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"By the word of truth, by the power of God."—II Corinthians 6:7.

The League of Evangelical Students is a continent-wide organization of students, founded in 1925 by a student group. Its aim is to exalt our Lord Jesus Christ—by setting forth the gospel of His grace as presented in the inerrant Word of God, by promoting the intellectual defense of the evangelical faith, by proclaiming the joy of Christian living through the indwelling power of the Spirit, by presenting the claims of the gospel ministry at home and abroad. By these means it desires to present a well-rounded witness, spiritual and intellectual, to the truths of historic, evangelical Christianity. It is an organization of, and for, students. It is set for the proclamation and defense of the gospel.

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The EVANGELICAL STUDENT

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WILLIAM J. JONES, *Editor*

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Editorial

IN ONE of the first numbers of the EVANGELICAL STUDENT, there was an article entitled, "The Human Apologetic", in which notable instances of conversion were related. Thus the League has ever stood for Christian life and living.

Buchmanism (discussed in this issue), like every false movement, has truth in disguise. It stresses "changed lives" and witnessing. Must the evangelical student be a living witness? Obviously. Our fellow-editor in the *Inter-Varsity Magazine*¹ of the British Movement rightly contends that it must be a *student* witness. Even in one's own college! Students to students—to their fellows who are just as lost and undone without Christ, as are others who are unbelievers.

It must be a balanced witness. It is ever a question of *both* doctrine and life; not one *or* the other; or one *before* the other! All the mischief in modern Christianity comes from confounding the Scriptural order. But the League thinks that it is a mistake to consider people as being converted by the good life of another, or even by his testimony for Christ. Witnessing is an instrument only. Its chief danger lies in one's telling about himself. Great things have been done for us; but He has done them—that is the marvel! There is an art in that sort of witness. There is a divine reticence in personal testimony which some of us have not yet caught. The Apostle Paul concludes his witness in 1 Timothy 1:12-17 with a *Te Deum*. To Him be the glory!

And it must be a personal, not an impersonal witness. Yet it must also be a corporate witness. That was wise counsel given John Wesley by one whom he traveled many miles from Lincoln College to see: "Sir, you wish to serve God and go to heaven. Remember, you cannot serve Him alone: you must therefore *find* companions or *make* them: the Bible knows nothing of solitary religion."²

There is ever a costliness attached to full and complete witnessing. What many League Chapters have endured, Wesley and his companions at Oxford suffered. They were called "Bible-bigots", "Bible moths", "the Godly Club". They merited such phrases only insofar as they were devoted to the Word of God, written and Incarnate. Wesley's devotion to the Scriptures took on added force by his life of holiness. But cross the Channel, and there observe the obloquy of a different type of witness by a reticent race. Recall the loyal fortitude of the oft-forgotten Dutch saints and martyrs of the seventeenth century.

¹Lent Term, 1933 number, Vol. V, No. 2.

²Quoted in the *Life of Wesley*, by Robert Southey, George Bell & Sons, London, 1901.

Guido de Bray, a godly Reformed scholar was flung from the gibbet even while he enjoined the people of Valenciennes to obey magistrates, but to obey the will of God above all else. In his monumental work, Motley tells of a lad who cried out while being burned at the stake with his father, "Let us be glad, for we are dying for the truth." That was an experience, a testimony; but verily it was based on the Truth; it was a testimony *for* the Truth. So with us. Hence, the League must always emphasize Christian truth and doctrine, maintaining it at all cost. In so doing, it does not desire to, nor does it dare, lose sight of the joy of the Christian who receives from the Spirit joy and peace in believing.



A student in a theological college in America once confided to us that he had been brought up in an evangelical home, but now felt the moorings slipping which he had long regarded as steady and true. One of his theological professors had taught him that the Old Testament, for instance, was highly commendable as a spiritual guide, but was utterly untrustworthy in questions of science and history! What has wrought more havoc with the Church than teachers within her pale who gloss over essential truth in an effort to teach important, yet periphery or consequential truth? But it is more grievous to note the unsound and unhealthy mystical attitudes arising ever and anon in evangelical circles. What brief can one hold for a certain Bible teacher who remarked that "not mental assent to certain doctrines, but just the fact of Christ in the heart" constitutes Christianity? Were that remark attributed to an arch-heretic he would be flayed in editorials of evangelical journals. But it is no less false an utterance because spoken in an unctuous tone or in an atmosphere hallowed by devout associations and memories. How can a modern college student or any one else have Christ in the heart, if none of the doctrines concerning His person and work is true?

"Christianity is not a set of doctrines or a system of teaching; it is the knowledge of a person and the manifestation of that person. . . . Was He born in a miraculous way? . . . so is the believer. . . . We must follow in the successive steps of experience, the steps which Christ took." These are semi-truths, truths imperfectly declared and imperfectly taught. The Christian leader mentioned ought, it would seem, to conform to the truth's demands for accuracy and clarity in thinking, and to realize the implication of his teaching. Such instructors sometimes try to go beyond the plain meaning of Scripture and in an effort to be spiritual they become senselessly naïve. They seem oftentimes to retreat within the citadel of their own salvation, discarding the means by which they have received redemption's blessed truths, obliterating all Scriptural distinctions, and overlooking the sharp conflict between unbelief and belief, error and truth. The theological liberal wants Christ without belief, too! Christian leaders of the type we are describing are truly Christian, but are logically denying the very truths making them Christian!

THE ONE STEP FORWARD MOVEMENT

A Definite, Practical Plan to Advance the Testimony of the League for Each Chapter of the League

This plan was enthusiastically adopted at the Eighth Annual Convention of the League. The plan is one that is practical even for the smallest Chapter. We believe that God will use this tangible proposal as a means of sending forward this ever-growing corporate testimony to the truth of the everlasting gospel.

The Resolution as it was adopted makes apparent the reasons for taking this step forward and very simply advises what steps are to be taken by the local Chapters:

I—That each Chapter of the League plan to make *at least one* deputation to some college or seminary adjacent to them for the purpose of founding a new Chapter of the League that shall defend and proclaim the truth of God's Word.

II—That each Chapter of the League plan to make *at least one* deputation trip to some evangelical church where the purpose, opportunities, and needs of the League may be presented, and prayers, (not money) requested.

III—That each member of the League of Evangelical Students endeavor to earn, give, or ask for *at least one* dollar for the League's tremendous task in the Kingdom of God.

We cannot point out too clearly that this plan of itself will avail nothing. We must wait upon our Lord in prayer. It is only as we depend upon our Sovereign Father and place our confidence and trust in Him that we can hope to have any true blessing in our endeavor.

Prayerfully submitted,

The Executive Committee,

Calvin K. Cummings, President.

Science and the Bible*

ALBERTUS PIETERS

THE question of miracles lies outside the subject we propose to discuss in this paper, for the reason that modern science and the Bible are obviously and entirely in harmony on that subject. The only thing science can say about a real miracle, like the Virgin Birth or Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, is that it is impossible under the laws of nature: and this statement is made by the Christian with no less emphasis than by the scientist. It is of the very essence of a true miracle that it should be impossible for the alleged event to have taken place naturally. If it could be shown—which is, of course, impossible—that the Resurrection of Christ was due to the action of certain natural laws hitherto unknown, and to them alone, its religious value would be at once destroyed for every believing Christian.

What we propose to discuss is not the relation of science to the miraculous events recorded in the Holy Scriptures, but its relation to the assertions made in those Holy Scriptures with regard to natural phenomena. Are these assertions in harmony with our present scientific knowledge, or are they not? Looked at from this standpoint, is the Bible exactly like other ancient writings, exhibiting contemporary attitudes towards natural things, reflecting in its pages the crude and ignorant notions of an unscientific age, or is it so markedly different that we must fairly posit a special divine superintendence of its writers, withholding them from giving utterance to absurdities, and causing them to write the truth?

We shall examine first the New Testament, and then the Old Testament.

The New Testament

With regard to the New Testament, we lay down for the consideration of the reader the following proposition:

There is not a single statement in the New Testament that is even alleged, by any scientist, to be out of harmony with modern knowledge.

My attention was called to this many years ago, in reading a little book by Professor George Romanes, entitled: *Thoughts on Religion*. Professor Romanes was a famous scientist, who lost his early Christian faith on account of his belief in evolution, but who came back to it in his later years, and died a believer. While still a skeptic, he wrote *A Candid Examination of Theism*, in which he demolished, to his own satisfaction, the arguments for the existence of God; but after coming back to the faith, or, rather, while feeling his way back, he wrote *Thoughts on Religion*, in which he revised his earlier views. In this latter work,¹ we read:

One of the strongest pieces of objective evidence in favor of Christianity is not sufficiently enforced by apologists. Indeed, I am not aware that I have

*An address delivered at the Eighth Annual Convention of the League at Grand Rapids, Michigan.

¹P. 167.

ever seen it mentioned. It is the absence from the biography of Christ of any doctrines which the subsequent growth of human knowledge—whether in natural science, ethics, political economy, or elsewhere—has had to discount. This negative argument is really almost as strong as is the positive one from what Christ did teach. For when we consider what a large number of sayings are recorded of, or at least attributed to, Him, it becomes most remarkable that in literal truth there is no reason why any of His words should ever pass away, in the sense of becoming obsolete. . . .

Contrast Jesus Christ in this respect with other thinkers of like antiquity. Even Plato . . . is nowhere in this respect as compared with Christ. Read the Dialogues, and see how enormous is the contrast with the Gospels in respect of errors of all kinds, reaching even to absurdity in respect of reason, and to sayings shocking to the moral sense. Yet this is confessedly the highest level of spirituality, when unaided by alleged revelation.

Let us take up this line of thought for a little, and see what a contrast there is in this respect between some of the most brilliant writers of the ages shortly before and after the time when the New Testament was written, and the contents of the New Testament itself.

Ancient thought comes commonly into collision with the teachings of modern science along three main lines: (1) Direct statements of things that are not true. (2) Belief in magic. (3) Belief in astrology.

I—PLATO

Plato's Chemistry.

Water, when divided by fire or air, on reforming, may become one part fire and two parts air, and a single volume of air divided becomes two of fire.²

Plato's Geography.

He says that the Atlantic Ocean was anciently navigable, but was not so in his day, because the island of Atlantis had sunk beneath the waves just outside the straits of Gibraltar.

For which reason the sea in those parts is impassable and impenetrable, because there is a shoal of mud in the way, and this is caused by the subsidence of the island.³

Plato's Physiology.

In company with most ancients, Plato had a high opinion of the liver, and he devotes a considerable space to a discussion of its wonderful prophetic capacities, concluding as follows:

Such is the nature of the liver, which is placed as we have described in order that it may give prophetic intimations. During the life of each individual these intimations are plainer, but after his death the liver becomes blind, and delivers oracles too obscure to be intelligible.⁴

Plato's Biology.

Plato believed in something like the transmigration of souls, and in that connection had a very uncomplimentary idea of the way in which women come into existence. One wonders what kind of women he had known.

Of the men who came into the world, those who were cowards or led

²*Timæus*, Vol. III, p. 477. The quotations are from the translation of B. Jowett, M.A., published in six volumes.

³*Op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 446.

⁴*Op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 493.

unrighteous lives may with reason be supposed to have changed into the nature of women in the second generation.

The race of birds was created out of innocent, light-minded men . . . these were remodeled and transformed into birds, and they grew feathers instead of hair.⁵

Perhaps this is sufficient to show how utterly out of harmony with modern science was the wisest of the Greeks. Suppose we had things like that in our Bible!

II—PLINY

Plato was a Greek, Pliny a Roman: the former a philosopher, the latter a naturalist. Pliny was a student of these matters, and rejects, on the basis of his own investigations, many mistaken ideas about natural phenomena. Yet he says things like the following:

Pliny's Meteorology.

It is not generally known, what has been discovered by men who are the most eminent for their learning, in consequence of their assiduous observation of the heavens, that the fires which fall upon the earth and receive the name of thunder-bolts, proceed from the three superior stars, but principally from the one which is situated in the middle.⁶

Pliny's Zoology.

The hyena, it is said, is particularly terrible to the panther. A thing truly marvelous to tell of: if the hides of these two animals are hung up facing one another, the hair will fall off the panther's skin.

Another bit of wisdom from Pliny is this: "In cases where bread has stuck in the throat, the best plan is to take some of the same bread, and insert it in both ears."

III—JOSEPHUS

Plato was Greek and Pliny was Roman—how was it with the Jews? Did they have a better knowledge of nature than their contemporaries? For answer, we turn to Josephus, the famous Jewish historian of the first century. He was a very intelligent man and a great scholar. One is amazed at the extent of his knowledge, and at the number of authors he can quote. He was no doubt one of the best informed men in the world at that time.

Invisible Serpents.

Yet in speaking of the campaigns of Moses in Egypt, while still an Egyptian commander, he tells us that one of the great dangers Moses met was a multitude of invisible serpents, "which ascend out of the ground unseen, and also fly into the air, and so come upon men at unawares, and do them mischief."⁷

The Demon and the Ring.

Josephus relates, as something he himself has seen, that a ring, with a certain root mentioned by Solomon, was placed over the nose of a demoniac, and the demon was drawn out through the ring.⁸

⁵*Op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 513.

⁶*The Universal Anthology*, p. 282, edited by R. Garnett and others (Clarke Co., Ltd., London, 1899).

⁷*Antiquities*, Bk. II, Chap. X, Sec. 2.

⁸*Ibid.*, Bk. VIII, Chap. II, Sec. 5.

The Fruits of Sodom.

He also tells us of the fruits of Sodom, which fruits have a color as if they were fit to be eaten, but if you pluck them with your hands, they dissolve into smoke and ashes.⁹

The Sabbatic River.

Now Titus Cæsar tarried some time in Berytus. . . . He then saw a river, as he went along, of such a nature as deserves to be recorded in history; it runs in the middle between Arcea, belonging to Agrippa's kingdom, and Raphanea. It hath somewhat very peculiar in it; for when it runs, its current is strong, and has plenty of water; after which its springs fail for six days together, and leave its channel dry, as any one may see; after which it runs on the seventh day as it did before, and as though it had undergone no change at all; it hath also been observed to keep this order perpetually and exactly; whence it is what they call it, The Sabbatic River.¹⁰

The Root of Baaras.

There is a certain place called Baaras, which produces a root. . . . Its color is like to that of flame, and toward the evening it sends out a certain ray like lightning: it is not easily taken by such as would do it, but recedes from their hands, nor will it yield itself to be taken quietly, until either the urine of a woman or blood be poured upon it; nay, even then it is certain death to those that touch it, unless any take and hang the root itself down from his hand, and so carry it away. It may also be taken in another way, without danger, which is this: they dig a trench quite round about it, till the hidden part of the root be very small. They then tie a dog to it, and when the dog tries hard to follow him that tied him, this root is easily plucked up, but the dog dies immediately, as if it were instead of the man who would take the plant away; nor after this need any one be afraid of taking it into his hands.¹¹

IV—AUGUSTINE

Let us look at one more eminent thinker, one of the keenest minds ever created, Saint Augustine, and read some of the mistakes he makes in regard to natural things. He was a man of truly scientific temperament, and of interest in nature. He lost faith in the teachings of the Manichæans because they contradicted what he knew to be true of nature. He was far ahead of his age in rejecting astrology. He took great interest in the load-stone, and experimented with its magnetic powers. He experimented with the flesh of a peacock, to determine whether it would spoil.

Yet he tells us soberly such things as the following, and bases upon them an argument to the effect that the things told of the future life are not more wonderful than some things we know to be true in nature: that in Cappadocia the mares are impregnated by the wind, and their colts live only three years; that the Garamantæ have a fountain so cold by day that no one can drink it, but so hot by night that no one can touch it; that the apples of Sodom crumble into dust and ashes when touched with hand or tooth, and so on.¹²

V—OTHER ANCIENT WRITERS

We have found absurdities in the realm of nature in the writings of

⁹*Jewish War*, Bk. IV, Chap. VIII, Sec. 3.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, Bk. VII, Chap. V, Sec. 1.

¹¹*Ibid.*, Bk. VII, Chap. VI, Sec. 3.

¹²*De Civitate Dei*, Bk. XXI, Sec. 5.

Plato, Pliny, Josephus, and Saint Augustine, four of the most brilliant, intelligent, and well-informed men of the ancient world. What of the others? If these things are true in the green tree, what of the dry? To discover this, one needs only to read the Old Testament Apocrypha, even those books accepted by the Roman Catholic Church. In Tobit one finds the story of fish liver that was a potent charm against the devil, when placed upon burning coals; in the New Testament Apocrypha the tale of a young man transformed by magic into a mule, and so forth. Even a casual reading of these and other ancient writings will show how completely the thought of that day was permeated with magic, astrology, and every sort of erroneous conception of things in the realm of nature.

Now then, turn to the New Testament, a book written in the same community, by men subject to the same thought influences, in the same general period, and explain, if you can, apart from divine inspiration, the marvel that there is not in the entire New Testament a single sentence that today is an embarrassment to faith because it is in conflict with the most advanced knowledge of natural science, not a passing illustration drawn from the apples of Sodom, or any similar mistake in natural history; not the slightest expression of faith in astrology; and not the remotest ascription of any event whatever to magical powers. Had we only the New Testament, from the literature of that age, we should without hesitation come to the conclusion that none of these things was then thought of; instead of which the fact is, as we have seen, and as is abundantly clear from all the extant literature outside the Bible, that the thought of the day was simply soaked in them.

Miraculous events, certainly, there are, in the New Testament, plenty of them; but miracles, in the Christian sense, stand in a totally different relation to scientific thought from such things as astrology and magic. Professor Romanes brings this out clearly when he says:¹³

The antecedent improbability against a miracle being wrought by a man, without a moral object, is apt to be confused with that of its being done by God, with an adequate moral object. The former is immeasurably great; the latter is only equal to the improbability of theism itself—i.e. nil.

This is a distinction to be constantly kept in mind. At the basis of all scientific thought and study lies the conviction that nothing occurs without an adequate cause. This conviction is not out of harmony with Christian miracles, for an adequate cause is assigned to them, namely, an almighty God, carrying out a program of redemption. Therefore, although such a cause is not within the realm of science, and is not open to its inspection, yet the demand of the scientific spirit for an adequate cause is met. This thing, if accepted as true, does not result in an arbitrary universe, does not undermine the foundation upon which science rests. That is exactly what magic, however, does. Its results are alleged to be produced by the repetition of certain words and formulas, by incantations, roots, rabbits' feet, bits of hair, and so forth, and so forth, which bear no intelligible relation to any adequate cause. If this were true, there could

¹³*Thoughts on Religion*, p. 191.

be no science, for it would not be an orderly universe. Hence, with such a conception science is of necessity irreconcilably and eternally at war. If there were so much as one story in the New Testament in which the reality of magical powers figure, it would raise an acute problem to our modern faith.

There is not, and no explanation of this fact is possible but that these Scriptures were written by inspiration of God; for we can not ascribe to the men that composed the New Testament any knowledge of natural things different from and superior to that of their contemporaries. It is not that they themselves were free from error, but that when they wrote this book, intended to be God's message, not only to their times but to ours, the guiding hand of the Holy Spirit prevented them from writing down anything that would discredit this revelation in the twentieth century.

Nor let any man say that, since the New Testament writers were discussing religion, not nature, there is no occasion for surprise in its freedom from scientific error. So was Saint Augustine discussing religion, and it was precisely in order to strengthen his religious argument that he adduced some of his erroneous accounts of nature. Josephus writes a history—so does Saint Luke. The former takes his heroes through various lands—so does the latter. Yet the former makes many mistakes in natural history—the latter none. Our Lord Jesus uses illustrations from nature constantly, yet not one that requires the slightest amendment in the light of our present knowledge.

The Old Testament

So far we have confined our discussion to the New Testament; for, however completely and confidently we also accept the Old Testament as the Word of God, it remains true that the New Testament is the primary Christian document; that upon its history and teachings the Christian religion is based; and that therefore the first question is whether science can raise any legitimate objection to anything in it. We have seen that it can not.

What we have thus seen to be true of the New Testament, may, broadly speaking, be affirmed of the Old Testament also. Again we lay aside, as outside the range of our discussion, those things that are definitely presented to us as miracles, events wrought by God at critical points in the development of revelation and redemption, such as the miracles of the Exodus and of Elijah's time. The budding of Aaron's rod, the story of the ass that spoke with a man's voice to Balaam, the floating of the axe in Elisha's day, the healing of Naaman the leper, and similar things, are deliberately presented to us as having been done by God for high spiritual purposes. They come under the head of miracles strictly so called.

Certain other events have their natural side, and are presented to us as having taken place by the will of God, without its being made plain whether they are of the order of an over-ruling Providence, using natural laws and properties, or not. Such events are the plagues of Egypt, the deluge of Noah, the passage of the Red Sea and of the Jordan, the lengthening of the day at the battle of Beth-horon, the preservation of Jonah

for three days in the belly of the whale, and so forth. If there is a scientific explanation, we are ready to hear what it is: if not, we classify them under miracles, strictly so called. In neither case is there any occasion to speak of conflict between the record and scientific knowledge.

Again, as in the New Testament, we are impressed with the immeasurable difference between the canonical Scriptures and all contemporary or nearly contemporary literature. Compare what we know of the thought of Egypt, Babylonia, Greece, Assyria, and Persia with the Old Testament books, and no one can fail to recognize the immensity of this difference. In all of these nations, divination, necromancy, astrology, and magic were accepted as true, and all important events were brought into connection with them.

Yet in all the Old Testament historical books, in the Psalms, the "Wisdom Literature", and the prophetic literature, whether of the Major or Minor Prophets, where do you find any passage teaching the reality of these things, or recommending men to use them? On the contrary, when they are mentioned at all, it is with loathing and contempt, as delusions and abominations of the heathen. There are two exceptions—at least apparent exceptions—to this statement. The magicians of Egypt are said to have transformed their staves into serpents, and the witch of Endor is said to have called up Samuel from the dead. We can not now go into a discussion of these two instances. Even if they are real exceptions, they stand apart from the body of the Old Testament, and help to emphasize the contrast between that literature and the thinking of surrounding nations.

In regard to erroneous statements in the realm of nature, the case is more complicated. We begin by saying that even here the astonishing thing is the very great scarcity of any statements that, on this ground, can be called into question, but there are some that cause hesitation and difficulty. Among these we may mention the apparent teaching of Genesis 30:37-43, about the means taken by Jacob to cause the conception of speckled sheep and cattle. If the account means to say that this did cause such conception, we do not know how to reconcile it with biology; but when we look again, is the inspired writer doing anything else than to tell us what was in Jacob's mind, and is not the passage 31:10-12 intended to inform us that it was by the act of God, not by the influence of the peeled rods, that the speckled cattle were conceived?

Another case is the classification of the hare as an animal that chews the cud. Here the principle that Scriptural language always refers to the phenomenon, not to the ultimate reality behind the phenomenon, furnishes an adequate explanation. That principle will be discussed presently. The reference to the eagle's habits, in Deuteronomy 32:11, has been challenged, but there is good evidence that it is correct. Then there are incidental references here and there that, taken literally, imply things about natural phenomena that are not true, such as that the snail wastes away as it goes (Psalm 58:8), that adders make themselves deaf (Psalm 58:4), that the eagle's youth is renewed (Psalm 103:5), and similar things. At

worst, compare these, even if acknowledged to be real errors, with the things we quoted from the wisest men of Greece, Palestine, and Rome. However, a reasonable explanation is immediately at hand. The things named are, almost without exception, passing allusions that had become standard literary phrases in the Hebrew language. When one uses such expressions, whether in poetry or prose, but especially in poetry, he is entitled to use them without being understood to commit himself to their correctness. We do that ourselves constantly. We speak of a city, after a conflagration, rising "like a phoenix" from the ashes, of the folly of governments that shut their eyes to coming dangers, "like the ostrich that hides her head in the sand", and other things of that kind, without intending in the least to guarantee the correctness of the tales about the phoenix and the ostrich from which these set phrases are derived. Most of the incidental references to nature in the Old Testament are of this class, and are of no importance whatever.

Far otherwise, however, is it with the first chapter of Genesis. There we find a series of statements purporting to give the essential facts in regard to the origin of the world, of the heavenly bodies, of vegetation, animal life, and man. These statements speak of the order in which these various things came into existence, of the state of the world before life existed upon it, and so forth. Such statements are about matters that fall within the proper domain of science, and fairly come into comparison with its teachings at the present time.

With regard to this there has been much shifting of opinion among Christian men. When astronomy, geology, and biology were young, there was a tendency among believers to reject their findings because of conflict with the Biblical record as then understood, and many things were said that all sensible Christians must regret. To this there came a natural reaction, and the prevailing attitude among Bible students now is to say that science and Genesis are clearly irreconcilable with one another; but that it doesn't in the least matter, because the Bible is a text-book of religion, not of science: and we can accept its religious teaching as authoritative, whether we regard its statements on natural things to be true or false.

I wish to express my very emphatic dissent to this position. It seems to me that it matters a great deal whether we accept the first chapter of Genesis or not. It matters, first of all, because the religious teaching of that part of the Bible—and of all succeeding parts—is very intimately connected with what it says about the origin of the world and the process of creative activity. It matters, further, because our Lord and His Apostles implicitly accepted the Old Testament as true, and if we must come to the conclusion that they were mistaken in so accepting it, it can not but have an effect upon our estimate of them as religious teachers. It matters, finally, because those who begin by denying the Biblical teaching on nature very soon are observed to go on to a similar denial of its trustworthiness in the realm of history, and then of morality: finally to the assertion that its teaching about God is inconsistent with the New Test-

ament revelation. Beginning, thus, with the apparently innocent remark that the Bible is a text-book of religion, not of science, they end by denying that the religion it teaches is worthy of our acceptance.

Not only is the principle, thus enunciated, dangerous; I wish to register my conviction that such a surrender of the credibility of the creation account in Genesis is entirely unnecessary and unscholarly. If right principles of interpretation are laid down, while not every problem can yet be solved, and not every difficulty removed, the comparison of Genesis with what is really proved by science, results very favorably to the Biblical record. Let me lay down three principles of interpretation, as I have come to view the matter.

(1) The Phenomenal Principle.

First of all in importance is the principle laid down by John Calvin, in his commentary on Genesis:

To my mind, this is a certain principle, that nothing is here treated of but the visible form of the world. He who would learn astronomy, and other recondite arts, let him go elsewhere.

This is what we mean by the "Phenomenal Principle" of interpretation, and it applies not only to the first chapter of Genesis, but to everything said in the Bible on natural things. Here or elsewhere, whatever the Bible says about such things must be understood of the "visible form" of things, as Calvin puts it: that is, of the phenomenon, the appearance that meets the eye, if there are human observers present, or as it would have appeared to such observers, if they had been present.

This is directly contrary to the method of speech employed by science, which seeks always to make its assertions in terms, not of the way things appear to the eye, but of the way they really are. Both are legitimate modes of speech, and if we are to compare the teachings of science and the Bible, we must first translate the one mode of speech into the other. A very common, and very sound, illustration is taken from the apparent motion of the sun around the earth. We say that the sun rises, that it sets, that it sinks beneath the horizon, and so on, all expressions implying that the sun has a proper diurnal motion around the earth; and we continue to use such expressions, although knowing very well that they are not really true. Yet we are not inaccurate, for we speak according to the appearance of things, and if what we say is true on that basis, we can not be accused of error.

Obviously sensible as this principle of Calvin's is, it has been constantly disregarded, both by friends and by enemies of the Bible. The great geologist Dana, for instance, seeking to reconcile science and Genesis, found in the six creative days six geologic periods, not remembering that this account properly has to do with the finished earth, and with stages in its production only in so far as they would have been visible to the eye of a beholder then present on the surface of the earth. Others have discussed the question whether the various forms of life include such as became extinct before man appeared: again making the same mistake. It is the animals known to us that are referred to, not such others. Reading

the story of the Flood, men have thought that loyalty to the Holy Scriptures required them to believe that the waters covered the entire globe as now known to us: failing to confine the statement to the conditions that met the eye of the witnesses in the ark.

(2) The Principle of Limitation.

The second principle is that each Biblical statement must be limited to what it contains, and that we have no right to read into it what is not there. Not long ago I had a letter from a man who was sure that the creation of man was an instantaneous act, because the account says: "God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into him the breath of life." Yet it is clear that nothing is here said about any instantaneous creation. The Lord God formed man: yes, but it is not said how long it took him to do it. He breathed into him the breath of life: yes, but how long did this require? You may have your own opinion on these points, but you have no right to say that your opinion is Bible teaching.

Modern scholars are great sinners against this principle. Almost without exception, the reference books tell us that the ancient Hebrews believed in a solid vault of crystal, extending over the earth, in which the heavenly bodies were fixed, and above which was a sea of fresh water, coming down as rain through sluice-gates, called the "windows of heaven". In accordance with this erroneous conception of the universe they then proceed to interpret Genesis 1:6-8, and to declare it irreconcilable with our present knowledge. Yet there is nothing corresponding to this representation in the book. It is read into the account, largely on the basis of certain poetic figures of speech found elsewhere in the Bible.

(3) The Principle of God's Working through Nature.

This principle is that when the Bible says God did a thing, it does not mean to exclude the use of natural processes by God. Believers have too often taken the stand, which skeptics insist on taking constantly, that the laws of nature and the acts of God are mutually exclusive. People find certain natural causes for a phenomenon, and forthwith they consider that they have proved that God had nothing to do with it. This is far from the Scriptural point of view. The Lord Jesus says that God clothes the lilies of the field, that He feeds the sparrows, that He causes the rain to fall and the sun to shine, not at all intending thereby to teach that these things are miracles. They are natural events; but above nature, working in and through nature, stands God, and the completed phenomenon is His act. That is the uniform attitude of the Bible. If this is clearly apprehended and firmly held, it disposes of many alleged difficulties. We shall not be apprehensive that the geologist is contradicting the Bible, when he tells us he has discovered long periods and important natural processes in the formation of the earth. He may be right or wrong, we are not concerned, for by whatever processes God brought this world into being, it is still His creation. At the very beginning, of course, you must have instantaneous creation, for you can not have a gradual beginning of anything, but after the first verse of Genesis there is no occa-

sion to deny God's use of natural processes in bringing about the results described, and there is much reason to admit it.

To examine the first chapter of Genesis in detail would require more space than we can now command; but we may indicate a number of important points on which there is a most striking harmony between the discoveries of science on the one hand and this account on the other. Let it first be premised that we join with Saint Augustine in looking upon the six creative days, not as ordinary days such as are now known to us, but as "days of God", to be measured by a measure not revealed to us. This is not a subterfuge forced upon us by modern science, as some would have it, but an interpretation demanded by the text itself, as Saint Augustine clearly perceived. So taking the days, we have the following important assertions of Genesis, with which science agrees, or to which it, at any rate, can offer no objection:

(1) *That the universe had a beginning.*

In all antiquity, the Bible stood alone in making this assertion. All science now stands with it; as witness the most recent views of Sir James Jeans and others. This is the first assertion of the Book, and it is of overwhelming importance. Agreement here means more than disagreement almost anywhere else.

(2) *That the earth was at one time dark, formless, and empty.*

(3) *That it was at one time covered with water, the continents gradually appearing.*

(4) *That there was vapor so dense as to make sea and cloud practically indistinguishable.*

(5) *That there was light on the surface of the earth before the heavenly bodies as such became visible.*

(6) *That the order of creation was, in general, first, vegetation, then marine life, then birds and reptiles, then mammals, and finally man.*

(7) *That man is essentially of a different order of being from the lower animals, separated from them by a wide and impassable gulf.*

In all of these important statements there is no serious conflict between the things stated in the Bible and the things definitely ascertained by modern science. Of course, we speak not of the many shifting theories, but of those things that can not be shaken.

As already said, by no means all problems have as yet been cleared up. It will be a long time before they are, if that ever takes place. On the one hand, we may be wrong on more than one point of interpretation. On the other, the last word of science has not yet been spoken. Yet it seems clear that the two are approaching each other, and that a later generation of Bible students will find it easier to bring them into reasonable adjustment than our generation has found it. I feel very sure, also, that scholarship will come back from the facile but superficial attitude now so common, that the two are hopelessly at variance, but that it makes no difference.

In conclusion, let us emphasize again that one thing is already entirely

beyond dispute, namely, that the Bible, and the Bible alone, among all ancient writings, can make a respectable showing in the sort of comparison we have instituted. We have seen how true that is of the most famous writers of Greece, Palestine, and Rome. It is true, with added emphasis, of the recovered writings of Sumer, Babylonia, Assyria, Egypt, and Persia; and it is no less true of the wisest things ever written in India, China, Japan, and wherever else men have thought and written on these themes, since the dawn of time. The Bible, and only the Bible, among all ancient compositions, has led men to views of the world that are tenable today!

The Writers in This Issue

ALBERTUS PIETERS, D. D., has been such a factor in League affairs, that it seems unnecessary to mention his years of service as a missionary to Japan; his noble service as a professor in Western Theological Seminary, where he holds the Dosker-Hulswit professorship in Bible and Missions; his delightful work as an author; and his sparkling and gracious, yet deep and reverent devotion to the gospel. Especially is he loved by students of the League. His article in this number of the EVANGELICAL STUDENT is a notable contribution to Bible study.

CORNELIUS VAN TIL, Th. M., Ph. D., is one of the younger theological professors in our country. His acquaintanceship with the League since its founding, and his knowledge of contemporaneous philosophical thought, fit him in a peculiar way for the messages he brings the League from time to time. The genius of Dr. Van Til lies in his ability to see truth in contrasts, and his clarity of thought is rooted in the facile manner of his revealing the simple in the complex. Dr. Van Til is professor of Apologetics at Westminster Theological Seminary.

WILLIAM J. JONES, M. A., B. Th., is General Secretary of the League. He is now serving on the staff of Columbia Bible College, Columbia, South Carolina. Mr. Jones has been with the League since the Fall of 1929. Because he has been able to visit various student bodies and has had personal relations with the Oxford Group Movement, he writes of that Movement in this issue. The undergraduate work of Mr. Jones was done at Wheaton College; his post-graduate work was completed at Princeton Theological Seminary, and at Princeton University.

MARGARET HUNT, B. A., the daughter of missionaries in Korea, is one of the women Regional Secretaries. Miss Hunt is a graduate of Wilson College, where she and her sister, Miss Mary B. Hunt, were very active in League work. Both of them are continuing their preparation for missionary service at the Moody Bible Institute where they find time for the Chapter work there. Miss Margaret Hunt is well acquainted with League activities, and in her article reflects such wide observation. The League regards Miss Hunt as a most valued and devoted worker.

CHINA!

Have our readers noticed the remarkable evidence of God's working in China, as reflected in the two letters (printed elsewhere) informing of the new League in China? We earnestly request prayer for this new movement, and for the General Secretary, Mr. Jonathan Hsü, and trust that our friends will see why we consider it the most hopeful sign in youth circles of China—a real witnessing band of Christian college students. Let our supporters not forget these sister movements.

Facing the Problem*

CORNELIUS VAN TIL

EVERY class of people has problems that are peculiar to itself. But these problems, that every class of people has, are after all but particular forms of the problem that all people have in common. So, too, the particular problems of college people are but specialized forms of the problem that all of us must face.

To the average college student the question of choosing the right vocation for life is of great importance. Some students may have settled this problem for themselves. But if they have, this only means that they must push on to a further question. A vocation prepares for life. But what is this life, for which the vocation is to prepare? Strictly speaking, the student has to answer that question before he can make up his mind as to what vocation to choose. Why should one student choose to enter the gospel ministry and another prefer the medical profession? Is it because one profession offers a greater financial reward? If it does, what will one do with the money that he dreams of having in his possession?

Now to the question of what life is, there are seemingly many answers. There are many systems of philosophy and there are many systems of religion. It seems as though we are in a veritable labyrinth of conflicting systems. Yet it does not take very long before we begin to learn that certain systems are but compounds of the elements of other systems. And after we have studied for a little while, we realize that there are only two systems that can not be compounded. Just as we watch the physicist in the laboratory making all manner of combinations from a very few fundamental substances, so we soon begin to perceive that all the non-Christian systems are compounded out of two ingredients. These two basic ingredients are: (1) the assumption of man himself as the ultimate standard of judgment, and (2) the assumption of the universe as existing in its own strength and right. And even these we may, if we wish, reduce to one assumption, namely, the assumption of the self-sufficiency of the space-time universe.

Now if we have thus reduced the various non-Christian systems to one system, we learn to see very clearly the most central point of opposition between Christianity and non-Christianity. Christianity holds that God is the ultimate standard of judgment for men. Christianity also holds that the space-time universe was created by God and is sustained by God. And these two points we may also reduce to one, by saying that Christianity believes in the self-sufficiency of God.

Bringing the difference between these two philosophies of life in as pointed a contrast as we can, we may say that according to Christianity the universe must be interpreted in terms of God, while according to all other systems, God must be interpreted in terms of the universe. Chris-

*One of the addresses given at the Eighth Annual Convention of the League at Grand Rapids, Michigan.

tianity is the only system that speaks of the second Person of the Trinity, the Christ, God of very God, as coming to judgment, to bring into everlasting glory, or to condemn to everlasting punishment, as men *have*, or *have not* accepted His interpretation of life. Christianity, orthodox, historical Christianity, is the only philosophy of life that believes in God as self-sufficient.

* * *

Unfortunately many students walk in the labyrinth of modern thought, as ladies are said to walk in large department stores, sampling this and sampling that, as though a day were a year. One of the most helpful things that we, as members of the League, can do, it seems to me, is to help men reduce the numberless systems that are offered them to the two of which we have spoken. This will greatly simplify their choice. This will also press the urgency of making the choice at once.

But is it necessary to make a choice at once? And is it scientific to make a choice at once? It may be well to preach to men in the slums that they must make a choice at once, but is it equally necessary to tell college men that they must make a choice without delay? It may be urged that college men, all of them, walk on the same road till graduation time. It is afterwards, so it is said, that they will have to make their choice.

Yet it is not true that we can put off the acceptance or the rejection of the Christian answer, till we have finished our course at college. Some of us may never finish our course at college. Many a time it happens that a student is taken out of life before he has finished his preparation for it. In such a case, Christ will not ask him in the Judgment Day, what he has done in life, but Christ will ask him for what sort of life he has been preparing. Or, in other words, for a student taken away in his student days, it is his preparation that is life itself, and it is of this that he will have to give an account. It is not more reasonable for any human being to put off the question of the acceptance or the rejection of Christianity, than it is for a man to go to sleep on a railroad track, unless he is positive that no train will ever pass on that track. It is as necessary, then, for every college student to make a choice at once as it is for the man that lies drunk in the gutter.

But it will be objected that this is certainly to go counter to common sense. It will be said that you can not expect a person to decide upon his permanent philosophy of life till he has grown to maturity. And it will be added that every child accepts his early outlook on life from his parents and teachers, and upon their authority alone. Is it not highly desirable and altogether necessary that such children should learn to develop independence of judgment? And how are they to develop independence of judgment if you press upon them prematurely the necessity of making choices for life and for death?

Now there is an element of truth in such objections. And we do not mean to advocate any policy of education that would hinder the development of young people's judgment. But we submit that it is in the best interest of a young person to grapple with the most ultimate problems of

life, as soon as he is able to do so. If we as children of Christian parents have at first received and accepted the Christian position on the authority of our parents, it is our business, as soon as we can, to ask ourselves whether we wish to accept self-consciously that which we have formerly accepted on the authority of others. So also, if we have received non-Christian teaching in our youth, it is our business to ask ourselves, as soon as we can, whether we wish to retain that non-Christian position or exchange it for the Christian position.

And this leads us also to face that objection so commonly made today, that we must by all means cultivate open-mindedness in young people. Now there is only one thing wrong with this ideal of cultivating the open-mind, and that is that there is no such open-mind anywhere in the universe to cultivate. It is all very well to hitch your wagon to a star, but it is foolish to beat the air. If something is inherently obtainable, it is well to strive for it; but if something is absolutely and forever beyond our reach, it is a waste of energy to strive for it. Or rather, I should use a figure which suggests that the open-mind is something that is past, instead of something that is in the far distant future. It is very discouraging to run in order to catch the horizon, because it has such a mean way of escaping our grasp by moving constantly ahead. But, if possible, it is still less encouraging to try to obtain something that is already past and out of reach. To see a man who will not put away childish things, but whose ambition it seems to be to return to childish things, is pitiable indeed. Yet it is this that men constantly try to do, in the name of science. Nothing is so common as to meet people, who tell you that they are quite open for conviction on the question of the existence of God. But if you ask them the question, whether they are open-minded on the argument for the existence of an absolutely self-sufficient God, they will have to admit at once that they are not.

To make this point clear, I may use again the illustration of the man who goes to sleep on a railroad track. What would you think of such a person, if he said that he was quite open-minded on the possibility of trains coming on the track? If he were perfectly open-minded on that possibility, he ought to allow for the possibility that after five minutes a train might come. So, then, the fact that he goes to sleep implies that it is his real conviction that it will certainly be several hours before any train will pass on that track. His much boasted open-mindedness has proved to be nothing but a negation. It is in this way that men will tell you that they are perfectly willing to be convinced that Christianity is true. In other words, they say they are perfectly willing to grant that any moment may be their last in life, and bring them face to face with the judgment. Yet their non-acceptance of Christianity, for the time being, proves that in their hearts they are convinced that death will not bring them before the judgment. Their much boasted open-mindedness has been negation only.

If it be said that such an analogy is forced, because it is certainly not the business of a sane man to go to sleep on a railroad track, while

there are plenty of beds at home, or while there is at least plenty of space to sleep in elsewhere, the reply is that if Christianity is true, your bed itself may at any time become the track on which the judgment comes to you, while you are asleep. If Christianity is true there is not one spot in this universe that may not bear us to the judgment. There is only one way in which one can sleep safely in this world, if one does not accept Christianity, and that is by proving that no judgment can possibly come. If a man could prove this he would have proved that this universe is self-sufficient, and that there is no need of the God of Christianity.

* * *

What then does the so-called neutral attitude which is found so generally on the average college campus, mean? It means that men have accepted the non-Christian position, without so much as giving one serious thought to the possibility of the truth of Christianity. Men have accepted an answer to the most ultimate question in life, without having faced the meaning of the question. There are hundreds and hundreds of college men that have gone to sleep on the railroad track. If you touch them lightly with a feather to suggest that possibly a train might come, they smile and say, "Perhaps". They regard it about as likely as Conan Doyle would consider that the man in the moon was the real culprit in a mystery plot. If you pull them gently by the hand, and say to them quite seriously that the coming of a train is at least an hypothesis to which they should give scientific attention, they tell you frankly that no one considers the creation theory seriously any more, since William Jennings Bryan has died. If you pound them vigorously on the forehead with a hammer, and show them that it is their solemn, scientific duty to prove the impossibility of the existence of God if they wish to live as they now live, they may get furious enough to tell you that you are outraging reason, or they may look down upon you in pity for your idiocy.

Unfortunately most college men are of the first variety. Christianity has never been presented to them vigorously. They may have had baseballs flatten their nose, they may have had basketballs take their wind, they may have been all but dashed to pieces on the football field, but Christianity has never given them more disturbance than the sensation of a feather tickling them in their sleep.

* * *

And now let us go one step further and see what the situation is when men get beyond the college campus. Suppose that men continue their studies and go to the leading universities of the land for their graduate courses. There, surely, men will have to be truly scientific and will not answer questions before squarely facing them. True, there are a few of those hide-bound, conservative colleges and seminaries in which the professors take the truth of Christianity for granted, and never make any real investigation with an open mind. But surely in the great universities of the world, men try to face the facts squarely, and follow the facts wherever they may lead them. But this exactly, we believe, is not the case. We believe that it is as true of the average university and sem-

inary professor as of the average college student, that he has simply accepted the non-Christian answer to the problem of life without seriously looking at the Christian answer. In the nature of the case, we are not saying that such is true of everyone. There are exceptions to the rule. What we mean is that those scientists and philosophers, as well as those theologians in so-called neutral institutions which are most influential in our day, are very unscientific indeed with respect to their treatment of Christianity.

If Christianity is true, then it is of such fundamental significance that it determines the meaning of every fact at which one looks. It would be truly scientific, then, to look seriously at the question whether Christianity is a fact. Yet it is this that men fail to do.

* * *

I realize that in making such a far-reaching charge I shall be flooded with objections. And the strange part of it is that one meets objections not only from those who are opposed to Christianity, and who therefore are themselves involved in the accusation, but as well from those who accept Christianity. Many orthodox Christians have an "inferiority complex" when it comes to men of science. To presume to criticize Einstein, whose theory of relativity only ten people in the world are supposed to be able to understand, seems well nigh sacrilegious to them.

Moreover, men say, "What is the use of being so extreme? Why not be happy that science is drawing much closer to the Christian position today than it used to? Why not rejoice since idealistic philosophy has a concept of God which, though not altogether that of Christianity, or of Biblical theism, is nevertheless very much closer to it than the God of the materialist and pragmatist?"

Now in answer to this objection we would say that we greatly rejoice in the accomplishments of science. We greatly admire the genius and the perseverance of scientists, as well as the profundity of philosophers. We may be quite open-minded, too, on the question of the curvature of space. We may rejoice because some modern psychologists and physicists have returned from a mechanistic view to a sort of teleology.

But while we admire the scientists and the philosophers for what they have accomplished, we do not in the least modify our charge, that, as a whole, they have not even faced the question of Christianity. As a whole modern scientists and philosophers have been absolutely closed-minded on the possibility of the existence of God.

* * *

Edward H. Cotton has recently published a symposium of scientific opinion under the title, *Has Science Discovered God?* In this symposium we have such names as Kirtly F. Mather, Heber D. Curtis, Edwin G. Conklin, George Thomas White Patrick, William McDougall, Sir J. Arthur Thomson, Harlan T. Stetson, Sir Oliver Lodge, J. Jeans, and J. Malcolm Bird. What do you suppose was the question that Cotton put to them? The question was whether they had, in their scientific researches, discovered God. But surely such a question is in itself perfectly meaning-

less. If such a question was to have any meaning, Cotton should have explained to them what sort of a God he was asking them about. Why did he not ask them whether they had discovered God as the creator and sustainer of this universe? The reason is not far to seek. Cotton himself does not believe in such a God. Cotton did not want them to find such a God.

But more than that, the question, even if put as we have suggested, whether science has discovered the God of Christianity, is misleading. It would seem, from the form of such a question, that it is quite possible to go along for a good while in making all manner of discoveries in this world, and not discover God. Again it means that perhaps you might discover God, but also, that perhaps you might not. Now neither of these matters is possible if Christianity is true. If God is the Creator of the universe then a scientist ought to meet God in the first fact he investigates. There is then no fact that exists except in total dependence upon God. The relation of any fact to God would be the most important aspect of any fact. Hence it would be impossible to go farther than the first fact without finding God. *If a scientist does not find God in the first fact that he investigates, there is no further hope that he will meet God in any of the other facts.* He may, of course, retrace his steps and then meet God, but he cannot go on in the way that he was going. If one fact can exist in independence of God, all facts can. Suppose that you invite six people to dinner. While the dinner is being served, you ask whether they have discovered a table. Now each one looks at you very seriously and goes out in search of a table. He looks through the meat, the vegetables, the salad, and the dessert. Some report that they have discovered no evidence of the existence of a table. The majority, however, report that there is, in the stability and the organization of the various dishes, convincing evidence of some sustaining principle within them, which, for want of a better term, they will call a table. It is in much this way that such a symposium about the existence of God is conducted. He that asks, and they that answer, have taken for granted that the only kind of God they will look for is a God who is Himself within the universe. That is, they have started with the assumption of the self-sufficiency of the universe.

* * *

We need only to look at the gods that these scientists have discovered to be convinced that once a man starts out to discover God, in the way that they have started out, he is sure to find a finite God, a God which is within this universe. "There may be in the cosmos that which can actually be termed absolute, but all we know is relative".¹ Says Millikan, "The service of the Christian religion, my own faith in essential Christianity, would not be diminished one iota if it should in some way be discovered that no such individual as Jesus ever existed".² Eddington says that we can just as well ask the question about the existence of God, by asking

¹Kirtly Mather, in *op. cit.*, p. 4.

²*Op. cit.*, p. 23.

whether science justifies the "mystical outlook".³ Curtis speaks of a "super-cosmic entity".⁴ For Einstein God may be identified with certain ideals of goodness, beauty, and truth.⁵ Julian Huxley tells us of God that "as an independent or unitary being, active in the affairs of the universe, he does not exist".⁶ McDougall, speaking of theism, says that so far as he can see, the bearing of recent scientific opinion on theism would be permissive only.⁷ Sir J. Arthur Thomson says that evolutionary philosophy will allow for a God that may be spoken of as a "Creative Purpose" in the universe.⁸ Michael Pupin identifies God with a principle of "Creative Co-ordination" in the universe.⁹

All of these men simply take for granted that God cannot be anything but some sort of a principle within the universe. They never ask themselves the question whether the God of Christianity exists.

And if it be objected that men who are scientific experts cannot be expected to say much about religious matters, since that is out of their province, we answer that they seem quite ready to give an account of their beliefs about God when some modernist minister asks them. It seems that they are quite ready to speak of a finite God for fear that they might have to speak of an absolute God.

* * *

A still more striking example of so-called ministers of the gospel asking scientists whether they have found the pagan God is found in the case of C. L. Drawbridge, secretary of the Christian Evidence Society in England. He sent out a questionnaire¹⁰ to all the Fellows of the Royal Society (with the exception of the Royal Princes) in order to discover their religious beliefs. The following are the questions asked of the scientists to whom he wrote:

1. Do you credit the existence of a spiritual domain?
2. Do you consider that man is in some way responsible for his acts?
3. Is it your opinion that belief in evolution is compatible with belief in a Creator?
4. Do you think that Science negatives the idea of a personal God as taught by Jesus Christ?
5. Do you believe that the personalities of men and women exist after the death of their bodies?
6. Do you think that the recent remarkable discoveries in scientific thought are favorable to religious belief?

It will be noted that in not one of these questions has Drawbridge dared to face these men with the Christian idea of God. Why did he not ask these scientists: "Do you believe in an absolutely self-sufficient God Who has created this universe, Who sustains it since creation, and Who

³*Op. cit.*, p. 43.

⁴*Op. cit.*, p. 55.

⁵*Op. cit.*, p. 94.

⁶*Op. cit.*, p. 105.

⁷*Op. cit.*, p. 148.

⁸*Op. cit.*, p. 179.

⁹*Op. cit.*, p. 201.

¹⁰*The Religion of Scientists.*

will condemn you to everlasting perdition unless the guilt of your sins has been atoned for by the substitutionary death of Christ on Calvary?" Naturally he would not insult their intelligence by asking what would appear to them as foolish questions. Drawbridge himself dismisses the whole controversy about Darwin and the Bible as a farce, by saying that it was ended except, perhaps, in Tennessee.¹¹

It should be noted too, that no matter in which way these scientists would answer such questions, positively or negatively, they would be perfectly safe from considering the Christian idea of God. Anyone can believe in a spiritual domain, in human responsibility, in life after death, and not have a speck of Christianity in his thought.

* * *

And what is true of scientists as a whole is true of modern philosophers as a whole. They too, have taken for granted that God is within the universe or identical with it. I shall not weary you with many of their definitions of God. I mention only a few by way of example. According to S. Alexander, "deity is always the next higher empirical quality to the one presently evolved".¹² Whitehead speaks of God as a "principle of concretion" in the universe. With such a God religion is not quite the same thing you used to think it was. "Religion is a projection in the roaring loom of time of a concentration or unified complex of psychical values".¹³

And if it be said that I am quoting from the most extreme pragmatists, I would only add that every idealist includes the universe in his definition of God. He may speak of God as the Beyond for a while, but it will not be long before he speaks of God as the Whole.

* * *

But now it will be objected still further that what these scientists and philosophers believe is the product of their maturest thought, and that it is not fair to say that they have never squarely faced the problem of the God of Christianity. And if it be true that these scientists are so far wrong, in their procedure, as not to have faced the most important question that any human being should face, what accounts for their magnificent structures of thought and accomplishment?

Let us begin with the last point. That the scientists and the philosophers of the ages and especially of modern times have reared magnificent structures of thought and of physical accomplishment, no one is interested in denying. But we can give God thanks for the accomplishments of the scientists, and at the same time maintain that they have accomplished what they have, not because of, but in spite of, their disbelief in God. In the story of the prodigal son, not only the prodigal son but the others too, were living on the substance of the father, though they knew and recognized it not. So too, it is because of God's common grace, that scientists

¹¹*Vid.*, Drawbridge in *op. cit.*, p. 14.

¹²*Space, Time and Deity*, Vol. II, p. 347.

¹³Joseph A. Leighton, *Man and Cosmos*, p. 545.

are able to do great things, even though they do not hold God in remembrance. A boy at college sometimes gets his monthly check from his father continually year after year, and spends his substance in riotous living. This son may almost, if not altogether, forget about his father, and take for granted that the checks will keep coming as a matter of course. Now if this is possible, why should it be deemed impossible that men, who have not been in contact with God for hundreds of generations, should assume themselves and this universe to be ultimate? If God comes in at all, it is as an after-thought, and then it is no longer God Who comes in.

And this is exactly what we mean by saying that scientists and philosophers have not faced the idea of God, namely that they have assumed themselves and the universe to be ultimate. They have taken for granted that the term *existence* may intelligibly be applied to them whether or not God exists. That means that the existence of the universe does not depend upon the creative act of God, and His present sustaining power. If the existence of any and every fact in this universe does depend upon God's creation and God's providence, as Christianity teaches that it does, one could not intelligently ask any question about any fact in this universe, unless one placed such a fact in relation to God. The most important question one could ask about any fact, then, would be the question of its relation to God. More than that, a fact would be a fact only because of its relation to God.

It is this question, then, that is in dispute between the Christian and the non-Christian, whether a fact can be a fact without God. Now if the scientists and philosophers had in any way attempted to prove to us that a fact can be a fact even though God does not exist, we should have no complaint to make. What we do complain of, however, is that they have taken for granted, before having begun their investigations, that facts can be facts without God. There is one refrain that runs through modern philosophy again and again, which is that we must take existence for granted. By that is meant that we must start with the facts and take their existence for granted. Now that is an innocent and obviously necessary thing to do, if nothing more is implied than that we must look at the facts that are here. But something more is very definitely implied, and that something more is that we must take the *ultimacy* of the facts for granted. What is meant is that we need not and cannot, if we wish to be scientific, ask the question about the origin of the universe.

Christianity, on the other hand, holds that it is quite reasonable to ask the question about the origin, not only of individual facts, but of the universe as a whole. We are not now concerned so much to debate which of these two positions is right, as to point out that the non-Christian position is, generally speaking, taken for granted and not proved, by modern scientists and philosophers. They have answered the problem without facing it.

* * *

Allow me to prove, by example, that the leading scientists simply dismiss the Christian idea of God without seriously looking at it.

This is often done when men arbitrarily give a definition of religion which leaves God out of the picture. So, for instance, Edwin G. Conklin, in true childlike faith, takes his *Century Dictionary* off the shelf to discover what religion is. "Religion", according to the *Century Dictionary*, "is faith in, and allegiance to, a superhuman power or powers."¹⁴ With this definition in hand, Conklin kindly makes room for Christianity among other religions, since Christianity, too, believes in a certain superhuman power. But with this definition in hand, Conklin has also succeeded in doing away with Christianity without so much as looking at it.

Again scientists quite commonly dismiss the Christian concept of God by saying that no intelligent man can seriously consider such an idea. To quote Conklin again, "No longer is it possible to think that man was created perfect in body, mind, and morals, or that in physical form he is the image of God. No longer is it possible to think of God as 'the Good Man' or of the devil as the 'Bad Man'. No longer is it possible to regard miracles—in the sense of suspension or violation of natural law—as of daily occurrence, nor magic, as the universal means of controlling nature or supernatural powers. To persons of mature minds, this faith of childhood is gone forever."¹⁵ Now aside from the simple misinterpretation of the traditional Christian position involved in the quotation, we may note that the Christian idea of God is not ruled out of court because of facts which have made such an idea untenable, but simply because none but the people of Tennessee believes in it.

And it seems that some scientists have for a long time been in this new frame of mind. One scientist replied to the questionnaire sent to him by Drawbridge, that he had not thought of such questions for sixty years.¹⁶ One wonders, then, for how long a time such a man has not thought about the *Christian* conception of God.

* * *

Of course, scientists have their reasons for not looking at the Christian conception of God. They tell us that they have tried to face the Christian idea of God at some time or other, in their lives, but that they could not stand it for more than a fraction of a second. They feared lest they should be turned into pillars of salt. They feared lest all their intellectual operations would have to come to a standstill. By one glance in the direction of the Christian idea of God they see a dualism and annihilation of reason. Accordingly, sometimes, they dismiss the whole concept with a flourish of the hand.

At other times, however, they tell us that the idea of God lies in a realm about which the mind of man can say nothing scientifically. They wish to be humbly agnostic about the matter. So Conklin tells us, for instance, that nobody knows what lies back of evolution.¹⁷ What does this mean? It might mean just what it says. It might mean that both

¹⁴Quoted in *Has Science Discovered God?*, p. 77.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 80.

¹⁶*Op. cit.*, p. 20.

¹⁷*Op. cit.*, p. 86.

the scientists and the men of religion should respect one another's beliefs about God, because both know that they are really no more than uncertain speculations. It seems to be in some such sense that Heber D. Curtis is willing to play the game. He says: "As we look back over the discarded scientific theories of the past, once regarded as inspired, and now of only historical interest, we are more and more forced to the conclusion that in the final analysis any scientific theory is simply a matter of belief".¹⁸ Now if it should be taken in this sense, it would seem strange that Conklin should designate a guess on the part of a Christian as a childish thing, and the guess of a scientist as a badge of a mature mind.

But it is plain that Conklin does not wish to put the matter on the basis that one man's guess is as good as another's. The seemingly humble agnosticism that he expresses by saying that no one knows what lies back of evolution, or by saying that "science cannot deal with this mystery; it is a matter of faith alone"¹⁹ he discards, as we have seen, when he says that it is simply no longer possible to believe that man was created perfect. At one time Conklin tells us that nobody knows what lies back of evolution, and at another he tells us, as simply as though he could prove it to you in his laboratory, what *could not* have been back of evolution. If a Christian should affirm his belief that God is back of the universe, Conklin would stigmatize such a statement as dogmatism. If he himself, after first admitting that no one knows what is back of evolution, proceeds to tell us that God is not back of it, this must be taken for true on his authority.

Still further, we would note not only that Conklin tells us what is not back of evolution, but that he also tells us what *is* back of evolution, of which according to his own statement no one knows anything. Speaking of what lies back of the universe he says, "Undoubtedly chance has played a large part in the evolution of the worlds and of organisms, but I cannot believe that it has played the only part".²⁰

It is thus that in the compass of thirteen pages Conklin has, in addition to telling us many other things, told us (a) that nobody knows what is back of the universe, (b) that we may be sure that God is not back of the universe, and (c) that we may also be sure upon the authority, if not upon the argument, of scientists, that Chance is back of the universe.

Now in all this Conklin does not stand alone. He has, to be sure, succeeded in getting more contradiction in a short compass than any other man writing in the book referred to, but after all, his case is only typical. The humblest avowals of complete agnosticism stand side by side with the most sweeping denials of the existence of God. Our age has brought forth not only a paradox theology, but a paradox science as well.

Now when, in view of such a procedure, you beg the modern scientist, and also the modern philosopher, to abandon his unscientific method and to look at the concept of God seriously, he will turn to you and say:

¹⁸Cotton in *op. cit.*, p. 59.

¹⁹*Op. cit.*, p. 86.

²⁰*Op. cit.*, p. 88.

"What do you mean by God? Put your idea of God in language that I can understand or you are asking me to outrage my reason."

Thus they would have us define God, Whom we present as the pre-supposition of the meaning of all human language, in language that presupposes the non-existence of God. If we could tell exactly what we mean by God, in terms which leave God out of the definition, we would be having such a God as the non-Christian takes for granted in his thinking. Even in the questions they ask about the Christian idea of God, the scientists and philosophers usually assume the ultimacy of themselves and the universe. They take for granted that any God, Who is to exist, must be definable in terms of this universe.

* * *

The pity of the whole matter, however, lies not so much in the procedure of scientists themselves, as in the imitation that they find on the part of those who profess to spread Christianity. Buchmanism travels far and wide. Many a student is told by men, high up in the Church, that it is a return to the spirit of first-century Christianity. Yet not only Christ, but God, occupies a subordinate place in the scheme of Buchmanism. A story told in the book *For Sinners Only* illustrates this point. Frank Buchman was about to change Bill Pickle, a famous bootlegger who was selling liquor to the students of Penn State. Now "Frank" soon made friends with a brilliant graduate student, who was a Confucianist. With this Confucianist friend he made an agreement, that if this Confucianist friend should fail to change a chicken-thief friend of Frank by his Confucianism, that then they would together try to change Bill Pickle, by applying Christianity to him. It did not take long before the Confucianist friend confessed his failure to change "Frank's" chicken-thief friend. This was fortunate indeed for "Frank". Accordingly they were ready to try Christianity on Bill Pickle. How did they go about it? "Frank" asks his Confucianist friend to pray that Bill Pickle may become a Christian. The latter seems to experience no difficulty in praying that men may become Christians. His prayer was, "O God, if there be a God, change Bill Pickle, Mrs. Pickle, and all the little Pickles." According to this, then, it makes no difference whether one prays to God or to a blank. The work that needs to be done can be done by a blank as well as by God. The question whether God really exists, was left out of consideration, and yet Bill Pickle was changed.

And this is only typical of the general attitude displayed by Buchmanism. The factuality of the truth of Christianity is regarded as only a matter of secondary importance, at best. For all one knows, Bill Pickle was changed into a Pharisee, against whom "Frank" so abundantly directs his wrath.

Is it any wonder that the average college student is at a loss when the great scientists of the day, as well as the religious leaders in the churches, combine in one great effort to erase the ideas of God and Christ from the thoughts and lives of men?

Again we remind you that our main concern is not to argue now the

question in dispute between those who believe in God, and those who take His non-existence for granted. Yet we may call attention to this, that those who take God's non-existence for granted, should at least be able to show that, by looking away from God, as they insist on doing, they do not see the dualisms and annihilation of reason that they think they see when they claim to be looking at God. It ought to be plain enough that if one refuses to look at God one has to look at an ultimate blank. Human reason is plainly derivative. If it is not derivative, in the sense of created by God, it is derivative from the void. If God is not back of our rationality, the void is. If we find that we would be handicapped if our reason should have to operate in the atmosphere of God's revelation, our remaining choice is to make our reasons operate in a vacuum. The choice is between God and chaos. If the mystery that surrounds us is not solved by God it is not solved at all.

"But", it will be asked, "do you mean to say, then, that only the orthodox Christian has seriously faced the question of the existence of God?" We answer that such is exactly our contention. We hasten to add, however, that the orthodox Christian has not faced this most profound problem of human thought, because of the fact that he is a better thinker in himself than others are. The orthodox Christian *has* faced the question because the Spirit of God has made him face it. The Spirit of God has round-about-faced him. No man can truly face God, unless he is made to face his God, by God. Where, then, is glorying? It is excluded. If men must call this vanity, we cannot help it. Before God, we know it is not vanity but true humility.

But where, then, is reasoning with men? Is it too excluded? Not in the least. We reason with men as we preach to men. We point out to them that unless they have faced God they have not interpreted one fact aright. We point out to men that unless they have faced God they have not faced the most fundamental questions that must be asked about all facts. We say to them that unless they interpret the facts in accordance with the interpretation of God, they are lost, just as they are lost for eternity unless the blood of Christ has cleansed them, and the Holy Spirit has regenerated them. And if we reason with men thus, we know that the Holy Spirit will honor our labor, and make men face the question of the existence of God.

Such, then, we believe to be the situation before the college student today. There are many institutions that claim to be open-minded. Of these, the students may be very sure that they are closed-minded on the question of the existence of God. Some of such institutions are public institutions. Others are pledged to uphold the confessions of the churches under whose auspices they function. This makes the confusion all the worse. How will the young man find his way? By watching thereunto in prayer? Yes, that first and above all. But by praying that he may be wide awake. By praying that he may be wide awake in his choice of an institution. By praying that he may be wide awake, if his choice should of necessity lead him in the midst of those who take the non-existence of

God for granted, however brilliant and accomplished they may be in the detailed knowledge of their fields. By praying that he may himself face the question of the existence of God, and that he may learn to recognize those who do and those who do not, even though they say and think they do. There are many gods and many Christs of which men speak, and to which they give allegiance. Yet there is only one God, and therefore only one Christ, Whom many reject, but Who is, nevertheless, indispensable for philosophy, for science, for all human interpretation, for life, and for death.

AN ANNOUNCEMENT AND AN APPEAL!

We regret that this Convention Number of the STUDENT has been delayed and that it has been combined with our Fall issue, necessitating a very scant number of the Annual Convention addresses. In a future number we may be able to print other messages delivered at that gathering.

In the interests of economy, we have taken this step; but still the magazine and work of the League itself need the support of Christian stewards. Most of our student members are helping magnanimously; but we cannot depend on them entirely—we must have the help of others.

The Apostle writes of having fellowship with him "in the matter of giving and receiving." The League values such fellowship in this grace of stewardship. To all who appreciate our position and can help us in any way, we commend the use of the business reply envelopes enclosed in this issue.

THE LEAGUE OF EVANGELICAL STUDENTS,
Box 455, Columbia, S. C.

NEW ADDRESS!

The General Secretary has again been forced to change his residence, thus necessitating the use of a new address. For the coming year he will be serving Columbia Bible College of Columbia, South Carolina, as well as carrying on his duties as General Secretary.

While the old Wheaton address is still carried, and mail directed there will reach the League, it is suggested that all Chapter correspondence, all enquiries concerning the work, and contributions be sent to the General Secretary, at

BOX 455, COLUMBIA, S. C.

Buchmanism: An Appraisal

WILLIAM J. JONES

IT is imperative at the very outset of an article like this that one set forth the occasion of its writing. That, the writer does gladly. Hitherto, several friends had urged him to write a critical appraisal of the First Century Christian Fellowship (as in those halcyon days it was so chivalrously called), but he was not inclined to do so for various reasons, the chief being the lack of a definite occasion. Now such an occasion has arisen—one of sufficient moment and of widespread consequence.

At the last Annual Convention of the League of Evangelical Students, a resolution pertaining to "Buchmanism" was presented by a student and was passed by the Conference. In that document the general attitude of the League is expressed as being opposed to the variously-designated movement, latterly called the Oxford Group, but more popularly known as Buchmanism. In order to point out the logical and practical objections to this movement which despite protests to the contrary is in reality a movement, the author of this article has endeavored to interpret that action. He does so in the light of the League of Evangelical Students' particular nature and character both as an evangelical organization and as a student movement. He accepts full responsibility for the utterances and references herein set forth.

Literary observations in this analysis are based on a number of pamphlets issued by various Group leaders, and also on a study of A. J. Russell's recent book, *For Sinners Only*,¹ recognized by the Group as an accurate picture of the movement. Because Russell endeavors to give a lengthy and orderly exposition of the Movement to which he adheres, this article makes frequent use of his work. Added to these is the writer's personal contact with the teachings of the Group, both in its early days at Princeton University when he was in distinct sympathy with the Group primarily because of its attempts to give some sort of religious testimony; in later days in the hereinafter-mentioned evangelical institution; as well as in his visitation of colleges and universities in connection with the League of Evangelical Students. It will not be the purpose to level an attack on the personal power and influence of the founder of this movement, or the pernicious effects of the ethics or spirituality of its members in their relations to questionable amusements, or the class consciousness of the Group (an attack which seems to be the sole burden of the objections of religious Liberals).²

The genius of the man Buchman, the principle of Buchmanism is not confined to the Groups. This statement is but one of several considerations preparatory to such a discussion as this. There are generically kindred movements of the last decade which have no organic relation, no tangible

¹Harper & Brothers, New York, 1932.

²*Vid.*, Paul Hutchinson in *Forum*, for February, 1933.

relation to the Movement except perhaps the chance meeting of a leader with the founder of the Groups, the Rev. Frank N. D. Buchman. It should be observed that Buchmanism has masqueraded in many vigorous forms, in least suspected circles. For example, one such form or group which has done a great deal of evangelistic work has a representative who labored for several years (as far back as 1928) in a well-known evangelical institution. Throughout all his sojourn he enunciated continually the familiar tenets and catch-words of the Groups: Confession, Surrender, Guidance, and Sharing. After due controversy, the administration of this institution has repudiated the nefarious workings of that religious method.

A second preliminary consideration is that in treating such a subject, it is not necessary that one's experience or contact with the movement be universal. Besides being physically impossible, such a stipulation would be manifestly undesirable. But the problem is especially difficult in connection with this particular movement, because with the greatest reluctance does it or its leadership issue any manifestoes. The Movement is particularly anti-doctrinal, anti-intellectual. It is peculiarly gifted with the modern genius of evasiveness, of indefiniteness, of indistinctness of belief. And, chameleon-like, it has the ability to present now one phase, now another with such adroitness as to deceive the very elect, so to speak. One of the Toronto (Canada) newspapers³ quoted Dr. Buchman as saying:

Let me say you will never get the message at one meeting. You will never know what the group is doing till you are changing other people, until you can evaluate what we are trying to do. If you come to me with criticism, I ask you only who did you change last? That is my answer. It is amazing how criticisms stop them. [*sic.*]

We need only to remark on this reported statement, incident to the Toronto meetings, that when unbelievers have been truly converted or changed at single gospel meetings, they did not change themselves—Christ by His Spirit did it; that the Apostle Paul, for example, did not refuse to answer questions concerning his beliefs. Neither did the Lord Jesus for that matter, as a glance at Matthew 22 or John 4 will show. What possesses Russell⁴ in his book to write concerning Buchman?—

While he is sensitive to unfair criticism of his work, and has the settled conviction that the Holy Spirit is with him, he dislikes arguing about the rightness of his methods of teaching. He prefers to change his critics, thereby giving them a personal demonstration of the practicality of his work.

Professor Albert C. Wyckoff begins his review of Russell's book⁵ by saying,

This book claims⁶ the unique distinction of being directly inspired by the guidance of the Holy Spirit, even down to the exact words of its title.

And quoting Russell further, this reviewer says,

Our author very correctly insists that "no one will ever understand this movement who does not accept as a working hypothesis"⁷ the group's

³*Mail and Empire* of December 9, 1932.

⁴*For Sinners Only*, p. 132.

⁵In *Saturday Review of Literature*, February 25, 1933.

⁶*Ibid.*, *op. cit.*, p. 194.

⁷*Op. cit.*, p. 135.

belief in the Holy Spirit's special guidance of Dr. Buchman. . . . This idealizing of Dr. Buchman as *The Holy Spirit-Guided* man elevates him to the level of a spiritual superman.

These quotations and the remark attributed to Buchman in the press despatch show Dr. Buchman to be a dealer in subterfuge. It is a smoke-screen that he raises. It is adroitly psychoanalytical—it draws attention away from him to the alleged offender. And how dearly do moderns like to be introspective! Christ did not change men in spite of their objections; He answered their objections, and through His answering changed them! The woman of Samaria had her questions answered first; then came the change. But it is ever thus with the Groups—get a man to look within; take the dangerously personal question of one's belief concerning God away; get a man to confess and you have him!

This Group faculty for evasion must be recalled again and again when considering the nature of the Movement.

But a third consideration must be borne in mind. The test of a movement or a philosophy, particularly one which claims to be Christian, is ultimately not how much good it does, nor how popular it is, but how true it is. There must be a qualitative, not a quantitative test, not a pragmatic, but a practical test, for there are scores of non-Christian bodies which perform notable feats of a good (using the term relatively, of course) character. We respectfully point out that the first century Christians were not welcomed with great acclaim in the Court of the Cæsars—they were neither popular nor immediately successful in the vulgar sense of being practical. The test must be, and ever is for the Christian student, How does a movement square with revealed truth? How right, how true is it?

The last preliminary consideration is that the oft-times dignified and academic titles of the Movement are question begging. The reader must remember that the Groups are no more Oxonian than Princetonian, no more Princetonian than Siwashian. The Movement is distinctly American with a cosmopolitan outreach and adaptation. Because some Britishers have lost their heads, and may lose their souls over Buchman, is no more reason for the acceptance of Buchmanism than is the acceptance of Theodore Dreiser as the typical American writer by certain literary critics of England, a guarantee that Dreiser is the only American man of letters, or the best literary representative of this country. And this Movement is truly a movement—it has "leaders", leaders of a special kind, particularly chosen, and privately-tutored and trained. And it has a technique that must be carefully followed in order to achieve results. There are some sort of Headquarters with a regular battery of pamphleteers and an output of brochures which would put the modest leaflets of the League to shame!

Before passing on to the discussion proper, we pause to remark that Dr. Buchman has no historical antecedents, no spiritual ancestry to which his movement can be referred. Students of church history may well compare his life and teaching with that of Montanus to whom there is no closer parallel, in our estimation.

Now then, with the above qualifications in mind we observe in the

first place that the Movement is on the simplest test of common-sense, or—to use the language of the theological schools—on the simplest test of common grace, not to be trusted. The most ridiculous and naïve procedures take place at “Quiet Time” in Group meetings. Methods of receiving guidance may vary, but the invariable results of guidance are of such a petty nature as to provoke mirth were not the exhibition oftentimes so serious in consequence. The Groups are in a fair way to reduce God to the proportions of an “universal bell hop”. We are aware that the reports of such gatherings and the reporters may be biased, and that *ad hominem* judgments might easily be made. But this is what a metropolitan leader of the Movement says concerning the methodology of their meetings:

And in the evening there was a united meeting for the sharing of experience. There testimonies would be given, decisions registered, experiences shared. It is hard to describe the atmosphere of entire ease and lightness and freedom from ordinary evangelistic high-pressure; the laughter and naturalness, combined all the while with intense earnestness. We often say that the recipe for a good meeting of this kind is “brevity, sincerity and hilarity.”⁸

Need we point out to Christian students that this is more than a new Christian methodology? Is this the “joy of the Holy Ghost” of the early Christians? The recent Toronto appearances were described thus by a reporter:⁹

There was much laughter, much friendly badinage between members of the team, much frankness in the way they talked to the audience.

Dr. Buchman’s method is the same. Russell prevailed upon him to tell the story of one Bill Pickle. This is the result:

A rollicking story, it captivates all sorts—Pagans as well as Christians. Frank started and established the Group in Oxford by telling a series of stories such as this and inspiring others to do the same. Frank is a born raconteur.¹⁰

Admitting the necessity for a point of contact in dealing with people, may we place this quotation from the New Testament, next that from Russell:

And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.

We simply point out that the Movement introduces no sensible approach when it reduces a religious service to a circus-like confessional. Again, without appeal to revelation, to Scripture, a candid observer of the Movement would have to admit that the jocularity, the air and demeanor of almost flippant and worldly buoyancy which characterize the public appearances of the Groups would immediately cause suspicion of the

⁸The Rev. Samuel M. Shoemaker, Jr., in the *Presbyterian*, December 25, 1930.

⁹In *Mail and Empire* of December 9, 1932.

¹⁰*Op. cit.*, p. 158.

depth and the spirituality of the Movement. No serious-minded modern student relishes such lightness.

No sack-cloth and ashes here, no pious psalm-singing writes Russell¹¹ of the South African work of the Groups.

If A. J. Russell could write a sentence like that, it indicates that he is still not ready to write about a truly spiritual movement. In his book he writes that Frank Buchman would not let him publish anything about the Oxford Group until he himself "was spiritually ready for the task." Our judgment is, that he is still not ready! The point, however, is this: apart from any implicit or explicit Scriptural revelation one would question the right of this Movement to the name of that institution which we know historically as Christianity.

But on the basis of the Word of God, what specific objections can be found in the Groups? For Christian students as well as for Christians in general, the following objections are valid, we believe. Especially valid are they for members of the League of Evangelical Students who have aligned themselves against the opponents of evangelical Christianity. The very Constitution of the League implies the truths which are either denied or glossed over by the Groups.

As far as one can determine, the bulk of the teaching of this Movement is in error in three fundamental Christian concepts—the concept and teaching of the Bible concerning God, Man, and Sin (including, of course, the cure for sin—Redemption).

Primary Concepts

Concerning God. In *For Sinners Only*, Russell tells the story of Bill Pickle. The fallacy of Buchman's view of God has been pointed out in another connection, but not so detailedly, by another writer¹² in this issue. Here is the record of the efforts of Frank Buchman and a Confucianist friend in praying for the conversion of Mr. Pickle:

The student (that is, the Confucianist) prayed: "Oh God, if there be a God, help us to change Bill Pickle, Mrs. Pickle, and all the little Pickles." An unorthodox prayer. But this unorthodox prayer soon brought an answer.¹³

How a Confucianist can pray to an agnostic or non-existent God, for him and Dr. Buchman to change an unbeliever is beyond us! But how an intelligent writer can pen such balderdash as that written by Russell as his comment on the incident is inexplicable! God the Father, the hearer of the prayers of His children, is far distant from such writing. The view of God as a righteous and just Being who must first deal with the guilt of sin, and then with sins, is missing here. The holiness of God one seeks for in vain in the pages of the writings of the Movement.

Moreover, the view of God which Russell holds, is clearly shown by his quotation, with approval, from an Unknown Writer who contributed to a series of articles for Russell's journal:

¹¹*Op. cit.*, p. 279.

¹²C. Van Til; see also in *The Banner*, February 10, 1933.

¹³*Op. cit.*, p. 161.

Religion is betting your life there is a God. I decided to bet my life there was a God, and more and more as the years go by I find that in so far as I yield up my will to God and open my heart to His indwelling, in so far as I try to live out my life in the Christ-spirit, the experiment works!¹⁴

But Russell represents the Movement as having this view of God:

I was shortly to find the gambling instinct strongly in evidence among the group of people I am about to describe. They are gamblers all; gambling recklessly with their own lives—gambling on God.¹⁵

Manifestly that is a derogatory view of God. It is shocking, to put it mildly. It is the favorite agnostic position of many religious leaders today. But it is not Biblical; it is not Christian. True faith in God is not a gamble. "But without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Those are foundation truths for the believing student on which he may base his triumphant "I know whom I have believed"! All the laborings of Russell, all his listings of apparently Scriptural principles¹⁶ do not comport with what is written elsewhere, and cannot be accepted literally, in the face of the notion of God he reflects.

In *Harpers*¹⁷ there is as good a critique of the theology of the Movement as one could find. And while he is by no means anxious to be known as an evangelical, this writer thinks clearly and trenchantly. Reading him will stimulate any student.

Certainly the associates of Frank Buchman have no antiquarian interest in the story of primitive Christianity, and even more certainly they utterly fail to reproduce it. St. Peter would feel much more out of place at a "house party" than he would at High Mass. The Fellowship has, as far as I can make out, little reason to claim that it reproduces original Christianity and it has still less claim to novelty. Buchmanism is a rehash of religious methods and ideals which have only recently grown cold in the ice-box of Liberal Protestantism. . . . Buchmanism, in fact, makes a frontal assault upon the Protestant conscience, but when the attack is successful with an intelligent young man it usually has to be followed up by an advance all along the line. *The theology of "the Groups" is so meager in content, so uncritically held, that the abler young men attracted by its appeal to conscience are apt to strike out in a new direction altogether.* [Italics ours.] Like so many reformations, Buchmanism actually leads to a religious revolution among abler minds and freer spirits.

As concerning God the Son, the teaching of the Movement is defective. Christ as Redeemer and Saviour is little known to the Groups. Russell's book, for instance, has none of the warmth of attachment to the Saviour that the world's best devotional books have. For all their "sharing" the Groups are deficient in praise to the Lamb that was slain. Search *For Sinners Only* and one finds no mention of the blood of the Saviour, which is the only cure for sin. The gospel's sweet invitation to sinners is absent. Instead of reconciliation to God through the work of Christ we have the

¹⁴*Op. cit.*, p. 4.

¹⁵*Op. cit.*, p. 4, f.

¹⁶*Id.*, *op. cit.*, p. 75, f.

¹⁷T. S. Harris in *Religion for a Scanty Band*, August, 1933 issue.

Group in accordance with their antipathy for "conventional terminology" encouraging us to listen

"to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and you will hear Him saying, 'Be ye reconciled one towards another.'"¹⁸

Mr. Buchman can give no other cure for evil thinking than to show that when the imagination and will are in conflict the imagination wins; that the imagination must be centered on God, goodness, and on helping other people, so that all the evil steam can be condensed into a happy, useful and satisfied life.

This leads the person being dealt with to declare,

"I find myself able to make a long nose at the devil. It was not a trick I learned, but the simple truth that Christ, working through the absolutely surrendered soul, enables him to overcome his own weaknesses by helping others who are also struggling with temptations."¹⁹

Here is no "bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ", no looking away to Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit. Here is a paradoxical, self-help recipe which the innocuous Boy Scout Creed with its "good turn daily" philosophy easily surpasses!

The religious practitioner whose work at an evangelical institution has been mentioned before, declared concerning the Lord Jesus:

Jesus will produce natural, wholesome emotion, if you do His will. You don't need to worry about your creed, if you believe in Jesus Christ as God's Son. Jesus Christ will tell you what to believe if you are studying God's Word . . . But there isn't any way by which Jesus Christ can use lukewarm Christians . . . There are a few around us who are cold and in the prison house of sin, and they're living in Hell. . . .

How do I know they're living in Hell? You can tell by looking at their faces . . . A young man came to me today (this afternoon) and said, "I don't have anything for folks; I want something." Have *you* got anything for anybody? I don't mean a creed; I don't mean a plan of salvation; I mean Jesus. . . .

Could anything be more damaging than such a view of Christ, than such an understanding of the gospel story? But such is the low view of Christ the Son and His redeeming work, as held by the Groups.

And how is it as concerning God the Holy Spirit? One finds that without reading into the name the true Biblical content, the Holy Spirit might just as well be some impersonal influence guiding men. Russell himself when prodded and urged by Buchman to do some testifying to a friend said that he tried to be helpful, but

was not sanguine of the results. I felt no sense of the Holy Spirit impelling me to talk, no freedom from natural inhibitions . . . I tried to quote a text or two from the New Testament which had changed my opinion, but at that awkward moment could not remember one correctly.²⁰

The most mature of Christians can easily sympathize with the latter sentiment, but certainly none of us wishes to testify at all times, everywhere, unless the Holy Spirit really lead us. Such a view of the Spirit

¹⁸Quoted by Russell in *op. cit.*, p. 111.

¹⁹*Op. cit.*, p. 196.

²⁰*Op. cit.*, p. 113.

and His work leads to a false view of guidance and of surrender, as will be shown later.

The implications of the Group view of Christian unity are far reaching. They reveal something other than an unity of the Holy Spirit, an unity of truth. Speaking of the Movement, Russell says:

Through a unity in common action, many of divers religious beliefs, and more of none, have reached an altitude of Christian experience which may hold the one possible solution for modern world problems.²¹

A new shaft of light was thrown on Africa's problem of Church unity when, at a house-party, people of all denominations and all shades of belief lived together for ten days in such perfect unity that a sister of an Anglo-Catholic Community, who attended throughout, wrote of it: "We lived on so high an altitude of Christian experience that we completely lost all sense of our differences."²²

How unfortunate that the Spirit should have inspired the writer of Acts to say of the genuine first century Christians: "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." What a disconcerting blow to Church union which is not based on any belief, let alone common Christian belief! Why does the Movement while holding such pagan mystic views resent being called unorthodox? Why do its friends work mightily to secure for it the name orthodox?

Concerning Man. Here the teaching of the Groups deals with man's emotions largely—that large area of his life which is sensuous, and in most cases in the Movement sensual. Despite avowed denials, the psychology of this Group is decidedly Freudian. The illustrations in the addresses of the evangelist already mentioned, were almost wholly sexual—to use a plain word. In conversation with him he displayed a letter from some clergyman in which the rankest and most disgusting confessions were narrated. The implications were, of course, that we should "confess our faults one to another", in the language of a verse which has been so perverted and interpreted by the Group so as to include "sins" that one hesitates to use it without sufficient exegesis or exposition. And this emphasis on sex was manifest in the earliest literature of the Movement. A more recent emphasis is found in *An Apostle to Youth*,²³ reprinted by "The Groups" a First Century Christian Fellowship, and in Russell's book, a typical statement in which is,

. . . was straightened out by the Group message.²⁴

Nowhere the cleansing power of the blood of Christ. Nowhere the apostolic cure for that specific sin of impurity "deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus"! Nowhere the evoking of the apostolic command, "But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints." To the mind of the present writer the tremendous drive of these Scriptural statements must be leveled

²¹*Op. cit.*, p. 117.

²²*Op. cit.*, p. 282.

²³P. 9.

²⁴*Op. cit.*, p. 37.

with full force at the morbid philosophy of the Groups. In our estimation, it is at this point that many criticisms of the Groups have failed.

The Movement disregards the fact that man is a sinner in his mind and in his thinking, as well as in his body, and in his acting. The consequence is that there is very little ado about the beliefs of the Group members.

Intellectual difficulties became irrelevant under a growing conviction of the sins of my own life—dishonesty, intellectual snobbery, pride, a biting tongue, and an uncontrollable temper.²⁵

What a low view of sin is this which excludes doubt concerning the Lord Jesus or the Word of God, which excludes from its scalpel the sin of being sinful! Anyone who can display "power", power to "change lives" is welcome no matter what the means of the transformation or the message or belief at the basis of the change might be.

Concerning Sin. In vain does one search in Russell's chapter, "What Sin Is" for the offended majesty and law of God. Sin is there defined as

anything in my life which keeps me from God and from other people.²⁶

"Against thee, thee only, have I sinned" is lost from sight altogether. And with such a low view of sin, there follows the correspondingly low view of redemption, as we shall see. It follows from their emotional view of man's nature, that their view of the character of sin will be emotional. The Groups hold that what a man needs to do to be saved is to get rid of pettiness, of jealousies, of unkindness, of selfishness. "The greatest sin in the world is lovelessness" cries the college evangelist in question. And in his closing exhortation which is wrung out of a heart which surely knew that it had failed to declare the whole counsel of God, he pleads with the students in the familiar Modernistic fashion, "Young people, dedicate your lives to a life of love."

The more sins one gets rid of, the purer he is. What doctrine is this? Can one rid himself of sins? And what boots it if he does? The Groups forget that before sins are dismissed, Sin must be dealt with, and that before a righteous God. The cardinal error in their view of salvation is that they neither teach nor believe that man is a sinner *by nature*. One looks uselessly for words to the effect that in Adam, man sinned. There is no need for the second Adam on their view. The piercing cry of a man convicted by the Holy Spirit is drowned in the description,

Sin was anything done contrary to the Will of God, as shown in the New Testament or by direct guidance.²⁷

Sin is viewed as that which can be probed by men, rather than that which must be revealed by the all-searching gaze of the Holy Spirit of God.

Further, man is capable of giving up himself to God. That is the meaning of their term "surrender". No true Calvinist or evangelical Arminian would deny that ultimately God gives grace to the sinner to

²⁵*Op. cit.*, p. 73.

²⁶*Op. cit.*, p. 269.

²⁷Russell, in *op. cit.*, p. 46.

surrender. But why listen to the preachments of the Group to surrender, when an unregenerate man cannot surrender? And why insist on surrender without explaining why one should surrender, to whom one should surrender, and how one can surrender? Buchmanism is plainly and simply a salvation by works, which is no salvation at all. It regards conversion as an old term.

Old-fashioned evangelicals called it conversion, but through misuse that word had for many minds lost its original potency, and so they preferred the simpler word "change".²⁸

The force of this low view of the inspiration of Scripture can be seen best by the further remarks of Russell.²⁹

While they paid tribute to much that was done by the old-time evangelists, they felt the new age required different words and perhaps less music to galvanize the religious interest. They believed that such phrases as "Are you saved?" were unintelligible to the average man. That the potency of such phrases vanished with a dead age.

What an insult to the revealing Spirit of God who inspired the Book! How is conversion effected? Listen to the unwholesome, unscriptural view they advance:

Changed men might go wrong in trying to change others by argument, but they were on safe ground in recounting their own experiences as the Apostles recounted theirs.³⁰

Yet here were . . . preaching friars . . . determined to follow Christ and proclaim Him wherever they went, as clergymen, ministers, or laymen, by the simple first-century method of narrating the story of their own changed lives, and reliance on the direction of the Holy Spirit. . . .³¹

The direct approach to Christ in experience is better than the human level of arguments.³²

The obvious answer to such shabby reasoning is that argument from the truth of the Scriptures, enabled Peter by the Holy Spirit to preach mightily at Pentecost. And as Dr. J. Gresham Machen once remarked about that model sermon, "There is nothing about Peter's experience, but a great deal about Christ." When Paul evangelized Asia Minor, he set forth the facts about Jesus Christ, His life and His death and about these matters he reasoned and persuaded.

Then why share? How can one share that which he does not have? And how can one share his own experience? My experience is mine. But by the truth, the very Lord who gave me my experience of salvation, can and will give to my fellow-student the same, that is the same kind of experience; but it is He who gives and not I! Yet Russell keeps mouthing these sentiments,

Sharing is again the explanation.³³
to share is better than to preach.³⁴

²⁸Russell in *op. cit.*, p. 20.

²⁹*Loc. cit.*

³⁰Russell in *op. cit.*, p. 22.

³¹*Op. cit.*, p. 74.

³²*Op. cit.*, p. 285.

³³*Op. cit.*, p. 210.

³⁴*Op. cit.*, p. 292.

And why confess? This phase of the Movement's technique is nothing but Romanism revived. We do not speak of the contents of these so-called confessions; we have already hinted at them. But the very principle is utterly opposed to all that is or ever was called evangelical. Followers of Buchman seldom display sorrow for sins, theirs is all attrition, no contrition, it would seem.

And why guidance? If man can get rid of jealousies, and call that victory, why the need of guidance? Guidance simply for the day? That is not enough. Why the planchette-like use of guidance for the day? A Christian student, a non-Christian student wants guidance for eternity, guidance by the Spirit of God. Morning watch? Why only that? The suggested thoughts for the morning watch, published by the school paper announcing the afore-mentioned evangelist's work, were no more Christian than the utterances of a heathen philosopher about a vague God. Frank Buchman has been known to lead meetings where confessions were made for deeds never committed! The practical results of guidance are not convincing; indeed they are deleterious. Before one can accept any story of the provisions of Group funds by "faith" one must discover the object of faith. Theodore Dreiser tells the story of a Yankee who lived by faith; Alcott had marvelous experiences of faith, but we are constrained to believe it was faith in his neighbor Emerson! It was not Christian faith. Picture Russell and Buchman, pad in hand seeking guidance, and then see Russell write down luminous thoughts, reading them aloud to Frank, who

confidently and surprisingly pronounced them to be God-given thoughts.³⁵

What more perfect picture of bondage to man can one find than that? At one meeting in a college town (where was situated the institution already referred to) the evangelist preyed upon a returned missionary who had vigorously opposed Modernism in China, until the man broke down and "confessed" that he had been uncharitable in his stand (which may have been so) and had done wrong (which was manifestly not so, if he had been led by the Spirit of God in the first instance to oppose error). Dr. Van Til is correct in his characterization of this "guidance" when he says³⁶ that the Groups have

substituted the modernist notion of the "Christian consciousness".

A supreme example of this is the striking statement by Russell,

Truth is presented more adequately through a team than through one individual.³⁷

Corollary Truths

The Word of God. With the Groups, the Word of God amounts to a fetish. The only reason why religious Liberals can consort with a movement which presumably attaches as much significance to the Bible as evangelicals do, is because the Groups are really non-doctrinal and

³⁵*Op. cit.*, p. 95.

³⁶In review quoted (*q. v.*).

³⁷*Op. cit.*, p. 31.

mystical. The Bible for the Groups, to all intents and purposes is only the New Testament.³⁸ In this, however, they are at one with many people who consciously or unconsciously reject the Old Testament.

The remarkable phenomenon about previous religious revivals of note was the return to simple, Biblical terminology. It was Scriptural language which the converts spoke, and they spoke and sang in the rich accents of Zion using the very terms of Scripture with all their richness of historical association and backgrounds, with all their weight of Divine inspiration. New methods may have entered into succeeding revival movements, but the great basic concepts of Scripture in the same language of Holy Writ were retained. Justification, faith, repentance, salvation, regeneration, atonement—Augustine, Luther, Calvin, Wesley, Whitefield, Moody—they all returned to the logical, theological language of Paul.

But what says Buchman?

Frank declines to accept the division of the world into two classes—saved and unsaved.³⁹

Everywhere it is the desire to speak in tones and in a nonchalant manner that the world understands.⁴⁰

How forgetful of the spiritual blindness of the world, of the natural man is such a roseate-hued philosophy! How inconsistent in the face of such dicta is the pious pronouncement that

The Group has no new method, no new theology; it comes with the old good news of Jesus mighty to save.⁴¹

When any modern spiritual awakening comes from the Throne, it will not ignore the rich heritage and history and meaning of the grand truths of the Word of God, it will not flaunt and lampoon them in the face of an unbelieving world. And it will not receive the prevailing philosophy of pragmatism as Russell does when he writes,

Their emphasis on knowing through doing intrigued me considerably.⁴²

No! The revival will come when the Truth is proclaimed and known, and that truth will make men free!

The Cross. The Movement mentions the Cross. But in what a denuding and eviscerating fashion! This is a point where the Movement is clearly non-Christian. A student brought under the sway of the Group in his university and seminary days at Princeton said in response to an enquiry concerning the lamentable absence of the Word of the Cross, of the Blood of Christ, "Why, when we approach someone about becoming a Christian, we simply assume all that." And another student replied to a similar question, not so long ago, "What they're trying to do is to make it plain so a modern man will understand."

A New York clergyman (quoted before) in whose church and mission this young man had been working once wrote concerning the Cross:

There has been much controversy about the cross; but this comes out

³⁸*Vid.*, Russell in *op. cit.*, p. 117.

³⁹Russell in *op. cit.*, p. 122.

⁴⁰*Op. cit.*, p. 265.

⁴¹*Op. cit.*, p. 256.

⁴²*Op. cit.*, p. 28.

of men's heads when they forget the experience of the cross, and wrangle as to its explanation. Nowhere is argument and debate so futile as here. More is likely to be given to one who simply stands in awe, before he begins to understand, than to any who comes saying he must first know all the theology of the matter.⁴³

The force of that last sentence does not mitigate the terrible untruth of the two former sentences. Back of every experience is the word, or knowledge of God. That is, there is a theology. And the Cross is not a meaningless symbol. It has meaning to a lonely, sinning student only because it has but one meaning objectively, that is doctrinally. Even evangelical students heedlessly lapse into this mystical, non-doctrinal language, and are thus far removed from the position of Scriptures. Such remarks as this exemplify this tendency outside of Group circles, "Have you come to the Cross? I don't mean the doctrine of the Cross, I mean the Cross." The Word of the Cross is a meaningful word; the meaning of the Cross implies a doctrine, doctrine pure and simple.

Concerning Doctrine. Enough has been said to show the opposition to, or at least the indifference to Christian doctrine which this Movement exhibits. For instance, Russell speaking of newspaper religious controversies says that

The New Testament was against them.⁴⁴

It is late in the day to inform us that Paul and the Apologists of the Church through the centuries have been against the New Testament! But the Movement does have a doctrine. But it is false doctrine. The keywords Sharing, Surrender, Confession, and Guidance have been echoed by the Groups in another form: Absolute honesty, absolute purity, absolute unselfishness, and absolute love. That is a philosophy, that is a teaching, that is doctrine.

In other words, Frank had undertaken a crusade to be absolutely for the absolute.⁴⁵

Page T. S. Eliot and his Mr. J. Alfred Prufrock! such talk is nonsense; it is effeminate! Without pointing out the possible failures of the Group in all these matters, the failures of all of us alas, we pause to add that we have known seminary students who would skip classes in order to fulfill guidance or follow "hunches"; or who would even fail to finish their courses. Conceivably they had other failings, but absolute honesty they did not have! The noted Canadian preacher is quite in order when he says,

There is only one Absolute: He is the Absolute. These qualities in the absolute degree are found alone in God.⁴⁶

Who will refuse us the right, then to judge the system? We dare not judge the reality and genuineness of some of the Christian experiences in the Group, or of certain members in the Groups. But we cannot fail to note the evils of the Movement. Why do the followers display such

⁴³In the *Watchman-Examiner*, October 30, 1930, p. 1389.

⁴⁴*Op. cit.*, p. 89.

⁴⁵Russell in *op. cit.*, p. 46.

⁴⁶T. T. Shields, *The Oxford Group Movement Analyzed*, p. 28.

an unholy, frantic desire for contact with the Group? Why do silly college "co-eds" exclaim ecstatically, "Oh, I can't wait until Mr. (naming the evangelist referred to) gets here"? The delight of the Christian student must ever be in such apostolic exhortations as "the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ." But of the Lord's return, of a coming cataclysmic event, the Groups seem to be ignorant!

It will not do for Russell to argue for the "Stung Conscience". Sin lurks in every heart. The accusing finger of Buchman against the Pharisee is not always the finger of God, perchance. We fear the leaven of the Sadducees, or the leaven of Herod quite as much as the leaven of the Pharisees. At least, the doctrine of the Pharisees was right! But we quote at this point, the Canadian divine, who cites a physician to establish his thesis of the philosophy of "sharing":

"I have studied the psychology of it, and have reached the conclusion that they come for a vicarious indulgence of the very things they want to discuss."

What is the psychology of the pornographic play or book? A vicarious or mental indulgence in the thing represented."

The ease with which the religious Liberal enters the Groups with their "power" is significant. That dynamic, that passion is lacking in Liberalism, and the Utopian schemes of Modernism are beginning to break up under pressure from within and without. Like Wordsworth's Doe of Rylstone, the weary Liberal who will not seek refuge in Rome, perhaps in the Groups can find it, and of such an one it can be said

In quietness she lays her down;
Gentle as a weary wave
Sinks, when the summer breeze hath died,
Against an anchored vessel's side;

But the vessel may move! And he may find, as will all others who enter the Groups with spiritual eyes illumined that the authority of Buchman must be substituted for the authority of the Word, of the Book. He will find all heat, no light; all power, no dynamic of the Spirit; all hilarity, no joy of the Holy Ghost.

Scan the converts to the Groups—they come largely from liturgical churches and circles, and from communities where formality has laid its leaden hand on the exercises of religion and on the means of grace. He would be a dullard who would not learn the lesson of zealotness from these who fain "compass sea and land to make one proselyte." There is no excuse for a lethargic, listless Christian, be he in the League or not. May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, His tender, compassionate will embolden us by the Spirit to be faithful witnesses to the great deposit of truth found in the Word of God! May we be patient even with error, and may the great Head of the Church give each of us strength to "take heed unto thyself and to the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."

"Op. cit., p. 25.

Report of the President*

MORRIS FABER

AS THE League pauses to look back one year its feelings are those of mingled regret and gratitude. Regret at the serious hampering a lack of adequate funds caused us, and gratitude to God for all that we by His grace have been enabled to do.

Lack of funds curtailed all the League's work from beginning to end. We had to allow our General Secretary to accept a professorship; we had to delay the publication of our magazine; we had to omit some issues of the bulletin; and the work of our General Secretary was decreased.

However, we simply accommodated ourselves to circumstances. While our income decreased by one half, our expenses were similarly lowered. If the General Secretary's movements were hindered, he yet traveled four and a half thousand miles to visit twenty-five schools and three conventions. And to set a new record in Regional Conferences, four of them were held this year, two in Philadelphia and one in Wheaton and Minneapolis each.

And some decided advance was made this year. The increased use of Regional Conferences, just referred to, is an instance. It seems that we have come to appreciate the great benefit to be derived from them and the means they furnish for reaching the public and the students.

In another respect also we have advanced. Due to the fact that our General Secretary could not devote all his time to the League we have learned to depend more on ourselves. Surely we could learn no better lesson than that the League's welfare depends on us.

We enter upon the future with buoyant spirits and steadfast faith in God. God has hitherto been with us. And He will further lead us. In that fact lies our confidence and joy.

*For the Year 1932-1933.

ON TO BOSTON!

The Ninth Annual Convention of the League will be held in Boston, with the Greater Boston Chapters acting as Hosts, and Gordon College of Theology and Missions as Headquarters. FEBRUARY 23-25, 1934, are the dates. Watch for further announcements of this important gathering. Information may be secured either from the Convention Officer, Mr. David W. Buzzell, at Gordon College, 30 Evans Way, Boston, or else from the General Secretary, Box 455, Columbia, S. C. Reservations should be sent to Boston.

The Students Note That—*

HISTORIC Christianity is not dead, and it is not dying. No one who attended the Convention of the League of Evangelical Students at Grand Rapids can disagree with the optimism expressed by Dr. Machen concerning the future of orthodoxy in America. After listening to the scholarly and deeply spiritual lectures given at the Convention, and after attending the business sessions of the delegates, I was convinced more than ever before that our position is sound, and that it is becoming more and more dynamic.

The young people of America are awaking to the issues. The enthusiasm and intelligence displayed by those who attended the Convention testify to the fact that the banners of evangelical Christianity are going to be carried forward. The crisis has come and the student world is taking sides. Although we must ever be mindful of the obstacles which beset our cause, we shall carry on by the strength which we have through our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Convention at Grand Rapids was, in my opinion, the best of the national and regional conventions which I have attended. It was characterized, both on the part of the speakers and that of the students by joyous Christian fellowship, scholarship, and profound spirituality.—C. E. K., *Lafayette*.

The Eighth Annual Convention of the League of Evangelical Students was perhaps the most encouraging convention in the short history of the League. Although the League was seriously handicapped by having only the part-time services of our Field Secretary, there were evidences on every hand that the League had gone confidently and fearlessly forward. That God should so advance the testimony of this ever-growing minority in these days of financial stress and opposition from an unbelieving world and a hostile church is a very evident seal of God's benediction.

We rejoiced as students to observe that the Board of Trustees of the League was so greatly encouraged by the alertness and vigorous spirit of the students. From various quarters have come expressions of great hope and confidence in the testimony of the League in the approaching years. One who has traveled extensively in religious circles throughout America has expressed his conviction that the League by God's grace can hope to carry on the Christian testimony and program formerly sponsored by the Y. M. C. A.

The splendid manner in which the students coped with the problems confronting the League indicated that the students were awake to the issues of the day and were ready to shoulder their responsibilities to advance the testimony of the League. The enthusiastic adoption of the "One Step Forward" proposal has given to each chapter a definite, practical plan whereby the League may "lengthen her cords and strengthen her stakes." The clear-cut stand by the students against the subtle form of modernism—

*Being a symposium on the significance of the Eighth Annual Convention.

known as "Buchmanism" has given new heart to those who had lost some confidence in the Christian students of America.

Truly, God has blessed the witness of the League. One cannot but believe more firmly than ever before that God has a great plan for the League of Evangelical Students.—C. K. C., *Westminster*.

It may seem to some that, for a student from a Christian college, a League convention would be a very ordinary thing, but I can truthfully say that the Grand Rapids Convention was one of the highlights of my experience.

Many of us looked forward to a testimony meeting such as we had at the Pittsburgh Convention last year, at which each Chapter and Branch reported on its work, on its particular problems and on its particular blessings. Although no time was found this year, I hope that those arranging next year's convention will plan for such a meeting, for it can be the means of giving all attending a greater vision of the work.

Two things have been indelibly impressed on my mind as a result of our fellowship at Grand Rapids. I have been led to see more clearly the immensity of the task before us, and then, have been convinced once more of the truth of His Word, ". . . and lo! I am with you always . . ."

We have come back to Wheaton with a new resolve to yield our lives more fully to be used of Him to His glory and praise.—A. W. K., *Wheaton*.

An Open Letter

THE LEAGUE OF EVANGELICAL STUDENTS IN CHINA

Headquarters: Tengersien, Shantung, China

August 23, 1933.

Dear Friend and Co-worker:

In view of the diverse conceptions of the nature of Christianity in this country of practically atheistic belief on one hand, and massive heathenism on the other, we, partakers of God's wonderful love and saving grace, have slowly come to realize the necessity of upholding, defending and furthering the Evangelical Gospel Message in the modern world. In particular, youths seem to have the greatest difficulties concerning the interpretation and acceptance of the Christian faith; and whether they are students in colleges, institutions of higher learning or theological seminaries, they seem to have almost daily temptations to doubt about the truths of the Evangelical Faith.

I, an unworthy worker for the Master Christ Jesus, hereby take the deepest pleasure in introducing the nature, purpose and work of our newly formed organization, The League of Evangelical Students in China, to all those who wish to witness the great triumph of the Gospel in this reedy land of China, as well as throughout the whole world.

As stated above, this organization is newly formed; so I can but mention here the primitive nature of the League which has come to its actual existence less than a month ago. Through the wonderful work of the League of Evangelical Students in America, first organized in 1925, we were much inspired to have the same movement started in our colleges, and so forth. At its triennial meeting in June, 1932, the League of Christian Churches decided to cooperate with Chinese Students of the common faith to start a similar movement in this land, to be affiliated with the brethren in

America. In response to this important call of an holy task, and at the suggestion of Dr. Albert B. Dodd, Stated Clerk of the League of Christian Churches, a group of earnest Christians held a series of meetings for the drawing up of the tentative constitution this July 27-29, at the North China Theological Seminary. Representatives of groups of Christian students in two universities, several middle (high) schools, two seminaries and a Bible School were gathered from various parts of China. Nearly all of these institutions are under Christian influence, but of the fraternal delegates, there was one from a government middle school. This, no doubt, was an encouraging sign of success for the organization; and we were much strengthened by the fact that Christians in government institutions, who encounter much more difficulties in standing for what they believe than believers in Christian schools, have realized also the importance of mutual aid through the fellowship from joining the League.

During these three days of mid-summer conference, the League was successfully organized. Among the things accomplished through our Father's guidance, members of the Executive Committee of seven were elected. A committee for drawing up the constitution was also appointed which soon adopted a constitution based mainly on the twice-revised constitution of the same movement in America, with only slight variations or modifications among the minor articles made to fit its use in China. However, the fundamental principles are nevertheless the same. This constitution was then read, revised, and approved by all the delegates present. The officers and members of the Executive Committee quickly assumed their respective posts, and among the major things discussed and resolved were questions of our Board of Trustees, General Secretary, and the plan of work to be followed at the represented schools, with the closely related financial problem. A Board of Trustees was constituted with twenty-five earnest Christian workers in China, Chinese and Western, who are deeply interested in the movement, carefully selected as members. The General Secretary was then chosen, who today has the privilege of calling your attention to the newly started work.

As to the purpose of the League, it is clearly stated in the constitution, i.e., "to bear united witness to the faith of its members in the whole Bible as the inspired Word of God; to interest other students in the work of the gospel ministry; to have fellowship one with another; and to present to students evidences of the truths of evangelical Christianity."

With such a sound purpose before us, we wish, with the help of the Father, to extend the work to all colleges, senior middle schools, theological seminaries and other institutions of higher learning in China. Being itself just a babe, the League in China naturally regards that in America as its "big brother." We heartily wish to be affiliated with our brethren across the sea in spirit, work, fellowship, and prayer, since we believe this will mean added strength and effectiveness to the work. May the Lord strengthen His own work here by providing generous aid from all those who are interested in, and sympathetic with our new movement.

God has permitted us to start this work on faith, so we will continue to walk on faith. Since this is His work, we trust that the needs will be supplied "according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." (Phil. 4:19.) Please pray for us. May the Lord have all the glory and honor through the propagation of the Evangelical Faith among our youths.

Yours in His Service,

JONATHAN HSÜ,
General Secretary.

Among The Chapters

Beaver College

IN our devotional meetings we are now studying the book of Romans. We first read a chapter to gain an idea of its contents in its entirety, after which we go back and study it verse by verse, looking up all of the references and from time to time consulting a commentary. Discussion also plays an important part in helping us to grasp the truths we are studying. Following our study we have our prayer time, which is the most blessed part of the evening. Praise the Lord that He has added to our number recently. We feel that there are many, many spiritual blessings in store for us. Pray that we may be kept true in all that we do and say, and that we may be led to the right persons for our group."

Bloomfield College and Theological Seminary

"Our weekly meetings were held regularly.* . . . The meetings on Tuesday afternoon are in charge of a faculty member who lectures on 'Introduction to Old Testament Studies' which lectures have proven very helpful to us.

"The attitude of the student body is more friendly this year, which uplifts our hearts in praise and thanks."

John E. Brown College

"We are giving out many Bibles, Testaments, and Gospels, and are having conversions and consecrations."

Cleveland Bible Institute

"The League prayer band has a list of not less than twenty names of those students who are in worldly institutions. The prayer meetings are lively. We also pray for the League in general."

Evangelical Theological College

"To date we have not seen any new chapters formed in neighboring institutions. We have, however, made several very promising contacts. . . .

"The fact that we have not made a great showing in work in other colleges is by no means an indication that nothing is being done by our men. . . . A recent at-random survey showed that forty of our seventy-four men in one week held ninety-five Gospel meetings in fifteen cities and towns. These men spoke to 5,530 people, traveling 1,910 miles in doing so. The messages were preached in churches of seven denominations and several independent groups. Three men made a seven hundred mile trip into West Texas, preaching twelve sermons. One man spoke to 2,200 high school students in Fort Worth. Of the ninety-five meetings forty-nine were preaching services, twenty-three Sunday-school classes, nine young people's societies, six fire station Bible classes, and the remainder open-air meetings, ladies' auxiliaries, and Bible classes for Negroes. Thirty thousand Gospels have been handed out this year by our men.

"We truly thank God that our General Secretary, Mr. Jones, was permitted to visit us for the first time April 10 to 14. During this time he was at Austin College, Trinity College, and Southern Methodist University. Mr. Jones 'sold' the League to our own students as no one before him was ever able to do. We believe he deserves our very best coöperation and our prayers."

Gordon College of Theology and Missions

"Recently the League Chapter here at Gordon has become interested in reaching students at an International Club in the city, where Chinese, Armenians, Greeks, Hindus, and representatives of nearly all the races of the world, who are studying in Boston, gather from time to time for social contacts and fellowship. We hope and pray that this may be an opportunity to reach many students with the Gospel

*Some of the reports, such as this one, are really cullings from the Annual Reports submitted to the last Annual Convention, and for that reason may appear to be lacking in recency.

through the medium of personal work. We plan to make this a special project in our Chapter."

Harvard University

"We held our meeting of consecration on April 11. Dr. A. Z. Conrad of Boston was our guest speaker to edification and exhortation and comfort. With the watchwords, 'Prayer and the Bible' he gave us a glorious start in His service."

Kingston Bible College

"Two of the members of the Chapter are preaching at outside stations to small congregations once each Sunday. These services really began at the opening of College."

University of Minnesota

"On a university campus some students and faculty members are distinctly hostile to the Christian faith and its promulgation, others are indifferent, and still others are vitally interested. The Christian witness-bearer at an institution of higher learning finds his most difficult task in combating that stubborn spirit of indifference which is actuated (if, indeed, it is actuated at all) by the philosophy that 'well enough' should be let alone. Outright opposition stimulates Christian activity; a drab uninterestedness is deadening in its influence. It is in an environment of this type that the Minnesota Chapter of the League, consisting of some thirty members, is trying to carry on its work.

"The meetings of the Chapter are held every Thursday noon; about forty students usually attend to hear pastors, faculty members, students, Bible expositors, and evangelists present Scripture studies and messages on the Christian life.

"A few weeks ago, about one hundred and forty letters were mailed to those whose names had been handed to the officers or who, at some time or other, had evinced an interest in the work. A pamphlet, *Our God and His Universe*, by Dr. W. E. Blackstone, which makes a definite plea for the acceptance of Christ as personal Saviour, was enclosed.

"During Passion Week a special effort was made to reach as many students as possible with the message of the suffering and death of Christ. Services were accordingly held every noon from Monday through Thursday and were addressed by some pastor or Christian worker. Between forty-five and fifty students attended the meetings daily, many of them subsequently witnessing to the spiritual uplift with which their attendance was rewarded.

"Another special effort to reach the student body as a whole was made some weeks earlier, when President Buswell of Wheaton College, himself a graduate of the University of Minnesota, gave two all-university lectures of an apologetic nature. Dr. Buswell also spent an afternoon talking with individual students, and conducted an open forum at the regular meeting of the Chapter.

"Deputation teams have been sent to neighboring schools, with the result that at almost all of these institutions either Chapters have been formed or interested students are working toward that end. A short time ago, during the hour that preceded its weekly meeting, a service was conducted before the Twin City Bible Conference. A history of the Minnesota Chapter, an account of the work of the national organization, an outline of the activity of the Minnesota Chapter during the past year, as well as several testimonies, were given by students of the University.

"Impressed with what seems to be an overwhelming task, the members of the Minnesota Chapter covet the prayers of Christians everywhere. They are ever conscious of the ancient words, 'Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.'"

University of Pennsylvania

"The Lord has greatly blessed the work of the League here at 'Penn' this last year. We have been having weekly meetings at which prominent pastors have spoken, such as: Rev. Percy Crawford (three accepted Christ at this meeting); Dr. Harold Paul Sloan; Rev. Merrill T. MacPherson; Professor John Murray,

of Westminster Theological Seminary. All of these meetings have been well attended.

"Our members had the privilege of distributing fifty Student Testaments. Many Jewish students accepted these Testaments and we are praying that they will come to a saving knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

"We have had the privilege of doing deputation work in the churches of Philadelphia and vicinity."

Princeton University

"The youthful chapter of Princeton, still thankful in being able to join the League, is facing an outlook very probably the same as that confronting all the larger campuses today, and were it not that the Lord is faithful, and has already answered the prayers of many friends, hope might have faded at the very thought of human incompetence to meet it. Two new boys have found their Saviour, and although they have not yet officially allied themselves with the League chapter, they are at least two more swords in the Lord's ranks. One fine Christian from the Graduate School as well has added his name to the list.

"On the evening of March 30th there was a curious meeting at Murray-Dodge, where a group of fellows whose habit has been informally to assemble on designated occasions to 'discuss Social and Religious Problems,' met with an unusually large attendance to talk with Mr. E. L. Chase and Dr. Eckings, both of them true men of God, on what was scheduled to be 'Fundamentalism'. The fellows were very keen in their questions, and undoubtedly received something far different from what they expected. At least they broke up deeply impressed, some of them eager for another occasion to continue the discussion. Of course, there could be little definite ground gained for the Lord in a meeting of that nature, but it was significant that a group of really serious fellows should have had such a strong and impressive introduction to the Truth, and a number of them ended convinced of a few things at least, and what is most to God's praise is that one of the two mentioned above who were saved was first intimately brought to a knowledge of his need at that meeting.

"The members of the Chapter itself have been studying with questionable regularity the Epistle to the Romans, not with questionable blessing however, often assisted in their study by the superior intelligence of Professor Harris of the University, or Mr. Fullerton and Mr. Chase when they happen along on one of their faithful visits to the Campus.

"The daily prayer meeting appears to have been our power station, as all the activities and fruits which count, seem to have begun suddenly after its inception. Five men received Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, and have been growing in Him. Space limitations prohibit describing the circumstances by which the Dean of the University Chapel kindly gave us use of the Chapel Crypt for our regular evangelical services on Sunday afternoons. Dr. Donald Gray Barnhouse was our first speaker on the following Sunday afternoon. His address was most helpful, and the attendance was very gratifying—125 persons, including about 35 undergraduates. Owing to examinations, this initial meeting was also the last of its kind for the spring term.

"Our League Chapter closed its year with a private devotional meeting attended by twelve men. Mr. Arthur Glasser, President of the Cornell Chapter, and Mr. Donald Fullerton, a Princeton alumnus, brought messages and the meeting closed with a season of prayer in which all present participated."

Wheaton College

"Concerning news items—we are making plans for work with caddies on the golf courses around Wheaton; we have just started personal correspondence with League members in other schools; the union of the Y. W. C. A. with the League might be included in this item."

News and Notes

Eighth Annual Convention

MARGARET HUNT

THE Eighth Annual Convention was held at Grand Rapids, Michigan, February 27-29, 1933, with the Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary Chapters acting as hosts. We can truthfully say that God answered prayer in a most marvelous way, as He always does, doing exceeding abundantly above all we asked or thought, and giving all who attended a rich blessing.

The excellent entertainment at the College and at the homes of Christian friends, the music which our hosts provided at all meetings; and the Fellowship Banquet which was unusually successful, were in a large measure responsible for the prevalent spirit of fellowship.

Eighteen institutions were enabled to send delegates to the Convention, four of which were non-League schools. The largest delegation, numbering fifteen students, was from Wheaton College. Seven institutions from Pennsylvania were represented: Beaver College, Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Lafayette College, Shippensburg State Teachers College, Reformed Episcopal Theological Seminary, Westminster Theological Seminary, and Wilson College. Delegates were sent from two Indiana colleges—Goshen, and Huntington.

Four Michigan schools were represented: Calvin College, Calvin Theological Seminary, Hope College, and Western Theological Seminary. Moody Bible Institute, and Wheaton College were the two schools from Illinois which sent delegates. Delegates also came from Southern Baptist Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky; University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota, and Evangelical Theological College, Dallas, Texas. The total number of registered delegates and visitors was eighty-six.

The Convention program included devotional and prayer periods, group meetings, and varied addresses. In different ways the students were constantly being challenged with the necessity of a clear and bold witness to God's Infallible Word, and with the need for students who will surrender to God and find all their "capacities new-born, ready to think out and vindicate the truth." As Dr. Bouma so fittingly remarked, "Having once been redeemed, we have an answer to the intellectual questions, because the truth is *in Him*."

If we gain nothing more from our Annual Conventions than just becoming acquainted with the members of our Board of Trustees, we should still feel that they are infinitely worth while. God has shown His great favor in granting us these virile devoted servants of the Cross as our friends and guides. Six members of our Board were present at this Convention—President Kuiper, Dr. Pieters, Dr. Bouma, Dr. Machen, and Dr. Smith—and their definitely apologetic, as well as deeply spiritual messages were the means of great blessing and inspiration to all.

There were two outstanding accomplishments in our business. The League went on record as being definitely opposed to the Oxford Group Movement, so popular today in the student world. The One Step Forward Plan was also adopted—a plan for every Chapter to try to establish a Chapter in one other school; to have a deputation meeting in at least *one* church requesting the prayers of God's people for this work; to have every member raise or give *one* dollar towards the work of the League.

Convention delegates returned to their schools with a keener understanding of the foes of Christianity, a deeper appreciation of the all-sufficiency of Christ, and an eager desire to go forward—being ready to give an answer to every one that asketh us a reason of the hope that is in us, knowing that the truth is in Him.

The Convention Discussion Groups*

The discussion group which considered the topic of "Christianity Is Right: Are Other Religions Wrong?" was presided over by Dr. Albertus Pieters.

The discussion was opened with a definition of terms in order to determine in just what way Christianity was different from other religions in order that it might

*See note, bottom Page 52.

be possible to decide as to whether other religions really are wrong or not. It was generally agreed that other religions would not be and are not wrong in their entirety, for we know that they contain elements of truth and factors of great good in them. However, the thing of note is that any good or moral standard which they may contain will be found in Christianity too, while on the other hand, one will find some moral truths in Christianity which are not to be found in other religions. The question for decision before the group was: Does Christianity contain in it some distinctive element which the other religions do not which is of significant importance as to warrant the assertion that unless a religion contains this element it is on the wrong track? Dr. Pieters then stated that whereas Christianity provides a means of redemption from sin and a promise of life eternal through the accepting of the atoning sacrifice for human sin by the morally perfect, Jesus Christ; all that other religions have to offer is a moral code of living which is set up before the individual for him to strive to attain, chiefly relying upon his own strength.

At this point some time was spent in talking over a few of the various means which the followers of some of the Oriental religions employ in their attempts to attain self-righteousness.

The discussion was carried on in a very informal manner and I believe proved very beneficial to all.

—C. H. M., *Moody*.

Dr. J. R. Mulder, professor of Practical Theology at Western Theological Seminary, led the group meeting on "Modernism and Teaching". Dr. Mulder traced the part Modernism has taken in teaching—to the place which they have now reached where they study life "horizontally". In this study, he said, they of course find out something which is true but definitely inadequate. When we take God out of life, and take the soul out, there is nothing left but pragmatic psychology. When we root man back in God, we know something—know where man is from, and it helps us to know where man is going—but studying life horizontally it is impossible to know where man is from—therefore equally impossible to know where man is going.

The liberal schools are interested in efficiency. Their goal is, therefore, efficiency training, and not education. The goal of education, Professor Mulder stated, is righteous efficiency and efficient righteousness.

—M. H., *Moody*.

The discussion group, at which Dr. H. Framer Smith was the speaker, was presented with "Present-Day Tendencies in Humanism".

Dr. Smith vividly presented humanism and its relation to modernism by the use of a triangle whose base is humanism and whose sides are the divisions into which humanism naturally falls: theistic, and non-theistic humanism. The apex of the triangle was shown to represent Modernism as it is today.

The speaker indicated, in the defining of theistic and non-theistic humanism, that non-theistic humanists say let God get out of the way and let man have his own way. On the other hand, theistic humanism is a mere compromise which today is chiefly taught in the guise of liberalism. God is in the universe in the sense that He is in the part of nature that produced man. God is in Christ only in the sense of degree; "Christ only realized the presence of God in Himself more than any other man." Thus we can all be Christs. A more extreme view held by theistic humanists is that of "an idealized God who is best seen in perfection of humanity."

Non-theistic humanism, as represented by Professor Ames, of the University of Chicago, in his book, *The Quest of the Ages* (1929), suggests that the difficulty with this world is maladjustment, not sin. Salvation comes through the aid of

*Students here give reports of three of the discussion groups which proved so interesting and informing a part of the Grand Rapids Convention. It is hoped that this innovation will be a feature of the coming Convention at Boston. We regret the omission of the report on Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer's splendid group which discussed "True Mysticism".

maladjustment. The Saviour is science. Further, this is a friendly universe gone to rot and what this world needs is a select kind of brain in the men it is producing—supermen—to lay hold on science. As for God, "We are God."

Dr. Smith showed the group the modern trend which is being presented by such men as John Dewey, who is branded as the leading Humanist today. He states, "The only thing of which we can be certain is that there is no certainty." In other words a pessimism or state of despair seems ultimate.

Open discussion of the possible effect of Humanism upon Theism followed.
—R. W., *Moody*.

LEAGUE OF EVANGELICAL STUDENTS
Annual Report of the League Treasurer
Covering: February 1, 1932, to January 31, 1933

Embracing Accounts at Office of Treasurer
and the Assistant Treasurer

| RECEIPTS | DISBURSEMENTS |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| Miscellaneous | EVANGELICAL STUDENT— |
| Gifts— | Printing |
| General | Mailing |
| Special | Office Stationery and Supplies. |
| Drives— | Furniture and Fixtures..... |
| Chapter | General Postage |
| Trustee | Office Expenses |
| Headquarters | Traveling Expenses— |
| Dues, Chapter | General Secretary |
| EVANGELICAL STUDENT | Regional Secretaries |
| (subscriptions)— | Convention Expenses |
| Alumni | Literature and Propaganda.... |
| General | Salaries— |
| Total Receipts | General Secretary |
|\$2,820.34 | Clerical |
| | Miscellaneous |
| | Total Disbursements |
| |\$2,941.29 |
| Cash Balance, February 1, 1932..... |\$137.03 |
| Total Receipts—\$2,820.34; Total Disbursements \$2,941.29..... |(Credit) 120.95 |
| Cash Balance, February 1, 1933 (Treasurer—\$12.00; Asst. Treas.—\$4.08)... | 16.08 |
| Petty Cash Fund..... | 10.00 |
| Total Cash Balance, February 1, 1933..... | \$26.08 |
| For the Treasurer, | Audited: |
| Respectfully submitted, | R. Beckering, |
| William J. Jones, | Chairman, Auditing Committee. |
| Assistant Treasurer. | |

Moody Regional Conference

The belated report of the Fifth Central Regional Conference, held at the Moody Bible Institute, April 21 and 22, contains news of intense interest. It was a Conference marked by deep spiritual earnestness. In each of the messages there was an undercurrent of uncommon spiritual force. The speakers were, Dr. H. Framer Smith, the Rev. Ernest M. Wadsworth, Dr. James M. Gray, the Rev. Earl A. Winsor, Dr. Clarence Bouma, and Mrs. Albert Dilling. The League General Secretary was present, conducting a forum on League problems and opportunities. The Moody

Chapter entertained well, especially in the tastefully prepared Fellowship Banquet with its varied program. The delegates were from League schools chiefly—some coming from as far away as the University of Minnesota. What was lacking in numbers, however, was compensated by the strengthening of the ties of the Central Region and its Chapters.

Eastern Regional Conference

The Fifth Annual Eastern Regional Conference was held this November 10 and 11, in the Christian Association Building at the University of Pennsylvania.

"God blessed the Conference this year in an unprecedented way," writes Mr. Calvin K. Cummings, League President. The speakers at this stirring gathering of Christian students included Bishop Robert W. Peach, Presiding Bishop of the Reformed Episcopal Church; Professor William W. Adams, of Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary; the Rev. T. Roland Philips, of the Arlington Presbyterian Church, Baltimore, Maryland; the Rev. William Allan Dean, of the Philadelphia School of the Bible; Professor Oswald T. Allis, of Westminster Theological Seminary; the Rev. Floyd E. Hamilton, of Union Christian College, Korea; the Rev. H. E. Davis, of Africa; Professor J. Gresham Machen, and Professor R. B. Kuiper, both of Westminster Theological Seminary. Dr. Gordon H. Clark, of the University of Pennsylvania was the Toastmaster at the Saturday evening banquet.

The attendance at the various sessions varied, the Saturday evening meeting having 175 present. Delegates registered from eighteen different schools—eighty-seven delegates in all. These institutions were represented: Beaver College, Bible Institute of Pennsylvania, Bloomfield College and Seminary, Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Haverford College, Houghton College, Juniata College, Lafayette College, Princeton University, Princeton Theological Seminary, Reformed Episcopal Theological Seminary, Shippensburg State Teachers College, Temple University, University of Pennsylvania, Vassar College, Westminster Theological Seminary, and Wilson College.

Miss Marjorie W. Erdman, Secretary of the League, has sent the following note of the Conference:

"The whole conference was very inspirational and, I believe, entirely guided by the Holy Spirit. Bishop Peach's deep and exceedingly intellectual message, 'In Defense of God's Truth', together with Dr. Adams' address on 'Why I Believe the Gospel', were a wonderful background for Mr. Philips' spiritual and convicting message. Oh, that we might be a continued witness for Him! After the Chapter reports, on Saturday morning, Mr. Cummings brought to our attention the fact that none of us seemed to have a definite program constructed so as to reach the whole student body. This program, he pointed out, was necessary to successful carrying out of the work. After a short devotional period led by the Beaver Chapter, Mr. Dean brought us the morning message based on Hebrews 2:6-13. Dr. Allis, in the afternoon, disclosed to us the 'Meaning and Menace' of the recently-published 'Short Bible.' Two strong missionary addresses were given by Mr. Davis from Africa, and Mr. Hamilton from Korea. They brought to our attention the points to be especially considered in making our decisions about the mission field. In the evening, Dr. Machen addressed us in a preliminary message on the duty of the Christian, and the purpose of the League as representing Christians and winning souls. The final message by President Kuiper, concerned a question which is constantly being brought up by both non-Christians and nominal Christians—'The Evangelical Student and Prayer'. Praise God for prayer!"

Second Annual North-West Regional Conference

Notice has come of the Second Annual Conference of schools in the North-West which will be held in Minneapolis, Minnesota, the week-end of December 8, 1933. The groups in the Twin Cities have done excellent work and are looking forward to a time of rich blessing in the coming Conference.

The Work of the General Secretary

In view of the severe curtailment of his time, the General Secretary has been able to keep up a modicum of traveling and visitation. Last Spring, he visited territory where League representatives had not been able to go hitherto. The gracious hospitality of the Chapter and the administration of Evangelical Theological College enabled the Secretary to make a number of calls in Texas institutions. Schools touched in this trip included: Enid University, Oklahoma City University, University of Oklahoma, Evangelical Theological College, Texas Christian University, Austin College, Trinity College, Park College, and Tarkio College.

During the past Summer, the Secretary again visited the Student Conference at Keswick Grove, New Jersey, where together with Mr. Calvin Cummings, President of the League, and other League students, many fruitful hours of conference and fellowship were afforded. In addition to this Conference, the General Secretary visited other conferences and some educational institutions in connection with his Summer work at Huntington College.

Both on the Spring and Summer trips the Secretary was given opportunities to present the work in occasional messages, single addresses in colleges, and at Evangelical Theological College in a series of chapel addresses on the purpose and scope of the League.

With Other Student Movements

CANADA—Mr. Judson H. Merritt, Missionary Secretary of the Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship of Canada, has written a lengthy and chatty Report of their Annual Conference held in Toronto, September 15-18. Considerations of space in this issue forbid the printing of the details of the Report and of the work. However, we note with joy the fine spirit of fellowship which pervaded the Conference, and especially the splendid reports of growth which the Conference revealed. Work in the secondary schools is progressing rapidly.

Dr. Arthur C. Hill is the new General Secretary of the Fellowship, succeeding the honored Rev. Noel F. Palmer. Dr. Hill writes of blessing attending his visitation to schools in Quebec, as well as that of Miss Catherine Nicoll among the high schools. News of this fellow-movement may be secured from Dr. Hill, by addressing him at 49 Gerrard Street, London, Ontario, Canada.

CHINA—In response to the request of our good friend Dr. Albert B. Dodd, we print the following letter from the new child of the League—the Chinese League of Evangelical Students. It is a pleasure to do this, and to note this proof of missionary harvest, which comes through the witness of the American movement. We are glad to accept contributions towards the new work, and will forward them to the Treasurer, Mrs. Martha Remington, Tenghsien, Shantung Province, China. Gifts may be sent direct to her, if it is so desired, by interested friends in this country and Canada.

My dear Mr. Jones:

Through the courtesy of Dr. Albert B. Dodd, I had the privilege of reading your letter to him, written on May the 29th, which he received some time after getting your literature which was relative to the League of Evangelical Students. Those of us who are much interested in your movement, greatly enjoyed reading your material; and, for the purpose of better understanding such a League in America, we even translated your constitution into Chinese, which we previously distributed to the students among a number of colleges and higher schools in China.

Regarding the formation of a similar League in China, I am more than glad to notify you that such a movement has been successfully organized within the last three days here in this part of the country. Dr. Dodd, now a member and associate treasurer of our board of trustees, has long been deeply interested in assisting us Chinese brethren to organize the League. Now, the members of the Executive Committee, delegates from different institutions, and all those who wished for the early formation of the League, rejoice with Dr. Dodd for the actual existence of the same.

In drawing up our Constitution, we have followed rather closely your twice-revised Constitution. We practically adopted it as a whole, with only slight modification made to fit its use in China. However, its fundamental principles are nevertheless the same. Within a short time, I hope to have copies of this newly drawn up constitution printed for the advancement of organizing chapters and branches at the colleges and higher schools concerned.

On account of the great distance between America and China, it seems best for us to have our work carried on as far as possible in China without any direct control in America. However, we heartily wish to be affiliated with the brethren in America, so that combined force of the League will mean added strength and effectiveness for our work. Since our constitutions have nothing to hinder such affiliation, why should we not unite together in Spirit, work, fellowship and prayers? Though the League in China is self-governing, yet we recognize ourselves as closely connected with your movement, and shall always be open toward receiving suggestions and aids from you. Whenever the movement in China can be of any help to the League in America, we will gladly affiliate with you if permitted. If it is possible, we wish to send one or two fraternal delegates to your future Annual Meetings, and we hope that you, in the coming days, will favor us with the great help of one or more fraternal delegates from America to our Annual Meetings, so that there will be a close linkage between the two movements of the common purpose and aim on the opposite sides of the earth.

The Evangelical Students' Alliance in China is just at its birth; it needs our Father's care and protection before it can stand on its own feet. Through faith in Him who is rich and able, we started the formation of the movement on the ground of faith; trusting that the needs will be supplied. Though the general secretary, Mr. Jonathan Hsü, whom I understand you met at Keswick last summer, has been elected for at least one year, our limited fund for this year is not enough to cover even half of this secretary's salary, which amounts to about \$25 gold per month, according to the present rate of exchange. May we ask if the League in America can furnish half of our secretary's salary as long as we need such a worker for the work? If this is granted, it will be a very great help toward our financial problem.

We also wish to have more copies of your literature for distribution. Please send us about 100 copies of your constitution and a few magazines if convenient.

How glad we are to learn of your profound interest and concern for China. We heartily hope that if it be the Lord's will, you will come to China to help us out in the near future, even next summer, when our Annual Meeting will be held. We deeply covet your presence in China as well as your prayers.

May I be allowed to have the privilege of learning more of your excellent work through further correspondence with you? Thank you ever so much.

Yours cordially,

JOSEPH HWANG,

English Corresponding Secretary,
Cheeloo Medical College,
Tsinanfu, Shantung, China.

GREAT BRITAIN—There comes news of renewed spiritual activity on the part of the various Unions in England as a result of the Conference of last April. Besides this, the Fellowship has been unusually active in missionary service, sending its own representative abroad to Spain and now to Australia. We hope to print more news of the Australian Unions in the next issue, regretting that more detailed notices cannot be included in this issue concerning all other evangelical student movements.

CHAPTER DIRECTORY of the LEAGUE of EVANGELICAL STUDENTS

- ASHLAND COLLEGE,
Ashland, Ohio.
- AUSTIN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY,
Austin, Texas.
- BALTIMORE BIBLE INSTITUTE,
Baltimore, Maryland.
- BEAVER COLLEGE,
Jenkintown, Pennsylvania.
- BIBLE INSTITUTE AND ACADEMY,
Minneapolis, Minnesota.
- BLOOMFIELD COLLEGE AND THEOLOGICAL
SEMINARY,
Bloomfield, New Jersey.
- BOSTON UNIVERSITY,
Boston, Massachusetts.
- UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA,
Vancouver, British Columbia.
- JOHN BROWN SCHOOLS,
Siloam Springs, Arkansas.
- BUCKNELL UNIVERSITY,
Lewisburg, Pennsylvania.
- CALVIN COLLEGE,
Grand Rapids, Michigan.
- CALVIN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY,
Grand Rapids, Michigan.
- CLEVELAND BIBLE INSTITUTE,
Cleveland, Ohio.
- COLUMBIA BIBLE COLLEGE,
Columbia, South Carolina.
- CORNELL UNIVERSITY,
Ithaca, New York.
- DICKINSON COLLEGE,
Carlisle, Pennsylvania.
- EASTERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL
SEMINARY,
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
- EASTERN NAZARENE COLLEGE,
Wollaston, Massachusetts.
- EVANGELICAL THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE,
Dallas, Texas.
- GENEVA COLLEGE,
Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania.
- GORDON COLLEGE OF THEOLOGY AND
MISSIONS,
Boston, Massachusetts.
- HARVARD UNIVERSITY,
Cambridge, Massachusetts.
- HAVERFORD COLLEGE,
Haverford, Pennsylvania.
- KINGSTON BIBLE COLLEGE,
Kingston, Nova Scotia.
- LAFAYETTE COLLEGE,
Easton, Pennsylvania.
- UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE,
Louisville, Kentucky.
- UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA,
Minneapolis, Minnesota.
- MOODY BIBLE INSTITUTE,
Chicago, Illinois.
- MUSKINGUM COLLEGE,
New Concord, Ohio.
- NATIONAL BIBLE INSTITUTE,
New York, New York.
- NEW ENGLAND SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY,
Boston, Massachusetts.
- NORTHWESTERN BIBLE SCHOOL,
Minneapolis, Minnesota.
- UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA,
Norman, Oklahoma.
- PARSONS COLLEGE,
Fairfield, Iowa.
- UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA,
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
- PHILADELPHIA COLLEGE OF PHARMACY
AND SCIENCE,
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
- PRINCETON UNIVERSITY,
Princeton, New Jersey.
- REFORMED EPISCOPAL THEOLOGICAL
SEMINARY,
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
- REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN THEOLOGICAL
SEMINARY,
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.
- SHIPPENSBURG STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE,
Shippensburg, Pennsylvania.
- SIOUX FALLS COLLEGE,
Sioux Falls, South Dakota.
- TEMPLE UNIVERSITY,
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
- TORONTO BAPTIST SEMINARY,
Toronto, Ontario.
- UNION COLLEGE,
Schenectady, New York.
- UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON,
Seattle, Washington.
- WESTERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL
SEMINARY,
Portland, Oregon.
- WESTERN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY,
Holland, Michigan.
- WESTMINSTER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY,
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
- WHEATON COLLEGE,
Wheaton, Illinois.
- WILSON COLLEGE,
Chambersburg, Pennsylvania.

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The
EIGHTH ANNUAL CONVENTION
OF THE
League of Evangelical Students

FEBRUARY 17th, 18th, and 19th—Grand Rapids, Michigan

TENTATIVE PROGRAM

(Eastern Standard Time Throughout)

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17TH

- 2:00 P. M. Registration of Delegates, Calvin College, 1300 Franklin Street, S. E., Grand Rapids.
- 3:00 P. M. Welcoming Address—President L. Berkhof.
Devotional—Professor T. E. Welmers.
Organ music—Miss A. H. Geerdes.
Business session.
- 7:00 P. M. Devotional—Dr. H. Framer Smith.
Address—**FACING THE ISSUES**—Dr. Cornelius Van Til.
Business session.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18TH

- 9:00 A. M. The Convention Prayer Period, led by the Rev. W. Stuart.
- 9:45 A. M. Evangelical Teacher Training—Dr. Clarence H. Benson.
Address—**A TRIUMPHANT APOLOGETIC**—Dr. Clarence Bouma.
- 1:45 P. M. Devotional—Professor J. R. Mulder.
Address—**SCIENCE AND THE BIBLE**—Dr. Albertus Pieters.
- 3:00 P. M. **GROUP MEETINGS** in Seminary building.
"True Mysticism"—Dr. L. S. Chafer.
"Modernism and Teaching"—Professor J. R. Mulder.
"Christianity Is Right; Are Other Religions Wrong?"—Dr. Albertus Pieters.
"Present-day Tendencies in Humanism"—Dr. H. Framer Smith.
- 6:00 P. M. Convention Banquet in Dining Hall of College Dormitory.
Toastmaster—Mr. Bert Kruithof.
Reading—Dr. J. Gresham Machen.
Address—President R. B. Kuiper.
Violin Solo—Selected—Mr. N. Punt.
- 8:30 P. M. Calvin College Mixed Glee Club, directed by Seymour Swets.
Address—(Speaker to be announced.)
Concluding Business session of Conference.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 19TH

- Morning worship in churches of the delegate's choosing.
- 3:00 P. M. **MISSIONARY MEETING.**
Missionary testimonies—
Rev. T. Titcombe of Africa.
Rev. William Pontier of Africa.
- 7:00 P. M. Divine Worship, League being guests of the Fuller Avenue Christian Reformed Church.
Dr. G. Goris, Pastor, leading.
Calvin Seminary Quartette, singing.
Sermon by Dr. J. Gresham Machen.

Every meeting will be held in the Calvin College auditorium unless otherwise specified.

The public is most warmly invited to attend every session of this Convention.

STUDENTS:—Register at once by making reservations for accommodations. Address MR. ARNOLD BRINK, 1056 Bates Street, S. E., Grand Rapids, Michigan. Lodging during the convention, and breakfast will be provided to all registered delegates, whether League members or not.

THE CONVENTION HEADQUARTERS ARE IN CALVIN COLLEGE, FRANKLIN STREET, S. E., GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN. TELEPHONE OF HEADQUARTERS: 58104. Delegates will report to this address upon arrival in Grand Rapids.