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Miscellanea

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ing you. How often have you experienced His magnificent redemption and deliverance! He has called you by your name. How many endearing names did He give to Israel, and in the New Testament, how many names does He give to His believers, calling them His friends, His sheep, His brothers and sisters, His children! How, then, can we doubt that we indeed are His own? If this mighty God is with us, there are no waters so deep and no rivers so rushing that must not obey His word, no fires so hot and no flames so fierce that will not submit to His command, no sorrow so great, no tribulation so crushing, that must not cease at His bidding. This Lord loves you. You are His own, and no man shall pluck you out of His hand. That is the promise which God gives to all His believers. This promise He fulfilled in the life of our deceased sister. The rivers of sorrow could not overwhelm her, could not tear her out of the loving grasp of Him who was with her. He had given her a cheerful disposition, and many a fiery arrow of the old Foe was turned away with a hearty laugh, many a bitter experience shaken off with a bright smile. Especially in her last days her faith rose triumphant, Ps. 73, 23—26. Even the river of death could not swallow her up. The Lord helped her safely through this river to the shores of Canaan. That same Lord has been, and shall be, with you also. At this very moment He is applying His healing balm; the fire of sorrow, far from harming you, shall by His direction rather cleanse and purify you. Rom. 8, 28. Hence fear not.

T. L.

Miscellanea.

Der Paraklet im Johannesevangelium.

über dieses Wort in seinem technischen Sinn schreibt S. Nowindel in „Zeitschrift für neutestamentliche Wissenschaft“ (Heft 2/3, 1933):

„Der Wortsinne des griechischen παράκλητος ist vollkommen klar. Der übliche Sinn im Profangriechisch ist ‚der zur Hilfe Herbeigerufene‘, das heißt, der Fürsprecher, derjenige, der mit Worten für einen andern auftritt und ihm dadurch hilft; im weiteren Sinne kann das Wort ‚Helfer‘ überhaupt bezeichnen. Dieser Wortsinne genügt auch überall im Neuen Testament, wobei es zunächst hingestellt sein mag, ob er mehr nach ‚Fürsprecher‘ oder nach ‚Helfer‘ hin akzentuiert wird. Das Problem entsteht erst dadurch, daß zwischen dem Wortsinne des Titels des Parakleten und den ihm im Johannesevangelium beigelegten Funktionen ein in die Augen springender Unterschied besteht; das berechtigt aber nicht dazu, den Wortsinne des Titels ändern zu wollen. — Hier ist nun aber zu bemerken, daß dem weiteren und allgemeineren Sinne ‚Helfer‘ doch immer etwas vom Charakter des bildlichen oder übertragenen Gebrauches anhaftet; der eigentliche Wortsinne des lebendigen Sprachgebrauches ist Fürsprecher, Anwalt, mit ausgesprochener Neigung in die Richtung des Begriffes ‚Verteidiger‘ hin. Zwar ist der technisch-forensische Gebrauch ‚ratgebender Bei-

stehet, Anwalt, bzw. Verteidiger vor dem Gericht', nicht ausdrücklich bezeugt. Das dürfte Zufall sein; auch im Griechischen ist παράκλητος ein Synonym zu συνήγορος. Παράκλητος wird sowohl als Fürsprecher wie als Helfer besonders von demjenigen gebraucht, der einem vor einem Mächtigeren beisteht, dem irgendwie 'richterliche' Befugnisse — im umfassenden antiken Sinne des Wortes — zustehen. Und es ist nicht bedeutungslos, daß die Lateiner das Wort mit advocatus übersetzen, das eben diesen Sinn hat. Hier muß aber an das oben über das jüdische Gerichtsverfahren Gesagte erinnert werden. Ähnlich waren auch die Verhältnisse in der ganzen Antike. Ο παράκλητος, advocatus, ist nicht [nur] der Berufsanwalt, der von den Angeklagten speziell Engagierte oder Herbeigerufene, sondern ein jeder, der sich vor dem Gericht für ihn einsetzt." F. C. S.

On Memorizing the Scriptures.

Some very significant and thought-provoking words on this topic are offered by O. E. Allison in the *Expositor* of October, 1933, from which we quote: —

"It is simply amazing how one is led through memorizing the Scripture to capture the mind that produced it. Feelings are released from crystallized forms, situations relive with all their dramatic significance, and one becomes conscious of the power of the finest literary technique to be found in any language. . . . We are in constant danger of being cursed by familiarity with the Scriptures, and *the cure for that is a greater familiarity*. Worshipers have unconsciously set their minds not to expect anything vital to happen while the Scriptures are being read. It therefore becomes a revelation when a voice with appreciation and understanding transforms it into a living word. Such a voice speaks with peculiar power to the depths of the heart as no lifeless, careless, and book-bound monotone can. It is the memorizing with appreciation which makes that possible. . . . A minister needs mental background and spiritual tone much more than he needs technical equipment. Facts are useless without clear-sightedness and conviction. Just here is where Scripture-memorizing pays its biggest dividends. There is a literal and practical life in the Word of God, and when it enters as a part of the very fiber of one's thinking, the Word is absorbed and becomes unconsciously a part of one's being. . . . There is about the Bible such a breadth and scope of feeling that it produces in the mind that masters it a kindred sense of the same thing. 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee.'—Not the least element of this poise is the true sense of values that seems automatically to take hold of the Scripture-fed mind. The Book is the product of centuries of experience and meditation. It was produced, in so far as the actual writing of it was concerned, in a comparatively limited period of the racial experience, but it is just as much the product of the last thousand years as of the thousand in which its writers lived. The Book is the product of the testing age as much as it ever was the product of the producing age, and both are of value. The values of the producing age could never hold without the values of the testing age. Therefore to saturate the mind with the Bible is to set up for character and thinking a standard which the ages have approved." P. E. K.

Overcrowding the Professions.

Writing on a topic which embraced this thought, Dr. E. G. Williamson says among other things: "We are perfectly willing to recognize that some of us are capable of becoming better musicians than others, but we still refuse to recognize that our neighbor's children may have greater capabilities with regard to intellectual types of work, social skill, and professional attainment. Until we do recognize these inequalities of capacities, vocational guidance is not possible, since guidance essentially means that individuals shall be guided into those types of work which they can perform satisfactorily. . . . Far too many students want to become lawyers simply because of the supposed financial opulence of these professional men. Other students choose medicine because of an emotional fixation on the physician who saved the life of some member of the family. These and others may be laudable motives, but unfortunately more than good intentions are required for one to carve a successful career out of the mediocre material some of us possess. Not even a skilled workman can make a bird's-eye maple bed from a hedge-tree. In view of decreasing professional opportunities and increasing differentiation of college students on the basis of professional possibilities it becomes necessary for every freshman . . . to take an inventory of his own capabilities. A reasonable attitude to take toward his future profession is to recognize the need for a more careful inventory of his capabilities and interests and a more careful matching of these with those demanded by the profession in which he is interested. . . . In addition, students are given more responsibility than in high school for intelligent use of their leisure moments outside the classroom. These additional responsibilities are oftentimes assumed by students without the necessary habits of responsibility. This one fact of intelligent use of opportunities for independent work and play explains in many cases why students of superior ability do mediocre or even failing work in college."—These factors may easily be transferred to the work of our preparatory schools and our seminaries.

P. E. K.

Buchmanite Invasion of London.

After solemn consecration in St. Paul's Cathedral, October 7, the Buchmanites began their self-appointed task of evangelizing London. Special trains from Oxford and Cambridge brought hundreds of undergraduates for the service. Five hundred young people received a "charge" from the Bishop of London. With the Bishop of London and the Dean of St. Paul's (Dr. Inge) conducting the service, there were between five and six thousand people in the cathedral. Thus the Oxford Group entered upon its project of holding meetings in each of the London boroughs throughout the autumn and winter—public meetings, large and small, in the city, in the suburbs, and in Greater London. (The actual name "Oxford Group" was given, we are now told, by the press in South Africa when a little party of seven Oxford men went out during the Long Vacation.)

Among those who sponsored the movement in the commissioning service and through letters to the press were Dr. L. W. Grensted, Professor of Philosophy of the Christian Religion in Oxford, the Anglican Bishop of Calcutta, military men, and business men. The sponsors testify that in

the movement they have "found a fresh vision of Jesus Christ" and that in the house parties they felt that they "had been in a stirring Christian atmosphere far above the dead-alive of much conventional religion."

However, there has been a great deal of adverse comment on the merits and results of the movement. To begin with, there is a "complete disregard of criticisms, however weighty and damaging." From the public expressions of its advocates nobody would gather that the Oxford Group has aroused against itself a formidable volume of hostile criticism, that its distinctive methods have been heavily challenged, that its teaching is gravely suspected, and that its much-vaunted achievements have been openly denied. The heaviest criticism is launched against the practise of mutual confession, called sharing. Writers in the *London Times* refer to this practise as "spiritual exhibitionism"; and if the character of the confessions is considered, this phrase (= the perversion of sexual instinct which leads the addict to show himself in the nude) is more than apt. From the *New Outlook* (December 21, 1932), a newspaper issued in Toronto and stated to be "published under the authority of the United Church of Canada," the following is quoted: "This meeting was the most unblushing piece of exhibitionism we had ever seen. . . . A meeting for ministers at which matters of sex were discussed will abide as one of the hideous memories of a lifetime." One Oxford correspondent adds the observation: "Their moral lapses are due to their principle of 'sharing,' which saps a man's moral independence."

Other attacks have centered upon the principle of guidance. Countless stories, says one observer, can be told "of duty shirked because of this 'pseudoguidance. . . . 'Guidance' is artificially secured with an infallibility the Pope would envy. . . . Men who have offered themselves for the ministry and who have availed themselves of the Church's time and money have been 'guided' to abandon ordination." More pertinently, another Oxford divine points out the danger "that some of those newly converted, being not yet spiritually sensitive, will mistake wandering voices from their subconsciousness for divine inspiration and thus fall into various follies and fanaticisms." A scientist, Prof. Julian S. Huxley, considers this idea of "special divine guidance" as "a psychological short cut to that sense of certitude which is so agreeable, especially to one who has been a prey to doubt or conflict." The critics do not fail to point out that there is indeed a true "guidance," that is, the determining control of the Christian's conduct by the will of God, that such guidance, in some sense, is to be sought and had of God, and that it comes about simply by the Spirit's "taking of the things of Christ and showing them" to the seeking believer and so gradually "guiding" him "into all truth"—i. e., the whole body of Christian principles for daily living. A correspondent of the *London Times* of September 29 goes still deeper by pointing out that "Buchmanism is nothing less than a recrudescence of the doctrine of the Inner Light which was the motive power of seventeenth-century Puritanism. The religious anarchy prevailing in that period might lead the boldest Evangelical to pause before sponsoring its twentieth-century variant. Doctrinally, the Inner Light is the most dangerous of religious forces, since in practise it comes to mean a supernatural sanction for every

personal eccentricity and places the egotistical element to be found in every man and woman above criticism. Such a creed cannot permanently endure. At the same time the doctrine can do immense harm. Sincere belief which is divorced from human reason is not enough and becomes unimpressive when confused with a crude anthropomorphism, which, logically pursued, must render God responsible for our choice of neckties or whether we choose to eat beef or mutton at luncheon."

The lack of theological background is cited as a sufficient reason for the enthusiast element in Buchmanism. "The movement has no definite standards of doctrine. While the lack of dogmatic commitment enables the movement to include people of greatly differing beliefs, the resultant vagueness tends to deprive it of the element of permanence. How can we aim at a cloudy target? This lack of definition will leave each Grouper largely to his own theories."

Many comments were voiced on the extravagance and luxury of the traveling teams and on the quick disillusionment of the groups organized by the Buchmanites on tour. It is reported that "two years ago there was a gigantic Group campaign in Louisville, Ky., and hundreds of 'conversions' were recorded. When the team visited this town last spring to consolidate their previous work, we found only eleven people who had retained any interest in the Group. In Detroit I found an exact parallel, except that in this case the converts had fallen away in a much shorter time. The grave question arises whether the last state of such disillusioned converts is not worse than the first."

The *London Times* of September 27, in a notable editorial, commented on a meeting of Buchman and his followers at the residence of the Lord Mayor. We quote the following significant expressions: "Certainly the triviality of the experiences shared at yesterday's meeting, the vagueness of the speakers about the new vision they claimed to have received, the refusal to meet criticisms offered in a helpful spirit, are not likely to convince the historic Christian bodies that they have much to learn from Dr. Buchman's methods. . . . How could evil fail to arise in a movement two of whose chief principles are 'sharing' and 'guidance'? It would be astonishing if that hawking round of past sins which goes under the name of sharing should not frequently produce spiritual pride in the sharer and besmirch the minds of those with whom they are shared. It would be incredible if the bulk of the 'guidance' received in 'quiet times' should not consist of submerged thoughts and desires. . . . The way in which we are to expect God normally to guide us is surely through the mind which He has implanted in us for the purpose. . . . Surely the simile of the little leaven that leaveneth the whole lump is much more after the mind of Christ than the volcanic eruptions which have so often passed for Christian evangelism. . . . Every one should be careful to say or do anything that might induce the Group Movement to end as so many past revivals have ended — in the setting up of a new religious communion."

THEO. GRAEBNER.