

## The Oxford Group



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### DUTY OF BEARING WITNESS.

In 1923 Harold Begbie wrote of "a strange work, going on almost in secret, among the undergraduates of many universities, not only in England but in many countries." That work, of which so little was known nine years ago, has spread till it has links and contacts in every quarter of the world.

Without formal organization, without financial appeal, a vital message has passed from one to another, as God has set men's hearts on fire. The life of Dr. Frank Buchman was "changed" during the Keswick Convention of 1908, and the influence of that one "changed" life has led, through the blessing of God, to the present soul-stirring movement in many lands. Rev. J. P. Thornton-Duesbery of Oxford refers to the special emphasis placed by the Group upon the "secret transaction between God and the individual soul." It is from such beginnings that there rise those movings of the Divine Spirit which affect whole classes and nations.

The coming of the Group to Ottawa demonstrated once again that our greatest, deepest need is evidenced in our hunger for the Living Word of God. We witnessed something of that same "desire to hear" of which we read in the Acts of the Apostles, when, as the early witnesses to the Gospel spoke of the things they had seen and heard, "almost the whole city came to hear the Word of the Lord."

We are grateful to our visitors for having stressed anew the truth, that those who will give themselves without reserve or compromise, to be used by God as, and when, and where, He pleases, do receive His Guidance, and that as they follow His leading, they become increasingly sensitive to it.

Then again, they stressed the duty of bearing witness. "The Spirit of Truth shall bear witness of Me, and ye also shall bear witness." There should be fixed firmly in our minds as an axiom of the spiritual life, that experience limits testimony. We can witness only so far as we know. But each changed life should witness. We

here touch one of the weaknesses of the Church, viz.: that the vast majority of professing Christians have been doing no systematic personal work for the unsaved.

The Group came with no harsh criticism of the Church. Credit is given for what has been done—"this ought ye to have done, and not to have left the other undone."

Nor is there the slightest suggestion of a new organization. We welcome their teaching, that this is a condition of life, and a quality of life, which should obtain in every Christian congregation. We shall not forget the sincerity, the joy, the fellowship manifest in every one of their meetings, and the very kindly personal contacts. We thank God for their coming, and rejoice in the "signs following" in our local congregations.

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