchman was neither worried nor surprised. That walk at Eastbourne was the first time he had mentioned it.

It was a year or two before I began to see what Buchman had meant. Then I realised that although I had never felt any physical attraction to the artist – nor as far as I know had he for me – I had sought satisfaction in the relationship with him as surely as if I had been one of his young men. His friendship, because it flattered me, meant more to me than my friendship with Christ, or than what the artist needed.

This made me face that, left to myself, I seek affection and appreciation from everyone. It is only when such 'inordinate affection', as Thomas à Kempis calls it, is yielded to Christ that one is able to help people in that artist's condition.

This experience, though painful at the time, brought me a new independence which is the beginning of maturity. Does not much of the immaturity in people, the insecurity and the 'loss of identity', come from never finding an answer to the desire to please men?

Some think they have escaped such immaturity by rebelling – against parent or a more forceful friend. But the fact is that reaction can be as immature as submission. How much so-called revolution is really reactionary – in that it originates in reaction against the false securities and love of comfort which they see in others? The real revolution sets you free, so that you neither submit nor react, but give the other person the disinterested help he needs.

The new morality

Arnold Lunn stepped off the mountain train at Caux one afternoon in April 1963, knapsack on shoulder, raincoat awry and stick in hand. 'If you don't write a book about Bishop Robinson's *Honest to God*, I'll have to do it,' he exclaimed.

'Why don't you?' I replied, and thought no more of it. But Arnold had an amiable way of not hearing what he did not want to hear. That night I found that he had been telling everyone he met that we were going to write a book together.

He kept after me about it, and a few months later we were at Caux again starting to write *The New Morality*.¹ Some of Arnold's friends have asked how we managed to collaborate. It certainly was an experience.

Sir Arnold, of course, was a celebrity. He was the much loved pioneer of modern skiing, having invented the downhill and slalom races – an achievement equivalent to a Swiss arriving in England and revolutionising the rules of cricket.

He was always a man of spirit. At Oxford he spent his time editing *Isis*, being Secretary of the Oxford Union and

generally enjoying life. When it came to Final Schools, he took one look at the English History paper and decided he could not answer a single question. There was one about King James I. So he wrote :

'J stands for James, who sank from bad to worse.
His life was squalid and his joys perverse.
His favourites, it seems absurd,
Were daily bathed in milk and posset curd.
No really chaste examiner should dream
To set a question on this sordid theme.'

Then he handed in his paper and hurried back to Balliol to collect his caution money before the inevitable fine could catch up with him. He did not get a degree, but did not seem to have suffered greatly. He was, among other things, an honorary Doctor of Zurich University.

He had a passion for mountains. Shortly before leaving Oxford, he fell off a Welsh mountain and narrowly missed losing his right leg. He was forbidden to climb mountains. So, of course, he climbed the highest he could find, and lived for eleven years with a suppurating wound through which fragments of bone would sometimes emerge.

Arnold carried these fighting qualities into his books, of which, by the time we started working together, he had written more than fifty. Perhaps the most famous were his debates, by means of an exchange of letters, with brilliant atheists like Professors Haldane and Joad. The *Times Literary Supplement* thought he 'got much the better of Haldane',² and Joad attributed his conversion to Christianity to their joint book. Louis Budens, the editor of the American *Daily Worker*, who subsequently became a Catholic, wrote after their public debate: 'His Christian consideration for me as an opponent and his rapier-like exposure of Communist philosophy made a deep impression on me'. In fact, Arnold was a master of apologetics,

convinced of the rational basis of the Christian faith and with a passionate belief in the value of informed argument.

I, on the other hand, had only produced two books, and had been schooled in the thought that little could be gained by argument. My idea that if you win your argument, you often lose your man, was anathema to Arnold. But, as our collaboration proceeded, we both modified our views.

I set to work on the chapters I had in mind, writing one a day, and submitting them to Arnold for criticism. He would take them off to bed—he slept badly—and come down to breakfast each morning, announcing with a charming smile that he had done a lot of work on my chapter. In fact, most of it would be crossed out, while large red annotations of ‘No! No! No!’ and ‘You can do better than this’ appeared in the margin of the rest. It is true that some of these comments were found to have been written when he was getting sleepy, and that some passages turned out, in daylight, to be better than he thought. However, I did have to rewrite a good deal and I learnt a lot from the experience.

After this had been going on for a fortnight, Arnold gave me three chapters he had written. One I thought excellent, while the second needed some modification and the third either rewriting or scrapping. How to tell Arnold? The best plan seemed to write him a note and go out for the day.

This worked admirably. On my return I found an early indignant reaction but with it was a warm note suggesting we talk it over. We did. And thereafter we worked happily, though far from supinely, together.

Our attitudes to Bishop Robinson and his colleagues were complementary. Arnold was outraged by their illogicality and what he considered the watering down of Christian faith and morals. I, too, felt this keenly, but

also that few of them seemed to believe in a God who could intervene in the world of today and alter men or situations. Their premise seemed to be that since men could not change, one had to think out how to adapt Christianity to them in the difficult situation of today. This they did, sincerely, in the name of compassion. But it seemed to me the height of cruelty for a clergyman to infer that people must live with their problems when, in fact, Christ could give victory over them.

The New Morality took six weeks to write and was published in record time, becoming the first answer to the stream of books by Messrs Robinson, Rhymes and Williams. It received many flattering reviews. 'As a comment on the New Morality,' wrote the *Sunday Telegraph* reviewer,³ 'this has not yet been bettered. It is typical of the pungent style of an essay which in its logical astringency and scholarly thoroughness, recalls the great days of religious and cultural controversy.' The book was, of course, also violently attacked. One reviewer described us as 'sex-obsessed'. 'To say Lunn and Lean are sex-obsessed,' wrote Dr D. B. Watson in the medical weekly *Pulse* 'is like saying that Professor Brand of Vellore is a leper because he writes with authority on the subject of leprosy'.⁴ And of course we were accused of 'puritanism', 'as if', Arnold remarked, 'the theory that sexual relations outside marriage were not permitted in the Christian code originated with the Puritans'. In fact, we had made it clear that we were not so much concerned with the sexual immorality of the young as with the intellectual immorality of the middle aged.

The book sold 60,000 and was followed by two others, *The Cult of Softness* and *Christian Counter-Attack*, which was chosen by a book society on each side of the Atlantic. They seemed to hearten people, and others began to write in the same way. Booksellers now tell me that the New

Moralists' books were a nine day wonder, long ago exhausted.

These books of ours were, as Arnold was fond of saying, concerned with preventing the perversion rather than attempting the conversion of England, although each of us took more liberty to make positive suggestions in the last of them. In *The Black and White Book*, where Mary and I co-operated with Sydney Cook and his daughter, Angela, a different approach was attempted.

At that time a number of little books were appearing. After the *Thoughts of Chairman Mao* came *The Little Red School Book*, which was described in a publication of the high and neutral-sounding Advisory Centre of Education as 'a lovely little reference book'. It was written by three Danes, though only two names appeared on the English edition after the third had admitted, 'It has nothing to do with education. It is an exercise in anarchy'. Parents and teachers – except, of course, those who pushed the book – were debunked, and the whole was a part of the new strategy that students and school children, not workers, are to be the pioneers of anarchy.

A small but varied group of Christians, some of whom I know, produced *The Little White Book*, an Evangelical answer from a Danish original, and I was privileged to help a little with the proof. This went out swiftly and widely, but Peter Cousins in the *Christian Record* commented, 'We need something more wide-ranging and more radical'. Our book was an attempt to fill this need.

It began with Sydney Cook and his daughter, Angela, then a school girl and now a nurse. They thought the principles of Christian revolution should be set out. Mary and I got into it because I am Angela's godfather. The result was a short booklet, but one which took more work than many much longer.

To our astonishment it was greeted on publication day

by long stories in most newspapers and an item on successive B.B.C. news bulletins. 'After the *Thoughts of Chairman Mao* and the *Little Red School Book* comes *The Black and White Book*', said *The Guardian*.⁵ 'The B.W.B. chapters on communism, sex and schools take a somewhat new line. For example, "We want to see a world where Communist and non-Communist nations face what they have done wrong and take on shaping a just society."' 'It manages to present Christianity as a radical and even a revolutionary programme for eradicating evil and building an unselfish society,' wrote the *Church of England Newspaper*.⁶

The reviews which most interested me were those in the *Times Literary Supplement* and the London University paper, *Pi. TLS*, amazingly, produced a 700 word editorial of the most venomous kind, full of innuendo and inaccurate quotation.⁷ For so tiny a book to be accorded such extensive treatment from the venerable *TLS* seemed to argue either that it was important or that something had disturbed the editorial sense of proportion – or both. *Pi's* description was: 'A glimpse of a new society in embryo, based on a far more radical revolution in motives and behaviour than most people would dare to consider possible.'⁸

Since then *The Black and White Book* has appeared in seventeen other languages, and is in preparation in twelve more. Chinese and Tigrinya are among the former, Arabic, Hebrew and Vietnamese among the latter.

Particularly encouraging has been the enthusiasm of some of the great Catholic publishing houses. In Italy, France and South America, such firms are well into their second and third editions, and the Austrian firm *Veritas* is publishing a special edition of 43,000 for German-speaking Catholics. Cardinal Koenig of Vienna sees it as having 'a very great influence in the German-speaking world',

but what pleased me most was when a nun said, 'This helps me fulfil my vocation', for that was always our aim – to provide a weapon to help people do what they most deeply wanted to do.

Margot and I were delighted to be asked to go to South America, where the little book was coming out in Spanish and Portuguese. 'The South American search is for a new type of man,' the Spanish language publisher, Father José Gallinger of Buenos Aires, told us, and visits to Left-wing Peru and Right-wing Brazil confirmed this. Both are military Governments, but whereas Peru feels the first priority is a fairer distribution of what wealth exists, Brazil goes all out for growth in the belief that only a larger national cake can provide for the population. It was interesting to see these two philosophies at work and to find that thinking people in each country believed that progress depends on a change in people's character.

A young man was sent to see us by the Guerilla Council of his country to see whether we could suggest a better way of producing social change than by violence.

'Did you know Ché?' I asked.

'His clothes were waiting in my house when he was killed,' he replied.

He writes: 'This book shows the right way to light the revolutionary flame of the new man in Latin America, offering the positive, superior alternative to heroic guerilla fighters, to the capitalism of the bourgeoisie and to all men of goodwill who want to change today's society.'

We found that the shanty-town (favela) leaders of Rio, whose character changes have initiated the rehousing of some 1,600,000 favelados – as recorded in our little book – were using it in their campaign to rehouse the rest of Brazil's favelados. The Rio dockers who, long before the present regime, had ended gang warfare in the docks, took

us to Brazilia and introduced us to some of the nation's leaders.

The acid test of a book's usefulness is not how many people read it, or whether newspapers approve of it, but what difference it makes to individuals.

In one country a presidential assistant was given a copy which he felt he had no time to read. 'But my wife read it and told me I had got to read it too,' he told me later. 'We had been quarrelling and it solved our differences. May I use it in lectures for my 10,000 students?'

On the evening that a man in Canberra read *The Black and White Book*, he had a fraudulent tax return in his pocket ready to post. He was in serious financial difficulties, but he tore it up and sent in an honest return. An Arab Minister said that, since reading the little book, he had ceased hating his enemies. 'Love is stronger than hate,' he said. And an Israeli Sergeant wrote to us that he wanted to make this philosophy, which was the quintessence of his religion, the foundation for his life.

'I am in prison, not for the first time, but certainly for the last,' a German wrote. 'I've read the *Black and White Book* and will now work for its ideas.'

In all countries young people have made the running with the little book, and letters reach us from many towns, schools and universities telling of their activities. In various Swiss towns large numbers have been sold from stalls in markets or fairs. One of those who bought it in Neuchatel was a Bulgarian engineer. He went away and read it immediately, returning after an hour to ask questions. Subsequently he came to the young peoples' home and studied the text in detail with them. 'This is exactly what we believe in our microfraternity back home,' he said.

The President of a Korean University printed 30,000 copies and, according to the Melbourne *Herald* 'the king

of wharfies (President of the Waterside Workers) takes his line from it'.⁹

The Norwegian translation was initiated by a father and son who six months before had been deeply divided. They had come to Caux together. 'My mind was haunted with fears for him, fears of narcotics and school failure,' says the father, a professor and Member of Parliament. 'I was so afraid that I started to put him under control.'¹⁰ The son naturally reacted.

Then, one morning at Caux, the father realised that his fears were the problem and were quite groundless. He remembered how his own father had tried to control him at that age and how he had hated it. He wrote his son a letter of apology – and left it on his bed. Two days later, a letter came in return, and thereafter they were able to talk. 'My fear was gone. The effect on the family was striking,' says the father.

Soon after getting home to Norway, he was appointed Minister of Education. He immediately told the Press about his experience at Caux and that for him the absolute standards of Christ were fundamental. One might have expected a cynical response, but he was voted a most successful Minister.

'The most important thing when you are a Minister is to make decisions,' he now says, 'and it happens too often that decisions are taken under the influence of fear. In such a job, guidance from God is absolutely vital. The fields one is expected to cover are so wide that one cannot possibly know every detail. When one takes into consideration that one's decisions are having an effect on almost every individual in the country one is grateful to share that responsibility with Almighty God.'¹⁰

When Margot and I were in Norway for the launching of the little book, he told us how listening to God had helped him, too, in wider Cabinet decisions. 'I am learn-

ing the difference between believing and trusting,' he said. 'It is so important to trust those guided impulses. It was an impulse which took me first to Caux – and there I found faith and family unity. It is the same in public affairs. Fear is the enemy of faith. When I listen and dare to obey, remarkable things happen.'

Exploration unending

Looking back, what do I feel about the experiment which I began at Oxford forty years ago? Looking forward at sixty, what do I see ahead?

I must say at once that 'Good God, it works!' is still too often my instinctive reaction when a new step in faith turns out to have been right. For I am still a sceptic by nature and the act of trusting, through good times and ill, does not come easily.

How, then, has the whole experiment worked? Patchily from my end, as you have seen; for I have often feared to take the seemingly risky initiatives involved. But so certain has been the supply of power from the other end, whenever I am willing to receive it, that I cannot doubt the existence of a loving God whose plan includes every individual as well as the whole earth.

I marvel at my good fortune. Margot and I began separately in the same month and were given a part in the most fascinating of all tasks – the remaking of men and nations. We were kept free for so many years; then married and had children who share our commitment. That commitment has brought us a multitude of friends of

astonishing variety and has taken us into countries and environments which we would never have known. It has been humbling to see so many families and larger situations affected for good, just as it is challenging to know all that is left undone. As Gabriel Marcel wrote 'the global and the intimate are linked together in a surprising way'.

We have found that God will be to us, at any moment, what we allow Him to be. If we seek a vague abstraction which will not interfere with our private plans, He will refrain. If we want a Father, loving but requiring discipline, He will be that parent. If we commit ourselves to the fight – and it is a fight – to bring His kingdom on earth, then He will take command. We can each choose, but must take the consequences of our choice.

The experience of our family contradicts the comfortable, but tragic, lie that only good people, even saints, can be led by the Spirit. We have experimented enough to know that there is indeed a vast store of wisdom and spiritual strength waiting for anyone to explore. And the exciting truth is that that exploration can begin immediately, this minute, and yet will never be exhausted. No one is too old or too young, too simple or too clever to begin – or to continue.

Charles Steinmetz, the pioneer of electrical invention, prophesied that 'the next great discoveries will be made in the realm of the spiritual'. They had better be. For we men, who have grown up technologically, must now grow up morally and spiritually – or perish.

REFERENCES AND NOTES

Introduction p. 9

1. Arthur Koestler in *The Challenge of Chance* (Hutchinson, 1973), p. 221. He continues, 'The 19th Century clockwork model of the universe is in shambles, and since the concept of matter itself has been dematerialised by the physicists, materialism can no longer claim to be a scientific philosophy.'
2. Quoted in *Runaway World* by Michael Green (Inter-Varsity Press 1968) p. 55.
3. Harold Blackham, when Director of the British Humanist Association, wrote, 'Sample opinion polls again and again show the same pattern—the overwhelming majority declare themselves believers in one way or another.' (*Religion in Modern Society*, Constable 1966, p. 116). Gallup International polls found that the percentage who claimed to believe in God was 97 per cent in the United States, 87 per cent in Australia, 84 per cent in Switzerland, 81 per cent in West Germany, 77 per cent in Britain and 73 per cent in France and Norway (*Plain Truth*, November 1973).
4. Barbara Ward, *Faith and Freedom* (Hamish Hamilton, 1954), pp. 254–6.

CHAPTER I The shocking experiment p. 12

1. See *The Writer and His World* (Macmillan, 1960), p. 44. Charles Morgan published *The Fountain* in 1932.
2. *The Divine Flame* (Collins, 1966), pp. 242–4. Sir Alister Hardy develops this theme in his Gifford Lectures, published in *The Living Stream* and *The Divine Flame*.

CHAPTER 2 The hunger marchers started it p. 15

1. Cecil Day Lewis, *The Buried Day* (Chatto and Windus, 1960), pp. 208-11.

2. A. J. Russell, *For Sinners Only* (Hodder and Stoughton, 1932).

3. St Francis de Sales, *Introduction to the Devout Life*.

4. Sant Agostino, *Soliloqui*, ed Antonio Marzulla, 1972.

5. Many instances could be given. A close friend of Einstein's told me that one day the scientist went for a walk, burdened by many worries and bitter thoughts. He was caught in a thunderstorm and the tree under which he was sheltering was struck by lightning. At the same time he had the compelling thought—like a voice—'Dump all those thoughts. You have no business with them.' He did so, and returned to his house, soaked to the skin. Lying in a hot bath, the solution to a great problem suddenly struck him. Was this inspiration due to his previous work? Or because the channel was now clear? Or both?

The author, Laurens van der Post, and the explorer, Thor Heyerdahl, are among many who have written of the intervention of God in their lives.

Mr van der Post, in *The Night of the New Moon* (Hogarth Press, 1970) describes how such 'intuition' saved many lives in a prison camp during the war. He describes, for example, how on one occasion all prisoners were paraded before a brutal camp commandant and each in turn had to march up to him and present himself for a beating. It was a time of great tension and van der Post noted that machine guns had been mounted round the parade ground. A likely end to the parade seemed to be a massacre. When he had received his own beating, and was returning to his place, van der Post suddenly thought he must turn about and present himself for a further session. He writes: 'Rationally everything was against such a course of action. If there was anything which normally provoked extreme punishment, it was any action on our part which broke their (the Japanese) rules or sense of order. Yet, this voice that rang almost like a bell within me was so clear and insistent that I turned about without hesitation and once more stood to attention before Mori before the next officer could take my place.' This action broke the mood of the commandant. He suddenly turned and marched off the parade ground. The prisoners remained standing for a long time, but no further beating or other violence took place. (Op. cit., pp. 92-4).

Mr Heyerdahl, the initiator of the Kon-Tiki and Ra II voyages,

tells how a similar experience freed him from a 'terrible fear of water', conceived in childhood which persisted into early manhood. 'So years later,' he concludes, 'I was able to set out on the Kon Tiki across the Pacific. I had learnt for myself what my father had always known, that there is an invisible world of caring all around and inside us - different from ours, unimaginable by us, but as close as a cry from the heart.' (Himmat, 7 December, 1973).

6. Prescott also said one should test the thoughts which came in times of quiet by the Bible, the highest ethical standards one knew and by the teachings of one's own Church. 'Anyone can hear the words of the Lord', said Frank Buchman. 'It is only necessary to obey the rules. The first rule is that we listen honestly for everything that may come - and if we are wise we write it down. The second rule is that we test the thoughts that come to see which are from God. One test is the Bible. . . . There, culminating in the life of Jesus Christ, we find the highest moral and spiritual challenge - complete honesty, purity, unselfishness and love. Another excellent test is 'What do others say who also listen to God?' This is an unwritten law of fellowship. It is also an acid test of one's commitment to God's plan. No one can be wholly God-controlled who works alone.' (Dr Frank N. D. Buchman. *Remaking the World* (Blandford revised edn 1958) p. 36.

I readily recognised that, while many thoughts which came in a time of listening would not be of God, I was more likely to hear His voice if I took time to listen than if I did not. Someone once said to me: 'Listen for fifteen minutes and increase it as you feel the need. Listen twice as much as you talk - and long enough to forget time. Sit still. Write down each thought that comes. Write down the next thought. The first may be foolish, but you will not capture the second until you have disposed of the first. You can sort them out later.'

CHAPTER 4 Oxford with Worcester Sauce

p. 32

1. Buchman, op. cit., p. 3.
2. The *Daily Express*, 27 February, 1928 and following days.
3. *The Times*, 23 June, 1928. See *The Open Secret of M.R.A.* by J. P. Thornton-Duesbery, Master of St Peter's College, Oxford (Blandford, 1964), pp. 9-14.
4. *The Bystander*, 30 May, 1928.
5. Dr Cosmo Gordon Lang, addressing his Diocesan Conference at Canterbury, August 1934. He added, 'It (the Oxford Group)

is changing human lives, giving them a new joy and freedom, liberating them from faults of temper, of domestic relationships and the like, which have beset them, and giving them a real ardour to communicate to their fellow creatures what God has given them.' (*Church of England Newspaper*, 14 September, 1934.)

6. Letter from Mr Herbert Upward to Dr Frank N. D. Buchman, 11 July, 1932.
7. Mr R. B. Bennett at a luncheon for his cabinet in Ottawa, 12 May, 1934, See *The Oxford Group and Its Work of Moral Re-Armament* - edited by Sir Lynden Macassey, Q.C.
8. Ward, op. cit., p. 255.
9. Alan Thornhill, *One Fight More* (Muller, 1943), pp. 48-9.
10. B. H. Streeter, *The God Who Speaks* (Macmillan, 1936), p. 15.
11. Sir Reginald Coupland, *Wilberforce* (Collins, 1923), p. 80.
12. Quoted in *The Faith that Built America* by Lee Vrooman (Arrowhead, New York, 1955), pp. 183-6.
13. Streeter, op. cit. pp. 11-12.

CHAPTER 5 Is the journey really necessary? p. 41

1. Quoted in *The Fool Hath Said* by Beverley Nichols (Jonathan Cape, 1936). p. 15.
2. Koestler, *The Ghost in the Machine* (Hutchinson, 1967), p. 319.
3. *The Times*, 16th November, 1968. Also in his Reith Lectures, 1967, reprinted in *The Listener*, starting 16th November, 1967.
4. Bertrand Russell, *Why I am Not a Christian* (Allen and Unwin, 1957), p. 68.
5. *The Observer Magazine*, 16th July, 1967.
6. *Tynan on Theatre* (Penguin, 1964), p. 189.
7. Quoted from *Francis Bacon* by John Russell (Methuen, 1965), p. 1.
8. *One Word of Truth*, Alexander Solzhenitsyn's Nobel Speech (The Bodley Head, 1972), p. 4.
9. *Le Monde*, 13th October, 1973.
10. *The Times*, 18th November, 1967.
11. Dr Bryan Wilson, Professor of Sociology at Oxford in *Religion in the Secular Society* (C. A. Watts, 1966), p. 229-33.
12. *The Yorkshire Post*, 26 August, 1972.

CHAPTER 7 American Adventure p. 51

1. Buchman, op. cit., p. 4.
2. In a review of *Moral Re-Armament* while opening an ideological institute at Frankfurt-am-Main, 1940. Rosenberg's denun-

ciations of M.R.A. go back as far as 1937 – see *Protestantischer Rompilger* by Alfred Rosenberg, 1937, p. 69.

CHAPTER 8 The Great Listener p. 62

1. *Stockholms Tidningen*, 19 August, 1938.
2. Letter to Professor Emil Brunner, 1934.
3. See Lean, *John Wesley, Anglican* (Blandford, 1964), p. 95.
4. Bishop Berggrav, later Primate of Norway, when Bishop of Tromsø, in 1934.
5. C. J. Hambro, then President of the Norwegian Parliament writing in 1944, in his foreword to a war-time book of Dr Buchman's speeches, quoted in *Remaking the World*, p. 263. On 22 April, 1945, Bishop Arne Fjellbu, speaking in St Martin-in-the-Fields, London, said, 'I wish to state publicly that the foundations of united resistance of Norwegian churchmen to Nazism were laid by the Oxford Group's work.' Later that day, Bishop Fjellbu, who himself took a leading part in that resistance, added, 'The first coming of the Oxford Group to Norway was an intervention of Providence in history, like Dunkirk and the Battle of Britain... They helped bridge the gap between religion and the people and make it real every day. We have been fighting more than an armed enemy. We have been fighting godless materialism. The Oxford Group gave us men who helped us fight for a Christian ideology.' See Ekman, *Experiment med Gud*, (Gummesson, Stockholm, 1971), p. 13.
6. In *Cross Road*, 1972, a multi-media account of Buchman's life, King Michael says: 'One of the things I remember so well of Frank's caring for other people was my own experience after meeting him again in 1955. With my sadness and unhappiness in having lost my country, Roumania, my bitterness had grown because of a feeling of not belonging. After our meeting, I felt how this great load was taken off my mind and soul. I realised that for Frank Buchman no problem was too big or too small.'
7. Ekman, op. cit., p. 9.
8. M. Muggerridge, *The Thirties* (Hamish Hamilton, 1940), p. 20.
9. Buchman, op. cit., pp. 53-9.
10. *Saturday Evening Post*, 12 August, 1939.
11. Buchman, op. cit., p. 146.
12. *Die Oxfordgruppenbewegung*, 1942. On the top right-hand corner of the cover it is marked: 'For Service Use Only.' ... and under the title 'Printed by the Head Office of the Reich Security Agency' (i.e. Gestapo). For a picture of the cover and a

verbatim translation of the chapter, 'Conclusions and Position We Take', see Thornton-Duesbury, *op. cit.*, 123-5.

13. Moscow Radio, 9 January, 1953. Many similar Communist evaluations have appeared. For example, *The New York Times International Edition*, 30 April, 1963, quoted *Kommunist*, a Moscow organ which gives the official line within the Soviet Union as saying: 'Moral Re-Armament is certainly the most prominent association which aims to save Western civilisation from Communism. It has staff headquarters in Europe, Asia and America. These people hold assemblies in Latin America and even organise Pan-African conferences... The Leaders of Moral Re-Armament claim it is superior to capitalism and Communism... At a time when the morals of the bourgeois world are bankrupt the prophets of Moral Re-Armament say that the world requires an ideology to satisfy the longing for absolute standards, an ideology able to move the hearts of the privileged as well as the under-privileged. They train officers, philosophers, film directors and move with equipment, radio transmitters, libraries... Not long ago they issued a call to Communists through full pages in the press. In this the Communists are challenged to take part in 'the greatest revolution of all time'. These people say the problem is neither Communism nor capitalism, but the necessity to change human nature to the roots. They puff themselves up with pride and even suggest to Marxists they should change and take up an ideology that is for everybody. This is really the most bold stroke that has come from these propagandists of reconciliation and forgiveness.'

14. Buchman, *op. cit.*, p. 178.

15. *The Manchester Guardian*, 7 February, 1950.

16. Both the French and German Governments decorated Dr Buchman for his work in reconciling France and Germany. Dr Konrad Adenauer stated, 'Nations cannot enjoy stable relationships until they have been inwardly prepared for them. In this Moral Re-Armament has rendered great and lasting services. In recent months we have seen the conclusion of important international agreements. Moral Re-Armament has played an unseen but effective part in bridging differences of opinion between the negotiating parties, and has kept before them the aim of peaceful agreement in the search for the common good.' (*New York Journal-American*, 31 January, 1960). Mr von Etzdorf, who later became German Ambassador in Britain, stated in New York in 1960 that 'the most significant development in Europe since

World War II is the new accord between Germany and France. For this the work of Moral Re-Armament was largely responsible.'

17. The Vice-Foreign Minister of Japan, Mr Frank Matsumoto, in a formal declaration on behalf of his Government on 12 April, 1958, stated that Moral Re-Armament has played a significant part in improving his country's relations with Korea, the Philippines and Australia. It was at the suggestion of Senator Kato, just returned from an M.R.A. Assembly, that Prime Minister Kishi undertook a mission of reconciliation and apology to Japan's former enemies in 1957. 'I have myself experienced the power of honest apology in healing the hurts of the past,' said Mr Kishi on his return. See Gabriel Marcel, *Fresh Hope for the World* (Longmans, 1960), pp. 181-208. Marcel states, 'The stories told me at Tokyo provided irrefutable proof of an extremely important fact, namely that the movement had now a direct impact on the political life of various countries in the Far East, and that statesmen - such as the President of the Philippines, the Prime Minister of Japan and so on - were being directly influenced by it.'

18. For a brief account see *Dr Frank N. D. Buchman, An Eightieth Birthday Tribute* with a Foreword by Sir Lynden Macassey, Q. C., 1958. 'In 1953 the French Foreign Minister, Robert Schuman, urged Dr Buchman to visit Morocco and Tunisia. The latter's subsequent visit to Marrakesh led to a dramatic reconciliation, described in *The Times* of 9th November, 1955, as an event of "nobility and grandeur", between Pasha el Glaoui, the celebrated Berber chief, and the exiled Sultan Sidi ben Youssef. This helped to pave the way for the Sultan's return and the peaceful evolution of Moroccan independence. The Sultan sent his thanks to Dr Buchman on 17th January, 1956, "for all you have done for Morocco". In neighbouring Tunisia, many of the country's leaders freely acclaim M.R.A. "But for its influence", says their Ambassador in Paris, Mr Masmoudi, who negotiated the treaty of independence, "we would long since have been engaged against the French in a war without mercy."

19. Dr. Eric Dombrowski, the publisher of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* in the course of an article headed, 'Conscience of the World' in the issue of 4 June, 1958.

20. Article by Major Palaypay, *Frank Buchman, Eighty* (Blandford, 1958), pp. 141-6.

21. In a speech at Caux, 4 June, 1961.

22. *Frank Buchman, Eighty* (Blandford, 1958), p. 171.

CHAPTER 9 Howard's beginning p. 80

1. *Sicherheitsdienst RFSS*, Oberabschnitt Süd-West, Stuttgart, 18 July, 1937.
2. *The Daily Telegraph*, 24 February, 1936.
3. *Die Oxfordgruppenbewegung*. These are among quotations from the Gestapo document in a letter to *The Times*, 29 December, 1945, signed by two heads of Oxford colleges, Sir David Ross and Sir Cyril Norwood; the Bishop of Lichfield; Lord Ammon, the chairman of the London Labour Party and the Chairman of Conservative Associations, Lord Courthope; 'It is vital,' they concluded, 'that we should understand the spiritual foundation of democracy as clearly as did our enemies, and that we should sustain with all our strength what they feared and hoped to destroy.'
4. *The Western Mail*, 15 March, 1941.
5. 2 December, 1940.
6. *The Daily Telegraph*, 22 May, 1969.
7. Howard, *Innocent Men* (Heinemann 1941), pp. 16-17.
8. *Ibid*, pp. 31-2.
9. *Ibid*, pp. 33-4.
10. Howard, *Fighters Ever* (Heinemann 1941), pp. 7-9.
11. Wolrige Gordon, *Peter Howard, Life and Letters* (Hodder & Stoughton 1969), p. 155.
12. James Brodrick, S. J., *The Origin of the Jesuits* (Longmans, Green, 1940), pp. 259-60.
13. Wolrige Gordon, *op. cit.*, p. 156.
14. *Ibid*, pp. 167-8, 169.

CHAPTER 10 'Apple' p. 94

1. For fuller information see *Geoffrey* by J.E.A. (Blandford, 1946).

CHAPTER 12 Getting married - and after p. 107

1. *The Birmingham Post*, 2 December, 1947, estimated that 'if the same results were obtained nationally as were evident in North Staffordshire and Cannock Chase the target of 200 million tons would be exceeded by 30 million tons', and the editor of *The Spectator*, 6th June, 1947, attributing this result to Moral Re-Armament, wrote, 'Tribute should be paid where tribute seems to be justly due. I heard this week of a striking impetus to coal production... Let me add that the story comes from no Moral Re-Armament quarter, but from someone who knows the pits and pitmen of that area particularly well.' I came direct to our

wedding from the Doncaster coal field where production in one pit had risen from 10,000 to 16,000 tons a week due, it was said, to the apology of the mine manager, a man called the 'pocket battleship'. In 1948, the N.C.B. area production officer in the Rhondda told me that production in that year, after our play *The Forgotten Factor* played in the area, had risen by 7 per cent as against a rise of 2 per cent nationally. 'The big problem is to get co-operation at pit level and M.R.A. is doing it,' he said.

2. *The Observer*, 8 August, 1971.

3. *The Times*, 23 January, 1974 writes, 'Dr Spock's main theme, which one would not expect to hear from him, is the need for parents to be firm with their children. He says the inability to be firm is the commonest problem of parents in America today, and that it can lead to a child's personality becoming "balkier and peskier" as the months and years go by. "The commonest reason, I think, why parents can't be firm is that they are afraid that if they insist their children will resent them, or at least won't love them as much..." Dr Spock observes that parents who are submissive towards their children are not necessarily submissive towards other adults.'

CHAPTER 13 Scandinavian smörgasbord p. 115

1. Huntford, *The New Totalitarians* (Allen Lane, 1972).

2. Ekman, op. cit., p. 7.

3. Dr H. Fuglsang-Damgaard, Bishop of Copenhagen, quoted from an article in *Berlingske Tidende* in *The Oxford Group's First Year in Denmark*, 1935, p. 10.

4. Conversations with Bishop Gulin. See also his autobiography, *Elaemaen Lahjat* (Werner Söderström, 1967 and 1968).

5. *The New York Times Book Review*, 20 March, 1938.

6. Ekman, op. cit., p. 7-8.

7. *The Times*, 23 February, 1954.

8. Official History of the Danish Foreign Service, vol. 2, 1919-70 (*Den danske Udenrigstjenesté*, bind 2), p. 349.

9. *Ibid*, p. 352.

10. Professor Troels Fink, *Deutschland als Problem Danemarks* (Christian Wolff Verlag, Flensburg, 1968), p. 121.

11. *Frederikshavn Avis*, 14 March, 1956.

12. Danish Foreign Service, op. cit., p. 350.

CHAPTER 14 What to do with fear? p. 128

1. *The New Statesman*, 16 November, 1973.

2. Daphne du Maurier, *Come Wind, Come Weather* (Heinemann, 1940).
3. Lean, *Brave Men Choose* (Blandford, 1961).

CHAPTER 15 Student revolutionaries p. 136

1. Letter to the Franks Commission from parents resident in Oxford, *The Times*, 29 December, 1964.
2. A. L. Rowse, *A Cornishman at Oxford* (Jonathan Cape, 1965), pp. 48, 103.
3. Lean, *John Wesley, Anglican* (Blandford, 1964), p. 98.

CHAPTER 16 Is the generation gap compulsory? p. 149

1. Fuller, *The Times Literary Supplement*, 20 February, 1969.
2. Editorial in *The International Times*, 2 June, 1967.

CHAPTER 17 Son's progress p. 163

1. See Cook and Lean, *The Black and White Book* (Blandford, 1972), p. 57, 'Bombs gone'.

CHAPTER 18 What about money? p. 178

1. *The Diary of George Muller*, Selected Extracts (Pickering & Inglis, 1954), pp. 81, 83, 128.

CHAPTER 19 Discouragement denied p. 187

1. Hocking, *The Coming World Civilization* (George Allen and Unwin, 1958), pp. 166-7.

CHAPTER 20 The new morality p. 194

1. Lunn and Lean, *The New Morality* (Blandford, 1964).
2. *The Times Literary Supplement*, 10 October, 1968.
3. *The Sunday Telegraph*, 12 January, 1964.
4. *Pulse*, 22 February, 1964.
5. *The Guardian*, 20 March, 1972.
6. *The Church of England Newspaper*, 19 May, 1972.
7. *The Times Literary Supplement*, 24 March, 1972.
8. *Pi*, 11 May, 1972.
9. *The Herald*, Melbourne, 30 May, 1972.
10. See *Education for Living*, addresses by Dr Anton Skulberg (Norwegian Minister of Education, 1972-3) and the Hon. K. E. Beazley (Australian Minister of Education), at M.R.A. Conference Centre, Panchgani, India, January 1974.