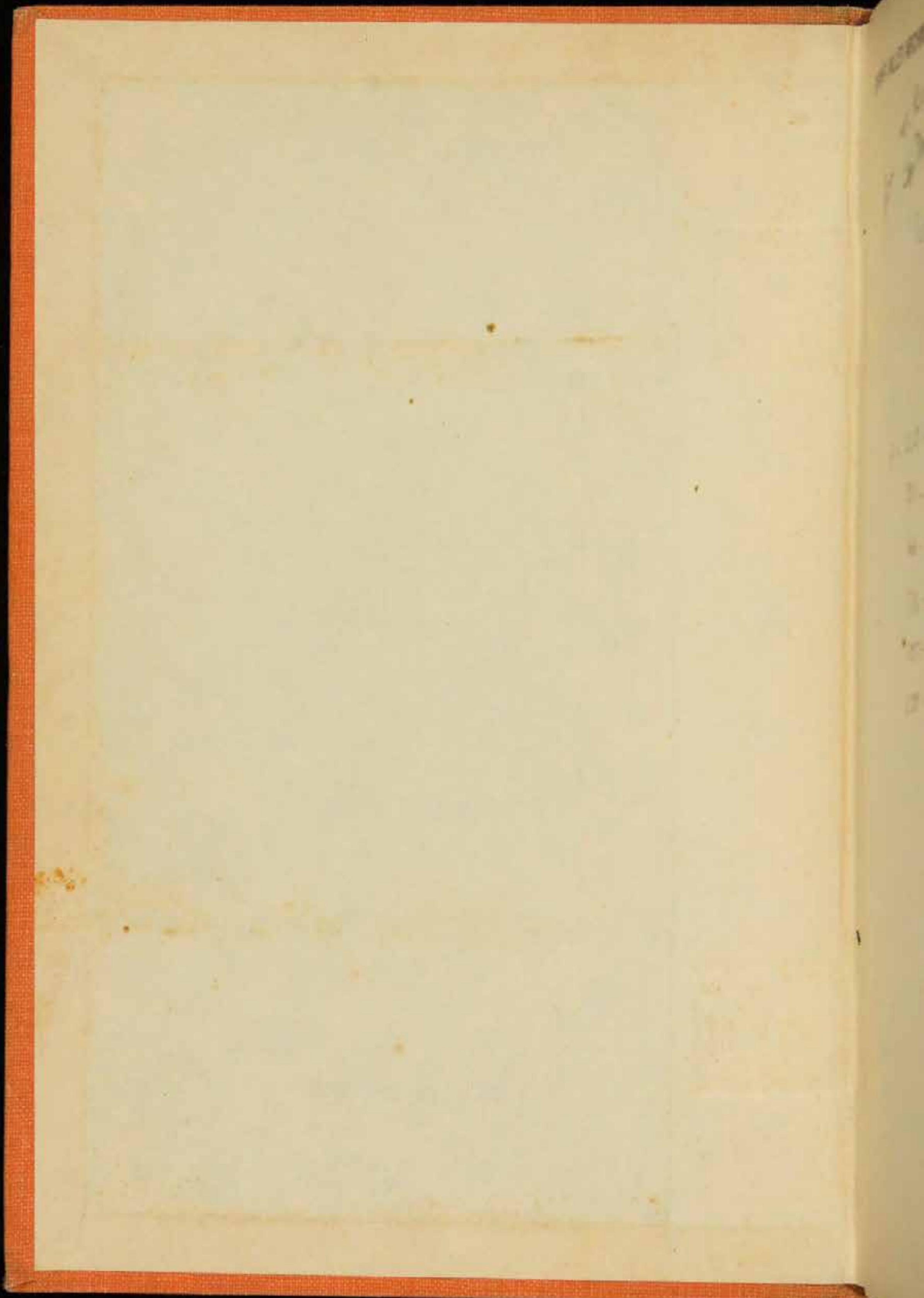


**COMMUNITY
IN BRITAIN**



SPRING VALLEY ARCHIVES

from T. Rowell Havers
to The Society of Brothers
Garden City (Iowa)

Archives

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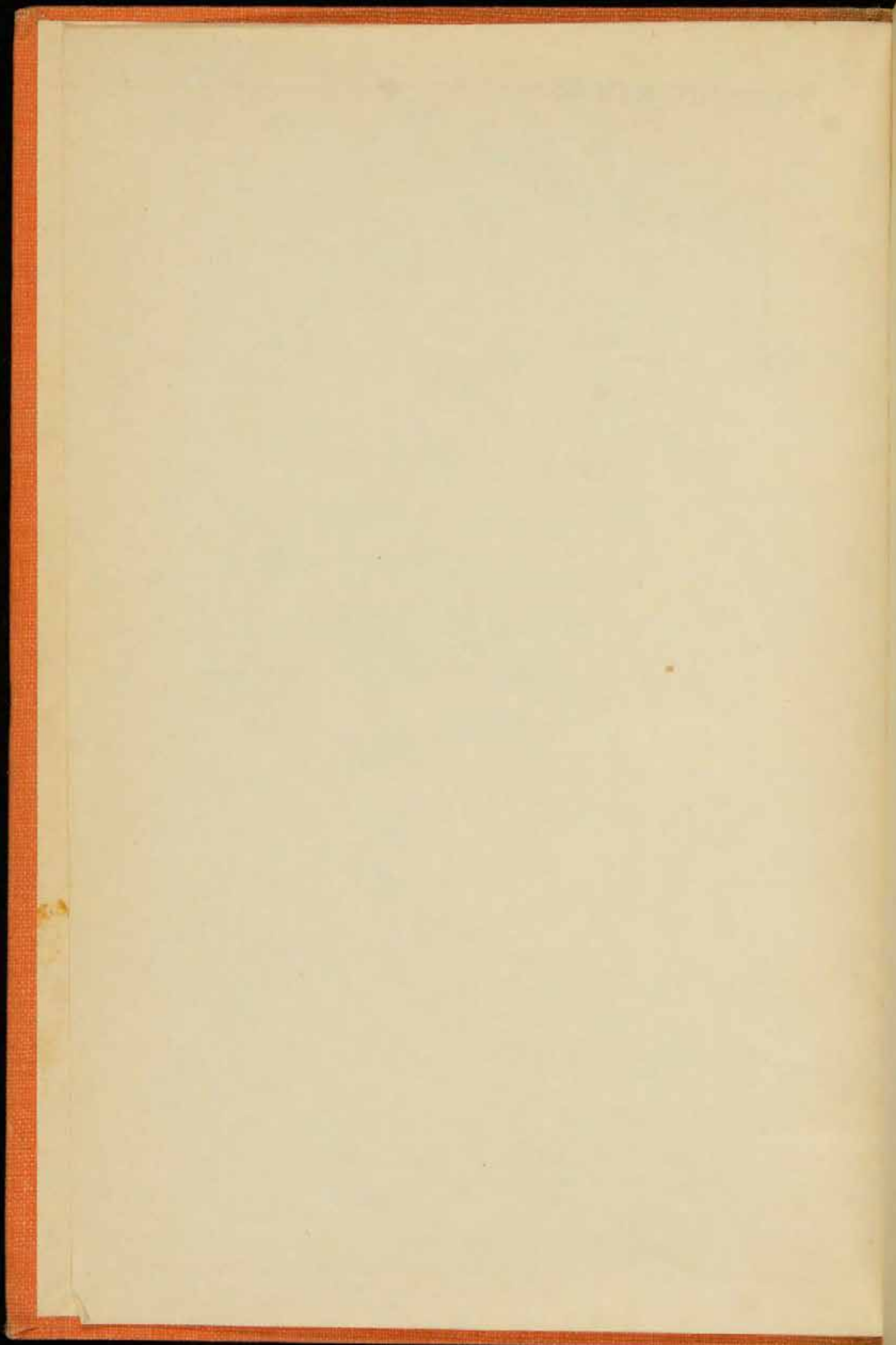
31 - Hugh's settlement

66 - Margery Parker - Gray

76 - Birmingham (A. Pain)

• 107 - Tramp Preachers - Stimson

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IN BRITAIN

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SPRING VALLEY ARCHIVES

COMMUNITY IN BRITAIN

A Survey of Community Thought
and Activity compiled mainly
from addresses given at the
Bath and London
Conferences
in 1937

PUBLISHED BY THE COMMUNITY SERVICE COMMITTEE
AND PRINTED AT THE COTSWOLD BRUDERHOF PRESS

1938

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*To all who in the spirit of
Community have gladly given
their services and their sub-
stance to further the prepar-
ation and the publication of
this book grateful thanks are
due—and in the spirit of
Community are offered.*

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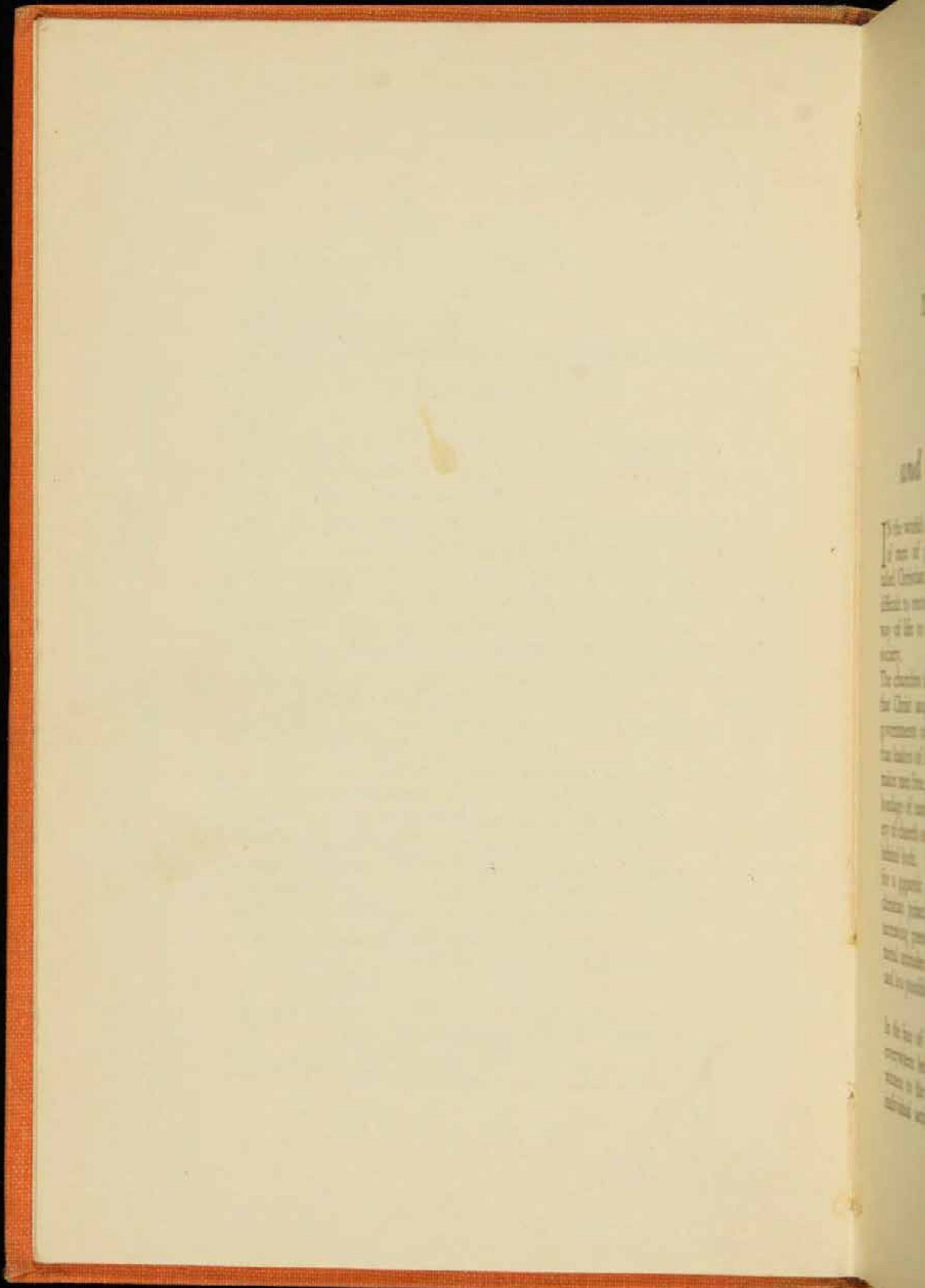
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INTRODUCTORY

Community and the World Crisis

IN the world as it is shaping today large numbers of men of goodwill and particularly of those called Christian Pacifists are finding it increasingly difficult to reconcile what they believe to be a true way of life to the demands of a highly competitive society.

The churches have failed to stand for all the things that Christ taught. The ballot box has produced governments of tacticians and opportunists rather than leaders of the people. Rejecting the truth that makes men free, whole peoples have fallen under the bondage of national gods. Reform of the machinery of church or state is useless, lacking a new spirit behind both. Meantime, world forces are massing for a gigantic clash: the apotheosis of the anti-christian principle in world affairs. The rapidly increasing pressure of events is making non-committal attitudes and comfortable compromises less and less possible.

*

In the face of this situation, men of goodwill are everywhere being led to attempt a more definite witness to the truths they profess—sometimes by individual activity and sometimes by collective

INTRODUCTORY

integration. These attempts necessarily begin on a basis of new relationships—between the individual and the group and between the group and the world at large.

At present such integrations are scattered and largely experimental, but they have in them the vitality of a living faith and a firm conviction. They are taking definite shape with the march of events. The beginnings of a new society are coming into being.

Those seeking this new way of life do not wish to *impose* that way upon others; rather by practical demonstration to lead others freely to integrate themselves with it. They do not set out to reform society: they recognise that reformation must begin with themselves and must spread outwards spontaneously. They do not seek to overthrow the present order: they believe that the present order is in the throes of its own mortal disease. They believe also that the values they stand for are the way of life and health and peace for men and for nations, and that these values can and must be lived out here and now in the midst of the conflict and sickness of our civilisation: *lived* and not merely preached and planned.

They believe in the technique not of revolution but of regeneration. They believe that fulness of life can be realised only in the act of giving, sharing and serving: that getting, holding and exploiting are the ways of death. The end of these ways is being demonstrated all round us today. Violence and self-seeking are taking on the form of a perverted religion and to it are being sacrificed the decencies and securities of life.

Cells, groups and colonies of men and women led by the Spirit of Christ, living freely and gladly in accordance with His teaching and, in accordance with that spirit and teaching, committing themselves

fully to one another, must necessarily constitute a negation of the principal of violence and self-seeking. These are the potential nucleus of a creative order of society, truly Christian and wholly co-operative—an order in which church and state are no longer divided entities but in which the whole of life becomes an act of devotion. The form, the constitution and the immediate function of such living units may be very diverse. Their strength will be in unity of spirit rather than in uniformity of pattern.

*

If a new order of society is to precede the break-up of the present world civilisation, there is no more time for talking. The time has come for the expression of personal conviction in constructive personal activity. There are many signs that this is already happening. The spirit of community is cutting across the formal boundaries of movements, sects and social groups and moving people of very diverse background and personality to wider realisations, greater adventures of faith and more courageous achievements of work.

While the strength of any such new way of life must be spiritual, its ways and means are already defined in principle. Production for use is being demonstrated successfully as an economic alternative to production for profit. The Homecroft plan works out the practical development of production from small holdings, and the growth of co-operative allotments and of community farms provides an extension of the same principle. The Brotherhood Trust Extension Society has produced the framework for a system of co-operative exchange regulated by a barter currency. All these things are open to investigation by those interested in them. Working examples of their application can be found in community experiments already well established. The

INTRODUCTORY

extension of the community principle would allow their wider and increasingly effective application. Between a growing chain of production and service units, a system of co-operative supply and demand is a matter of progressive evolution.

*

These new beginnings are calling to all that is most vital and courageous in youth movements, peace bodies, churches, social clubs and societies. They ask for the best we have in every field of human endeavour—in education and industry, in science and art. Community has been too often represented as a resort of cranks, faddists, and escapists—and certainly its manifestations have not always avoided self-consciousness and mannerisms. But its strength has been and will be in a determination to get back to realities; in its identification with the familiar and the everyday. Indeed, if community calls for something more than common vision, it calls also for nothing less than common sense. In very special measure it demands the allegiance of people of real breadth and balance, with practical gifts for organisation and administration and with a sunny sanity and a saving sense of humour.

*

That ideals and efficiency cannot live together is a fallacy easily fostered by slipshod practice. Against slipshod practice, community will set its face. Single-minded group co-operation can and ought to produce better results than any form of enterprise with one eye on its competitors and the other on its profits. Materially as well as spiritually, community stands for a better job as well as a fuller life.

At the outset, indeed, its way must needs be the way of all pioneers. Communities to-day are advance posts of a new order pushed out to the very fringes of the old. They find themselves on the border

line of country that is alien and that may presently become hostile. Their life is simple and hazardous. Their only certain resources are, first and last, the resources of the spirit. To any of us whose conceptions of civilisation have become epitomised in a tiled bathroom, their ménage may sometimes seem spartan. But it is less spartan than a front line trench in wartime and in its own way community is also in the front line. "Seeking first the Kingdom of God," it believes that tiled bathrooms and all else needful will in good time be added. Meanwhile there is work to be done.

*

It is good that we who realise these things should come sometimes together to share our convictions. It is good that we should know what others like-minded—the pioneers of a new order—are doing. It is good that we should take counsel with one another. But it is not good *enough*. The urge to action can too often become dissipated in overmuch talking. Conferences are valuable just in so far as they lead to a constructive effort and not simply to another conference. Conviction should make us impatient of sitting in chairs. Counsels ought to be counsels of action.

"Be not hearers of the word but doers also" is a message that needs to be written up large behind the platform of every community gathering: a challenge to those of us who are too greatly addicted to reading and listening. That indeed must be the text for every community report that seeks not simply to record events but to shape them. It is the message and the challenge of this little book.

H.S./L.S.

*Community Service Committee,
Bow, London, E. 3.
January 1938.*

PREFACE

Building a New Britain

THE following pages outline some brief descriptions of a number of activities. These are being carried on in the hope that they will add, each in its own way, to the building of a new social order. Through all their diversity, the reader will trace two parallel elements. There is the personality—the faith and the steadfastness—of those concerned in them: and there is the plan, more or less well defined, to which they are working.

The relative importance attached to these elements in the different schemes varies considerably but both of them are necessary to success. Without willing and well-equipped men and women to implement them, the best laid plans are useless, while much honest effort may be robbed of full fruition through an insufficiency of thought.

*

And so we see the motive of service working itself out, sometimes as a new manifestation of vital Christianity; sometimes as a vigorous attempt to interpret social or political philosophy on the plane of action. The significance of all these experiments lies indeed in their spirit rather than in their size or even their immediate success. It is a far cry from 1899 when the Whiteway Colonists turned their backs on convention and sought to set up a

PREFACE

model of what they conceived that society might one day become. Yet after forty years, the Cotswold Bruderhof is repeating the experiment in a new context but with an unfailing confidence in the practical possibility of a "life based on love."

Moreover we are witnessing today the evidences of this same spirit not only in relatively large organised movements such as the Order of Friends, the International Voluntary Service for Peace, and John Hoyland's Work Camps. We are seeing them break out also in small but not less courageous and significant ventures all over the country. Bert Over distributing to those who need rather than to those who can buy; the Community of the Way kindling a bright little flame of fellowship and hope amongst the drabness of unemployment in East London; the "Community Shop" at Salford where no money changes hands; the thousand distressed homes who have discovered the meaning of friendship-by-post—these are a few, and only a few, of many evidences that can be traced through the pages that follow. Like straws, they show the set of a silent current running strongly below the surface of our everyday life in Britain.

*

Many of these experiments are truly ventures of faith, but equally devoted people are striking out boldly by methods which depend on a carefully worked-out system and which are capable of application on the widest scale. These also are seeking here and now to eliminate the profit motive and to foster the principles and practice of co-operation. Equitable exchange of goods and services through the medium of a barter currency, first visualised by the Production for Use League as a local expedient for unemployed men, is now taking shape as an economic basis for a classless community.

Whether conceived in Professor Scott's terms as "homecrofts," in Brinsley Nixon's as village communities; as communal colonies such as the Bruderhof or as all these together, Community sets itself uncompromisingly against the worship of the golden calf and, so far as its internal life is concerned, is able frequently to carry on without the use of money at all.

*

On a broader basis we watch also the Co-operative Movement, both Distributive and Productive, building up a huge organisation on a well-defined plan in the hope that human nature may rise, however slowly to the level of the principle it embodies. This movement has been described as "a sprig of Owenism grafted on to a stock of common sense"—a very apt statement of the relationship between idealism and the average. The possibilities of this great movement, interpreted in terms of the new trend towards co-operative *living*, will hardly fail to occur to everyone who studies the talks that follow.

*

Still wider in its influence lies the sphere of political action. Here we are concerned almost entirely with the removal of obstacles and the provision of opportunity on the National scale. It works slowly but nevertheless it moves. The attention given of recent years to the distressed areas and to slum clearance is an example which can be judged on its own merits.

*

Yet behind and beneath all this, is striving another kind of activity to which our attention will be called repeatedly in this book. It is the deep and earnest searching by prophets, mystics and thinkers after the true psychological, moral and religious foundations upon which any new order must be built if it

PREFACE

is to endure. Here, too, is a growing concern for the many obscure and ordinary men and women who are working for the cause amidst perpetual discouragement and difficulty—how are they to be guided, helped and inspired in their uphill task? Whether we think in terms of religious conviction or of social policy, it is becoming clear that we must be prepared to *live* what we hold as well as to believe and proclaim it. The outward and visible change is being held back because so few have experienced the necessary inward change and are willing to face up to its implications.

*

This is the ultimate lesson of the Community Conferences that have taken place during the past year. Some light has been thrown on method and organisation; some co-ordination of activity has been visualised; some mobilising of interest begun. But the true line of progress lies in the psychological and religious sphere. Economic change must have a spiritual basis. Persons must be prepared as well as plans.

Stanford-le-Hope
Essex. 1938.

THOMAS DENT.

COLONIES AND SETTLEMENTS

The Cotswold Bruderhof— a Christian Community

THE Cotswold Bruderhof at Ashton Keynes, Swindon, Wiltshire, was founded in March 1936 as a daughter settlement of both the Rhoenbruderhof, near Frankfurt in Germany, and the Almbruderhof in Liechtenstein, near Switzerland. The community, therefore, is the direct continuation of the group which started to live together in 1920 in Germany, in the little village of Sannerz, near Schluechtern, under the leadership of the late Dr. Eberhard Arnold (1883-1935). Dr. Arnold, having been the General Secretary of the Student Christian Movement in Germany for many years, and a leader in the Youth Movement, was deeply disquieted by the failure of the organised churches to carry out the will of God, which he saw to be true community and fellowship among men, that is, a life of justice, peace, purity and simplicity. In these ideas he was not alone, for a great number of the younger generation in Germany was at that time seeking for a new order of life, based on the principles of true freedom, love and universality. Little communities sprang into being all over Germany and the small group which gathered together in Sannerz was only one among them. It is the only one which has survived without having surrendered any of its principles. It has rather been enabled to give a clearer witness of them. The reason is to be found in the religious basis of its life.

(1) *The Spiritual foundation.* From the very beginning it was clear to the group in Sannerz that the only foundation for a true life, as they were trying to live it, was to be found in Jesus Christ. Not in the misinterpreted and misunderstood Christ of organised church religion, or of sectarian narrowness, or of liberal humanitarianism, but in the living Christ who is a potent force, working within men and changing their lives, and using, in true freedom, all their energies, gifts and talents for his purpose.

More than anything it was the Sermon on the Mount, the farewell speeches of Jesus, and his prayer "that all might be one" (John, Ch. xiv-xvii) which, together with the whole teaching of the prophets and apostles, showed them a clear way of life, and helped them to find a solution for the most urgent problems, not only of their time but of our day and of all times. Firstly, there was the question of war, or the attitude of Christians to the state; secondly, the question of property, or the attitude towards the right use of material things; thirdly, the question of the right relationship of men and women, or the attitude towards sex; and fourthly, the question of the social problems of man, or the attitude towards work. On the one hand, it was clearly seen that the way of love and justice precludes Christians from many things which are now accepted by the organised churches and their following. On the other hand, it was strongly felt that the attitude of Christ and his followers to life in all its different aspects is a positive one. This idea, applied to these four main problems, led to the following conclusions: Firstly, it is evident that no follower of Christ can take part in war or any other destruction of man, nor can he, as representative of God's love, actively promote the order of law; that is, followers of Christ cannot be judges, magistrates, or policemen,

or hold other legislative or administrative government posts. On the other hand, the way of Christ cannot be a pure negation. Refusal to fight, refusal to make or to enforce law, should be followed by the building up of a positive witness where *love* is the "law" which rules over every sphere of a life outside, and yet within, the unchristian order of force and compulsion. This leads to true community.

Secondly, it was strongly felt that a Christian could not hold private property or lend his active support to a system which is based on the profit motive. Christ's words about the rich are clear enough for anybody who is prepared to accept them. It was felt that if men are brothers in spirit with all those who wish to follow Christ, they cannot be unbrotherly in the economic sphere. Positively, this means sharing, or community of goods, which follows spontaneously where the Spirit of Jesus Christ grips men and takes entire possession of them. As we read in the Acts of the Apostles: "Now there was but one heart and soul among the multitude of the believers; not one of them considered anything his personal property, they shared all they had with one another. There was not a needy person among them, for those who owned land or houses would sell them and bring the proceeds of the sale, laying the money before the feet of the apostles; it was then distributed according to each individuals' need." (Acts iv). The negation of private property and the injustices which it incurs therefore leads to the positive way of sharing, and to a voluntary communism in love.

Thirdly, it was realised that in the same way as the co-operative and communal elements in human life are abused in the state, and the material things given to mankind abused in private property and the

resultant capitalism, so also the creative gifts and powers which are given to man for the propagation of the species are terribly abused, with most disastrous results. In Christ all impurity is strongly attacked and renounced. Although a few are definitely called to a celibate life because it gives them more freedom to serve their fellow men, the majority of men and women will find the true fulfilment of their creative powers in monogamous marriage. It was felt that the unity of two people in marriage, and the family group which springs from them in their children, is the first and natural stage of true community. In keeping with the pure spirit of Christ, absolute purity is demanded from his followers both before, outside and in marriage. More than that, all misuse and interference with the creative powers within marriage, as propagated in our times for social, economic and other reasons, was strongly rejected. In short, true marriage and true family life, where husband and wife are deeply united in spirit, soul and body, became the cell of a true community fellowship.

Fourthly, all barriers of social distinction, birthright, property, class or caste had to be rejected, and brotherly co-operation in true community took its place. All work is equal, whether it is manual, mental, artistic or spiritual, and if this attitude is really taken no economic inequalities can grow out of the different occupations of man. Men should not only work for their daily bread, which is essential for everyone ("He who does not work, shall not eat"), but work is also definitely the spiritual task of man, because it means attaining mastery over the material things which are to be won for God and for the fellowship of men. In short, to work for private ends is sin. To work for God, for and in community, is the true calling of man. All work

must be creative and therefore artistic, even the simplest manual work.

To summarise, the attempt to solve the main problems of human life led to their positive solution in a practical, communal life which was and is by no means an escape from reality, but a real witness for peace, justice, creative purity, brotherly equality and a positive attitude to work. In such a life entirely different standards from those usually accepted in society apply, and separation and departmentalisation are overcome in the harmonious co-operation of people in a life which is not disintegrated, but one complete whole.

From what has been said, it is evident that we cannot solve any particular problem in itself or on its own merit, but only in connection with the whole. The original source and cause of a new life in community is *unity*. All the particular problems of life find their solution in connection with the whole. So the individual cannot find his true vocation within and for *himself*, but within and for the *community*. In contradiction, therefore, to the ideas represented by a large section of those who are seeking for community, it must be said emphatically that true co-operation cannot be achieved by compromise between individualism and the communal principle, but only by the complete surrender of the individual to the ultimate Will, which leads to community. True community, therefore, is a new unit or entity, which can only be fully achieved if its parts or components, that is to say the individuals, give themselves wholeheartedly to the highest Cause, which is God, or unity, or love, call it whichever we will, in whom originates all true fellowship. To use a simple parable, a loaf of bread has more value than a number of grains of corn. But in order to make the loaf, the grains have to sacrifice their

individuality, that is, their separate existence, and be ground into flour, which is then mixed with water and baked into bread. The grains are thus fulfilling their highest purpose. So individuals who seek for true community, which is the higher unit, have to undergo the same process spiritually.

Only sacrifice of our individualism, or our selfishness, can lead us to union with God, whose ultimate will for all is community, and who himself is the source and cause of all community. Union with God leads to union with all those who by sacrificing themselves undergo the same absolute change. This is in the beginning a spiritual or mystical experience, but from it grows a new attitude to the real and material problems of life. Only through death can be find resurrection. Only the end of our own lives, of our own will, of our own works, can make us represent and be instruments of God's life, God's will, God's work. Therefore non-participation in war and the building up of the city of peace, community of goods, of work and of everyday life, including pure marriage and true family life, is the logical fruit or outcome of the inner experience of spiritual union with God and with one another. All this can be summarised in the simple commandment, the greatest in the New Testament and for all time and Eternity: "You must love the Lord your God with your whole heart, with your whole soul, and with your whole mind. This is the greatest and chief command. There is a second like it; you must love your neighbour as yourself."

(2) *The history.* The community, when it started in Sannerz in 1920, was a centre of a large section of the German Youth Movement, the New Work Group (Neuwerk-Bewegung). Later on, when the

Youth Movement either left its principles and went back to organised religion or became more and more nationalistic, thus preparing the way for National Socialism, the little group struggled on in the background, but remained in close contact with the Pacifist and Socio-religious movement in Germany, in the main European countries and in America. Until the advent of National Socialism it was regarded as the settlement of the pacifist section of the Free German Youth Movement (Freideutscher Werk-Bund). From the beginning there was very close association and friendship with the Quakers and similar circles in Germany.

The community grew until it was found necessary to find a place with more facilities for expansion than the house at Sannerz. A farm was bought in 1926 some ten miles away in the Rhoen hills, and was called the "Rhoenbruderhof." The community had its own publishing house and edited a monthly periodical and a series of books called "Sources of Christian Witness throughout the Centuries." From the early days it had its own school. Later on farming and gardening became more important, but the publishing and educational work were fully retained and further developed, and other branches of work such as craftwork, printing, carpentry, smithing and building were begun.

In 1933 when Hitler gained power in Germany, the community had about one hundred and twenty members, including children, and economically its prospects were promising. But because it stood for peace and justice and opposed the racial doctrine of National Socialism, the community came into great difficulties. Its school was closed and most of the orphan children which the community was educating were taken away by the authorities. As it was found impossible, for reasons of conscience,

to send the remaining children to a state school, the Almbruderhof was founded in the spring of 1934, in the little principality of Liechtenstein, for the sole purpose of educating the children in accordance with the community's principles.

Another difficulty arose in Germany in connection with compulsory military service, which came into force in the spring of 1935. This was met at first by most of the men of military age going to Almbruderhof. In 1936, the Liechtenstein authorities refused those members who were wanted by the German military authorities permission to remain in Liechtenstein, so it was necessary to find a third place in a country less dominated by German influence. As the British Government was sympathetic and helpful, it was possible to found the Cotswold Bruderhof in England in March 1936. Apart from the reasons mentioned, the growing interest and understanding for the Bruderhof witness and way of life which had made itself felt in England since 1933-34 was the deciding factor in the Bruderhof's coming to this country.

In April 1937 the situation in Germany came to a head and the Rhoenbruderhof was dissolved by the Secret State Police, its property confiscated and its members forced to leave the country. Some of them found a home at the Cotswold Bruderhof and some went to the Almbruderhof. When Austria was annexed by Germany the Almbruderhof also had to be given up and its members came to the Cotswold Bruderhof in March 1938. This step had been anticipated for some time, as the position of the Almbruderhof, 4,500 feet up in the mountains, made a permanent economic basis for the community there impossible. The Cotswold Bruderhof at Ashton Keynes is now the only settlement of the movement in existence in Europe.

From the very beginning the community had sought to find other groups with a similar outlook and way of life in order to unite with them, as there was no intention of remaining a separate group. It was not until about 1928 that a direct contact was established with the Hutterian Communities in Canada and the United States, about which Eberhard Arnold had some previous knowledge through his historical studies. After much deep consideration and correspondence with these communities, Eberhard Arnold went over to Canada and united with the Hutterians on behalf of the community. They also gave him the charge of a Minister of the Word, and the task of building up the Bruderhof in Europe. The principles which the Cotswold Bruderhof has in common with the Hutterian Brothers, who have been in existence for four hundred years, have been outlined in the preceding paragraphs.

(3) *Description of the Bruderhof.* At the Cotswold Bruderhof there live two hundred and twenty men, women and children (in July, 1938), of several nationalities, mainly German, Swiss, British and Dutch. As there are nearly ninety children, educational work is one of the most important activities. The children are divided into three main groups: the babies (up to two-and-a-half years), the kindergarten (from two-and-a-half to six years), and the School children. During the day all children are in one of these three sections, whilst the mothers are helping with the work. English, German and Swiss teachers, kindergarten teachers and nurses look after the children, about fifteen people being engaged in this work.

Apart from the housework, which includes cooking, washing, baking, cleaning, sewing, etc., the members

of the Bruderhof are engaged in the following branches of work :

Firstly, farming and gardening. Nearly two hundred acres are pasture and there are also one hundred acres of arable land, including ten acres of garden. A tuberculin-tested herd of seventy Shorthorn dairy cattle is kept. Part of the milk is sold and part of it consumed by the large household. Further live stock includes one hundred and twenty Shropshire sheep, four horses, two working oxen and a pony. The community has amongst its members a veterinary surgeon who looks after the cattle. A large poultry section of more than one thousand birds is one of the most successful branches of the community's activities. In addition to this, thirty beehives are kept. The arable land produces the corn for the community's bread and potatoes for the household, and also fodder for the cattle. Most important for the maintenance of the household is the garden of ten acres which produces all the vegetables required. Some fruit trees have already been planted. The whole farm and garden are worked by modern scientific methods, although it is essential that the natural conditions of rural life should not be destroyed.

The other large branch of work is the publishing, printing and bookbinding department. The Cotswold Bruderhof is publishing a quarterly journal called "The Plough: Towards the Coming Order," and also books for the promotion of its ideals together with publications for the Hutterians in America.

Smaller branches of work include wood-turning, carpentry, smithing and similar occupations. For the furtherance of intellectual work the community has a large collection of about ten thousand books, mainly German and English. Lectures are held periodically throughout the year, and every individual

has also, as far as time permits in the present pioneering stage, ample opportunity for education through music, both vocal and instrumental, folk-dancing, and other arts and crafts.

The working day is broken up by three meal times, breakfast, dinner and supper, which are held in common. During the meals, talks are given about various subjects, guests are welcomed and views exchanged, and there is much spontaneous singing. The evenings close with a devotional meeting or a meeting where practical issues are discussed by the brotherhood which is responsible for the whole life. From time to time people are sent out to give addresses in various parts of England and the continent, and a great number of visitors are received every year, including many unemployed, refugees or other destitute people, whom the community endeavours to help to the best of its ability.

Recently the community has started work in a large industrial city, since the Handsworth Group (vide p. 76), united themselves with the Bruderhof. The house at 11 Handsworth New Road, Winson Green, Birmingham is called "The Bruderhof House" and is used as a centre and meeting-place for all those interested in a Christian community life in the Birmingham area.

The brotherhood elects various responsible members for the different departments of work and for the general well-being of the community in spiritual and material things. The whole life of the Bruderhof can be compared to a living organism, the centre of which is the love which comes from Christ and which expands into and penetrates all spheres and branches of life, and brings into being a new Christian commonwealth.

EBERHARD C. H. ARNOLD.

*The Cotswold Bruderhof,
Ashton Keynes, Wilts.*

Hugh's Settlement— an Experiment in Collectivity

THE scheme of Hugh's Settlement stands for certain ideas left behind him by a man who was killed during the Great War. As he was killed, it was left to his friends to bring his ideas down to the earth. The central idea of the scheme is its plan of adolescent education, based on the agreed fact that we learn better from experience than when taught by other people—that in fact education should be through life, and a part of life, rather than regarded as a preparation *for* life. Thus the Colony takes the place of the school, and the adolescents are not so much taught by teachers as enabled to learn from more experienced workers in one or other of the industrial branches of the Colony. Academic education, in addition, takes place during approximately half of the youngster's working day.

The unit in the organization is the squad of four, working in alternate pairs under its adult leaders—part time on industrial work and part time on academic education. The plan has to be seen, I think, in order to be thoroughly understood, but we have found, not only that it has many educational advantages, but that it is also satisfactory to the adults concerned, as they are able thereby to deal with a larger share of work.

The research work which resulted in the reduction of the scheme to a concrete plan took place between 1919 and 1923. During that time the pioneers

were engaged on house building, poultry farming, market gardening, bee keeping, rabbit breeding for fur, etc., while a beginning was made with craft work.

And there the research work ended—chiefly, I think, because we realised that the foundations were not yet laid deep enough. You see, one colony is not sufficient for a scheme of this kind: if you mean to break with the industrial system, you must make a complete break, and one colony cannot supply the colonists with all the prime necessities of life. Let us take an example. Three prime products are coal, sea fish and farm produce. It is impossible for these three commodities to be produced from the same piece of land or water, nor is it advisable to attempt such a combination.

Thus we found ourselves faced with two fresh problems—to work out the implications of Production for Use as opposed to trading for profit, and secondly the implications of the financial principles necessary to extend the financial machinery so that investment may reach directly (*a*) adults, on the security of their character and earning powers; (*b*) children (through adult sureties), for the development of their potential assets.

While we were working out these problems, two other groups appeared, having precisely these objects in view, and to that extent we were encouraged. One of them, the Production for Use League, is represented here today.

The result has been that, for a good many years past now, the land at Hugh's Settlement has been marking time—and yet perhaps I should not say that, for during the interval it has been found advisable to register the enterprise within a legal framework, so that there are today 60 shareholders with an issued capital of approximately £2,000 and the Settlement

has now a wide connection. But what we have primarily been waiting for is the emergence of other, like-minded groups, and, sure enough, they have now made their appearance. Some have been born and have died. Some, like ourselves, are still grimly holding on, whilst, judging from our meeting here this afternoon, yet others have just been born or are about to be born, and I suggest that one of the next questions you will have to face is whether it will be better to concentrate on one or two Settlements, and allow these, when full, to swarm like bees for the creation of new hives, or whether it is going to be possible for different groups to develop heterogeneously along different lines, in the hope that they may ultimately "tune in" through the medium of some federation. Well—the future will show.

One thing must be clear, I think to all those who have experimented in this field, and that is that there is a very great deal to be learnt, and it does seem a pity that the same elementary mistakes should be made again and again, for these at least can be avoided by giving heed to the experience of others.

For the rest, we have at Quarley a beautiful stretch of country—about one hundred and twenty acres of it—lying some seventy-five miles west of London; we have the advantage of a Company's water supply—a most unusual amenity in a rural area—and the electric Grid is less than a mile away.

At Quarley we pin our faith in chalk, which has not only given us an admirable and inexpensive method of building and road-making—which has not yet reached finality—but has a number of other industrial uses as well.

In conclusion I will repeat the words used in your programme: Hugh's Settlement is an "experiment in Collectivity." It stands for team-work both

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within the Group and between Groups, and I doubt whether an experiment on any smaller lines can be a worth-while contribution in face of the great problems we have set ourselves to solve.

BRINSLEY NIXON.

*Hugh's Settlement,
Quarley, Hants.*

Whiteway Colony—the Story of a Pioneer Experiment

IN October 1898, a small group of idealistic socialists, inspired by Tolstoy's teaching and the necessity of getting back to the land, decided to start a colony. Pooling their resources, land was bought on the Cotswold Hills, near Stroud, and the experiment began. This land was bought in the names of three of the group, and the conveyance deed was burnt, as a gesture, to show the land was no longer private property but free to all who chose to join the community. From the cultivation of the land the community was to live.

The group, about twelve in number, was absolutely communistic, sharing everything, even clothes, and putting their money into the common fund. This becoming soon exhausted, they endured great hardships, but the strong spirit of brotherhood made it into a splendid experience. Goodwill and freedom were the watchwords, and voluntarism the dominant factor.

No pledge or promise was ever asked; it was taken for granted each individual would gladly share in the necessary work. The wish to join was taken as evidence of sincerity. But, alas, this proved not to be so. Reluctantly, we were forced to abandon the communal living and land cultivation, which did not thrive on such amateurish labour. The burden of the work, both domestic and on the land, was borne by the few original colonists. Therefore,

individual plots were decided upon, to be cultivated by the holder for his own use, the responsibility for providing his sustenance resting on his own efforts. This acted as a purge, and some straightway left—considering the arrangement “unbrotherly.” Money relations with the outside world became necessary, for we began to build little homes, which were rated and tithed.

Each person solved this problem in his own way, usually working for some farmer as a day labourer. I may say here that under communism we never solicited help—or expected it. Small cheques occasionally came from sympathisers, but our aim was to live on our produce, some never touching any food they had not grown themselves. It was in the eyes of outsiders mere existence, but we considered we lived.

After the plot system was developed, we found it necessary to evolve some kind of community control; at first, very vague. Monthly meetings were held, but there was no force behind any decisions of the Colony. However, majority rule by voting was later decided upon. To supplement the land work, Handicrafts were introduced: weaving, leather work, sandal making and high-class furniture, the last two being still carried on. A hall was also built, entirely by voluntary labour and monetary contributions for socials, dances, plays and lectures. The Colony has had a chequered career, community life recently being rendered almost impossible chiefly on account of the entirely different calibre of the late comers, some appearing merely desirous of obtaining land for nothing, and then absolutely disregarding the social claims of the Community. I think our mistake was that we imagined we could jump straight into a system of pure voluntarism from inside the Capitalistic system, missing out the

necessary intervening steps of Socialism leading to Communism. Many generations need to be educated on these lines before the real philosophic Anarchism, wherein man is fit and able to be a law unto himself, can be established.

As one of the first colonists, having lived on the Colony for 37 years, all I can say is that here I have been able to live a happy, useful, simple life, and that, had I my time over again, I would ask nothing better than to do the same again, that is, provided there were the same fine disinterested group of people that we had in the beginning.

NELLIE SHAW

*Whiteway Colony,
Cotswold, Gloucester.*

Stapleton—The Brotherhood Church and its Colony

THE Brotherhood Church was founded nearly forty years ago, but it was not until 1921 that it was able to start a "colony" on the land.

Most Churches are sectarian, *i.e.*, they embody only a portion of the Christian teaching in their preaching, but the Brotherhood Church has endeavoured to avoid this sectarianism by recognising that the whole of Christ's teaching must be taken as the basis of a Church, and that there can be no hard and fast rules of membership which seem to be necessary in a "corporate" organisation, but which at the same time create barriers against those who are of the Spirit of Christ but may be in another sect.

The object of the Brotherhood Church in securing land, was to be able to dedicate that land wholly to the service and jurisdiction of God. Everybody realises to some extent that the methods of Christ, and the methods of the State, of legal authority, are vastly different, but few realise that the two represent an absolute antithesis. The methods of coercion are anti-christian, and in consequence the Brotherhood Church has always refused to recognise the State and its coercion, and has put a moral standard in the place of a legal standard. It seeks to retain the freedom which Christ and the martyrs won for us, and which we have to keep on winning. It further rights, within its own organisation and in its relation to the outside world, principles of economic justice, and does away with those monopolistic charges of Rent, Interest and Profit particularly,

by which the State enslaves the workers of the country in the interests of the privileged classes. Morally speaking, man can only be responsible for what he can personally control, and therefore it is true to say that he can live in such a community as this without any compromise.

The Brotherhood Church seeks to establish the rule of Christ in the lives of its members, and refuses to tolerate the control of the coercive State over its actions. The Brotherhood Church has never sought to proselytise, it seeks to act as a leaven, and consequently it cannot claim a large number of members practising its principles, but its life and teaching have had quite considerable effects, and by willingness to endure to the end under persecution, its community have established their freedom from State and local government interference in many directions.

Naturally the most harassing of problems has been that of finance. The refusal to submit plans to the local coercive authority has led to the loss of three houses. These were destroyed by the authority, not because they were badly built, but because the Church would not acknowledge the authority's claim to interfere in a matter which concerned them alone. As one prominent newspaper pointed out, the action taken under an Act "to better working-class housing" had resulted in the owners of perfectly good houses being made homeless, and it strongly criticised the authorities for acting out of the spirit of the Act. As a matter of fact, such is the blindness of those who wield coercive power, that they overstepped the legal bounds as well as the moral ones, and conclusively proved our case that they were not in power for people's good, but to gratify their tyrannous predilections. Naturally we did not take action against them, but we have withheld rates since that time as a protest.

The right of the Church to control its own education without seeking the consent of the State has also led to difficulties. This persecution has been overcome, but education does present difficulties in a small community without financial resources to pay for private schooling, but these difficulties are being dealt with as they arise. Any practical help in this connection would be appreciated.

We have no "plans" for the future, except to carry on, taking no thought for the morrow, but to do the work (and there is plenty of it) which is at hand. Naturally this does not mean that we do not think about our work, it means that we are prepared to face new problems as they arise and settle them on Christian principles.

Our material activities consist in cultivating our land, we have one greenhouse only, continuing our knitting industry (which we used to support ourselves by before we got land), and in keeping bees. We have about 50 colonies of bees at present, and are endeavouring to make this line more prominent. We have been hampered in this by lack of capital, and have built up all the equipment, from a couple of hives.

We would welcome the interest of any individual in our work and propaganda. The help one might get naturally depends on a variety of factors. Particularly with regard to work, would we welcome interest taken in our knitting industry. We have seven machines and do nothing but good quality socks, stockings, and knitted garments.

We have published leaflets and pamphlets from time to time dealing with Christian principles in relation to topical subjects. We should be glad to send inquirers some, and should be glad to get in touch with other communities.

A. G. HIGGINS.

*The Brotherhood Church,
Stapleton, Yorks.*

CAMPS AND SERVICES

The Unemployed—Hope of a New England

THERE are some of us who believe that the unemployed are the real hope of a new England: and that the sufferings—through which they are now passing will prove to be a long, dark tunnel, leading out into daylight and hope, not only for themselves but for many others.

In order to show that this is not a mere fancy, I want to describe some of the Production-for-Use co-operative land-enterprises now being run by unemployed men. I know a little about them, because for some six or seven years I have been engaged in the work of trying to get teams of students, schoolboys and (more recently) school-girls to help these unemployed groups in what is often a very hard job—that of getting rough land under cultivation. In the unemployed groups there is always a percentage of men unable to work their own plots, as a result of malnutrition, old age, accident whilst still in work, or other similar reasons. The student teams dig their plots for these men. They live two by two in the men's homes, and thus get to know the problem of unemployment from within. In the case of the girls' teams a certain amount of time is spent on land-work; but help is also given with the children, by running play-centres.

First of all, then, an ordinary allotment association for unemployed men. I will choose Burnley, under

the shadow of Pendle Hill, from which George Fox, the founder of the Quakers, saw his vision of a great people to be gathered. He might see that vision still; for there are some 8,000 unemployed people in Burnley alone, and thousands more in the neighbouring towns. We had a team of students there last September, helping a few of these unemployed men to work their 300 square yard plots. It isn't much ground; but if it is well worked, it will bring in an average fourpennyworth of extra food to the family larder for every day of the year. One of the men with whom we were working said to me, "I'm often so hungry, I could eat this grass." Another told me that the job he used to be doing in a paper factory, and with it the jobs of twenty-nine other men, are all being done now, owing to the introduction of new machinery, by one girl who has just left school.

Then the quarter-acre allotments. They bring in, if they are well worked, something like eight or nine shillings worth of extra food per week. I remember a place in one of the Welsh coal-valleys, where not long ago we were co-operating with a splendid group of men in getting such quarter-acres under weigh. They had had their poultry some time; and one of them took me into his larder, during a tea-party to which he invited me, and showed me a fine bowl of eggs on a shelf, and a huge sack of potatoes on the floor. He said to me, "The chief terror of being unemployed was the feeling of insecurity, but since I've had my plot I've begun to feel secure. With those eggs and those potatoes, I feel I'm safe for the winter."

Then the five-acre schemes, which are being started rapidly in various parts of the country under the auspices of the Land Settlement Association. They consist of co-operative groups of about thirty men,

settled on contiguous five-acre plots. There is a central farm, where the Warden lives. He looks after the breeding of stock, the co-operative buying and selling, and so forth. He is general adviser and helper in all manner of ways. The system seems to combine the best of two worlds—the individualist and the collectivist. There are all manner of social and educational amenities provided at the central farm: a good deal of work is done together; and there is the co-operative buying and selling. On the other hand, the men work their own plots, and if they choose can sell separately. There is a fifteen-month probationary period, during which the man's account is credited with the proceeds of the working of his five acres. Thus he starts his life as a small-holder with a well-stocked plot in full working order and a compact bank-balance.

In process of time it is hoped that these five-acre groups will exchange commodities, each group concentrating on lines of production especially suited to the conditions of soil, etc. in its own locality. Thus a Production-for-Use economy will be built up, perhaps if all goes well on a nation-wide scale. The members of these groups become independent of the "dole" or of public assistance as soon as they take over their holdings.

To contrast the life of such a settler with the miseries of the ordinary unemployed family, is to believe that we may be on the road to the recovery of that precious thing which we lost centuries ago, a British peasantry, and on co-operative lines.

JOHN S. HOYLAND.

*Woodbrooke Settlement,
Selly Oak, Birmingham.*

Jack Hoyland's Work-Camps

WE are concerned at this conference with the needs of society which our various organisations are designed to fill. We want, I take it, to compare the theoretic foundations of our movements, and, finding that we have much in common, strengthen the faith by which we work. Jack Hoyland's work may be described as emphasizing the value of a palliative for unemployment while waiting for a real remedy which can only be applied by the government, and secondly as emphasizing the need for the wealthy to do hard manual work for the "dispossessed" and thus to begin to learn that existing society requires a radical change.

Jack Hoyland was at Brynmawr with Pierre Ceresole in 1931 when the swimming bath was made; since that time he has been arranging for groups of students to go and live with the families of the unemployed and help them start allotments and other work. It is a great advantage being a small party and living in the homes of the people you are working with in the day-time. Very little organising is done. J.H. knows the people who are glad to have the students or schoolchildren, and he simply gives their names to the leaders of the parties. In this way the spontaneity of the meeting is kept and friendships are the more easily made.

Work-camps provide the right environment for friendships, there is give and take on both sides. The students give their work but working in a group of unemployed men and students is far too much fun to allow the work to count for much. In return the students get first-hand experience of the

people who have to live in the special areas. To anyone who takes unemployment and indeed industrial areas for granted it is difficult to describe what these expeditions have meant to some of our people. You have to imagine a boy at the impressionable age of 18, grown up perhaps in a market town of southern England, where the type of environment is best indicated by the fact that churches are the most outstanding buildings—the landmarks by which you find your way—suddenly brought into a new world where factory chimneys, symbols of money earning, are the landmarks. Prose is inadequate to express the effect on the boy's mind of seeing 130 factory chimneys at the same time, as you can when you stand on Oldham edge. Keats' sonnet about "stout Cortez" describes an awakening of the mind such as this. In my opinion it is difficult to exaggerate the importance of this educative side of the work. Anyone who is sound in intelligence and moral sense must leave a work-camp realising that he has only been applying a palliative to unemployment, and that drastic action must be taken. Moreover he will be more likely to set about demanding it in the right spirit if he has been working with an understanding of the Franciscan attitude which should permeate all work-camps. I hope that the students become more zealous in their social work, and in personal matters catch a glimpse of the fuller life men lead when misfortune and poverty strip them of their pretensions, and they cease being actors and become real people. Some wise wit once said we should all live together as though we were sailors shipwrecked on a desert island.

For this less obvious side, the evenings are just as important as the work during the day. Whether the evenings are spent seeing mines and factories or in singing and chatting in a back-kitchen they are

the better for the work. The work gives the party a status, and besides there is nothing like working with people for getting to know them. On one occasion a few of us were introduced to a keen Trade Unionist and Labour man; he looked us up and down with a frown and proceeded to tell us of the other Oxford people he had met before, and exactly why he did not like them. One group had been Communists who probably told him that he ought to be a Marxist; the others had been well-meaning charity people who had pitied him, and he had not liked being pitied; even though he had lost his father and three brothers in the mines, and was suffering from lung trouble himself. He only melted towards us when he discovered that we were working: work was evidently the open sesame to his respect. After that he did a great deal to help us and he still writes to say how things are going. On that work-camp we were a group of five helping an unemployed club start a co-operative coal level. They had begun in the wrong place and had wasted three months' work.

Allotments are by no means the only work suitable for these camps; it has been with these same parties that I have visited both Hilda Chapman's Challenge Centre and the Cotswold Bruderhof. In particular must be mentioned the camps abroad; these began with the large camp near Vienna for unemployed cotton-spinners in 1935. The reply to those who ask how to make pacifism constructive is that they might very well help in one of these camps. Since that time groups have worked in Sweden, Denmark, France, Spain and other countries.

In ending I should like to say what a privilege it has been knowing Jack Hoyland, and for myself I can say that this work has been one of the most valuable parts of my education.

NICHOLAS GILLET.

Oxford.

Grith Pioneers—some Experiences of a Community

GRITH Pioneers, originally known as Grith Fyrd (two Saxon words meaning "Peace Militia") was sponsored and established by a social movement of wide sympathies, the Order of Woodcraft Chivalry. It was the outcome of a course of lectures held under the auspices of the Order in August, 1931, entitled "The Tactics of Peace; a Contribution."

The concern of those lectures and the objects of Grith Fyrd was a positive contribution to the problems of Pacifism. The sponsors were impressed with the impossibility of merely discarding a mechanism which has for so long played such an important role in human evolution as the institution of warfare. They felt that pacifist propaganda, for the most part was too negative and will necessarily fail until a substitute for war is found, great enough to captivate young men no less than they have been captivated by the glories of war. As was so aptly quoted by our first chairman from the writing of Kathleen Green: "We want many things when we are young, but the last thing we want is safety. . . . It is to the credit of human nature that it cannot be frightened off things. . . . A great deal of nonsense has been written about the 'animal lust for war,' but the fact remains that there is an element in man which likes discomfort and sacrifice and danger, and the hope of glory, and a cause on earth for which we might have died."

On the other hand, we cannot continue with the institution of warfare. It has become too huge, too ugly and unmanageable, even for those romantics whose wistful reveries dwell on glories of battles and the sword.

So our first camp was established in March 1932 at Godshill in the New Forest. There were no amenities to welcome the pioneers, they felled timber from the camp site to construct their first, rough sleeping and living shelters. Vegetable cultivation followed at once, and after that the practice of various handicrafts, carpentry, weaving, etc., added to an already busy programme. Recreational activities—a distinction more conventional than applicable to the camp—took the form of discussions, play-reading, cricket and football, classes and B.B.C. listening groups, and adventurous long-distance hikes. No work was undertaken which might undercut outside labour; on the contrary, members were encouraged to seek distasteful and “unprofitable” tasks by which they could serve and impress the outside world. Since our general aims were to engender self-reliance, the members were left very much to their own resources; since we wished to increase physical fitness and manual dexterity, they were encouraged to furnish themselves with all requirements, and the consequent primitive aspect of the camp was, indeed, welcomed for its own hardening effects; and everything was done to provide an environment in which members could best work out their own salvation.

It was by this programme that we hoped to surmount those practical difficulties of holding together a group without the bond of fear and conflict, and to satisfy in a constructive manner our aggressive and combative propensities, and our desire—too often exploited for evil ends—to make a dramatic sacrifice for the motherland.

1932 was a year of great unemployment, and more and more we found our personnel consisting of young men rejected through industry's diminishing needs. We became a welcome constructive contribution to the problems of unemployment, so soon after our beginning, that our original aims of Peace were jostled into the background. As a result, increasing prosperity decreased our usefulness as a reconditioning camp and lost us some of that public support which was still essential to our ideals. We are now in a position of having to recapitulate our original ambitions, anxious to make contact with a small group of young men who would be willing to join in working out the technique of constructive adventure. That means more than living in a camp: it involves the achievement of a method by which a group could successfully accomplish its purpose without strong external compulsion.

We have not failed to learn lessons from the experiment. We have seen how men will work unceasingly on a private hobby, yet partake only half-heartedly in an equally attractive group task. Men who have never enjoyed freedom and who are given self-government invariably try to use their freedom in the first place to enslave others as they themselves have been enslaved, or else to become parasites on the group. We have had to tolerate that kind of anti-social conduct for a considerable time, and have learned to wait with friendly interest the period when members can stand without a strong emotional stimulus either of fear or favouritism, and work steadily at a task with pleasure and a full comprehensive satisfaction.

J. NORMAN GLAISTER

Grith Pioneers,
Camberwell, London, S.E.

An Unemployed Adoption Plan

IN December, 1935, we began to correspond with the family of an unemployed miner in Blackwood, Monmouthshire. I was not altogether enthusiastic about this "adoption scheme" before we began in this way, but almost immediately this method of helping seemed to me to be one of the best possible.

Our two families soon became friends—the children especially showed a great interest in each other, which was heightened when we visited our friends in the summer of 1936. We sent what presents we could afford and, little by little (for we are not wealthy ourselves), tried to replace their possessions, such as sheets and blankets, which had fallen to pieces from age and use. We sent things that would seem worthless to societies—children's comic papers, fallen apples, an old gas iron—but often these apparently valueless trifles were appreciated beyond measure. For instance, the apples let the children have an All Hallows'een party!

Altogether, the whole idea seemed to me such a complete success that I thought it might be worth writing to *The Times* about it. I did so and an extract from my letter was published on December 8th, 1936.

Briefly, the result of that letter was that, to my knowledge, between 60 and 70 families were "adopted" in time for Christmas, some directly

through me and others through Messrs. Lingford, a Bishop Auckland firm in touch with all the Social Service work done in their neighbourhood, which had a letter in *The Times* two or three days after mine, saying that they could supply names and addresses of suitable families. A later letter, published also in *The Times* said what an immense amount of happiness had been brought to almost hopeless homes.

The success of this made me determine to write to every possible newspaper, asking people to "adopt" families, however little they could send, and throughout this year I have written to a fresh newspaper every three or four weeks, including *The Morning Post*, *The Daily Telegraph*, and *The Observer* (twice each), and *The Sunday Times*, *Spectator*, *Daily Mail* and *News Chronicle*. People who have seen my letters have written to their own local papers too.

I have had letters from all over the country, from people eager to help, and even from Switzerland, India and Burma—this last, one of my kindest and most generous "adopters," who has simply transformed the life and prospects of a poor widow who, having lost her husband and youngest child in eleven months, was left with six other children, three of them delicate, to bring up on a total of 28s. a week after paying her rent (although her eldest boy is earning a little). As her husband and baby probably died partly because of undernourishment, there was quite a possibility that the same fate might befall these three.

One by one, I have got into touch with Settlements, Nursery Schools, Councils of Social Service, clubs and individual social workers. And as, one by one, the families they recommend for help get "adopted," they become more and more enthusiastic about the results. "It is giving new life to

our people." "The thing that they appreciate most is the fact that entire strangers do take an interest in them." "You simply cannot imagine the difference that it has made to these poor women who have so little." "The kindness and friendliness of the 'adopters' take away any feeling that they are objects of charity"—that is the sort of thing that I hear from one centre after another.

The poor people themselves and their "adopters" are at least as enthusiastic and I constantly receive letters saying what a difference it has made—not always only to the people who have been "adopted." Mothers who become friends consult each other on all manner of things, from birth control to recipes. But though personal interest is the key to the success of this form of help, there is no doubt that an immense amount of material help, more sorely needed than many people imagine, is given too—at least 80 per cent. of it, I should say, help that would not have been given in any form otherwise.

People will take an immense amount of trouble for people who have become their friends, which they would not dream of doing for, say the Personal Service League or any other cause just as good. The answers to a letter which I wrote to *The News-Chronicle* a fortnight ago show this. Many of these letters are from people who have themselves known unemployment—even now have "only £2 a week" or "rubbing along comfortable now on a bit over £3 a week," but are really overjoyed by the idea that now *they* can give the help, for which they would have been so thankful, to other people having hard times.

The postage, even, is going to be a struggle for some of them (one of them mentioned this, but said she would give up going to the pictures sometimes), but *they* know that the things their babies outgrow

will be some use to someone and that if they send the things themselves they will be worth ten times more. To me these letters are an inspiration and I do plead with my whole heart for encouragement for this kind of help.

When King Edward was Prince of Wales, he said that the unemployment problem should be a personal matter for each one of us, and I believe that "adoptions" are one of the easiest ways to make it so. I am quite sure that there is an immense reserve of sympathy to be tapped—energy waiting to be converted if people can only be convinced how *little* is a help.

I do not myself think that letters alone are enough. A letter, however kind, is rather an empty thing to a tired mother with cold, hungry, weary children. A letter accompanied by some warm, if shabby, clothes, some jam to spread on dry bread and a few toys means a good deal more. And nearly everyone who writes say he or she will try to make a special effort at Christmas.

I shall be extremely grateful if a little official help can be given—I do not think that my letters have caused any Society to suffer and I do know that hundreds—perhaps even thousands—of people have known some happiness.

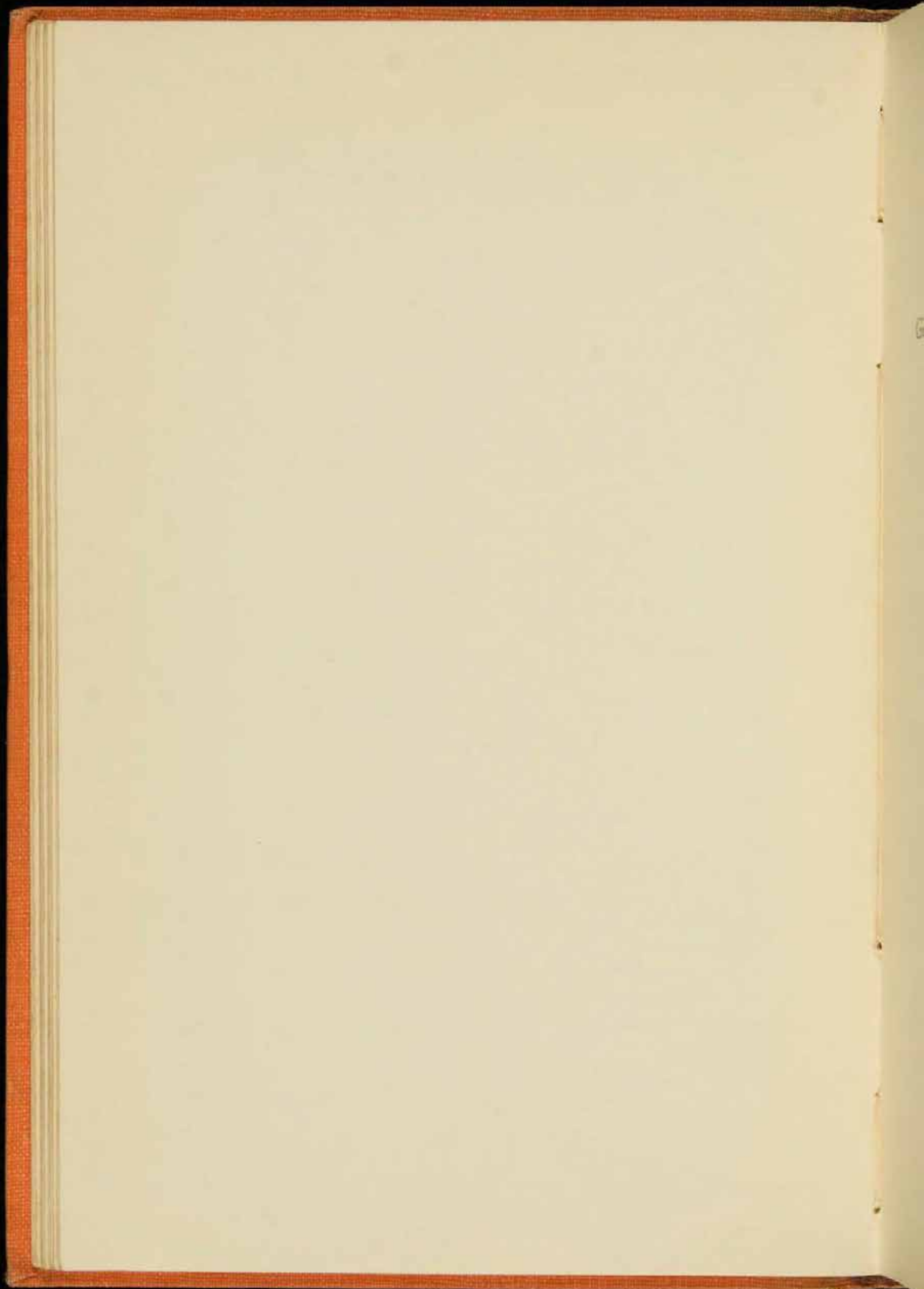
Up to the beginning of September, 1937, I had arranged myself roughly 300 adoptions, and *The News-Chronicle* has brought me offers of help from nearly 130 more people. Some of these have agreed to "share" the "adoption" of large families, but I hope that in another week or two I shall be able to say that 400 have been fixed up—this in addition to 50 odd "adoptions" arranged by Messrs. Lingford of Bishop Auckland.*

*the total has since grown to close on 1000.

Lastly, may I say that *no one* (with the possible exception of the people who have been helped) is so much convinced of the value of an "adoption" as an "adopter." Once they get into touch with their families, they become as keen as possible and many of them have persuaded their friends to do the same thing—I have even had the friends of the friends writing to me! And so it goes on and I hope with my whole heart that it *may* go on for it seems to me to bring happiness where there would be none. Now some people object because they say "You do it to get a kick out of it." Well—that may be—but I do assure you that the people who get the biggest kick are those who learn that after all there is some kindness left in the world they have found so cruel. The Warden of a settlement has assured me that people who get a few useful things with a nice letter are far happier than those who receive much more impressive gifts with only a brief note. The personal friendly *interest* is what everyone appreciates so greatly. There need be no patronage: if you could see my letters I don't think you would detect any trace of that. Kindliness, as a noble lord said the other day is the essential element of human society. Now "adoptions" spread kindness like a contagious disease and my great hope is that the whole country may be infected by it. England, I believe, will be a happier place because of it.

BEATRICE LEIGH-CLARE.

"Longshot," *The Ridgeway*,
Guildford, Surrey.



GROUPS, CENTRES AND CELLS

A Community Fruit Service

IT is not unusual to see the statement that the commercial system is irrational, but the usual practice is to accept its dictates, rational or otherwise. It is impossible to do otherwise, one is told. Just as one was told that one would be compelled to serve in the army. One must earn one's living: one must work for a wage: one must pay one's way—otherwise one would starve,

I take the position that, just as it was possible to refuse to serve in the army, so it is possible to refuse to accept any irrational system—the commercial system, for instance. Further that, just as our refusal to accept military service brought us moral and practical support, so in the same way one could be hopeful of support in refusing to accept the commercial system.

Sometimes it is assumed that only poor people are dissatisfied with the present social order. The proportion of people who take an intelligent and sympathetic interest in the Community Fruit Service at Bleadon in Somerset is about the same in the various grades of society. It is much more the type of mind than social position that is the deciding factor. Some poor people are ethically minded, some are not, and the same is true of other classes. If the poor were in general ethically minded and acted on a high ethic, riches and poverty would disappear. The poor are so many that they would be able to remove by mutual service the curse of riches: they would automatically refuse excessive service to the

rich. The few are rich because the many put aside mutual service as their criterion. I am assuming that riches and poverty are equally bad. They both assume an attitude to life that is not freely co-operative. Our scheme of things is an attempt at that free co-operation.

For some years, with a few friends, I have been making an attempt to work out the pacifist idea into daily life on somewhat unusual lines. The method of the Community Fruit Service, which is what we call our concern, is very different from the normal. Production is for use and, further, distribution is according to need. Consequently, nothing is sold. I ignore the cash nexus—the means to command—and I expect to be served on the same basis. The idea is essentially one of mutual service.

The Community Fruit Service has been going on now for more than ten years (it was started in 1926) and we get sufficient co-operation to be able to carry on fairly well, although there is a definite need of adult labour. I myself do not use money, but those who co-operate with me do use it. My sisters keep the household going.

A grocer friend cycles from Bournemouth most holidays, during which he works strenuously in the garden. He says it does him more good and gives him more satisfaction than a normal holiday. By the co-operation of another friend we have the use of a car for delivery at any time when necessary. Another friend will come from the other side of England to help with the delivery and distribution in the busy time (he has a car) or perhaps will take charge while I am away.

We are working about three acres of land, the crops being apples, strawberries, raspberries, plums, grapes, tomatoes, green peas, beans and other fruits and vegetables. The idea is to produce what can best

be produced to serve the children of the district. The children of the village come at any odd hours—just when they feel inclined: they go when they feel inclined—generally taking something home with them.

We get useful help from the children in the lighter work; they pick most of the strawberries, raspberries and plums. Also beans and peas. Picking fruit is always popular with the children—we sometimes have sixty children on the ground, but more often a dozen or so at picking time. In one way and another the village children take an appreciable part in the work of the concern and they have an appreciable part of the produce—that is, they are served first and most often. Children come also from the surrounding villages and from Weston-super-Mare. Sometimes their school-teachers bring them, and the garden has established itself as part of the life of the village. Riding the horse for horse hoeing is almost as popular as fruit picking with the village boys and, to get a chance, they do their best at it. The children are taught to swim and camps are arranged for them.

Baskets of produce are taken to local schools as the children come out—other portions are sent to homes where circumstances are particularly hard. Further afield, loads of fruit and tomatoes are taken to children's homes, hospitals and orphanages. As far as possible it is seen that the children *do* receive it.

Most of the children at the village school are from poor homes—say about £2 per week average. The few who are more comfortably off generally take what there is going and it doesn't matter. Most of the children who come to help are the children of farm labourers and others of the working class—there is no question as to the desirability of serving them well, that is there is no question if one accepts

the proposition that the causes of war must be removed and a new structure must be erected whose foundations and expression will be the unity of mankind. I take that to include the idea that children—all children—would be served as we can best serve them. How else could they be expected to believe in the unity of mankind?

BERT J. OVER.

*Community Fruit Service,
Bleadon, Somerset.*

Community Service in Salford

THE Challenge Centre at Salford was formed at the desire of adopting bodies in Sussex sponsored by the Bishop of Chichester and a small committee. Its object was to cover unemployed women in Salford: two men's centres being already sponsored by the same group (both of the latter closed down within two years, or so).

A year or more ago the Challenge moved off the basis of women members only and now caters for all groups of the community though naturally we are only at the outset of this larger work. Knowing that no family can live a full life on the dole, U.A.B. or P.A.C., it has tackled the clothing problem as an important and basic need of every unemployed person. It could not tackle allotment work, as it is situated in a congested slum area. All goods are distributed to members only, using time as the element of exchange instead of cash. The real value of things thus distributed has been found to equate with the overhead cash expenditure in running the experiment (about £500 per annum). Time is spent by each member (*a*) on work done in L.E.A. classes (from which all articles are drawn into the general stock, and distributed alongside the discarded wearables from the general public); (*b*) cleaning the Centre; (*c*) canteen work; (*d*) men's crafts; (*e*) simple work done at home on materials not usable in the L.E.A. groups; (*f*) simple drama; (*g*) general work as occasion demands. A little social work is added for evenings in the Winter. A boys'

and a girls' club has recently been started (ages 10-14). A W.E.A. class on Language has also recently started, for members and others.

How far has the Group achieved its ends? Satisfactorily as far as helping the clothing problem is concerned during severe unemployment. Unsatisfactorily in driving home the need for physical, mental and spiritual effort on the part of members themselves so that there is a *combination* of effort in fellowship.

Problems are legion! They are the normal state of life under the present conditions of work. They are concerned with all these difficulties: (1) the failure to break down apathy and suspicion so that there is a full complement of members always; (2) discontinuity of membership for various reasons; (3) personal relationships which do not develop along right lines; (4) deterioration of personality through slum-life; (5) failure to convince the "powers that be" of the need to allow sufficient time for growth, money, decent materials, decent premises. The work must always be planned in faith, however, for long development. (6) The local authority in a slum area such as Salford cannot be expected to be sympathetic and lend whole-hearted support. Much philanthropic work is therefore done here, there and everywhere, not always wisely. The churches cannot help as they meet precisely the same problems in the same sort of situation, but with a denominational one in addition. Finally there is a feeling of resentment against any adopting body, which feeling is intensified when the body feels it is time to withdraw its support.

What are the plans for the future? Ideally to continue to build upon the distribution system, plans for an all-round community settlement for day and evening activities for employed as well as

unemployed, despite the insecurity of tenure. Actually unless there is some great national effort to deal with the whole situation adequately, our four years' of colossal effort and drive, will come to a bitter end in about a year's time, leaving the human problem still unsolved, as has happened in hundreds of experiments already, many of which have been sound and worthy of continuation. One other possibility remains—that of linking the work with that of a junior occupational centre providing meals in line with the new suggestions, which would give the background of added security.

How far might other groups assist the development of these plans? Not at all unless planned on a national basis, similar to but larger than the Friends' Allotment Scheme which cannot touch such areas as Salford. A national plan on a time-service basis is felt to be a practical and a sizable project, but there is more interest in the impractical problem of armaments and a correspondingly greater expenditure *on* wastage than would be incurred by the right use of the present wastages of materials and personalities. One pound sterling's worth of unwanted materials from every manufacturer in the country would cover the craft side of such a scheme, and industry would be shouldering one of its rightful responsibilities.

In what ways could individuals, interested in community work but not attached to any group, be helpful? Only by making a thorough study of the problems of waste, and following it up. Individuals nearby could make a better effort with regard to such little voluntary service as it is possible to render. Individuals at a distance could chiefly help by propaganda or political work, but either must be based on Christian foundations. If the latter is exchanged for humanitarianism, it necessarily involves the

application of dictatorships, or force either obtrusively or otherwise. The most perfectly planned scheme must however fail in the power of appreciation of "super" human values, until such time as its spiritual life is stirred into activity. Only the clear understanding of the Christ ideal used for a standard of working comparisons, will save the situation. People are afraid of speaking of the Christ ideal. Give it another name if you will, and if you can find an equivalent so full of living comprehension, but recognise as Nicholas Berdyaev does in his *Fate of Man in the Modern World*, or his *Destiny of Man*, where the important final link lies.

HILDA CHAPMAN.

*The Challenge Centre,
Salford, Lancs.*

Community Work in Mid-Rhondda

COMMUNITY HOUSE at Trealaw started from the clear conviction that the world's need and Christianity's gift was a social order in which men were one family. We were broken in diverse and often hostile groups, and our miseries were due to the breach of fellowship. What was needed was that the world should see what we meant when we talked of Fellowship—and that could be done only by deeds. The dream then was a House that might be the incarnation of a new life together; for it is together that the true meaning of the Kingdom of God is to be revealed. This life was to be, on the one hand, the answer to those who challenged the Church from the ground of economic materialism, and, on the other hand, the incarnation of our common devotion to our Lord, and of our common effort to serve the present age. It is the monastic ideal without the segregation of the monastery, at once an expression of our fellowship and a means of serving our fellow-men in all the variety of their needs—believing that all human needs are religious needs.

The House is maintained to give a corporate example of Christian Social Principles by the practice of Christian Fellowship in prayer, in the use of arts, in work, in reading and recreation, and in an endeavour to bridge the gulf between classes of people and in any other phase of life. It also provides temporary

living accommodation for Christians of other neighbourhoods, and of differing social status to meet in conference; and for members of the Youth Hostel Association to meet in friendship with each other and with people of Rhondda. Nearly 200 visitors have stayed in the House this year, including many from other countries. The use of the chapel has encouraged prayer. The library has given facilities for study, particularly of social subjects, religion and pacifism. Reading has been supplemented by regular discussion groups. The gymnasium and tennis court have provided opportunities for recreation, and the latter has also been used as an open-air stage. The yearly camp of a week's holiday and study has been instrumental in deepening our fellowship. Crafts such as bookbinding, weaving, and embroidery are being taught. Instruction has been given in printing, cookery, folk-dancing, community singing, and carpentry. The garden has been cultivated and used as a Garden of Ease. Volunteers have carried out cleaning and redecoration, and have every year made toys in the carpenter's shop as gifts for unemployed families.

Our achievement is neither in the number of articles we have made, nor in perfection of work, although that is our aim; it is in the free giving of unpaid services. Our significance is in the spirit of friendship, which is springing up between old and young employed and unemployed, those who have had few or many advantages. We begin to belong to each other. With this growing unity is a more pressing sense of obligation to our neighbours.

Increasing unemployment and poverty have handicapped us by lack of financial resources. The House which was rebuilt by a group mainly of unemployed volunteers is in need of considerable repair. Our problem also, to maintain and deepen fellowship has

arisen from the continual forced exodus of many of our keenest members to find work in other districts. Not least was the removal of our founder, at a time when we were still unprepared to shoulder our practical and spiritual responsibilities.

For the future our thoughts turn more insistently to some attempt at living together in this House, in simplicity and sharing. This would be a new venture and we should certainly need directing guidance from other groups such as the Bruderhof who are already achieving a communal life, and who have already shared some of their idealism with us. Individuals may help us through correspondence with our members, through visits to the House, or staying with local families, and through orders for craft, bookbinding and so on.

Our Chapel has been called the Heart of this House. Our House can live more fully as it discovers God through prayer. Both individuals and groups can help us, and we can help you by this gift of prayer. Together we can find a way out from our Rhondda industrial problem, the warfare of the coal industry, and the crueller warfare of unemployment.

To banish such injustices is to be very near finding world peace.

MARGERY PARKER-GRAY.

*Trealaw,
Rhondda, S. Wales.*

Community in the East End of London

(*THE COMMUNITY OF THE WAY*)

MOST of you to whom this talk is addressed, already know of the needs that, rather more than two years ago, challenged a little group of us to seek a new way of life, but to some the events preceding the birth of this little community, may still be unknown.

We were a fellowship of men, with the exception of myself, drawn together by a common need and seeking to discover a purpose for our lives. A number of our members had suffered unemployment over a long period of years, and were continually faced not only with semi-starvation but with a feeling of utter hopelessness. There was no place in life or society for them and what was worse, no future for themselves or for their children—and nowhere had they found an answer to their questioning.

A sense of the futility of life under existing conditions also marked the outlook of the men who were in regular employment. They worked long hours and in some cases could only eke out a mere existence for their families—and to what purpose? As young men they had set out upon life with high hopes and unswerving enthusiasm, had allied themselves to one political party or another in the hope of making some contribution to a new order of society, only to find their efforts accompanied by bitter disillusionment.

For a long time we talked of these things and after many days a glimmer of hope was restored to us and there dawned the realisation that no order of society created by man, embodying only economic and social reforms, could herald the Kingdom of God on earth. It was God's gift to mankind that could only find expression in its fulness in the hearts of men and women who were selfless enough and pure-hearted enough to receive it. In Christ's way of life alone lay the whole answer to our need and only in His peace was there healing for the nations.

We began to study His life and message in relation to our own problems and it became perfectly clear that there was no other way, save to follow Him. "But it can't be done in our life" said one man, "we would lose our job straight away. The best we can do is to try it out in our spare time." "But that doesn't work" said another, while a third retorted, "The Bible isn't for the likes of us, it was written by blokes in colleges!"

Such was the foundation upon which we had to build. We tried to find help and encouragement from the records of the early church and we read—"All that believed were together (of one heart and of one soul) and had all things common and sold their possessions and goods and parted them to all men, as every man had need . . . and breaking bread from house to house did eat their meat with gladness and simpleness of heart, praising God."

Here lay an answer—a life of love and brotherhood in community. Some of us would work towards that. Could we seek together such a way of life in Bow? No, we thought, not in its entirety. We must move out to the country, near the things created by the hand of God, where we could sow and reap and rejoice in honourable toil, where we could create things of beauty with our own hands for the

use and service of men—and where together we could share a life of communion with God.

This life was not to be in any sense an escape from reality but, we hoped, an answer to the gravest problem with which the world is faced today—the art of living together. If men could learn its secret they would hold the key not only to personal, but to national and international problems. Together we worked and planned. There were two unemployed families, a single man, a boy of thirteen who had asked if he might join us, an old shepherd and his wife who were anxious to help if we could find a small farm, and Judith Honegger from Switzerland. So the summer months of 1937 saw us hunting for a suitable home for a little company of twelve, seven adults and five children, not including the shepherd and his wife, because by this time we had decided not to undertake the responsibility of a farm immediately, but to find a temporary place, suitable for a year or two. We finally found a house in Well End, Bucks. It was originally a 17th-century inn with a forge adjoining and a nice garden. Although it was a place with possibilities, it would never have sufficed for a permanent home, but very soon the old inn with its lantern over the doorway became symbolic to us of that glad night almost two thousand years ago, when the stable of an inn gave shelter to the Son of God. But very soon we were to learn that God had other plans for this little company who would aspire to follow the way of His Son.

On September 30th, Judith and I returned to London after several weeks' absence to discover, much to our dismay, that the last family to join us had suddenly disappeared from Bow leaving no word or trace behind. The same day we discovered that the house agent had also let us down very badly, and the builders were only just beginning the necessary

repairs, which the agent assured us were being done weeks previously. We were a forlorn little group of eight, very uncertain of what the days ahead of us would bring, but feeling somewhere in our hearts that the significance of these events would be revealed to us one day. The Franciscan ideal suddenly became real to Judith and me for the first time in our lives, as we found ourselves without work, or roof, or a place in which to store our possessions! This state of affairs did not continue for very long. One of the families came to our aid and offered us a room and a bed and hospitality, while another offered to store our belongings in their cellar, including equipment we had collected together for the community. Then followed days of intense spiritual darkness. We were certain that we could no longer pursue the original plan but for days we were without any light as to the future.

Then came the realisation that the weakness lay, not in the ideal but in ourselves—perhaps we were not yet ready as a group to embark upon a venture that demanded so much. After some days we felt that this Divine intervention had probably saved us from untold difficulties which as a community we were not yet strong enough to bear—with this thought, our despair gave place to a deep thankfulness. We decided to try and work out the ideal a little more fully in Bow and with more families before attempting to establish a rural community. Our life here we hope will embody all the original ideals, with certain modifications. For instance, we shall not all be living under the same roof, nor can we share a common purse (with the exception of Judith and myself!) though it may be possible to work out this ideal as a group later.

We shall keep our original name, the Community of the Way, in the hope that it will inspire us to the

life of adventurous self-giving, characteristic of the first disciples—the people of the Way.

Many families here have welcomed the idea with enthusiasm and three families apart from the original group have already joined us. Their help has been a constant source of encouragement to us during these days of uncertainty and has found expression in countless very practical ways, from plastering walls and redecorating rooms to supplying us with a host of lovely spring bulbs, to bring us a message of hope. We know that our community programme must include time for prayer and study and work, together with the development of the crafts (spinning, weaving, pottery, needlework, etc.), which had been a feature of our original plan. It would take too long to tell you now of our plans for the children but these also have their place. For some time to come we will be responsible for raising most of the necessary funds to meet the cost of equipment and materials, rent, lighting, heating, and to meet the responsibilities which will naturally be laid upon us with the future development of our work. We two are hoping to earn enough to cover our personal expenses, food, clothes and so on through the sale of our craftwork. We shall endeavour to live as simply as possible in order that our surplus earnings may be devoted to the general fund.

In spite of the many difficulties and disappointments that have accompanied the birth of our little community, we have received a great measure of “ghostly comfort” and the words of Mother Julian have been with us continually:—

*He said not—
Thou shalt not be tempested :
Thou shalt not be travailed :
Thou shalt not be afflicted :
But He said—
Thou shalt not be overcome.*

Postscript to the original Paper. After a period of eight months it is possible to make a brief summary of the main streams of development and one or two important things have become apparent. The heart of the community is now more clearly defined and consists of a small group of people who having faced all the implications of this way of life are prepared to commit themselves entirely to it and to each other. The rest of the group are interested and willing to help but do not feel that they are yet ready to take the final step.

Community gatherings have been a continual source of inspiration to us, bringing to light many aspects of the life of love and brotherhood. The children are also realising something of the demands that this new life makes upon those who pursue it.

The craftwork, upon which the economic basis of our life rests, has made some progress and includes spinning and weaving, carpentry, needlework, toy-making and printing. One word should be said about the work-room which is the main scene of our activities, including all our domestic duties. This room has an amazing capacity for housing our many necessities. It holds a carpenter's bench, a sewing machine, a large Danish loom, three spinning-wheels, a warping mill, a printing press, and numerous shelves, and drawers and cupboards together with a spacious sink and a fireplace containing a brazier upon which (until quite recently) cooking, washing and dyeing of wool had to be performed! Now our thoughts are turning to the future. Having laid the foundations, it is evident that the time has come for us to seek a fuller expression of community that will embrace the whole of life and touch it at every point—spiritual, social, economic and educational. During the next few months we hope to move from Bow and to find a home within easy

reach of those who most need to begin life again. The distress of South Wales and Lancashire has been laid heavily upon our hearts and it is towards finding a house with ready access to one of these areas, that our thoughts are now directed.

Meantime life is never monotonous. It alternates between joys and difficulties, order and chaos, plenty and poverty, in the realm both of spiritual and material things, but we are conscious of a new life struggling to birth, and we cannot but be joyful.

MARY OSBORN.

The Community of the Way,
Bow, London, E. 3.

Birth of a City Community Group

(HANDSWORTH, BIRMINGHAM)

BELIEVING that experience gained in life is the truest means of education, a group of young people was formed some while ago in one of our bigger provincial cities for the purpose of giving service to the community.

The group was known as the Seventy Club after the seventy disciples. This is the club's charter:—

“And He appointed Seventy, and sent them forth two by two to be messengers of peace and sons of encouragement. He commanded them to go in all simplicity, with no money and no pride, to enter into the homes of the people and become their true friends. He charged them to bring peace to the household; to bind up the broken-hearted; to give sight to the blind; to strengthen the sick; and to set at liberty those that are oppressed.”

While members engaged in various forms of social service, a group grew up within the club whose aim it was to establish friendship with individuals or families in special need through poverty, illness, or other trouble. Members visited such homes at least weekly, and often daily, when the need arose, and did whatever was most needful. The types of work done would include—playing with the children, washing them and putting them to bed, to give the mother a rest—getting meals when the mother was ill or in hospital—digging with the husband on an

allotment—minding the house while husband and wife went out together and so on. Through such work as came most natural, barriers were broken down and a real friendship was established.

The young people giving this service met regularly each week to pool their experiences, and thrash out the many delicate problems small and large which arose during the work. Here are some of the practical problems. Blind-alley jobs of several of the boys; chronic poverty; an attempt at suicide as a result of continued unemployment; the continual tension between husband and wife and family, the meaning of frayed nerves; the inability of a worried mother to spend her money wisely; the need of spectacles, boots and clothes; what a burial means in a poor family; the iniquity of bad housing and the need for alternative accommodation; the outbreak of infectious diseases; the difficulties arising when the bread-winner goes to hospital; the unwanted baby; and so on. These experiences and many others were the stuff of life which educated the members of the group into thinking of the need for community. Here was a University of Sociology in earnest.

In seeking to solve these problems, the group not only had to discover what social agencies should be consulted for help, but also to consider the causes which gave rise to such injustices. This in turn caused them to examine not only the Social Problem but the Christian faith in a new light. Here was not a class-room discussion, but a life situation of urgency.

It became impossible, if honesty meant anything, to discuss the family incomes and needs of those whom they sought to serve and who had become their friends, without also discussing their own incomes and social environment. At almost every point

their life was challenged. In two years the group got further than many people get in a life-time. They discovered that a new social framework and new spirit were needed and that "Christian Community" was the solution.

The group then entered the second stage and established a common pool among its members; to this pool each contributed and from it certain of the more pressing needs of the families were met. Common meals were planned from time to time, and as many as fifty to sixty members of the families came, their ages ranging from two years to seventy. Each Sunday morning the group also met in the house of one of its members for breakfast, and this was followed by worship and discussion.

The following three affirmations became the basis of the group:—

1. To seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.
2. To endeavour to live out all the relationship of life in the spirit of an unfailing love.
3. To be identified with those who suffer.

The more the group realised the implications of the gospel of love in human relationships, the more difficult it became to carry out these affirmations in the existing economic order. They recognised that the system itself compelled men, even against their will, to place their own interests before the interest of their fellows, and it was therefore inconsistent with the Christian gospel.

The third stage was reached when, after much wrestling and searching of heart, the majority of the members decided that, as well as working for a new society, they should attempt to create for themselves a new social framework surrendering private property and private profit. For them, this meant *living* in community.

At length a house was purchased, and seven members—two day-school teachers; two clerks, a lawyer and an older married couple—went into residence. All except one member continue their everyday occupation, but the salaries earned go, not to the individual but to the community. The property is owned communally. Meals are taken in common and regarded as sacramental. In this way the community becomes more available to the needs of men; there is an open door to those in need.

The house was taken in the vicinity of a "down town" church which it is hoped the community will be able to serve. All the members realise the extreme inadequacy of their community life since it does not include, anyway at the moment, any means to production. It is therefore very limited as a community witness. The adventure for them has only just begun and they wait to know what the next step will be.

GODFREY PAIN.

*Kingsley Hall,
Bow, London, E. 3.*

"*The Next Step*"—*postscript by Lloyd Jones.* The next step became clear after six months in Birmingham together. The Community Group, after having spent Easter and Whitsuntide (1938), at the Cotswold Bruderhof, soon became convinced that, as a separate city community, they were unable to offer a full life to those who came to them in need. Every day they grew more certain that although the gift of friendship expressed both in material and spiritual assistance was part of any Christian witness, yet these in themselves were not enough. Nothing less was needed than a complete life-revolution resulting in the creation by God of a new society. They knew that the Love of God demanded this of

all followers of Christ. Furthermore, as a group, they longed to be fully united with all those living this life of complete surrender to God. It was clear to them that the Bruderhof was actually going this way, so quite spontaneously and out of a deep conviction the two communities became united, spiritually and economically. At present, therefore, the old community house in Birmingham is known as "Bruderhof House," being an outpost of the larger community in Wiltshire. So that now, as never before, more people can be not only helped, but can be actually called out to a new life and practical work in and for the Kingdom of God. (See page 20 "*The Cotswold Bruderhof—a Christian Community*," Eberhard C. H. Arnold).

Outline for an Adventure in Sharing

(CAMBRIDGE GROUP)

THE experiment we want to try is a "Christian Community House" in Cambridge. We want to start it because we feel strongly that we must do something actively to express our Christian Fellowship. St. John said: "Let us put our Love . . . (fellowship, brotherhood, sharing) . . . not into words and talk, but into deeds and make it real." In a world which is confronted with the challenge—"See, I have put before you life and death . . . choose"—we want to show that true Christian Fellowship can mean real life, if only its implications are sufficiently accepted.

It hurts us to look round at the world and see that everywhere, almost, men are putting their hatred, fear, selfishness, national ambitions, into deeds and are making them real. Our Christian Fellowship means a lot to us—we feel it can mean more still—and will do so, if we are loyal in action, and explore more deeply the meaning of sonship and brotherhood.

*O Lord, how long
Shall we say we are all brethren,
That we love our Father in heaven,
And our life give it the lie?*

We have read and talked a lot about the various programmes and suggestions for making our

brotherhood real; we were very much interested in a letter we received some months ago, about the stewardship of money. We felt, however, that it didn't go quite far enough for us. You see, when God wanted to save the world, He did not send an angel two half-days a week; we mustn't be satisfied with brief excursions into the realms of brotherhood, fellowship and sharing, or with partial relationships. We must go the whole way, as God did when He sent Jesus. So with our money; we want to live lives in which "our" money is not spent in charity, however well conceived, but in which, for the sake of the love which links us together, we share as much as ever we possibly can, and in which that awful word "mine" has been replaced by "ours."

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The plan briefly is that a body of people with definite incomes—the bigger the better because the size of our family will have to depend on the size of the total incomes—shall pool their salaries, fix on a simple standard of living and bring into the house others who need spiritual or material help. The house will be first and foremost a Christian home, although it may also include people who, making no profession of faith, are yet consciously seeking the way of Christ. We want it to be a centre of loving service; a hive of mutual ministry; a little colony of heaven. We conceive it as a bit of a settlement, club, guest house, rescue home, convalescent home; just think for a moment of the tremendous spiritual forces that could be released, not just to us, but to all Cambridge, from such a community centre! Think of the joy of belonging to such a place where everyone was dealt with according to his needs, where Jesus was Lord and we were each others' servants, for Christ's sake!

We need a good-sized house with a garden. A garden seems necessary (*a*) to supply work for some of the family, and vegetables and fruit for all : we might even keep hens, bees and a cow—if it would not be too lonely ; (*b*) to provide extra sleeping accommodation in the way of tents or huts when the house overflows. The part of the family that is not busy income-earning will run the house and garden, and perhaps do some craft work ; we might even have a little printing press.

And now, after months of seeking, waiting and hoping, the way has opened up for us. We have taken a house on a two-year lease, which we hope will be our Community home. Our family group at the outset will consist of a retired bank clerk and his wife ; an unemployed friend with his wife and children ; a University graduate who will be with us in term time, and myself who will be out teaching during the day. There will be eleven of us in all, including five children, ages 5-10.

It is possible that we may be able presently to form a local Community Committee from amongst those in the University and attached to the Churches of Cambridge. The plan would include a kind of propaganda centre. But our main job is and will be to *live* community, and we realise that is going to be the biggest task of all and that it is also going to be the best kind of propaganda.

These are the outlines of our adventure in faith. We are looking for others like-minded to join us and specially for those who are prepared to pool with us their substance or their salaries. We want in this way to be able increasingly to give practical as well as spiritual help to any in trouble or without resources who wish to join with us and share our fellowship. In so far as more and more of us who "have" are willing to share fully and freely with more and more

of us who "have not," so far shall we all be enabled to grow outwards, inwards and upwards—outwards in our numbers and influence; inwards in our experience and communion; upwards both as individuals and as a family towards the "stature of the whole man in Christ Jesus."

EMILY KENDREW.

*Homerton College,
Cambridge.*

A Community Conference House

(RIVERSIDE, PARKGATE)

THE community experiment at Riverside, Parkgate in Cheshire, started at Michaelmas, 1937, has its roots in (a) one member's natural inclination for community life; (b) the Auxiliary Movement and the Order of the Kingdom; (c) Tegla Cottage, Llandegla, a "happy-go-lucky" guest house, leading up to Riverside.

It is one of a number of small experiments being made by people who feel that, to live their ordinary lives, accepting the undeserved benefits that come to them, without relating them to the "comfortless troubles of the needy" in this and other countries, is no longer possible. We believe that the international and social problems, which threaten to overwhelm us, cannot be solved by political action alone, but that we can begin at once to live out in small groups and in all sorts of ways the vision of human community which we have seen.

Riverside is organised by a small group of people who are trying to work out their conception of life in community and their aims are:—

- (a) to work out an attitude to material possessions on the principle of the family rather than economic self-interest;
- (b) to bring together people of different occupations, creeds, political parties, so that they may learn from each other and find a fuller life in a diverse community;

- (c) to afford opportunities for quiet and for a free form of worship for those who feel the need of these things.

“ Friends of Riverside ” pay a small yearly subscription and use the house as an informal club.

The house aims at being self-supporting but not at making any profit. During the past year, Riverside has been used considerably for conferences, retreats and individual visits and has provided a meeting-ground for kindred spirits. Nine club members and twenty-four house members have just been enrolled. The three permanent members have many ups and downs but feel the experiment is well worth while and are surprised at the amount of encouragement they have received—in some cases from the most unexpected quarters.

Naturally in an experiment of this kind a number of problems inevitably arise, of which the following are a selected few :—

- (a) Privacy is to some extent necessary to freedom. There must be times and places where interruption is barred.
- (b) The necessity for responsibility and for control must go together. Democracy is not a question of giving everyone an equal say in everything. The majority are not always right and even a unanimous decision is not necessarily right. There is a need for real single-mindedness.
- (c) Psychological kinks have to be dealt with. Complete frankness is necessary, but this is often very difficult. There is a great need for psychological advice.

We hope the group of those really committed will grow. This would mean that we should not all necessarily live together but we could be resident or not as the good of the whole seemed to require.

Communication with other groups would be a great help in solving our common problems and a common voice (*e.g.* in the press) expressing any particular point of view would carry far more weight than letters from any single group.

At the present time we are making a special effort for peace and have asked those of our friends who wish to join us in this effort to do the following :—

- (*a*) Sign a form expressing sorrow for the faults in our national life and a belief that a better world can be built if all make the effort in a spirit of forgiveness and understanding.
- (*b*) Wear a badge (a green leaf on a black and white ground symbolising sorrow, forgiveness, life and hope).
- (*c*) Make some small personal sacrifice for the cause of peace and justice, for example, relief work in this country or in China.
- (*d*) Take some time quiet to unite with others in the spirit of peace and to find new ways of expressing that spirit.

MARGARET CORKE.

*Riverside,
Parkgate, Cheshire.*

Cell Groups for Christian Social Action

WHERE are we to turn for a Christian Social Philosophy adequate for our age? How can we reconcile hunger and love? How can I love my neighbour as myself? How does the Gospel of Love permeate the whole of life?

Systems of so-called individual morality do not answer these questions. Life is social. Though individual, we belong to each other. Life also is dynamic. Static systems of thought do not express it. Thought must be seen in action. While action without thought is blind, thought without action is sterile. New thought forms are demanded. As Troeltsch concluded a few years ago: "If the present social situation is to be controlled by Christian principles, thoughts will be necessary which have not yet been thought."

Actually, as Whitehead recently observed, a new Reformation is in full progress. It is a re-formation. But it is a process of which we are largely unconscious, whereas the new dynamic theology must come by deliberate effort. Theology in action will need actors, and actors whose activity is bound up with the main stream of life. In other words, theology needs to be worked out by the rank and file of everyday life. He that doeth the will shall know of the doctrine.

Love, necessarily, is of persons, experienced through human fellowship, through the interaction of human

personalities in the affairs of life. It is in the deep deposit of the religious experience of those who live their lives before God, therefore, that we must fumble for the clues we need. And it is in terms of personality, however vaguely as yet we conceive it, that we must express our new thoughts, for personality is the highest form of existence we know, and must, therefore, be our canon of reality. "Let us put our love not into words or into talk but into deeds, and make it real."

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Somehow, therefore, Christian men and women who are determined to get to grips with reality must pool their intellectual and spiritual resources in frank fellowship. They will be fellowships of actors, and with them the theologian and theorist must make contact. The theorist must act, the actor must reflect. But it must be a joint undertaking. Discussion must go hand in hand with action. To this we would add the conviction that no one should be exempt from the effort. No more are we strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God. We are, moreover, members one of another, and, though many, together make one body. And with Christ as head, "the whole body, fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

It would seem, therefore, that as we address ourselves to our task of relating religion to life, we must not allow denominational loyalties to separate us from our fellow Christian workers. Nor should we be isolated from workers in other fields. Our intimate groups of Christians of various schools must, therefore, be seen as cells in a great national

and, indeed, international organism. Cell should build up with cell to form regional arms, and the limbs should relate themselves to the whole. In this way, the impulses from below will be informed from above, and the direction from above will be conditioned by the field of action below.

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The method of the cell-group is not new, but it needs emphasis, explanation and development. A cell-group is a company of Christian people who undertake to work in vital contact with each other in some definite situation in which they recognize that they are called to be fellow-workers with God. Both the size and function of cells may vary, but if the sharing is to be real and vital they should generally be small.

Cell-groups, therefore, have an essential place in any given calling. Whether they are printers or ministers, politicians or teachers, operatives or clerks, Christians have a common incentive to draw together, because of the common interest of their occupation and a common obligation to work out the practical meaning of Christian community in that particular calling.

Moreover, as Christian social action obviously involves action within the field of local and national politics, contact will be necessary with fellow workers within these fields, whether or not they are professing Christians. This might well call for cell-groups for common action.

The main function of Christian cell-groups must be the promotion of Christian community, however limited the particular aspect of community life upon which the group engages.

In groups, for instance, such as those promoted by the Church Army and the Oxford Group Movement, the main concern will be social change through

personal conversion; Church Councils will have as their concern the whole witness of the church in its given area; other groups may select one or more particular social problem, *e.g.* housing, unemployment, as the centre of their attempt to establish true community.

The germ of a fully active Christian cell-group may be found in any existing committee or fellowship. Thus, a Church tutorial study circle may develop a desire to promote understanding between the Christian politicians of different parties, or a Youth group, Toc H branch, Mothers' Union or branch of the C.E.M.S., may constitute a group desirous of helping some particular piece of local community service. It is recommended that these should declare themselves as action groups, and seek allies in action wherever they can. Still further, where there is a desire for Christian action on the widest possible front, and with the richest possible Christian understanding of the problem, any denominational group will reach out to others engaged on similar problems and quests.

The more any group aims to express *full* Christian community, that is community which cuts across race, creed and class, the more it is likely to manifest the essence of the one holy, catholic Church which comprises them all. All cell-groups would do well, therefore, to relate themselves to any experiments in full Christian living, whether through settlement, Community Centre, Mission, or family intercourse.

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Some such cell-groups are to be found in South London, which have been federally related through the "Kempshead Hall Conference" meeting monthly in Camberwell. These groups, which arose out of the Albert Hall demonstration of 1935 (November) to witness to Christian responsibility in social

problems, were originally composed of Anglicans, mostly lay men and women, pledged to Survey, Study and Christian Social Action; they are now opening their ranks to fellow Christians of other denominations, and seeking to be spread and linked up nationally.

They are, in fact, looking to the Christian Social Council, as the Council of Churches in England for Social Questions, to supply the minimum organisation necessary. This organisation the Council proposes to supply by promoting Regional conferences, and also through its Local Councils, one of which it is hoped will be found in every district, and in connection with each of which it is hoped a Youth Council will be set up. The findings and recommendations of the various central committees of the Christian Social Council (which includes a Research Committee, a Reconstruction Committee, as well as Committees on Gambling, Vocational Service, Unemployment, Housing and Christian Social Action) will thus be available for all the cell-groups associated with it. The cell-groups, in turn, will contribute their impressions and findings to the centre. Through Regional Conferences, results of local effort will be pooled and examined, corporate action determined, and further survey outlined, and individual Christians will be stimulated to bolder witness in whatever branch of social action they are engaged. Thus, a constant cycle of Survey, Study and Action will be shared by widely scattered groups of rank and file Christians.

GEORGE H. GIBSON.

*Christian Social Council
and S. Hilda's Mission,
Camberwell, S.E. 5*

SERVICE OVERSEAS

The Peace Army in Palestine

MEMBERS of the Peace Army believe that unarmed intervention is a right answer to war. We feel that this is most likely to be achieved by placing soldiers of peace in the world's danger spots—to offer service there and to be prepared to stand between the combatants if all other peace-making should fail.

We are trying to spread this idea in the world and to carry it out in whatever way may be open to us—however small—where our own country is involved. Two of us recently visited Palestine and found a field of service there. We learned that our way of peace-making—the sending of ordinary people to offer an attempt to understand, to share troubles and to be of service—was understood and appreciated by the people of Palestine, Arabs and Jews alike. We felt that offering permanent service in Arab villages was one of the things that should be done in the name of peace. We found that friendship and a desire to co-operate existed in some of the Jewish colonies and Arab villages and that the co-operation of British people was wanted. The Peace Army is therefore sending two permanent workers to Palestine and hopes to send more later.* Several members, including the President, Dr. Maude Royden, and the speaker, are visiting Palestine for a short time in the spring and expect to see the work started while they are there. The Peace Army has been definitely invited to help in building up a social centre for girls in Upper Galilee. The invitation

* *Two workers went out to Palestine early in January, 1937. They are now in Jerusalem studying Arabic and preparing themselves for their future work.*

has come from a Jewish Colony, whose members are living in friendship with their Arab neighbours. One of the most interesting experiences that the speaker has ever had was visiting Jewish colonies in Palestine. She felt that she was seeing the beginnings of a new world. There are over 100 colonies and in them various forms of communal life are being tried. One type of colony is known as the Moshav Ovdim. This consists of a number of individual farms, but all the marketing is done cooperatively and the tractors, and so on, are the property of the whole community. The greater number of colonies however, are of the type known as Kibbutz, and in these the life is fully communal. The land is farmed collectively. In some colonies other work is done and there are workshops and small factories connected with them. Some members, especially in the early days, have to go out as wage earners, but all the earnings go to the community. The individual gives his or her service and receives in return a fair share of whatever there is to offer. Life is hard in the beginning and living very simple. The workers usually begin by living in tents and move into bungalows as the colony progresses. The first good house that is built is always the children's house, and here all the children of the colony live. They are given expert care and are said to be the healthiest children in the world. In some colonies the children sleep in their parents' rooms; in others they spend the free part of the day with their parents and return to the children's house at night. As there is a communal kitchen and all the domestic work of the colony is shared by the workers, the parents are free to devote themselves entirely to their children in their spare time. There is absolute equality between men and women. The Jewish colonists are not pacifists. They believe

that self-defence is right and the colonies are guarded by armed watchmen at night. They do not however believe in retaliation and they have shown remarkable restraint under terrible conditions. The young people are no longer religious as their parents were, but to be among them was to the speaker a religious experience. They gave her a fresh and abiding sense of the goodness of life and of hope for the future. They live in great simplicity, with love for the land they are tending and love for one another. They combine hard manual work and great simplicity of living with a high level of culture, and they are happy and full of hope. Is not this life as God meant it to be lived?

Two other things have led the Peace Army to an interest in communal living:

(1) We see economic strife as a form of war and welcome the community idea as a constructive attempt to meet it. We should therefore like to learn about it and see if there are ways in which we can help those who are trying to carry it out.

(2) Some of us feel that pacifist communities might provide training grounds for soldiers of peace. Peace training is in an experimental stage and few of us can undertake long courses of training. We have given much thought to this subject and have come to the conclusion that our own surroundings provide the best possible training ground. At the same time we feel it would help us if we could undergo short periods of intensive training with other workers for peace. Some of us might go to pacifist communities for such periods. We should go as territorials go into camp, but our object would be to learn the arts of peace and not the arts of war.

JOYCE POLLARD.

The Peace Army,
63 Meadway, London, N.W. 11.

I. V. S. P.

*(INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTARY SERVICE
FOR PEACE)*

SOME years ago, Signor Mussolini was good enough to give me an interview, in which I explained to him the character of the I.V.S.P. Naturally he did not agree with our aims. In his opinion, War was an inevitable feature of human society: for young men had to find an outlet for their adventurous spirit—and the only sufficient outlet was War.

Then Mussolini went on to ask what were our numbers. When I told him he at once lost any interest in I.V.S.P. What could a service that enjoyed the co-operation only of a comparative handful of people mean to the absolute master of so many millions?

For Mussolini, God was on the side of the big battalions.

Now I.V.S.P. does not command big battalions. In fact, its experience shows what can be achieved in construction for peace and creation of international friendship by the voluntary work of small numbers of men and women, drawn from many lands by the true spirit of service.

May I quote the following extract from our constitution:

“The aim of the I.V.S.P. is to create a spirit of friendship and a constructive attitude towards peace among all peoples, by giving practical help on the occasion of natural catastrophes, or in the carrying

out of work of public utility, thus providing people of goodwill—both men and women—with a sound system of training in mutual help, voluntary discipline and comradeship.

“ I.V.S.P. supports all efforts to replace military service in times of peace by an international constructive service, which will foster greater confidence between the nations of the world.

“ I.V.S.P. never undertakes any scheme involving competition with ordinary labour or intended for strike-breaking.”

These words from our constitution may indicate to those of you, who are not familiar with our work, its true spirit and purpose.

Manual service to those in need, irrespective of race or religion. No acknowledgment asked in return. In place of the mutual aloofness and suspicion which foster war, a joyful companionship in the common necessary task which makes peace an inspiration and an adventure.

Our Service began seventeen years ago. Shortly afterwards, our team at work in the devastated Areas of France, included not only Swiss, Dutch, Americans and British, but also Austrians and Germans. Former enemies laboured side by side to rebuild the country which the war had shattered ; it was a new method symbolising a new hope and a new order.

Since then, our teams have dug, drained, planted and built in France, Switzerland, England and Wales, Sweden, India and Spain. Their numbers have varied between four and seven hundred. They have included Sisters who chiefly gave their time to domestic work, while the men were occupied with heavy manual labour.

All cheerfully accepted the necessary discipline. Many have found in this selfless service to suffering a

zest and pleasure, which they never conceived in the material aims of their everyday work.

Beside these serving members, we have ordinary members associated with our work, who support us with their interest and their donations. I cannot better illustrate the wonderful, though quite spontaneous response which those, with whom we labour, give to our efforts, than to mention the case of Lagarde in Southern France. This village had been practically destroyed by flood. From sixteen countries a total of two hundred and fifty-four volunteers collected to help in its reconstruction. Now the Peasant of France for all his many virtues is also known for his extreme thrift, his suspicion of strangers and his indifference to what is going on, beyond the horizons of his own village. That the people of Lagarde were deeply moved by the brotherly help of our volunteers was certain. But their appreciation took an unexpected form, which proves that free and loving service by men of different countries wherever there is need, is a mighty instrument for international friendship.

In 1931, that is a year afterwards, we were co-operating with the gallant band of unemployed men, who were building a swimming-bath and public gardens for their stricken mining town of Brynmawr in South Wales. Naturally, money was short. This splendid work might never have been completed, but for the memories which Lagarde had kept of I.V.S.P.

For when the French Scheme had been wound up, a balance of eighteen thousand francs (over £150) had been left for distribution among the people of Lagarde. They were typically French peasants, frugal, thrifty. They were just recovering from a terrible natural catastrophe. Yet when they heard of the distress in Brynmawr, they sent this sum,

every single penny, as their contribution towards relieving it. A spontaneous gesture from some villagers in France to a community they had never seen, the unemployed coal miners of South Wales. So can the spirit of good will and voluntary service overleap all the barriers which keep men sundered. The Mayor of Lagarde was a guest of honour at the opening of Brynmawr Baths. His presence there and all it indicated, is a tribute to the power of those ideals which I.V.S.P. has striven to serve.

JEAN INEBNIT.

International Voluntary Service for Peace,
1 Lyddon Terrace, Leeds 2.

COMMUNITY PRINCIPLES

Back to Realities

THE cry of "Back to the Land" as a social panacea has been used by politicians, self-seeking orators and reformers until it has become a meaningless catchword; because it is only relatively true and requires another word to describe it. I well remember a general election being fought and won on a land song. Nothing was heard about the land afterwards. "Back to the Land" has just that amount of truth in it which makes it dangerous as an experiment by well meaning reformers and idealists. If going back to the land is only a conflict with poverty, then the cry of "Back to the Land" is nothing. Back to realities is the first essential, and that is a battle all through the forest and jungle of man; a battle against human disorder, stupidity and selfishness. And though I hold that colonies on the land, co-ordinated and international, provide a workable economic and social system, this system can only be established and developed by a body of people who have first gone back to realities.

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Though people, in great numbers, would flock to the country under settled conditions, only a few are ready to go as pioneers to clear the jungle and mark out the path. For the movement to the land that is taking hold of people means a great deal more than putting men on the land as labourers in small holdings and allotments, for the sole purpose of earning their living. This is only a palliative for a system that is false or antiquated and needs uprooting—a mere playing with a divine urge. This urge is

towards emancipation and freedom; towards the expression of something which is beyond the flux of immediate happenings on the material plane; yet it is real and waiting to be realised—a revival of religion, but not through the churches, or by ecclesiastical decrees, however high the source from which they come. Rather, through colonies on the land, the spiritual will be wedded to the industrial by those who have first gone back to Realities.

Revivals come, and successive revivals come; they are as certain in the spiritual system as a comet in its orbit, and can be foretold almost as accurately. But every revival is unlike every other revival. It seems that God breaks out in an unexpected way every time. And it is this unexpected thing that is the important factor. Because it is a different way of expression, it excites attraction and criticism, or opposition, all of which are useful concomitants to focus a new movement on the mind of the multitude. To those who are watching for the first signs of the coming revival, the omens are convincing. God is going to break out on the land.

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It is commonly said that Socialism is bound to come—that it is inevitable. This is not so. What *is* inevitable is the downfall of Capitalism; and what will replace Capitalism will depend on what we are ready for. And the multitude are not yet ready for Socialism—even economic Socialism—any more than the churches are ready for Christianity. Justice is a fine thing, but, after all, justice is an elementary virtue; and something higher and better than economic justice is needed to save the world and give people a vision, so that leisure and freedom may be used as an opportunity to develop their moral and spiritual natures. To give people merely economic justice seems, at first sight, such an unanswerable

basis for Christian effort that it is difficult to believe it to be unsound—until one has tried it.

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The idea of bringing salvation to the world through colonies on the land, co-ordinated internationally throughout every country, is a divine urge. It is the tiny acorn that will produce the giant oak. But then—the acorn must not be a rotten one. It must be free from the corroding acids that have bitten into organised religion. Dr Moffat, in his writings, has a passage, "We are a colony of Heaven." The Revised Version has it, "We are citizens of Heaven." The idea is that of planting a small colony in an enemy country, and gradually conquering the country from that centre. It is the working out and elaboration of this idea that may very well form the basis of an international land movement. The idea is not new; it is as old as the Christian Faith. I will not labour the theme; those with a vision will recognise it as the only solution. And those without vision will continue to hold vapid discussions in Church and political circles without ever seeing a goal reached.

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It is hardly an exaggeration to say that the rise of an international colonisation movement, carried forward by people with a vision that aims at a definite goal, would attract to itself great numbers of people who are dissatisfied with the feeble present day presentation of the principles of the Christian Faith. I am not able to envisage that far distant time when the Kingdom of God will be established on earth. But after 2,000 years of Christian teaching and praying for its consummation, it is surely time that a body of believers set their lives in harmony with its conditions, and began to march towards this goal, not

waiting until we have solved all our intellectual problems before making a start.

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Once our lives have been brought into direct relation with the teaching of Christ, and, throwing all dogma to the winds, we have accepted Him as our unerring guide, we shall find that our social problems will begin to solve themselves. Argument concerning present day problems is waste of energy that should be employed in our mission. We are not going to convince men by argument; we can only convince men by what we do. The man who can say "I know" has a better answer than all the reasoned calculations of the scientists.

Many people certainly are doing "good work" in the world, but our need is not to multiply social agencies or to rope in a few more people (however "good") who are not prepared boldly to denounce the things that hinder a full acceptance of the teaching of Christ. Those who *are* truly following Christ have to spend half their lives undoing the evil that some of these "good" people are doing. Too many folks are for ever trying to make the "far country" a habitable place. "Let us fill up the pits," they say, "and sprinkle some disinfectant; then we will build villas and send for the old people to live in them." And it's no use. If the Christian ideal is capable of realisation it must be prepared to find a body of men and women who are ready to accept all the risks, to make the personal sacrifices that alone can make its conditions possible in our world.

We shall have to go into the wilderness; but we shall find a surprising number of people there who are waiting for our arrival. "Putting the world right" is a pitfall that must be avoided. The world is good enough for those who want to live in

it; it is not good enough for those who have seen the vision of Christ and His Kingdom.

If my personal views, arrived at after fifty years of experience, are of any value, may I conclude this brief and somewhat crowded address by saying that I have visited isolated land communities and individual settlers in many European countries and in America. And my observation of these schemes and the varied types of human nature they have brought together, convinces me that a great spiritual urge is—subconsciously—seeking to manifest itself, but is greatly hampered by want of co-ordinated effort. These primitive colonies—mountain or forest retreats—are all composed of pioneers who are seeking new worlds, but none of them is voyaging forth with the full-blooded adventure of a Columbus to discover them. Hence nothing happens. They begin, they end, they get nowhere. Many beautiful souls I have met in these places, in Alpine fastnesses, in forest and jungle, in the Maritime Alps, on the French and Italian Rivièras, in Austria, in Holland, and in the snow-capped Jura.

And the lesson I have learned, and which I proclaim to humanity as the only solution for its social problems, is that no reformer, be he never so spiritual, is worth anything at all in these days, however much he may expound and talk, unless he has sealed his mission by a consecrated life—unless he has himself come out of the world and forsaken its spirit and its practice.

E. BURTON REEVES.

*Land Colonisation and Industrial Guild,
Norwich, Norfolk.*

(Tramp Preachers)

The Franciscan Ideal in Relation to Christian Community Life

AT first sight there is not much in common between St. Francis and any organisation of material property. St. Francis was a kind of "total abstainer" in regard to property. He believed the devil was in it and that the Love of God could only be suitably expressed if we gave up the warfare involved in winning and maintaining the privileged and coveted position of an owner of capital or even of any possessions other than the most meagre personal necessities.

To St. Francis' mind, the sending out of the Twelve and the Seventy "without purse or scrip" and "as lambs amongst wolves" was an essential and most significant part of the Gospel. And I think that an impartial study of the Sermon on the Mount will show that this was also the mind of Christ.

And if today we are considering the formation of Christian Communities—the expressing of the spirit of Christ in terms of fields, factories and workshops—the first thing we need to bear in mind is that Christianity is not compatible with the holding of property as a weapon or fortress against our fellows. Mammon in the Gospel means the power that money and possessions give to the owner to compel men to do his will—to be his servants. This money-power and God are set in direct antithesis.

So in St. Francis we see the true pacifist who not only laid aside the sword. If we are to carry the

Christian spirit into the realm of economic relationships, the first thing we must do is to abandon the relationships of money-power and the false motive of profit seeking and enter into true relationships with our fellow men. Till then nothing that we do will be more than putting a new patch on an old garment. Christianity is revolutionary and especially in this sphere it is necessary to start afresh and build on Christian principles.

To many people this simply suggests political activity. Christian Pacifists are not so likely to be misled in this respect. But even Pacifists have generally failed to see that the economic system is just as coercive in its methods and spirit as the political system. Neither do they appear so far to have seen the inherent immorality of capitalism—that it is in the realm of economic life what polygamy is in the realm of sex—not an imperfect arrangement, but a positive sin against the moral law. For just as the polygamist of old took by reason of his wealth and power that which was a necessary part of the life of his poorer neighbour, so does the capitalist deprive the bulk of men of their right to a responsible relationship to the economic means of production.

Community living of the kind we are contemplating will be limited to a few interesting experiments till, by the ethical light of the Gospel, we can make the capitalist mode of living intolerable to the Christian conscience.

The Brotherhood of the Way exists for this purpose. Our preachers go out like the Franciscans—except that we don't carry a begging bowl to be filled with food. Instead we ask at our meetings for enough money for our present needs. But from the control of capitalists we are free and can therefore speak

those truths not permitted in the pulpits of our Mammon-controlled churches.

But our aim is not only to preach. From the first we set ourselves to establish Christian industrial enterprises—"guilds" we called them. Our Second Order is an Order of Christian Guilds, or Communities, that are to serve as experiments in, or examples of, Christian community living. The property of these Guilds is to be owned and controlled by the members of the Guild in the name of Christ and for the service of mankind.

We desire to work as an Order within the Church of England and deplore the idea that a new and separate Church must be formed when God blesses us with more light than is possessed by our fellow Christians on some particular subject.

Finally, let me stress this: the spirit of St. Francis must prevail in the Christian Guild. For communal ownership does not escape the danger of using our property as a fortress to protect us against the world—and a world, we must remember, still 70 per cent. proletarian. To escape this we must make our material possessions a sacrament. Every brick, every wheel, every blade of grass must be part of the Body of Christ broken for mankind. Like His Body it may at any time have to be surrendered to evil men. We hold it with that in mind. Yet who can say what redemptive power might go forth to men if many capitalists who profess to obey Christ could be brought to risk their all in this way? When the Spirit of Christ can move men to give their capital (more valuable it seems than lives) unreservedly into Christ's hands, perhaps *then* the Kingdom of God will not be so far off.

C. C. STIMSON.

Charles

*The Brotherhood of the Way,
Hitchin, Herts.*

The New Community

SINCE I believe that—to use the old religious phrase—individual witness is the most convincing contribution I can make, I propose to do no more than describe part of the process of mind which brought me to the determination to undertake the rather peculiar effort at “education into community” known as The Adelphi Centre.

When I was finally converted to Socialism by reading Marx’s “Capital,” eight years ago, I took my socialism very seriously. Accepting as I did Marx’s fundamental thesis that upon the working class falls the task of destroying capitalistic society and creating a socialist society, I set myself to discover, if I could, the means by which the working class could be made conscious of its mission: for it seemed to me that the conditions of an advanced political democracy imposed the necessity that the working class should be consciously determined to achieve the social revolution. I studied the life and writing of Lenin, in order to understand, if I could, the dynamic and cohesion of the Bolshevik party in pre-revolutionary Russia. What I thought was required in this country was the analogue of such an organisation—a party of Socialists equally determined, equally convinced, who should have the same living relation to English society and the English tradition as the Bolsheviks had to the society and tradition of pre-revolutionary Russia. I still believe I was right.

From this study one thing became lucidly clear to me: that the class of “professional revolutionaries,”

from whom the Bolsheviki were recruited were already picked and dedicated men. Historically, they were the product of ninety years of unremitting and hazardous revolutionary activity. In a country where the Tsardom was the object of abhorrence to all thinking men, the fine flower of the race was gathered into the revolutionary ranks. The professional "revolutionary" of the Tsarist days had been tempered to heroic stuff. That meant that Lenin could take for granted, precisely, the heroic quality which was now conspicuously absent in the English Socialist. The natural path of the English socialist was towards a position of prestige and emolument, in the society he was committed to destroy. Socialism in England, even the most militant, was a bourgeois institution.

To some degree, I had to admit, that was inevitable. What disappointed me was to find that most of the Socialists whom I encountered were unaware of this condition and its dangers. The patent fact that Socialist politics—even the most revolutionary—was a bourgeois career hardly ever presented itself as an alarming contradiction and a cause for misgiving to their consciousness. Of any determined power of Socialist self-criticism they were strangely innocent. They could seldom see, what now appeared obvious, that the real problem of Socialism in advanced democracy is a *moral* problem. How to form a body of reliable socialists at all? They were helped to ignore this fundamental problem by the new vogue of a superficial Marxist materialism, which refused to recognise even the existence of a thing so immaterial as a moral problem.

I comforted myself with the thought that there had been an English Revolution—a real one; and I turned to that. I studied the making of the Ironsides of the Parliamentary War: and it became clear

to me that ultimately the dynamic of a victorious political revolution must be sought in religious conviction. Economic causes do, and can do, no more than afford the opportunity for creative revolution. They so dispose the forces within society at a given historical moment that there is the opportunity of creative advance. But the power of actually seizing upon that opportunity comes from another source altogether—from something which can only be called religious faith. Cromwell and his troopers—the men who actually decided the issue and won the victory—were men who passionately believed that they were fighting for the right of the Christian to commune directly with God. They believed passionately that they were fighting God's battle; and they were. That was the point. To risk one's life for a freedom essential to the creative advance of mankind is to fight God's battle. So, likewise, the Bolsheviks had believed passionately that they were fighting God's battle, even though they abhorred the name of God. They had their scriptures—the work of Marx—as Cromwell had the English Bible. Marxism could never be a religious creed to an English Socialist. Capitalist democracy itself made that impossible. It set Socialism new and unprecedented problems in the effort to grapple with which the English Marxist was compelled to become conscious where the Russian Marxist was unconscious. The Bolsheviks had been almost ridiculously unaware of the profoundly religious character of their own motivation. They were ignorant of the Jewish Messianism and eschatology with which Marx himself was saturated, and which enabled him to believe simultaneously and unquestionably in the inevitability of human progress, and in the salvation of mankind when its situation was most desperate,

because its situation was most desperate. For that was the religious essence of Marx's belief in the Messianic mission of the proletariat. "Surely he has borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows, yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted." It was the old world-shaking passion of Jewish prophecy; the re-emergence in a new form of the Christian promise to the slave, who carried Christianity to victory.

But we English Socialists were doomed to *know* all these things. We could not thus naively believe in the Messianic mission of the proletariat, with the retrogression of democratic Germany and the stagnation of democratic England staring us in the face. Marxism could be no religion for us; nor was it likely to become one even for the naive. For those who were not naive it was the temptation of the devil: it absolved them from the necessity of religion, and gave them no religion. They became completely irreligious, and therefore—though they did not know it, and because they did not know it—incapable of revolution.

Revolution without religion was impossible, and we Socialists had no religion. Yet we had, indeed we must have, inasmuch as we knew that religion was necessary. That very acknowledgment was itself religious. It meant that somewhere in us, although yet unformulated and perhaps forever unformulable, was a veritable religion which we must discover, or which must be discovered in us: if only we could endure to the end.

At the moment that I reached this point—somewhere about the middle of 1934—I had a gleam. I had resigned from the I.L.P. and most of my Socialist friends had resigned with me: and partly in consequence of our political unattachment, a gathering of Adelphi Socialists was held at Glossop in the form

of a Summer School, lasting a week. That experience of mutual discovery is, and always will be vivid in my memory. It was one of the crucial experiences of my life. The barriers were down. Unemployed, employed, proletarians, bourgeois, our brief fraternity was to me veritably the evidence of the human possibility of the classless society. Community among Socialists was itself a religious experience. I came away renewed: and I felt I had a clue. The urgent question now was to discover what a socialist, like myself, was to do. For if he must not entirely sever himself from the working class political party, it was self-stultifying to be completely identified with it: it had neither socialist morale, nor socialist purpose. But the trying to begin a new kind of Socialist movement seemed fantastic.

Nevertheless I had to do something. I had not endured the drastic process of conversion to Socialism for nothing. Something was required of me, more exacting than making barren or embarrassing propaganda speeches from the platform in support of candidates whom I distrusted; more exacting even than the long-continued effort at sustained Socialist thinking I had lately undergone. That had indeed brought me much nearer to an understanding of the kind of thing that had to be done; but not by any means to a clear knowledge that I was the person to do it.

What had to be done was "to make socialists." We were really in the position which William Morris had anticipated forty years ago: and all that he had foretold concerning the final irrelevance of purely political action under democracy had been realised in fact. But "to make socialists" was not a simple business. To become a Socialist involved much more than an intellectual understanding that the economic breakdown of capitalism was inevitable.

Capitalism was much more than an economic system: it was a social morality, an all-pervading spiritual atmosphere—nothing less indeed than a total “life-mode.” Unless Socialists were prepared to challenge, first of all in themselves, the blind conformity to this “life-mode,” unless they had imagination enough to realise the strength and subtlety of the thing they had to overthrow, they would merely be fighting the economics of capitalism with the ethics of capitalism, and they were bound to lose. Capitalism would adjust itself again and again to economic necessity. It would itself eliminate the competitive element which prevented it from functioning and would give way, finally, not to any social revolution, but to the complete collapse of society in the barbarism that must follow international war.

To become a socialist was to understand that it involved not merely an understanding of the economics of capitalism but a total conscious opposition to the ethics of a capitalistic society. In pure theory, such opposition would compel a severance of oneself from capitalist society which was impossible practically and effectively would prevent such a new Socialist movement from having any actual influence on the evolution of society. The new socialist had to combine economic dependence on capitalist society with ethical independence of it: but this ethical independence must be real. It could not be merely intellectual. It was not sufficient to say to oneself, “I am a member of a capitalist society, and therefore must submit to its compulsions, although I desire to be a member of a socialist society.” That was to fall back again, as democratic socialism had already done, into the equivalent of the Sunday religion of bourgeois Christianity. The ethical independence from

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capitalist society must be actually accomplished, or at least consciously and continually striven for. By actual experience, by constant effort, by spiritual discipline, Socialists must learn to overcome their own instinctive individualism. The new Socialism must be clarified by the knowledge that the enemy was the Ego—in every realm of human activity, economic, intellectual, political, socialistic. This fight against the Ego could be carried on only in a real community: for that was the only medium in which the ramifications of the Ego became visible. It was also the only place where the finer order of life, for which the Ego must be sacrificed, could be actually manifested. If fraternity was a higher order of human living, as Socialists professed to believe, then they must cease merely to dream about it: they must no longer deceive themselves into the spurious activity of inertia, by imagining that fraternity would be the inevitable aftermath of an economic revolution. In the first place they would never achieve the revolution: and in the second place, the fraternity they imagined would actually come to them as a compelled fraternity—which was the contradiction of the Devil: namely, the enforced uniformity of Fascism. Voluntary fraternity, but real instead of superficial and titular, was the necessary ethos of a serious movement for social revolution in capitalist democracy.

At a second Adelphi Summer School, I set forth this conclusion. It was not very favourably received. Still it met with just enough practical encouragement to make me feel that my tentative suggestion of a centre for "making Socialists," was not quite still-born. But I realised with dismay that, if anything was to be done, it would have to be done in the main by me. After a considerable struggle against an inward reluctance, I acknowledged that I must

commit myself wholly to this effort: and that, deeper than my own reluctance, I wanted to commit myself.

On the practical side what we proposed was achieved: and by the devoted work of a number of associates, a house was acquired and was ready to receive the members of the third Adelphi Summer School in August of 1936. That lasted a month, and justified in ways totally unforeseen, the effort we had undertaken. On the basis of a genuine effort at communal living our Socialist thinking took on a new kind of reality. The contemporary demand upon those who possess the capacity for imagination is to *live* imaginatively. That is not an easy conception: in fact, it is so difficult that it is hardly possible to formulate it at all. Nevertheless, in the actual living, it is simple enough. But it is not easy to accomplish, because it involves at a different level of consciousness, a rediscovery of the spiritual discipline of monasticism, with the element of arbitrariness eliminated from it. It is, so to speak, a monasticism of this world: a monasticism which must therefore accept responsibility for the continuity of life, and can neither take refuge in celibacy, nor seek the sanction for its discipline in an authoritarian Church. The life of imagination can only be realised within a community *which can be universalised*. No such community can really be established within capitalist society without such severance from the capitalist economy as will involve the danger of social retrogression. Therefore, there can be no complete solution. But that possibility is inherent in human life. A compromise of some sort is inevitable to all creative effort: and, provided that the compromise is conscious, and is derived from a real acceptance of the inevitable tension between the absolute and the relative,

compromise is itself creative : a source of strength, and a prophylactic against illusion.

The effort to live, at least periodically, the imaginative life of fraternity and community is the discipline demanded from a socialist movement by the compulsions of capitalist democracy, which will divert all more superficial revolutionary impulse into the maintenance of the structure of capitalist society. I believe that revolutionary impulse which stops short of the task of achieving inward revolution, or stops short even of the admission that such inward revolution is necessary, is bound to achieve the opposite of its intellectual intentions.

It may be that there will prove to be no road leading directly from capitalist democracy to Socialism, and that a retrogression to barbarism is the ultimate destiny of this country also. But it is unlikely in the extreme that England will abandon political democracy before it is actually involved in war : and even then it will probably be unnecessary for this capitalist society to abandon the apparatus of political democracy. The relapse into barbarism will be the direct result of war : it will not be a politically conscious act, as it has been in Italy and Germany. But even in this most hideous of eventualities the task of a Socialist movement seems plain to me : it is on the negative side to oppose the war absolutely by the method of non-violent resistance, and on the positive side to prepare to meet barbarism creatively by opposing to it a developed capacity for simple communal living. Today one can easily conceive a condition of society so chaotic and so barbarous that a Socialist movement which had educated itself into community and frugality would be the sole indigenous vehicle of the continuity of civilisation. One final word. I have come to be convinced that there is no possibility of avoiding degeneration of

purpose in an effort at community-living unless it is not merely based avowedly on Christian "principles," but has a spiritual focus and a source of spiritual renewal in Christian *worship*. To describe in detail how I have been compelled to this conclusion is too large an undertaking for this paper. But I may express my conclusion by saying that social Community and Christian Communion must go hand in hand. This is, to my mind, by far the most valuable lesson I have learned from my efforts at education into community. And I believe the conclusion indicates the pattern of a regeneration of society which can be undertaken without freakishness or isolation. It seems to me that in this principle we have not only a principle of synthesis between such notable efforts (for example) as those of the Cotswold Bruderhof and those of Professor J. W. Scott, but a principle to guide us in the simple effort to regenerate the village-community. The spiritual centre of that effort must be the parish church, and its source of constant renewal the central mystery of Christian worship that is celebrated there. The effort to restore Community culminates in the effort to restore the vital meaning of the sacrament of Communion.

I have expressed myself hurriedly, and those who care to make further acquaintance with my thought on these matters will find it elaborated in *The Adelphi* magazine, in *The Necessity of Pacifism*, and in my forthcoming book, *The Church Eternal*.

J. MIDDLETON MURRY.

*The Adelphi Centre,
Langham, Colchester, Essex.*

The Church and the Social Order

THE Order of the Church Militant is a society within the Church of England which is carrying on the Catholic Socialist tradition of the Guild of St. Matthew, the Church Socialist League, and the Catholic Crusade.

On its theological side, the Order is Catholic in the sense that it recognises and values the visible Catholic Church, with its distinctive dogmas, sacraments and ordained priesthood, as the historic institutional embodiment of the Christian religion. But it is also Liberal Catholic, in the sense that, believing that God is not *confined* to His visible church, it holds that the Catholic Tradition embodied in that Church should always be open to absorb, and to be further developed and enriched by the experience and thought of the most vital people and thinkers, non-Christian as well as Christian, of each succeeding generation—and therefore of the present generation.

The Order is also democratic, in its theology as well as in its politics. For example, it values the ordained priesthood of the Church, but it regards that institution, not as the exclusive channel through which God in a distant heaven doles out truth and grace to a merely receptive laity, but rather as, for the sake of "holy order," the special organ through which the whole God-indwelt Catholic Community secures the handing down of its common doctrine, performs certain functions, and offers its common worship.

Further, it regards the Catholic Community itself as being, not the exclusive sphere of God's grace, with a God-forsaken humanity outside it, but, on the exact contrary, as being, in the midst of mankind, the permanent witness to and visible expression of the essential, although largely unrecognised, fact that the whole Body of Mankind is rooted and grounded in God and will only be healthy and really human when it lives according to that essential law of its being. Thus the whole conception, both of the relationship between the priesthood of the Church and the whole body of the Church, and between the Church itself and the whole body of Mankind, is divinely democratic right through.

Again, the O.C.M. regards the Sacraments of the Church, not as exclusive means of grace in which, by magical priestly power, God is brought down into matter, from which otherwise He is absent. On the contrary, the Order regards the particular Sacraments of the Church (for example, and above all, the Communion or Mass) as the outward and visible signs and focussing points of the *universal* presence of God beneath and in His whole material world. The Sacraments of the Church are God's particular sacraments, and their purpose is to help men to see the whole material world as God's universal Sacrament and, in their common life, to use it accordingly.

You are not, at this Conference, primarily concerned with theology, but this much of a hint at the basic theological position of the O.C.M. seemed necessary, if I was to talk about the Order at all. (It might be a further hint to some of you if I were to say that the O.C.M.'s interpretation of Catholicism is that of F. D. Maurice rather than that of Dr Pusey). And now for what the Order regards as the necessary

expression, in life, of the Catholic Faith, so interpreted. The O.C.M. believes that the purpose of God, as suggested by Him in the deepest impulses and desires of all men and, above all, as unveiled in Jesus, the fully divine man, is that the whole human race, as one body, shall in its whole life perfectly manifest the God in Whom it is rooted. That perfect manifestation of God in mankind will be the Kingdom of God. And the true purpose for which the Christian Church exists is that it shall bear witness to that eternal purpose of God in its own teaching and life, and work for its actualisation in the life of the whole world.

This involves working to create a classless, co-operative, equalitarian, social order, in and between all nations. It involves, that is, the creation of a social order in which the means of production and distribution are accessible to all, without the intervention of an owning rent-interest-and-profit-taking class, and are used by all, nationally and internationally, in co-operation for the deliberate planned purpose of supplying the needs of all. To such a social order the O.C.M. holds that the Christian Church is committed by the essential principles and values of its religion. The Christian religion, that is, involves the *essentials* of Socialism or Communism.

No doubt a really Christian, a fully Christian, social order will only come as the expression of a really Christian and consciously Christian community. But, as was pointed out in dealing with its theology, the O.C.M. realises that God is not confined to the Christian Church (a cynic might say that He is present *anywhere but* in the existing Church—an exaggeration no doubt, but there's something in it!) Anyhow God is certainly present wherever men, whatever they call themselves, are hungering and

thirsting for justice and are working for it. So the Order, while keeping its religion and its values (ultimately so essential for the health of mankind) well to the fore, works with all, Christian or non-Christian, for the *next possible stage* in the direction of the Socialist or Communist commonwealth.

While as realists accepting certain unavoidable imperfections in that "next possible stage," the Order will all the time proclaim the values which must find expression in a really human social order, and will demand the utmost possible recognition of those values even in that imperfect stage. For example, while no doubt accepting a great deal of State Collectivism, as probably a necessary stage on the road out of Capitalism and towards Socialism, the Order would at the same time uphold the Christian valuation of human personality and demand, and seek to create the demand (possibly against bureaucratic opposition) for as much scope for individual and group freedom and self-expression as possible.

Of course the social order at which it aims will be one in which provision for individual freedom and self-expression and initiative will be as essential a feature as will be co-operation between free individuals. We might express this by saying that a Christian and human social order will be Socialist or Communist in its essential structure, with "distributist" ingredients.

Similarly, the O.C.M. stands for nationalism within an international order. That it is opposed to Imperialism—that is, to the subjection of one or more nations to the rule of another nation, or to the dominant class of another nation—goes without saying. Imperialism is merely the extension into the international sphere of the essentially anti-Christian principles of Capitalism. But the Order

is also opposed to the mere uniformity of cosmopolitanism. It believes that "variety is the spice of life"—variety *in unity*—and therefore believes that there must be full expression, not only for individuals, but also for natural groupings such as the family and the nation. It believes that the Christian principle is neither narrow and exclusive nationalism nor cosmopolitanism, but real internationalism.

Just one more point. The O.C.M. is not pacifist. It is not out for a violent revolution, nor does it believe that anything good can be created by violence. But it does believe that in an imperfect world, where the only choice is sometimes between the lesser of two immediate evils, it is legitimate, and sometimes necessary, for Christians to defend by force the juster conditions which by other means have been, or are in process of being, created, and which are threatened by the enemies of justice.

I have said nothing about "Community Life," in the sense of the creation of groups of people to live the community life *now*, as oases within an unchristian society. For the object of the O.C.M. is rather to work for the creation of a Christian social order in the whole national and international life of the world. But the Order does include in its methods, as far as possible, the gathering of its members into groups, centring round a particular church and altar, to try and live now in the spirit and according to the values of the Christian social order so that they may be more effectual workers for the creation of that social order in the world and more effectual in their interference with the world as it is.

R. WOODIFIELD.

*Order of the Church Militant,
Thaxted, Essex.*

Co-operation and the Future of Community

MANY of us have looked in vain to Parliament for a new Magna Carta or Bill of Rights which would adequately tackle the unemployment problem. In social, economic and international problems we have looked for a cure in political action. But the inertia of the government at home and the spectacle of an almost doomed democracy on the continent, or at best a democracy which is threatened with extinction through a series of civil wars, has led us to look elsewhere than to political action for a real solution, and to ask ourselves, has the stage of action passed from government to the people, is the real power now vested in the people if they would only know it? This has brought us to the conclusion that governments cannot do everything for us, but that a new approach must be found by the people themselves and that those who really mean their socialism can live it *here and now*. Morally and psychologically this approach is also sound. Socialism becomes a Way of Life for which we are spiritually and morally and psychologically prepared, and ready to sustain but which would involve no coercion for those who could not accept that way. This conclusion has led us to re-examine voluntary socialism and co-operation as the way out. Our conference programme* shows two trends of development, that of voluntary co-operative

* Bath, April, 1937.

communities or colonies, and that of expansion of the co-operative movement, probably following along the lines of the Swedish system and even developing past it.

Of such communities we know that they are springing up spontaneously in different parts of the world, like a new mind emerging. In India the organising of community life has been one of the most important aspects of Gandhi's work. In America and Canada community experiments have been remarkably successful. The Catholic Church has recently organised such communes extensively in rural Quebec, and the Oxford Group has also undertaken a community experiment in Canada. United first by spiritual compulsion, they have next sought to plant their roots firmly in the soil. Both the first and the last seems the necessary basis of such a venture and in this country no one is more fitted than the Quakers to make this ideal of community a reality.

Of the co-operative movement in England there are those who are striving to give it once more leadership and a goal. In Sweden, by the expansion of the co-operatives on the productive side, they were able to check the profiteering of the great cartels, control the fluctuation of price levels of both commodities and money, and not only to stop the slump in unemployment, but to re-absorb the unemployed in industry. Built up primarily on service and protection to the consumer they also cut across class distinction and welded a true national unity which is singularly lacking in this country. We are undoubtedly entering on a period of unprecedented instability; of fluctuation of price levels with accompanying labour troubles, more severe than anything we have yet experienced. Unless our co-operative system here can function on all these levels as it has

done in Sweden, it will not fulfil its destiny ; and sinking to the status of a mere trading company will have deserted the principle for which it should stand. It may be that real co-operation can only be realised in groups, whether in industry or on the land. But in a real co-operative economy there must be a sense of producing together, as well as enjoying the fruits thereof. Economically and socially it becomes a "life-mode." Thus can be laid the basis of a super-state and indeed of a super-world.

SISLEY TANNER.

*Convener of Community
Conference at Bath, 1937.*

A

Co-operative Commonwealth

I SUPPOSE I could be classed as a revolutionary but the revolution in which I believe is a spiritual revolution for I want to attain a state of society from which war and violence will be eliminated and in which men and women can live healthy lives co-operating in all good ways. Really what we are all scheming for is Utopia. We shall not build it suddenly. Perhaps gradually we can lay a few foundation stones. I cannot in the compass of a very short address do more than make a few suggestions for creating a happier life for the individuals who compose the nation. We must not wait for governments to take the initiative. They will only move when there is behind them a sufficient body of informed opinion to compel them to take action. I have urged for many years that it is through co-operation and co-operative enterprise that redemption will come alike to English agriculture and to the English village. One vital evil connected with the most essential of all work is the fact that in the main we are a country of large farms, upon which there is room, generally speaking, only for the proprietor. His workpeople have no share in the prosperity they create. Their work is frequently uninteresting and always heavy.

We speak lightly of settling many thousands of additional men on the land, but it is of vital importance to know under what conditions they are to be settled. We do not want merely to increase the

number of labourers without interest in their work, with little or no chance of progress and yearning for the greater interests of the towns. We want, therefore, by co-operative effort in agriculture to increase the number of families gaining a living under interesting conditions and receiving the reward for their own exertions. I am not thinking of large co-operative farms—there is a place for them when certain fundamental problems have been worked out, but I should like to see many more experiments with a view to finding out what should be the size of a small holding in order to be economic and support one man and his family. When these experiments have been successfully carried out and this class of small farmers established, there is a further great opportunity for co-operation among these smallholders, particularly in the marketing of their goods, and in such matters as transport facilities, purchase of stock, loan of animals and machinery, buildings, and so on.

The village in many parts of the country is a decaying institution. I believe it can be revived and made a place of great happiness and industry. I should begin with better methods of education. I would not send the children of a village away to a central school in another village, perhaps miles away, for their education. I would have in every village a school worthy of its purpose and I would make it a great centre of progress. I should begin by once more using craftsmanship as an instrument of spiritual, physical and intellectual education. Every village school should have attached to it a manual training room where boys would be taught the use of tools, some of the principles of beauty in design, and the skill for making articles for use. I would try in the workshop of the village school to help every boy to become self-reliant in the matter

of providing for his own necessities. I would follow up the workrooms for the children of the school with one for those who have left school and I believe that under a system like this it would be possible for the men and women of the village to provide most of the things, so far as furniture and buildings were concerned, of the village. Here is a magnificent field for co-operation. Instead of the importation of cheap, badly made articles from a big town, furniture, woven articles, simple pottery, household utensils of every kind in wood—all these could be made in the village workshop by friendly villagers working in co-operation.

Craftsmanship would be a splendid recreation in moderation after the work of the day and would bring a new influence especially in the lives of village youths. There would be, as a natural corollary of this scheme, a village co-operative store primarily for the sale of the things produced locally.

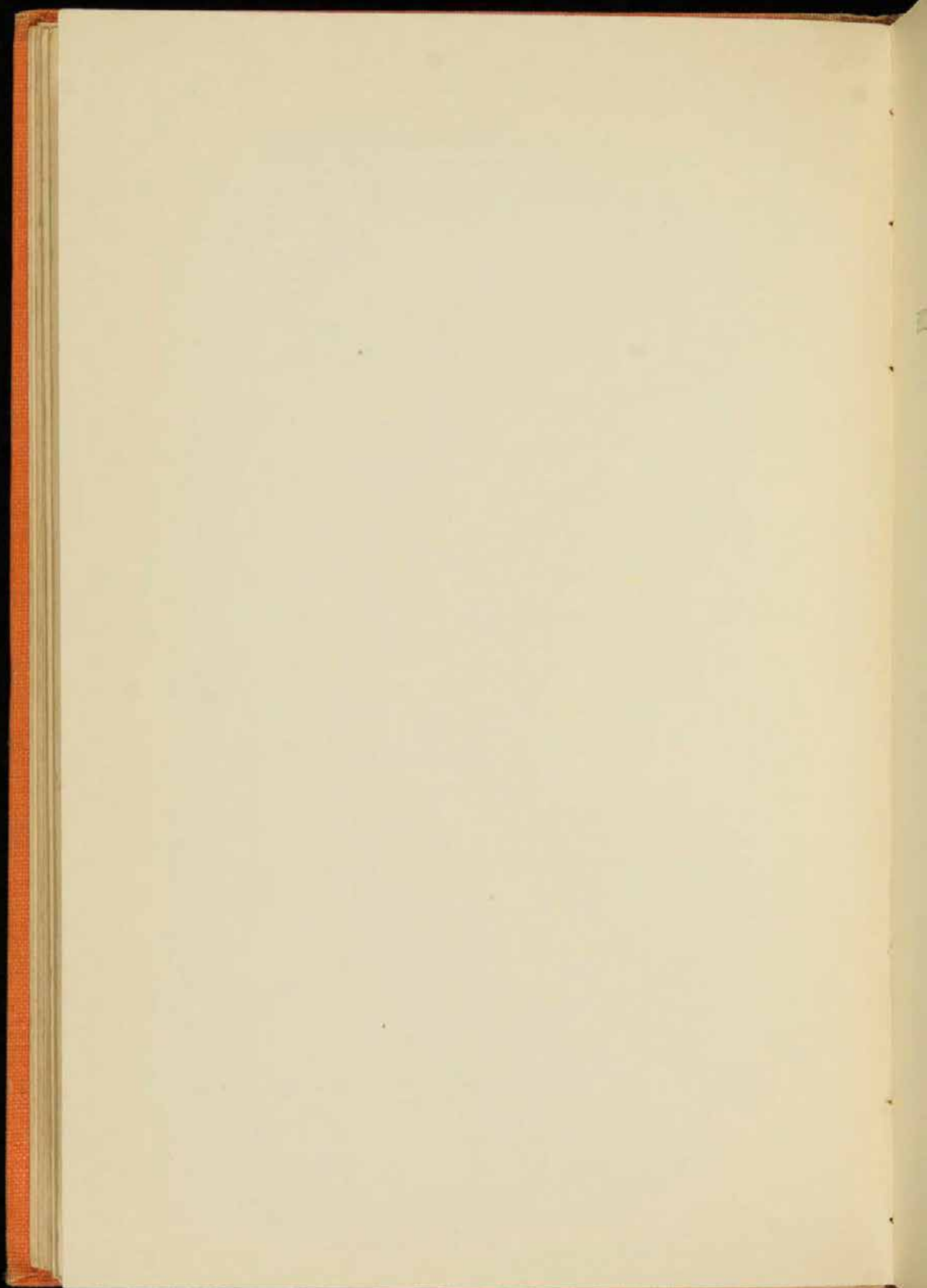
I believe there is the opportunity to start in many of the depressed areas co-operative industries in the success of which all would have an interest. I believe, too, that something greater than material success would be achieved. That would be a fellowship in spirit which would ennoble life. I should like to see a co-operative village take the place of one of the present dismal slums which are called villages, say in Wales or in certain districts of Scotland. What could be done? The slum houses and tenements could be pulled down. New houses could be built by the unemployed; furniture made by the unemployed. Such a village could be built according to an efficient and yet beautiful piece of planning with gardens and small holdings, with public amenities such as playing grounds, educational centre, swimming pool, gymnasium, library, an arts and crafts centre and many other things. All

this could be co-operatively done and the villages themselves could be shareholders.

The co-operative movement now requires a permanent thinking staff to work out schemes, small and great, and above all to begin the extension of the movement to meet the new difficulties in the world.

J. HOWARD WHITEHOUSE.

*Bembridge School,
Isle of Wight.*



ECONOMICS OF COMMUNITY

The Homecroft Technique

THE conference to which we have been called bears in its title that it is concerned with voluntary systems of communal living, and with practical efforts towards the realisation of such. Fifteen years of poverty and depression in a country of the material wealth of England could hardly leave the attitude of thinking men to this subject unaffected. I believe it has affected men's minds adversely. It has put many good people out of patience with such efforts. The old antithesis of starvation and abundance has stood out more sharply in our time than ever in the history of the world before. It has literally wrought upon the nerves of the age; and the number is greatly increased, of those who despair of constructive measures of reform, have lost all faith in voluntary movements, want a clean break with the past, a total change of scene, a fresh start from first principles in a new social world.

What more than anything has fed the flame of this desire for a break and a new start, has been the sight of the very men who could do it, standing for all these years idle in the market-place. And they are there still. Let us not make a mistake about that. It is true their visible numbers are reduced. But they are only temporarily out of sight. We know very well that the problem of the unemployed has not been solved. There is not a shadow of reason to think that the workless will not soon be on our hands again. And the feeling grows apace, that we must do something drastic: *either* let them away to

make their own community on some uninhabited part of the planet, *or else* forcibly make a rent in our established system, and give them room to do it here. For the belief will never die, that they have the power to save themselves if only they have the chance to work for one another.

Personally, I believe in the community solution, without believing that those two ways of reaching it are the only alternatives. I do not think it is necessary either to break up the present system or to go away from it; and I welcome this Conference, at a time when all the radicalisms are so much in the limelight, as a symptom of the tenacity of purpose animating those who still want to devote patient constructive thought to the means of bringing about a real change. My contribution is very simply made. All would agree that the evil we have to deal with is precariousness of employment. This is what has to be overcome. I believe that it could be gradually overcome by self-employment, if the men now enjoying wages could join in groups with the remaining unemployed, *and first master and then develop the Homecroft technique for group-self-subsistence.*

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I saw it stated in an English weekly journal the other day that Englishmen fear nothing as much as unemployment; because in the nature of the case it is so difficult for Englishmen to *employ themselves*. The writer's meaning was that very few of them possess the necessary kind of property—a piece of land, a craftsman's workshop, any small business of any kind, in which to go on continuously employing themselves producing something or other for the market, as independent workers on their own behalf. But it is obvious that when life is dependent on a market it is quite as precarious as when dependent on a wage. The market may collapse just as

the wage may stop. The only assured self-employment would be to be employed producing all one's own requirements, from the origin and consuming them.

Now at certain levels of human development it may be possible for a family to do this. But clearly, they will be very low levels—that, for example, of the South Sea Islander. To produce (and produce from the origin) all that is needed in a completely civilised society requires a very extensive territory and a very large number of people. It is said that the people of the United States could, if the need arose, draw a line round their own country and produce everything inside it that civilised life now uses without once going into the outer world for anything. Some authorities believe that there are even single States within the Union which could do the same. North Carolina is mentioned as a State which, at a pinch, could carry on without change although it was boycotted by all the rest of the world for ever.

But clearly the sort of tiny islanded community which interests this Conference is a very different affair. Such a miniature community must, of course try to draw a line round itself; but it can never completely close the ring. At most, it must aim at *contracting out of* the precarious surrounding life. It must buy its immunity. It must pay for the privilege of quietly going on in its own way, making things for itself and consuming them. And the price it must pay will consist of part of its labour, given to the outer world. An opening must be left in the ring fence, in other words, through which a stream of goods passes out and a stream of money comes in; money necessary to meet the money charges—rent for land and erections, interest on and redemption of the capital expended on equipment,

and a due supply of raw materials without which people cannot begin to produce for their own consumption. So that three practical questions at once arise in any proposal for a self-providing community:—

Firstly: *in what necessaries* are the people to be made self-providing?

Secondly: *how many people* are to be made self-providing in these necessaries? and

Thirdly: what is to be the *sales-line*?

The very essence of all practical wisdom in such an enterprise is to begin in a modest way, tackling the simplest propositions first and gradually extending as you learn the technique of the system. For even the simplest application of a principle, if it is a principle which is to be able to expand, will involve considerable capital expenditure.

Say, then, for the sake of argument that ten unemployed men by having access given them to five acres of land (placed somewhere near their homes so that they can walk back and forth) are to be made self-providing in potatoes, vegetables, eggs, bread (or at least flour) and boot-repairs; with, for their sales-line, *eggs*; how could they go about it?

For the sake of making our argument quite concrete, let us suppose the field is flat and oblong; that you enter it from one end, by a roadway which runs straight to the other end, dividing the field lengthwise into two unequal parts, the narrower strip on the left containing two acres, and the wide one on the right the remaining three. On the left along the roadway will run the poultry houses, accommodating perhaps 1,000 birds; indicating at once a feature of fundamental importance in the planning, without which there can be no success—the sales-line.

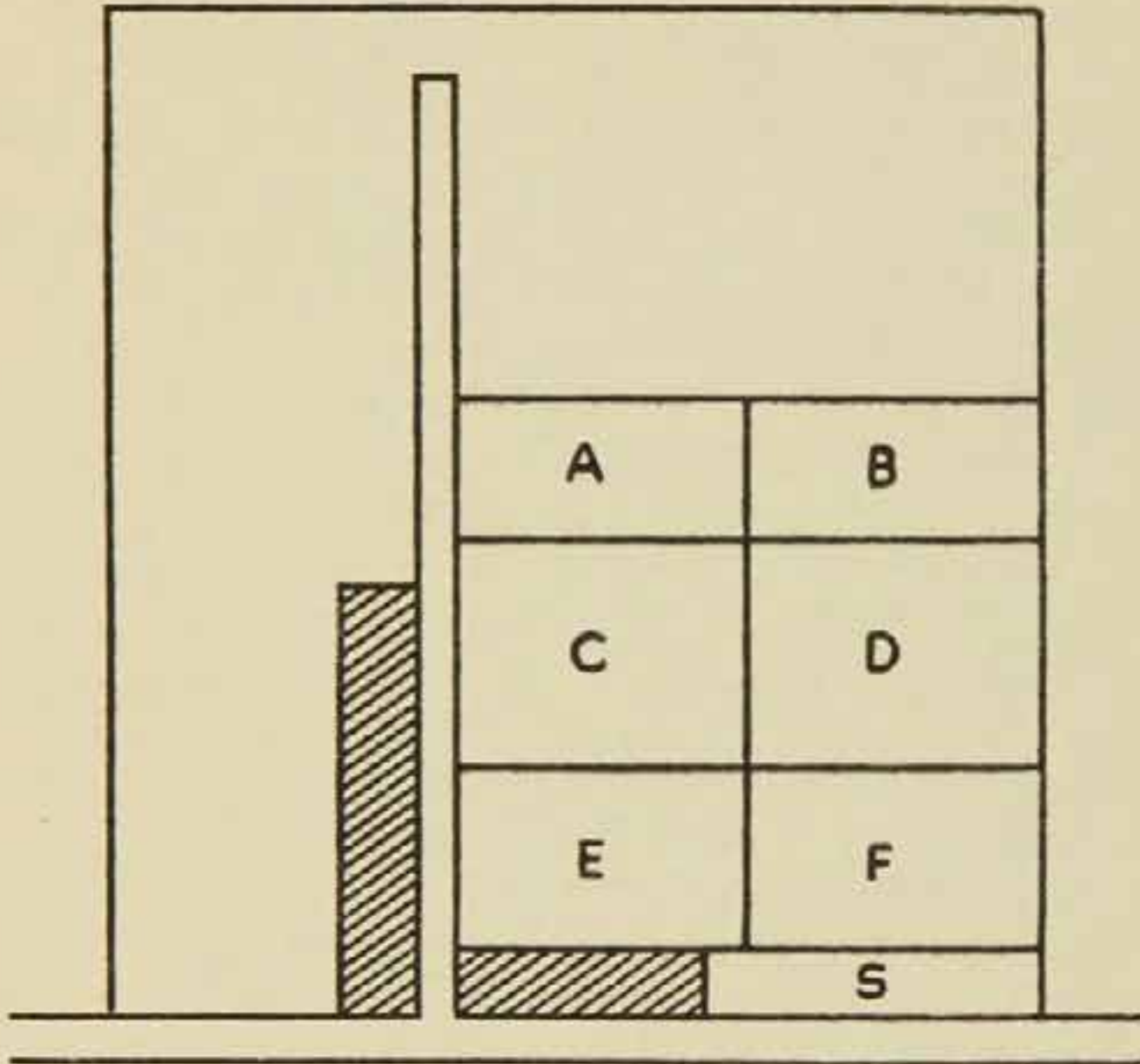
Since the sales-line in this case is poultry, in looking for someone, preferably a working man, to put in

charge of the experiment we must select one who, while he must be a great deal more, is at least a thorough poultry man, and he must live on the spot. If you cannot get him for 50s. a week, then the poultry plant must be extended till the stream of cash coming from it is able to carry its other burdens *and* meet his wage. Everything of course depends on this key man. If he cannot be an educated man in a position to forego salary, then he must be of the type who can not only keep books and market goods but can run a 1,000 head of poultry without touching a spoon or a spirtle with his own hands. Of the ten workers, two would have to be detailed by him for this poultry duty each week, one in the mornings and one in the afternoons, so that the plant is run by each of the ten members doing seven half-days, once in five weeks. Any man who has a family can of course let a member of his family take his place, in this or any other of his tasks.

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The Homecroft may now be conceived to appear something like this. In the figure, (p. 139) the poultry plant is run on the left of the avenue (shaded part) and the great kitchen garden, with its six plots and seed bed, occupying two of the acres on the right. Again on the right, just at the entrance, we note the shelters (shaded) where tools and stores are kept and the men can have their mid-day bread and cheese, looking out on to the food garden, the latter being always the centre of interest.

You will notice that one acre at the farther end of the avenue on the right remained unused. This is for gradual absorption into the food garden as more families join the scheme. Also it will be noted that not all of the two acres on the left is actually covered by the poultry. Part is reserved for cultivation with crops that will grind into poultry meal to



SKETCH PLAN OF A HOMECROFT.

A B C D E & F represent a Communal Food Garden divided into six for rotation of crops. S represents a seed bed. The shaded sections are fowl houses and shelters.

keep down the bills for feeding stuffs. Among the bought materials will be wheat for grinding into flour; and the hand mill which grinds it—a Birmingham machine—will also grind beans, peas, etc. into poultry meal. If the climate permitted the Soya bean to be grown, the mill would take that too.

It will now be seen how, by keeping their poultry going, these men have contracted themselves out of the surrounding system, so far as a few of their most

important necessities are concerned. They can go on producing their own food and consuming it, indefinitely. And if they were allowed to draw their unemployment allowances whilst doing it—as I think they would be—it would not only raise their standard of life economically but benefit them in health and character and in every other way.

The capital expenses would be considerable—the field, the road and fence-making, the shelters, the ten sets of gardening equipment, and the batteries for 1,000 fowls. The regular revenue would have to meet (i) upkeep and renewals; (ii) interest and redemption on this capital; (iii) rent, manures, seed and raw materials. Would 1,000 head of poultry carry it? Would two acres carry 1,000 poultry, even on the battery system? If not, is there any other line of production that the space would carry better? All that would have to be gone into. In this paper I am merely indicating the principle of the system.

And there would have to be a scheme for distributing the produce among the Homecrofters themselves. That is difficult enough. And yet it is not impossibly difficult. It can be done on a "ticket" system; though it is better to speak of units in this connexion than of tickets. For then a ticket may be printed for one unit or five or twenty-five or fifty or one hundred. One can have books of them from which to tear them out as required, different denominations having different colours, and all being serially numbered. The men are given units for the hours they work—only a nominal number per hour at the first, for of course there are no goods in the store yet. But when the goods materialise you then distribute the goods to the men according to the units they surrender. And if you remember always that a unit is a sixth of a penny, you can be

guided in the distribution by that fact. You then know to give just a generous shilling's worth for every seventy-two that are offered—a generous shilling's worth, of whatever you have got, eggs, parsnips, boot-repairs, flour, etc.—only taking care not to give eggs beyond the family's proper requirements, for they are your sales-line. But in the case of everything else, give it as you have it, but always for units tendered; a good shilling's worth, as I have said, for seventy-two units. You can have a price-list showing *e.g.* how many units parsnips are, how many it requires to have one's shoes soled, how many for a pound of flour, for a dozen eggs, and so on—a list the men can all consult. And one simply keeps feeding the units out to the men (at so many per hour), so that they are able to take away all the stuff as it appears—to clean up the whole garden. You can never do it absolutely neatly, of course, but the fowls are always there to take oddments and scraps.

This method of dividing the spoil is simple and should take away all fear of inequality or injustice. All get units for their work and all get them at the same rate. The units a man has, depend on the hours of work he has contributed towards putting goods into the common store; and that is exactly the extent to which he is enabled to draw them out.

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The store once started can be enriched by all kinds of other work, done perhaps outside the Homecroft altogether. If a man's children gather blackberries and their mother makes jam, for example, units can be had for that at the Homecroft store. If a Homecrofter buys flour with his units he might bring it back the next day in the form of little cakes which his wife has made. He can then have back the units he paid for the flour, with a few extra. Or he

may buy rhubarb or raspberries and bring them back as jam or raspberry wine; receiving his due units for those in the same way. Or if used clothing is of any value to the men and the store has a supply, a suit may be taken away and brought back brushed and pressed and mended and units be given for that work. Units can be given in this case, because the suit mended (like the flour baked or the fruit turned into jam), is immediately worth more units, and can be placed in the store ticketed at the number proper to that kind of article. And there are many more thinkable lines, pickles, honey, oatcakes, home-made toys, painting and paper-hanging, furniture, etc. That in fact is how the system is meant to grow towards complete self-support. If anyone knows of firewood, for example he can bring it to the Homecroft and split it. He will get units for the labour and the firewood will be available, at a corresponding number of units, at the store. If knitting wool is in stock, any Homecrofter or member of his family who has the skill may take some home and bring it back as a little knitted coat. It will go into the store at so many units. The Homecroft might run a stud of Angora rabbits, sending the wool away to be spun. There would then be the chance of beautiful articles of wear to be made by members' families for units. You will notice that the spinning of this Angora wool would cost money, unless we learnt to spin it, just as the ordinary wool for knitting would cost the store money, unless we could spin it, and as the leather for the boot repairs will cost money, unless we can revive an ancient craft and learn to tan the leather. In all these cases the principle is the same. Every new thing introduced, which requires new materials to make, requires additional money. It means a bigger and bigger demand on our money

crop. It means continuously extending our poultry—or whatever our sales-line is. But we are all the time contracting out from the surrounding uncertainty on more and more of life's requirements. We are purchasing freedom to provide *ourselves* with more and more of the food and other necessaries, and thereby attaining nearer and nearer the distant ideal of our search, the islanded, self-employing community.

Moreover, no rent needs to be torn in the present social system for this new thing to be born. Men neither need to desert nor to destroy the established order. On the contrary, they *can* only re-establish themselves thus, if they make *use* of the existing system—at once make use of it, and by that very act perhaps start it growing beyond its present type. There is no room in the Homecroft plan for the destructive moment. Nay, I would go further. Even if the radicalisms following their first blind impulse, should destroy and scrap the old order to make room for a better, they will find that this which I have been describing—which, as I believe, can be done without any destruction—is what they are themselves engaged in doing; *is* in literal fact the very better order which they are seeking to plant. For communism itself rests on communes. And all I am saying is that the commune does not need to wait for communism. It can be started now, with ten or twenty people.

J. W. SCOTT.

The National Homecroft Association Ltd.
38 Charles Street, Cardiff.

The Brotherhood Trust Extension Society

ONE of the miracles of the industrial world today is the Consumers' Co-operative Movement. This movement started less than one hundred years ago, when a few poor people opened a grocery store in Rochdale. Today it is one of the leading trading organizations in England, and the movement is spread throughout the world. The rapid growth of the movement has one lesson to teach us, and that is the soundness of producing for a known demand, rather than for a market governed by fluctuations caused through wasteful competition. The Rochdale pioneers had a larger vision than the establishment of a mere trading organization which could distribute its surpluses. Their vision was of a reciprocal trading circle, and their method was to use any surpluses for the purpose of acquiring land, tools, and so forth, so that their members could be employed in the work of directly producing the needs of the circle.

At the beginning of the twentieth century J. Bruce Wallace, a Christian Socialist, felt the need of again adopting the method of capitalisation of surpluses. To this end the Co-operative Brotherhood Trust was formed. To facilitate reciprocity within the trading of this society, barter notes were introduced; and, later, in order to safeguard the trading position of the Co-operative Brotherhood Trust, the Brotherhood Trust Extension Society was formed, and this society's function was the acquiring of land and tools with which to provide employment for

members of the Co-operative Brotherhood Trust. In 1920 the Co-operative Brotherhood Trust was merged with the London Co-operative Society; but the Brotherhood Trust Extension Society has continued its existence. It is to be hoped that this society with its currency will be useful in the work of co-ordinating community experiments in general. It is realized that in each community it is necessary to have a wide variety of activities; but it must be realized also that self-sufficiency of each unit is both undesirable and unattainable. There is the recurring need for capital goods even when a community is self-supporting, and has a surplus to trade for these goods. If it depends on a fluctuating market in which to trade its surplus, it is using a very unsound method of trading. Also, if a community in trading its surplus competes in the open market with normal producers, ill feeling is most likely to arise amongst those competitors; and it is this warring spirit we wish to avoid.

I wish to impress upon you the need for a consumers' association, which will consume surpluses of community efforts, and thereby contribute capital to the communities. The association could be formed by all who are interested in community life, but are not participating directly in it. Such an association would be able to state its requirements from time to time. The various communities having an assured market for their surpluses would be in a really sound position to build that co-operative commonwealth, which has for so long been the dream of idealists, but is now proving to be the indispensable method by which to carry out the much needed change in the social system.

It is the instrument for practical men.

DOUGLAS H. LAMB.

The Brotherhood Trust Extension Society,
London, E. 5.

Production for Use

WHEN Edward Unwin, the founder of our League, first launched his scheme "to give the unemployed the opportunity of producing for their own use the goods they need," with ideas and methods very similar to those of the Co-operative Brotherhood Trust and its child the B.T.E.S., it was obviously the opportunity for the two organisations to co-operate as closely as possible.

There are only three factors in the production of material wealth in a civilised community: (a) Land; (b) Labour—manual and mental; (c) a medium of Exchange of the goods manufactured. The unemployed have one of the three factors in superabundance, namely their Labour. The real tragedy of the unemployed is not that they have not a sufficiency of food, clothing, shelter and culture to provide a decent and comfortable life, but that there is no opportunity to exercise their divine gift of Creative Service. In a system based on the motive of Production for Profit, they are superfluous. They are unwanted.

The more fortunate and privileged could assist in giving the opportunity to their fellow human beings, to have access to the other factor, raw materials, tools, and the like, which land furnishes. This is easier now than formerly, because Science and Invention have greatly increased the production of Labour. The power of the Landlord and the Private Capitalist lies not so much in the Land and Capital which the few own and control—tyrannous though

this ownership and control are—as in the lack of access to the means of production by the many. Once some access is obtained, Labour can increasingly create its own Capital, as indeed it is doing through Consumers' Co-operation.

To provide the third factor—a medium of Exchange—it is first of all necessary to recognise that money, whose sole function should be a medium of Exchange is today a commodity and is bought and sold like boots and butter. Indeed, the financial system furnishes perhaps the most glaring examples of the evils that arise from Production for Profit.

When the idea is thoroughly grasped, particularly by the workers, that the true function of money is a means of exchange, the real power of the landlord will be broken. What is there to prevent the creation and use of a currency which shall assist in the equitable exchange of the goods produced by the workers, with those who want to consume them?

It is necessary therefore to think in terms of goods and real things—not in terms of gold which does not exist. When this fundamental truth—that money should be a means of exchange and not a commodity—is understood, it should not be beyond the capacity of the human brain to devise a currency which should function as a true medium of exchange. Difficulties, of course, there will be, especially at the beginning. The League's Economics Sub-Committee have given careful and prolonged attention to this problem. Finally, the League have entrusted the business side of exchange to the Brotherhood Trust Extension Society Ltd., which had altered its rules to include the Barter Currency Rules of its parent.

Turning from principle to practice, we may note some practical expressions of the idea, such as the

Society of Friends Allotments Scheme and Peter Scott's Upholland experiment, now extended to South Wales.

In conclusion, it is emphasised that the main issue before mankind today is whether Production should be for Use or Profit. In the opinion of the speaker, Production for Profit leads to Unemployment, Poverty, Riches, side by side with their concomitant evils of Intemperance, Slums, and so on—and finally to War.

There are many methods by which the vital principle of Production for Use can and does find practical expression. I submit for the consideration of the conference this voluntary method of building a New England, by organising the labour of all those who prefer to produce for one another's needs rather than to produce for profit, with all its domination, exploitation and waste of wealth.

By this and other means, we may take our part in hastening the realisation of the mad priest Keegan's dream of Heaven—"a commonwealth in which work is play and play is life—a godhead in which all life is human and all humanity divine."

J. THEODORE HARRIS.

*Production for Use League,
9 Queensdown Road,
London, E. 5.*

The Co-operative Productive Federation

THE Co-operative Productive Federation consists of manufacturing businesses which are also associations of workers bringing both the owners of capital and the consumers into partnership with themselves. They are co-operative in that they produce chiefly for the co-operative market and often their control is shared with delegates from the Co-operative Stores. They are also called Co-partnership, because all their workers are partners and share in the ownership, the annual surplus and the control. The control and the profit or surplus are both shared between Capital, Labour and the Consumer.

These Societies are seen, therefore, to be a form of industry alternative both to ordinary business, which is under the dominance of capital and also to the Store Co-operative Movement, which is based on the autocracy of the consumer, as is seen most clearly in the factories owned by the Co-operative Wholesale Society. The C.W.S. factories are very well conducted, but the workers in them—so far as their work is concerned—are simply employees.

Every employee in these Co-partnership workshops, who is above a certain age, becomes a member of the Society automatically and therefore has a vote in the election of the Committee of Management, and is eligible for election to that committee, subject to the possession of some small amount of the Share

Capital. The voting is on the democratic principle of "one man one vote," because it is person and not purse which is considered valuable.

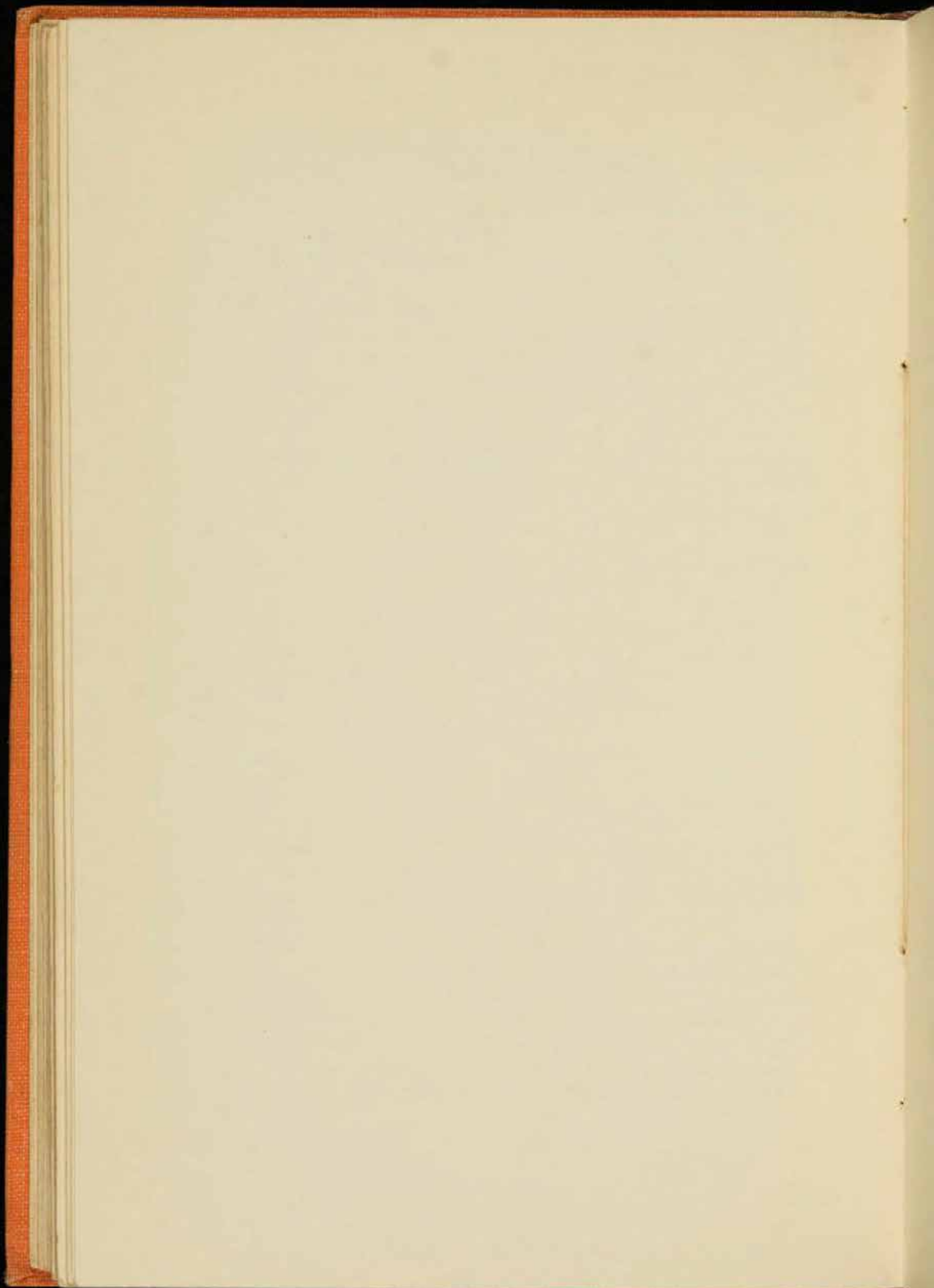
The committee keeps in its own hands the appointment of the manager and some few members of the staff such as travellers; the manager appoints other workers and dismisses them, subject to a right of appeal. The dual relation of the manager to the workers as the appointed commander of the employees in their work and also the servant of the committee, which includes employees, has been found to work quite well over a long period of years, and to lead to most harmonious relations. The fact that the employees are members with a right to know how the business is progressing; with ready access to the manager and finally with the knowledge that the business is being conducted for the purpose of giving right conditions of work to the workers and sound goods to the purchasers, satisfies them intellectually and produces an atmosphere of harmony which is the essence of efficiency. There are at present 42 societies in the Federation and about ten outside. The federated societies have a total capital of something over £2,000,000, do a trade of nearly £2,750,000 and have nearly 8,000 employees. The largest are two ready-made clothing manufacturers, one employing about 2,000 and the other 1,900. The principal groups are ten in the clothing trade, fifteen in the boot and shoe trade, and nine in the printing trade.

The method of the Federation is not communism nor collective living; but it is collective working, though reward is in accordance with service, modified by payments above standard trade union rates or wage board minima, which are a first step towards payment according to need. This method of industry gives all workers some control over

their lives, which is a most important type of freedom leading to an increase of self-esteem. Such recognition of self-value, bound up as it is in the recognition of the same personal value of all the other co-partners working together, leads inevitably to a recognition of wider responsibilities and a better idea of citizenship. This is illustrated by the number of co-partnership workers who take part in public affairs. In the past, industry has devoured its own children; these societies, on the contrary being based on the intrinsic worth of the individual give real scope for the development of character and personality.

E. W. MUNDY.

The Co-operative Productive Federation.



THE PERSONAL APPROACH

A Layman Looks at Community

IT was the first intention of the conveners of this conference* to remain very much in the background—the more so because it seemed that their work was achieved in bringing others together and that they themselves had nothing of experience or counsel to offer or to add. It was suggested to us that this might not be altogether true; that at least it would be useful to explain the point of the gathering as we saw it; the sense of need that led to it and the hopes we have of it.

In a way this meeting ends one stage of a quest that had its beginning perhaps at the end of that war which so many hoped might end war. With others who are also ex-servicemen we came to realise the futility of force. With all right-thinking people we trusted that war and its ways were discredited. Yet the fear that hangs over the world today is a fear greater than that of the years before 1914. Today the lives of whole nations are threatened by greed and self-seeking and the lust for power. It has been possible always to destroy life: the special menace of today lies in the power to destroy thought as well. As never before in the known history of mankind, it is possible to launch a concerted attack not only against the body of mankind,

* *Kingsley Hall, Bow. December 1937*

but against its spirit also. That is the measure of our crisis and it is coming on us very swiftly now.

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It is our special shame that these things have their core in our Western civilisation—the civilisation of a nominal Christianity. They are tolerated—fostered even—by many who profess that name and sign. And because of this, we are convinced that the heaviest responsibility must lie at the door of those of us who seek to follow Christ. For it is we who have failed to live out His principles. At best we have compromised: at worst we have followed the way of the world—rendering a respectable lip service to God and offering Him a share of the loot. Very miserably we have failed to inspire co-operation in the service of our brethren which is part of our service to God. John Hoyland has something to say about this* that needs repeating:

“Christ belonged to the lower class, to the working class, to the exploited, to the dispossessed. He called to Himself the weary and heavy laden; and the immortal words are not to be bastardised by interpreting them merely in a figurative and sentimental sense. He cried aloud ‘Woe unto you who are rich.’ ‘Blessed are ye poor.’ He taught those masterpieces of working-class propaganda the Parables of the Rich Man and Lazarus, of the Rich Fool, of the Sheep and the Goats. He identified Himself with the least of these brethren, and took the trouble to point out that this meant with the hungry, the naked, the prisoners. Finally, He died the death of a slave-felon.

“And, after all this, we—shame on us—have made His church into a comfortable middle-class funkhole . . . we are content to remain comfortable middle-class cravens, under these conditions, whilst our brethren perish around us, in idleness and despair.”

* “Digging for a New England”, pp. 191-2

And now the time has come when we can no longer escape the issue. We have to be honest with ourselves till it hurts.

We have to ask ourselves—we who are doing what is called “the world’s work”—whether its selfishness is not a reflection of our own: whether its exaggerated strivings for power and profits are not big, ugly shadows of our own little self-seekings in the affairs of every day. We have to face up to the unwelcome truth that in so far as we have part in the daily snatch-and-grab of mill and office and market-place, just so far must we accept responsibility for our world as we find it.

There is no compromising with this situation: it is as true as it ever was that “the love of money is the root of all evil.” Either we must go down discredited in the wreck of the old order or we must set about building anew. Everywhere there is much talk of peace, but surely the time for talk is pretty nearly over. We who stand for the Kingdom of God and His righteousness must begin as we may to *live* it.

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In so far as this idea of a New Beginning really takes hold on us—first as individuals, then as groups, as churches, as communities, as colonies—in so far as we are impelled to grow up into new ways of life by the spirit of love; to live consciously as members one of another; so far shall we be on the way to the realisation of a new social order—the only one that will have within itself the final answer to the problems of poverty and war. But it will cost us something.

We look about us and we see very few signs of this new social order on the surface of things. It isn't

advertised in the press or in the House of Commons and very little in the pulpits.

We realise the immense practical problems of building a new society within the frame of a civilisation already on the verge of conflagration. But since when has vital Christianity been scared of practical problems?

We know that many before us have glimpsed their utopias and died not having received the promise. The time was not ripe but, even so, they died in a faith that we also must follow. And indeed with the challenge of our own days we seem to see a new striving *under* the surface. We believe that in this generation we are called to rise up and follow the path of the pioneers.

Already we see enterprises bravely conceived in which devotion, eagerness and resource are badly needed. And we see also a growing body, largely scattered and unrecognised—little groups of laymen who have such service to offer and who ask nothing better than to give and to make and to build. Yet it seems all too easy for the people who need service and the people who want to serve never to meet. They don't know where to find one another.

We see these two camps—those who are employed in useful work towards a new order, and those who as yet are in that special sense “unemployed”—and we ask ourselves whether or not something can be done to make co-operation more possible and more useful between us all? Can we not join hands, however loosely, and begin at least to map out the first outlines of a plan in which *all* of us may have some part or lot in the practical enterprise of service?

Soon there may be—we believe there will be—

many eager recruits to this adventure of a new order of living. So many men and women of goodwill, sick of daily compromises with their conscience are only waiting for a lead. Who will give it? What is there for them to do? Where will they look for guidance and advice? Where can they get training in their tasks of construction?

Is anybody ready to open doors to them, to show them the difference between goodwill and good work; to explain what is useful and what is wasteful; to give them the benefit of hard-won experience? Or must they be left to flounder in doubt and indecision; to waste themselves in sentimental dreams of brave new worlds; to squander willing service in ill-conceived effort; to grow weary and disillusioned before they have ever got to grips with realities? Or else endlessly to talk and talk and talk of things that are never begun?

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We see also that those who are working to the same ends are not always working in the same way. It seems there may be many roads to our utopia; many counsels of perfection. Can unity grow out of all this diversity of temperament and technique? For ourselves it seems needful first and last to strive against the sin of intolerance. Our sympathies must be as wide as the love we profess. We shall seek always for that common denominator in men and movements, not magnifying differences that divide; keeping clear in our mind the distinction between *unity*—which is needful—and *uniformity*—which is not.

That does not mean that we shall sink our principles and liquidate our convictions. For ourselves as the conveners of this conference, we have nailed our colours to the mast in the agenda for these meetings. We believe profoundly that the Spirit

of Christ is the one necessary and unifying factor between individuals and groups alike. We believe we shall go forward only as we seek in all teachableness to be led by that Spirit into all truth. We believe that nothing less than the faith of the Son of God can suffice to move our mountains. We believe that the fullest and deepest fellowship in service is the fellowship of those linked by that faith in the service of one Master, even Christ.

For us, there can be no compromises there. As we see it, any new way of life and any creative social pattern will take shape only in so far as it not only bases on the principles Christ taught, but is actually filled and made alive by the gift of His Spirit.

None the less we believe that we must co-operate with all who share a belief in the co-operative way of life. None is excluded from the fellowship of service.

To those who cannot in honesty share with us the Christian basis, we say, "work to the highest you see, and so far as we may we will work together; presently, maybe, we shall share our vision as well as our work." For it is certain that no man can live by another man's light. We have all of us much to learn of the way of understanding and the bearing of one another's burdens.

And we want here to put in a word for a robust sense of humour. It seems to us that the sorts of task we are all facing call in very special measure for people with a joyous breadth and sunny sanity of outlook that will be equal to the stresses that co-operative effort must needs set up at times. Those who can laugh together will also be able to work together.

*

We would wish this meeting to be the beginning of a wider phase of our common quest. We here are

of one heart and one mind about most of the deeper issues. We represent many more who are not with us but who would understand our language and answer to it, if they were.

We believe that, for us and for them, a co-operative Christian commonwealth is no dream, but a practical everyday possibility. We believe that those of us who see that, are called upon to work towards it actively here and now. We believe that Christ must be made manifest to the world, as in times past, through small companies of everyday people fired by His Spirit. We believe that it is necessary to commit ourselves to the road: if we wait till we see where it is leading we may find we are too late. We believe that those who have the faith will also find the means ready to hand.

We have tried to say something of what we see as the fundamentals of this co-operative Christian commonwealth. Such a society (as another speaker has put it) must certainly "break out on the land." But may it not also break out in factories and mills and distributive units as well? We shall need true co-operation in industry as well as in agriculture. Then too there is need for the co-operation of the mystical mind which sees *why* with the scientific mind which shows *how*. Indeed, our society must be broad based enough in its development to take and use all the gifts we have to bring—the gifts of the artist as well as the industrialist; of the organiser and the investigator; of the doctor and the teacher; of the spade worker and the desk worker; the maker of motors and the makers of music. All have their own contribution to the full life.

*

On the material side we visualise the beginnings of a new order in an increasing growth of individual

groups, colonies, settlements and services, and an increasing co-operation between them.

We see possibilities of a widening system of co-ordinated producing and distributing units devoted to the essential means of life.

We see auxiliary advisory committees of specialists who will investigate and report on data arising out of practical work in the field.

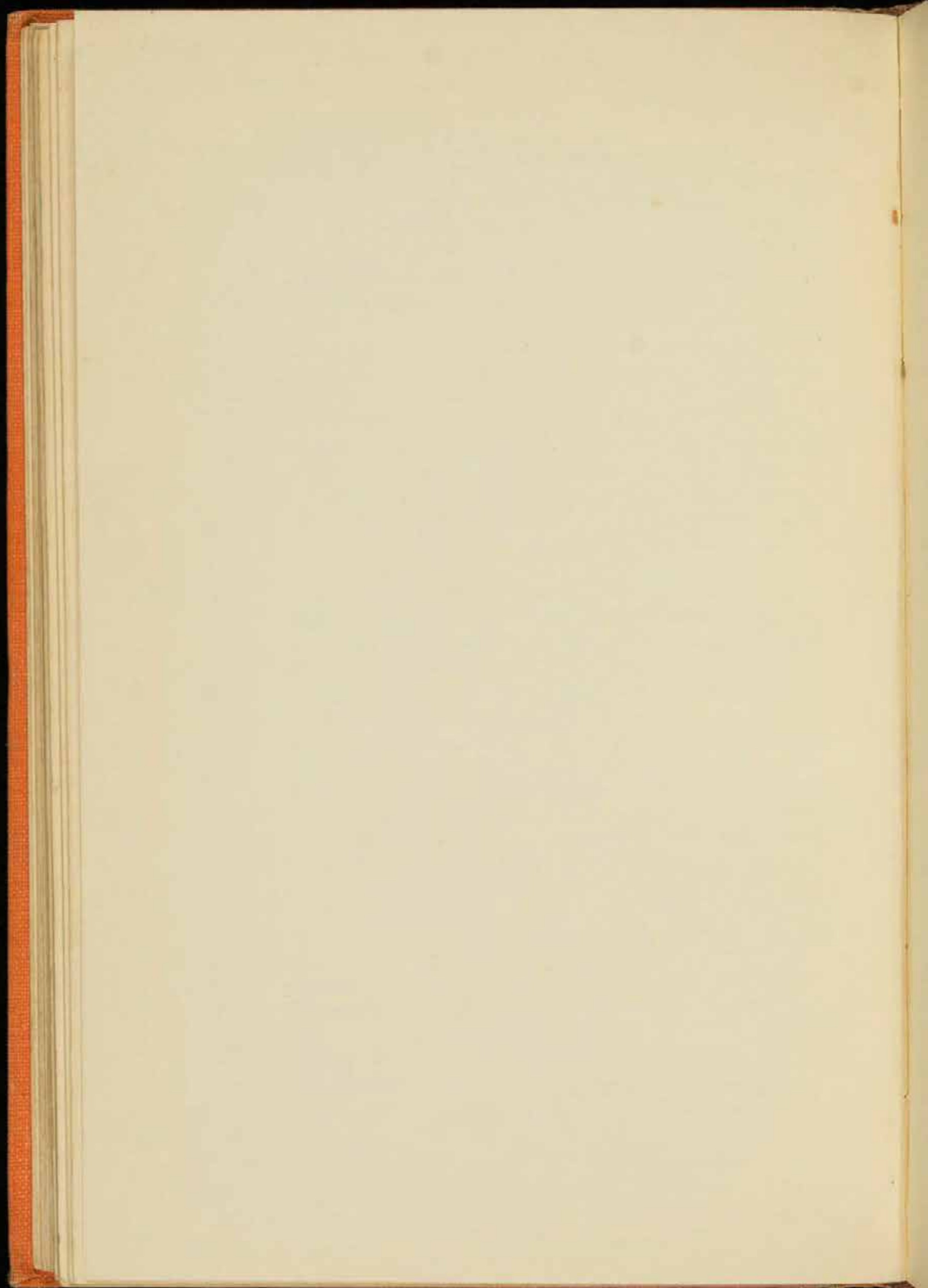
We see a liaison unit keeping contact not only with these working groups but acting also as an information source and an advisory body for those interested in community life and service—a sort of employment exchange for those willing to give time, work or specialised service.

This last perhaps may seem a practical suggestion for immediate consideration.* The rest still lies ahead—though not maybe so far ahead as it appears. If, in the light of anything that may happen during the week-end, a small body of interested and serviceable people can find time to get together and examine present issues—not theoretically but always with a view to action—then we shall be able to lay another small but solid foundation stone in the building of “the city set on a hill that cannot be hid.” That is for you to decide.

HERBERT SHIPLEY.

*Joint Convener of
Community Conference,
Bow, London, 1937.*

*See Appendix: “Formation and Functions of Community Service Committee.”



APPENDICES

The Distressed Areas

By Rhys J. Davies, M.P.

DURING the last four years the sum of about £11,000,000 has been set aside by Government to revive industry in the Special Areas and to try to do something in the areas that are to be "certified." But out of that vast total the actual cash that has been spent is £2,800,000. If spent in nothing but wages the whole amount of £2,800,000 would have found employment for only 7,000 people for four years, on the calculation of £2 per week per person. The paucity of this provision will be understood when it is realised that in the Special Areas alone in January, 1937, there were no fewer than 335,000 unemployed persons.

According to the terms of the Bill passed through Parliament in April 1937, a new distinction is to be drawn between the several poverty-stricken areas. In future, therefore, the country is to be divided up into three categories—the prosperous, the special and the certified areas. There are patches of Lancashire which are expected to be "certified." There are four urban townships in the Westhoughton (Lancs.) Parliamentary constituency, with a population of 50,000, and ten years' ago there were about 10,000 colliers at work in 17 mines. Today those 17 pits are closed and there is hardly a miner employed in the whole of those districts. The rateable value of industrial undertakings in the four townships ten years ago, was £50,000; today it is only about £5,000. The result is that the local authorities are seriously hampered and the social and human consequences are almost beyond description. The infantile mortality rate in 1935 throughout the country was 59 per 1,000. What is the position in Aspull, a small township in that constituency? In that township, with a population of 7,000 the infantile mortality was not 59 per thousand but 149. A child in Aspull has only one-third the chance of living of a child in Bournemouth or St. Annes-on-the-Sea.

The Aspull local authority has condemned about 100 houses as unfit for human habitation, but not a single house of any kind has yet been built by the local authority. The township

of Aspall is at best nothing but a huge rubbish heap; it is derelict. And the people who have taken the wealth out of the ground in that locality are now enjoying the riches they have thus obtained and probably living in Harrogate, Morecambe, Bournemouth, and in luxurious flats in London. The population of Lancashire is greater than that of the whole of Scotland and twice that of Wales. We could put several Durhams or Monmouthshires in Lancashire and not feel their presence. Apart from putting a munitions factory ten miles away from these four townships, where the distress is heaviest, the following remedies are now suggested. First, the attention of the Service Departments is called to the heavy unemployment rates prevailing, so that industrialists in those parts may tender for contracts for those Departments. But what is the use of saying that firms will be allowed to tender for contracts for those Departments, when there are hardly any firms there to tender? Service Departments will give contracts to firms which, in their opinion, can do the job cheapest and best, whether it is done in a distressed area or anywhere else. Part of the problem in this country at the moment, both in the prosperous and the distressed areas, is that there is not sufficient liaison between the Ministry of Labour and the Service Departments. Critics sometimes throw out suggestions that the unemployed do not want to work. I know the problem of dealing with human beings as well as most. I happen to be the Secretary of a society which pays out benefits under the Health Insurance Scheme. When it was announced that a munitions factory was to be established at Chorley, 30 men from the village of Blackrod walked eight miles to look for work, and walked back again, and the answer they received was that they could get work when all the unemployed in Chorley had been absorbed. When the unemployment rate at Chorley is 15 and the rate in these four townships is 50, the unemployed there ought to have some priority of employment at that factory. Some people argue that industrialists will not come to these areas because the rates are too high, but in these parts of Lancashire they are about the lowest in the whole county. Then we are told that we must be very careful not to dub these areas as depressed otherwise industrialists will shun them. The local authorities have been inviting industrialists to come there, but they have declined, and they declined long before we whispered that it was a distressed area. They will not go there for at least two reasons. First, they do not want to be bothered with trade unionism, and, secondly, the profit factor counts with them more than anything else.

The people of Lancashire are not revolutionary-minded ; they have not marched to London behind bands and banners and all the rest of it. There is something more sinister even than marches from Jarrow to London and demonstrations in South Wales, and that is, the gradual deterioration of the physique of the people and the undermining of their morale until, in the end, they become satisfied with the social services. That is the most sinister thing in Lancashire.

Lancashire is unlike anything else in the country. Not only have we unemployed, but we have thousands, if not tens of thousands of skilled men and women working full time for wages that are below the standard which they would get if they were on public assistance.

Irrespective of the colour of the Government which may be in power at the time, the scientist, the engineer and the chemist have confounded the schemes of the best statesmen and politicians of all parties. A girl of 16 can work a machine which puts out of employment 50 adult men at one stroke. That is what is going on everywhere ; and in the end comparatively few people will be required in this great industrialised country to produce all we require. In spite of all the documents that have been published, and all the speeches that have been made, a Government, whatever political colour it may be, will some day have to face that problem by raising the school-leaving age, abolishing overtime, reducing the number of years which people are called upon to work, and introducing pensions at an earlier age. We shall somehow have to provide in that way for the unemployed, and lift them out of the terrible travail which they are in at present.

We must find ways and means to give them a chance to enjoy some of the riches that other people continue to enjoy in this land of plenty.

April 1937.

Economic Size and Layout of A Self-Subsistence Unit

IN planning to utilize human energy for voluntary effort the size of the group is of fundamental importance. It vitally affects the psychological reactions between the members, and the growth and maintenance of the best relationships which depend upon intimacy, mutual respect and personal responsibility. This factor has been largely ignored in the rise of the industrial system, but, for Community purposes, merits the closest study.

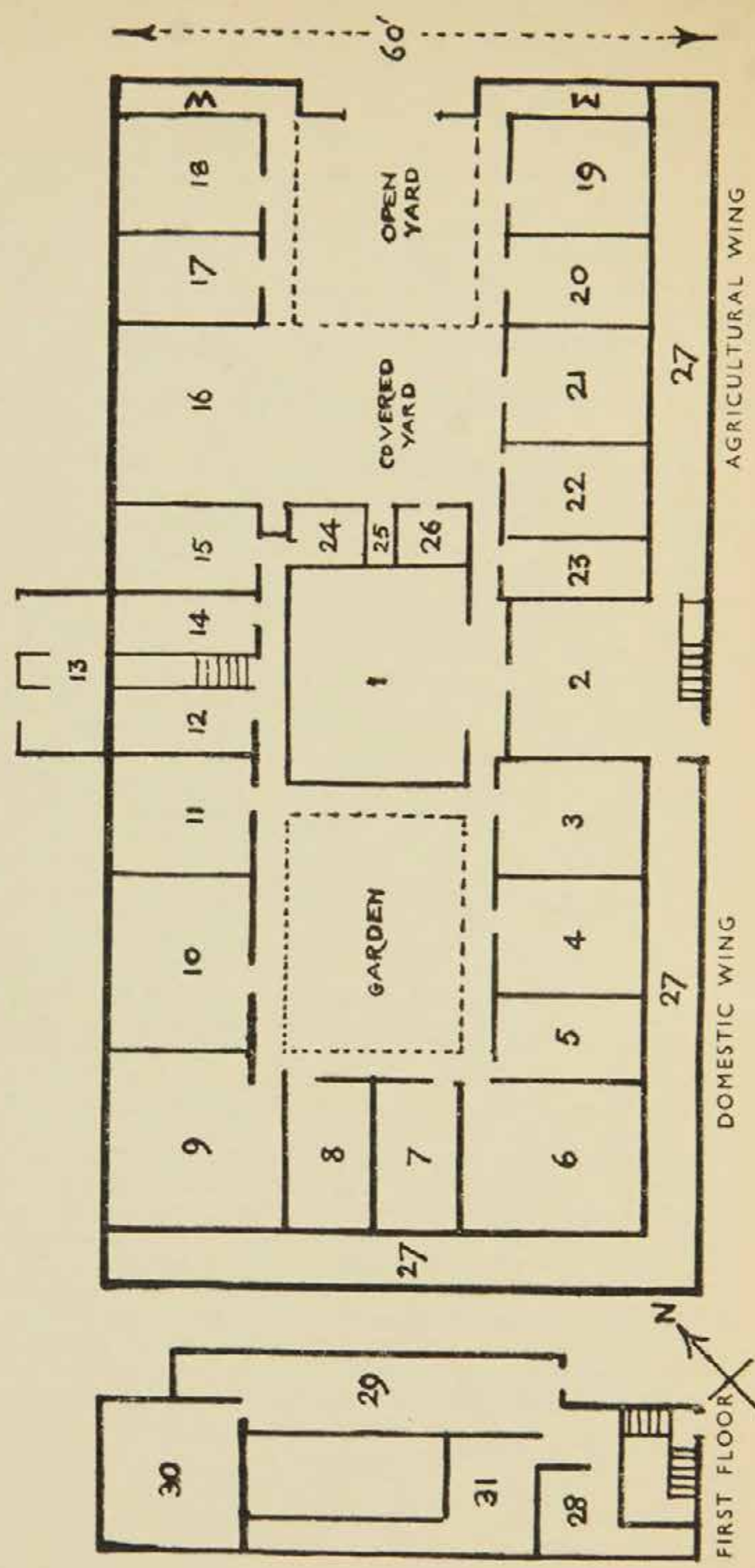
There is a widespread conviction nowadays that to do anything well it must be done on a huge scale. This may be sound when viewed from the angle of securing a return on vested capital, but is definitely false when applied to the production of the basic needs of life by people seeking fullness of life, not profit. We must beware when considering the plan of community of a lag in thought such as that which, for years after the introduction of electricity, prevented builders from fitting a switch upstairs to turn off the hall light, just because such had not been technically feasible with gaslighting.

In reply to those who say that the production of our vital needs cannot be successfully undertaken on a small scale, I would point to the Upholland experiment in Lancashire.* This was successful in spite of the most indifferent premises, without such elemental facilities as running water, light or power, and the absence of any previous experience by either sponsors or members. It only failed when expanded on the conventional plan, and reduced to the status of a branch establishment in a large organisation. Then it ceased to be an entity, and the virtue went out of it.

In the U.S.A., Borsodi, the author of "Flight from the City" has made himself and family independent of the industrial system. With somewhat better equipment than was available at Upholland, he claims a saving of 20 to 30 per cent. against retail prices on a specialized mass-produced commodity like canned tomatoes, for the reason that production at or near the point of consumption results of itself in a very great economy. In East Anglia a small farmer, in addition to producing as

* *An Order of friends.*

A SELF-CONTAINED SECTIONAL BUILDING FOR A SELF-SUBSISTENCE GROUP



KEY

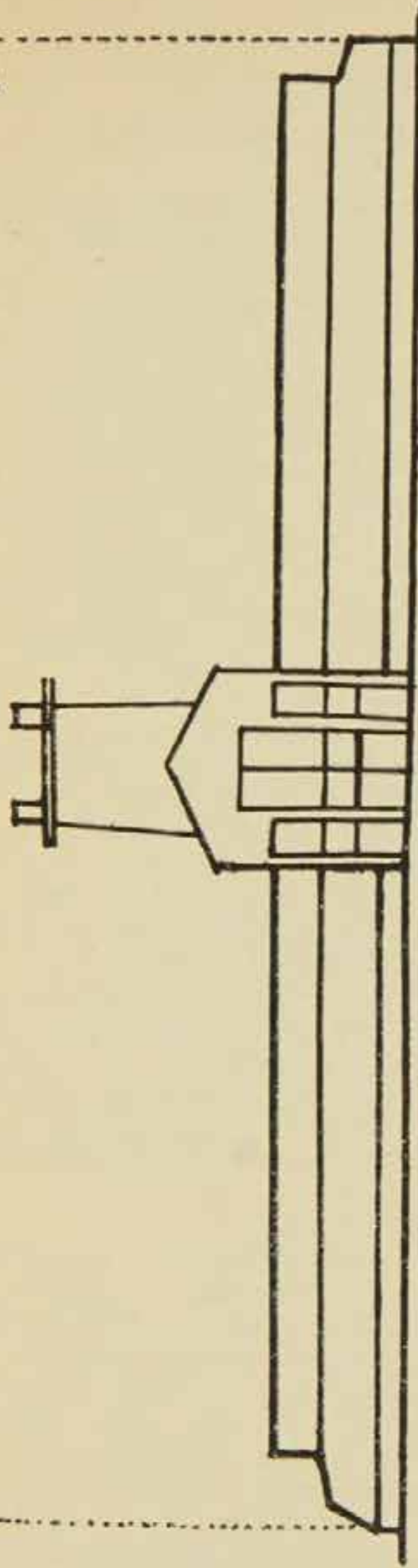
Ground Floor

1. Hall
2. Mess Room
3. Bakery
4. Preserves
5. Cooked Meats
6. Stores, etc.
7. Sewing
8. Cobbling
9. Woodwork
10. Wash House
11. Exchange
12. Larder
13. Slaughter
14. Butchery
15. Dairy
16. Cart and Implements
17. Roots
18. Horses
19. Pigs
20. Feed Mix
21. Loose Box
22. Cows
23. Tools
24. Sterilizer
25. Boiler
26. Fuel
27. Glasshouse

First Floor

28. Flour Store
29. Dry Goods Store
30. Weaving
31. Office

120' 9"



MC 16-78

Ground plan, first floor plan and S.E. frontal elevation of a functional unit planned from practical experience of subsistence production technique.

(built round an open yard), glasshouses, workrooms, stores, offices, hall, mess room and a water tower above the central two-storey block.

The building is designed in sections and can be extended with the development of the group and its resources. In complete form illustrated it includes a domestic wing (built round a garden) and an agricultural wing

This layout simplifies provision of necessary services and roads, sewers, manure pit and hay barn would be provided according to site.

Note the N.E.—S.W. aspect.

Designed by William Henry Butler, M.I.P.E.

many as possible of his other needs, is growing and grinding (by hand) his own corn for bread, and enjoying a full and free life, mentally and spiritually, as a reward.

If any feel that this is a return to barbarism, it is because they are unable to re-adjust their thinking, and recognise that this generation can draw on the service of science and the machine to an extent never before possible in human history. These, in turn, if we will but seize our opportunity, allow a new decentralized pattern for Society without loss of the amenities to which we have become accustomed. The immense combines of today will surely perish, just as the seemingly invincible prehistoric monsters did, and for the same reasons—immobility and lack of adaptability to changing conditions. It is the smaller, more active and sensitive forms of life that have persisted.

At this time we have an unparalleled opportunity to lay enduring foundations for a new order of Society—an order that shall arise to greater beauty than any we have yet been able to conceive. With the collapse of the Roman Empire the engineering technique was lost that had enabled them to set up massive columns spanned by heavy stone lintels.

The native builders fell back on the unassuming round or Norman arch, built brick by brick, but, as greater skill developed, the pointed or Gothic arch was introduced, and this resulted in the incomparable beauty of the cathedrals that are the glory of Europe. So now can we pave the way for a healthy, balanced Society, wherein all have access to the heights of the Good Life, by establishing self-sustaining groups of men and women, economically independent of any central organisation, while free to associate for purposes of mutual interest.

*

It is very significant that most active groups of people who depend on mutual confidence for their effective corporate action are limited to from 11 to 15 in number. Most sports teams consist of from 11 to 15 players, the army platoon is 12 men, while in the Navy the crews of the smaller ships are divided into messes of about 12 or 13 men each. There must be some deep-seated reason for the prevalence of this number, and we should take advantage of it to secure the right response in community effort. Too often we plan location and procedure for human endeavour without sufficient regard to those factors that foster the growth of skill, enthusiasm and harmony.

The picture I have in mind for immediate action, wherever twelve good men and true can get together and wish to make

a start, will entail the securing of a five-acre plot, on which a simple self-contained block of sectional building can be erected by the members, to house all their equipment, stock, workshops and so on. A suitable plan, based on experience, is reproduced herewith, showing two courtyards—that on N.E. being surrounded by the farm building, and that on the S.W. which can be cultivated, surrounded by the workrooms, so that all look on to a garden. The southern walls accommodate a lean-to glasshouse, while the central two-storey block provides office, stores and communal hall, with water tower above all.

This layout simplifies the provision of necessary services, such as light, heat, water and drains. Constructed from standardized interchangeable sections, the building is readily adaptable for the basic activities of a team of from twelve to twenty families. The plan entails the minimum cost for materials, and skilled labour. All departments are placed to take full advantage of sunshine or shade and prevailing S.W. wind according to requirements. It provides ample daylight, ventilation and hygienic conditions everywhere, and may be easily altered or extended to suit local needs.

The whole establishment would not be required at the start, but would be added to year by year as the land was developed, and the livestock increased. A fairly complete degree of economic self-sufficiency should be secured by this means within five years.

W. H. BUTLER, M.I.P.E.

*Lately Production Engineer
to An Order of friends.
Southport. Lancs.*

Community and Child Education

THE chief concern of thoughtful parents today regarding the education of their children lies, not in the number of facts they acquire, but in their ability to live with other people. Herein lies the essence of education in community—the art of learning to live together and herein also lies the solution to the world's most grievous ills. The answers to the real problems of life are not to be found in text books, they are to be found where men have learnt to live as brothers. It is therefore little wonder that the trend of so-called modern education, with lamentably few exceptions leaves most intelligent people with an impression of hopeless inadequacy. Educators of the calibre of Pestalozzi and Froebel are still lone voices crying in the wilderness and "education for life," even in these days, has little claim in the academic world.

*

On the other hand many people argue that children living in a community would suffer through lack of efficient education, at least for some years, until the community school had become fully developed and adequately staffed, and this situation would probably necessitate the children's attendance at a village school, with possibly few opportunities for secondary school education. But if the purpose of education means the fullest development of the individual in relation to the home and the community and the fullest development of the home and community in relation to the individual and the development of all these factors in relation to the whole world and its needs then community has something of vital importance to offer to education. To some of us, who have considered this problem carefully, there has come the conviction that the children's experience of life—especially in a community where the religious basis is not an empty creed, but life itself—would more than compensate the lack of academic instruction, where such a choice had to be made. The question of specialised training cannot be dealt with here, but no constructive aspect of living should be neglected in a developed plan for community education.

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It was in the spirit of love and with a deep understanding of the whole life and need of man, that educationalists like

Froebel and Pestalozzi, were prompted to translate their dreams of good into reality and weave them into the very fabric of life itself. They both realised the supreme importance of helping the child to develop his awareness of God and man and of the world of nature. They realised too that such knowledge could never walk hand-in-hand with violence, it could only flourish by the way of love. It knew no barriers of class or age and it made God real to the children through the lives of its interpreters. In his *Education of Man*, Froebel says "Education should lead and guide man to clearness concerning himself and in himself, to peace with nature and to unity with God : hence it should lift him to a knowledge of himself and of mankind, to a knowledge of God and of nature, and to the pure and holy life to which such knowledge leads."

In another chapter he speaks of the feeling of community between mother and child and later between the child and the rest of the family and he goes on to say : "This feeling of community, first uniting the child with mother, father, brothers and sisters and resting on a higher spiritual unity to which later on is added the unmistakable discovery that father, mother, brothers, sisters, human beings in general, feel and know themselves to be in community and unity with a higher principle—with humanity, with God—this feeling of community is the very first germ, the very first beginning of all true religious spirit." Is this not a challenge to educationalists of our own day to seek a more adequate answer to the child's needs in relation to life as a whole ?

*

Something indeed is being done along these lines and the work of the following schools should not be forgotten—in India, Rabindranath Tagore's School at Santiniketan, Moga in the Punjab, Kees Boeke's Community Workshop in Holland (this school has also undertaken courageous work on international lines). In California, the Voorhis School, and in England this spirit in education is best represented in the principles underlying the foundation of the Caldicott Community. There must be others too, throughout the world who are exploring the way of community in education, but the sum total of their efforts has probably only touched the fringe of the question—the answer lies with educationalists of the future.

MARY OSBORN.

The Community of the Way.

Formation and Functions of the Community Service Committee

AS an outcome of the Community Conferences at Bath and Bow, a provisional service committee was constituted with a desire to serve the community movement in the way in which it seemed that immediate service is most needed and may be most practically rendered.

It was very generally felt that, although active developments towards community are taking shape quietly but fairly rapidly and in many different ways, these developments are likely to be slowed up and hampered by lack of information, of working experience, of inter-contact and co-ordination. Isolation in any movement towards community is a paradox, yet at the present time many community activities are coming into being in very much that state. We may look to see many recruits to a new order of living in these coming days, but are we ready for them?

Active groups already in being are necessarily pre-occupied with the full-time task of building up their own life and work; they have little time or opportunity to consider the development of activities outside their immediate concern. Any service in the direction of co-ordination seems likely to come more helpfully from without.

It is such service that the provisional committee is constituted to attempt. Its members include several who have been concerned at first hand and for many years with community problems and activities. All share a sense of the immanence of community development in the present day; all believe that a new social order based on co-operation and not competition must result from any real and widespread effort to interpret the spirit and teaching of Christ in everyday living; all are agreed that the time for action is likely to be brief; that any steps towards a more conscious ordering and co-ordination of community interests should be taken now.

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Convinced as they are that the basis of community integration is and must be spiritual, the committee recognise the need that "all things be done decently and in order" and that, to

this end, working knowledge of all available ways and means is also necessary.

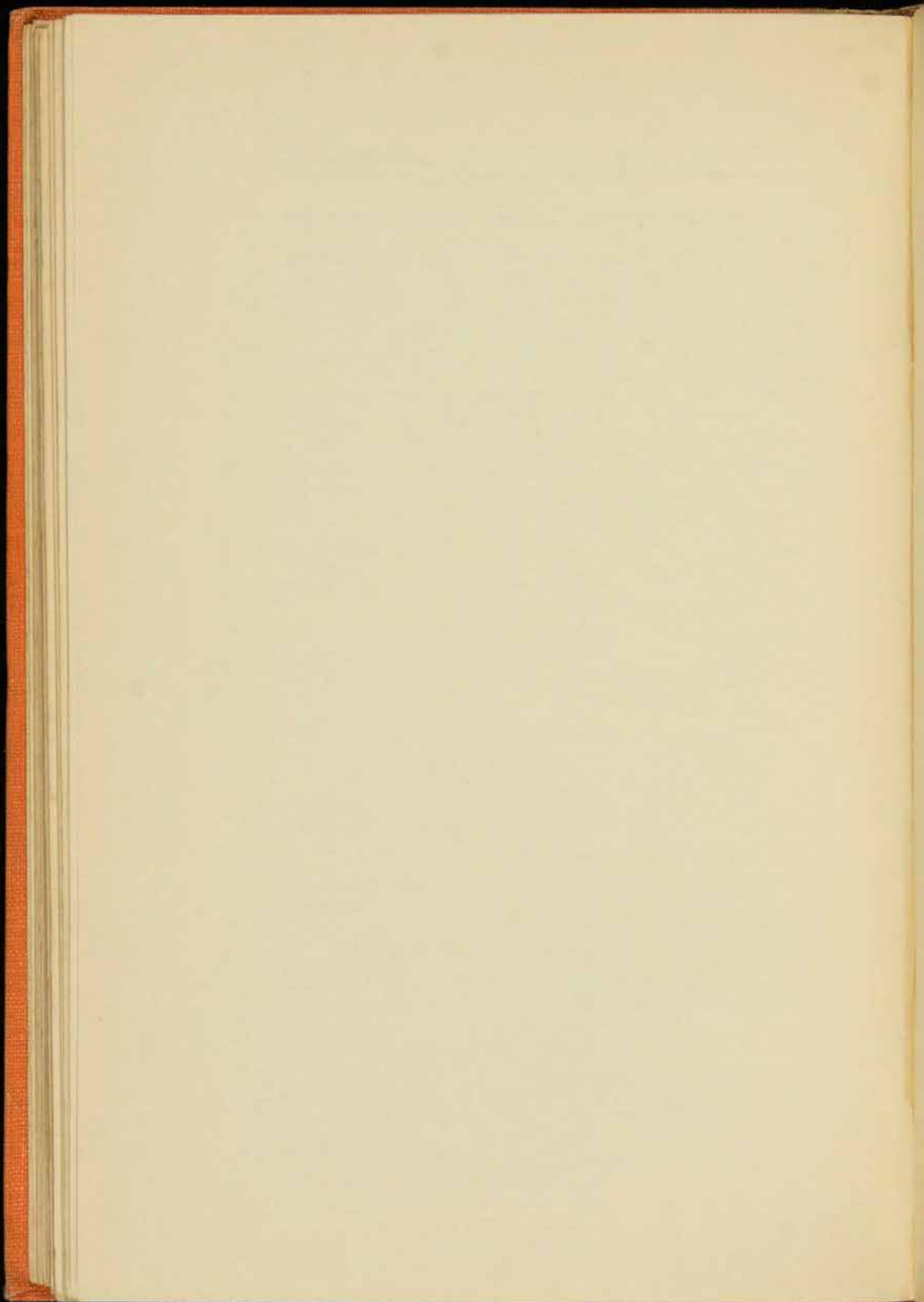
Their function will be to learn from all who have working experience or constructive thought to offer and to make the resulting information available as widely as possible to all who want it. Their job is conceived essentially in terms of service to all who are interested in any sense in community—whether actively engaged, formulating plans, or simply questing towards decisions.

Specifically their work would seem to fall into several categories. It would seek simply and with the least possible machinery:—

- (a) To offer a ready channel of intercommunication between community units themselves and between such units and laymen becoming interested in them.
- (b) to gather exact information about the organisation and work of community experiments for the guidance of those eager to co-operate with active groups, to visit them, or to start units of their own.
- (c) To assist as opportunity offers in promoting the interchange of community produced goods and services and in that way to strengthen the economic independence of community life.
- (d) To constitute something akin to a community "employment exchange" putting into touch those who have help to give and those who have need of such help.
- (e) To link up with all who are studying and investigating from any angle the factors entering into community organisation.

*

Since its formation the Committee has been working quietly but steadily in these directions and contacts have been established in many parts of the country. Correspondence is invited and letters should be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, Community Service Committee, "Chancton," Dartnell Park, West Byfleet, Surrey. This is not a "movement," and it is supported by no fund so that, where response is indicated, correspondents are asked if possible to enclose postage.



A
Short Survey of
some Experiments and
Activities towards Community

THIS summary does not claim to be complete but it outlines sufficient examples to show in how many various patterns the living spirit of community is expressing itself to-day.

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Through all these patterns, however diverse in form, runs a significant unity of spiritual conviction, of social consciousness and of economic principle.

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All such community activities call in these times of crisis for conscious fellowship, practical co-operation, and closer contact with the growing body of free people everywhere who are waking to the necessity for a new way of life. In such fellowship, co-operation and contact lies the wider community sought by men of good-will throughout the world.

Colonies and Settlements

1. THE COTSWOLD BRUDERHOF.

Ashton Keynes, Wilts.

A Christian Community originated in Germany in 1920 and established in England in 1936 to witness the practical possibility here and now of a way of life based on love and lived in accordance with Christ's teaching about the Kingdom of God. A membership of some 250 includes men, women and children of several nationalities. Property is held in common and work shared by all. No "wages" are paid and money is used only in external transactions and in the maintenance and extension of communal activities. Agriculture and dairy farming provide the staple economic basis but craft-work and book-publishing are also carried out. "The Plough" is produced as a quarterly magazine and published in several languages. Orders are invited for printing, bookbinding, carved bookmarkers and craft-work in wood. The community is open to all and visitors are freely welcomed.

2. AN ORDER OF FRIENDS (Peter Scott)

'Deristone,' Chapel Road, Abergavenny, Mon.

An Order of friends is a group of men and women who feel deeply the defects of the present economic and social system and the urgency of radical changes. They have come together in a special organisation because they know that some persons must at this critical time dedicate themselves wholly to the development of a new society in peaceful, experimental ways. The activities of an Order of friends include:—

The Brynmawr Experiment, a planned effort to enable a derelict township to discover for itself a new level of community life. The experiment has brought into being:

(1) The Community Council, which consists of men and women from all sections of the town, meeting regularly to discuss common problems. Its practical work has included:

(a) The Brynmawr Survey (published in 1934 by Allenson).

(b) The Swimming Bath, Paddling Pool and Gardens built by voluntary labour on the site of an old rubbish tip, and given to the Urban District Council in 1938.

(c) The Nursery School, built by voluntary labour and managed by its own Committee.

(d) Social Welfare work of many kinds.

(2) Community House, where activities are co-ordinated, and which serves as a meeting place for many other organisations in the town.

(3) Clubs for men, women, boys and girls, in Brynmawr and the area around Brynmawr, assisted by leaders working from Community House.

(4) Two new industries, Brynmawr Bootmakers, Ltd., and Brynmawr Furniture Makers Ltd., commercial ventures producing goods of the highest quality in their respective fields, and providing paid employment for a number of men and boys.

Subsistence Production, an attempt to set the older unemployed men to work along new lines, producing for their own consumption as many as possible of the necessities of life, while remaining in receipt of unemployment

assistance. This work includes at present:

(a) The Subsistence Production Society of the Eastern Valley of Monmouthshire, with centres at Cwmavon, Trevethin, Pontymoel, Pontnewydd and Llandegveth.

(b) The Brynmawr Subsistence Production Society, which works in close relation to the other work in Brynmawr.

London Office (and showroom of Brynmawr Furniture): 6 Cavendish Square, W. 1. Subscriptions, donations, and enquiries should be addressed to the leader, Peter Scott. Plans and progress are described in a quarterly publication, "Towards the New Community."

3. HUGH'S SETTLEMENT. (Brinsley Nixon)

Quarley, near Andover, Hants.

An experimental model of 120 acres for the development of rural settlements in England and overseas. Registered as a public utility society in 1928, Hugh's Settlement builds its own houses; aims at community food production and industries; plans adolescent education based on mutual assistance in working and learning; seeks to identify interests of investors providing capital with those of workers providing effort. Invites participation in its plans.

4. WHITEWAY.

(Nellie Shaw)

Stroud, Gloucester.

A colony of about 40 acres founded in 1898 as a community on Tolstoyan principles but developing into an associational group of members, each cultivating own plot; occupying own dwelling; following own employment. It has operated a bakery, introduced hand-loom weaving and cabinet making and built a hall. With a population varying from a dozen to 100 and including men, women and children, White-way has had a long and colourful story fully described in the book of that name. Its

community life has now become largely a matter of history.

5. STAPLETON.

(A. G. Higgins)

The Brotherhood Church, Stapleton, near Pontefract, Yorks.

A land colony started in 1921 on the basis of the Christian teaching. It substitutes moral standards for legal ones, seeks to establish the rule of Christ in the lives of its members and refuses to tolerate the control of the coercive state over its actions. It carries on a knitting industry with 7 machines, has 7½ acres of land and keeps some 50 colonies of bees.

Service Units, Teams and Camps

1. JOHN HOYLAND'S WORK CAMPS.

(John Hoyland)

Woodbrooke Settlement, Selly
Oak, Birmingham.

In action since about 1930. Enlists voluntary parties of students and others of all ages, both sexes, and any nationality "to work side by side with the men who till lately have been plunged in the hopeless despair of prolonged inactivity but are now in action again on the land." Its objects are (a) to assist production-for-use on behalf of unemployed and partially incapacitated men and on the basis of co-operative allotment or land settlement schemes; (b) to bring men and women of differing background into working contact and understanding; (c) to promote the restoration of a prosperous British peasantry on co-operative lines. Weekend or holiday digging parties billet in the homes of their fellow-workers on the spot. Experienced teams are organised for overseas work. Applications are invited.

2. GRITH PIONEERS.

(Leslie West)

139 Camberwell Road, London,
S.E. 5

Grith Camps were started after the war with the object of bringing young men to a self-disciplined life of adventure, hardihood and self-expression and the sublimation of war-mongering passions by healthy and constructive activity. Their work has been largely devoted to the unemployed but students are welcomed in vacation. Volunteers are invited for a camp at Shining Cliff near Derby.

3. INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTARY SER- VICE FOR PEACE.

(Jean Inebnit)

1 Lyddon Terrace, Leeds, 2

Originating in France about 1921, the aim of I.V.S.P. is the creation of a spirit of friendship and a constructive attitude towards peace among all peoples, irrespective of race or religion, by giving practical help in national catastrophe or in carrying out work of public utility, thus providing men and women of

goodwill with a sound training in mutual help, voluntary discipline and comradeship. It supports all efforts to replace military service in times of peace by international constructive service fostering confidence between nations. It never competes with ordinary labour or undertakes any scheme intended for strike breaking. The I.V.S.P. has worked in many countries and has enlisted teams numbering from 400 to 700. Teams include "sisters" chiefly occupied in domestic work. Volunteers capable of hard disciplined service are invited for periods of not less than 12 working days: board and lodging provided but not travellings costs.

4. THE PEACE ARMY.

(Dr Maude Royden / Joyce Pollard)
63 Meadway, London, N.W. 11

Members are pledged to bring to the service of peace—loyalty, endurance, disciplined courage and, if need be, a readiness for the ultimate sacrifice demanded of soldiers at war. The Peace Army is committed to positive peace-making, wherever opportunity offers, by the provision of conciliation parties, neutral observers and international police; to the technique of non-violent resistance in the event of invasion and to the principle of peaceful intervention between opposing

forces committed to war. These principles are being interpreted at the present time through constructive work amongst the Jewish-Arab settlements in Palestine.

5. UNEMPLOYED ADOPTION.

(Beatrice Leigh-Clare)

"Longshot," The Ridgeway,
Guildford, Surrey

A practical sharing plan, in action since late 1937. Establishes postal contacts on a basis of personal friendship as between families and individuals who need help and those who have help to offer. During the first 18 months over 900 "adoptions" have been arranged. Those able to recommend families or willing to adopt them, are invited to get in touch.

6. SCOTTISH WORK CAMPS. (Ann Cumming)

Friends Meeting House, 22 Stafford Street, Edinburgh

Formed 1934 to assist in depressed areas and other emergency by providing work teams of students and others. The work has included road mending, drainage work, limewashing house exteriors, making gardens, and especially helping unemployed men start new land schemes. A young people's active service corps for peace.

Groups, Centres and Cells

1. COMMUNITY FRUIT SERVICE. (Bert Over)

The Mount, Bleadon,
Weston-super-Mare

A co-operative experiment started in 1926 with 3 acres of land. Produces for use and distributes the produce according to need. Fruit and vegetables are grown, picked and distributed to local families, schools, children's homes hospitals and orphanages. Children assist largely in picking and the fruit garden has become an element in the life of the district. Friends are encouraged to camp on the ground and it is hoped that those doing so will take their part in whatever work is going on. All work is voluntary and no goods are sold.

2. THE CHALLENGE CENTRE.

(Hilda Chapman)

Woodbine Street, Cross Lane,
Salford 3

A service centre opened in 1933 for unemployed women and wives of unemployed men. Members work up gifts of materials and odds and ends into useful clothing

and household goods. Hours given to the Club in making and mending, cleaning and cooking are recorded and for the most part used to "buy" things from a community "shop," stocked by this hitherto unwanted labour and by gifts from friends. Through its membership of 100 wives, some 400 men, women and children were clothed in one year by this experiment in production-for-use. Other services include sewing classes, fitness classes, hot meals at low cost, and country holiday parties. Gifts of goods and clothing or offers of voluntary help welcomed.

3. TREALAW COMMUNITY HOUSE.

(Margery Parker-Gray)

Trealaw, Rhondda, S. Wales

A house set up to demonstrate the possibilities of a new life of fellowship and service amongst the miseries and hostilities of a depressed area. Believing that "all human needs are religious needs" Community House gives corporate examples of Christian social principles by a classless fellowship finding expression

in prayer, work, use of arts, reading, discussion, recreation and holiday camps. It includes a chapel, library, gymnasium, tennis court and garden of ease. It carries on carpentry, bookbinding, weaving and embroidery, cooking, folk-dancing and community singing. Services are co-operative and freely given. Accommodation is offered to friends for conference and to members of Y.H.A. for local contact. The House looks towards the development of a full community life of simplicity and sharing. Correspondence, visits and orders for craft-work and bookbinding are welcomed.

4. THE MISSION COMMUNITY OF S. HILDA.

(Rev. G. H. Gibson)

40-42 Sandover Road,
N. Camberwell, London, S.E. 5

An experimental unit in an Anglican slum parish in North Camberwell. It sets out to cater for the needs of the "island" territory of tenement houses surrounding it, through worship, study and recreation. Its officers include an Anglican priest and his wife who are the Missioners in charge, an ex-professor of Economics as its hon. lay-missioner, and an Economics research student who is one of its hon. secretaries. These and others share a common life on the

premises. The mission Community has plans in hand to round off its life by establishing a permanent farm colony and guest house 15 miles out of London. A magazine "Church and Community" is published monthly.

5. KINGSLEY HALL.

(Rev. Godfrey Pain)

Kingsley Hall Powis Road, Bow,
London, E. 3

A community centre with clubs, educational groups, L.C.C. and W.E.A. classes, centering round Christian worship. The work begins with a Nursery School at Children's House. A group of some fifteen resident workers and students share the manual work entailed in caretaking and also help in directing activities. The Hall has strong international contacts, and there is much interest in developing community experiments. Students and guests are invited to take part in the community life.

6. COMMUNITY OF THE WAY.

(Mary Osborn)

23 Raverley Street, Bow,
London, E. 3

An experiment in Christian love, community brotherhood and adventurous giving and sharing in the East End of London. Founded in 1938, this house is used as a community centre by a number of families for work, study and

prayer. Various hand-crafts are in course of development for the support of the group. Schemes for the future include plans for the children of families and a fuller community life as a group, outside of London. Orders are welcomed for hand-spun wool, hand-woven goods, aprons hand-embroidered in Old English designs, wooden toys (very strong and realistically coloured), and hand-printed greeting cards for all occasions.

7. HITCHIN COMMUNITY HOUSE.

(Warden : Leonard Ames)

20 Walsworth Road, Hitchin, Herts.

A Guild of the Second Order of the Brotherhood of the Way (*see below*). There are at present in residence five full members of the Guild, three or four associate members, and also the editor of the Brotherhood of the Way Magazine. The first object of the Guild is to express the Christian faith and spirit in communal life and work. There are the further objects of providing a centre for the printing propaganda work of the Brotherhood; and also providing a place to which the preachers of the First Order can retire from time to time for change of occupation. The work by which the Community supports itself includes a bakery business and a small market

garden. The control of all the affairs of the Community rests with the full members of the Guild.

8. HANDSWORTH * GROUP. (Guy Johnson)

11 Handsworth New Road, Winson Green, Birmingham

A Christian Community Group founded in 1937 and operating on an income sharing basis. Some dozen members share a home but follow their daily vocations, pooling resources and using their house as a centre for communal worship and social service.

**This group is now united with the Cotswold Bruderhof (see above).*

9. CAMBRIDGE GROUP.

(Emily Kendrew)

Mavis House, 163 Hills Road, Cambridge

A Christian Community Group constituted on an income-pooling plan and adopting simple standards of life. Their centre is conceived as sharing the functions of a communal guest house, convalescent home, settlement and propaganda unit. Garden produce will be raised for group subsistence, and craft work may be developed. A special aim of the centre will be to give a helping hand, practical and spiritual, to those in need.

In proportion as friends with resources are moved to join the group, so the membership of unemployed friends can be increased.

10. DRIFFIELD GROUP

(George Dixon)

Dringhoe Grange, Driffield,
Yorks.

An experimental attempt by some of the P.P.U. in 1937 to work out the full implications of pacifism in terms of community. One of the original members of this group has since visited Palestine to study the organisation of the Communal Settlements there.

11. MICKLEPAGE FARM HOLIDAY HOME.

(Joan Lyster Jameson)

Nuthurst near Horsham, Sussex

The Franciscan tradition expressed in a holiday home run on a non-profit making basis and open at very low charges to mothers and children, boys' and girls' clubs and others needing a homelike holiday with a background of friendliness, peace and service. An outbuilding is visualised for possible conversion into a chapel for small conferences and retreats.

12. COMMUNITY CON- FERENCE HOUSE.

(Margaret Corke)

Riverside, Parkgate, Cheshire

An attempt to work out an attitude to material possessions on the principle of the family; to bring together people of varying occupation, creeds and parties to learn from one another; also to afford opportunities for quiet and a free form of worship for those who need them. Riverside stands for the spirit of forgiveness and understanding in personal, social and international affairs and for the practical expression of that spirit as an immediate step towards the realisation of the wider vision of community. Friends of Riverside use the house as an informal club and pay a small subscription; there are 9 club members and 24 house members.

13. THE ADELPHI CENTRE. *

(J. Middleton Murry)

Langham near Colchester

A training centre for "education into community," the making of socialists—as distinct from social politicians—through actual co-operation in everyday human work. The centre has 5 acres of garden and 15 acres of field and will accommodate 70 people. Its continuity is

assured by a nucleus of some dozen residents, forming a permanent staff. Visitors are accommodated at a fee and are required to take their part in communal life and work. Simple workshops are being developed as well as a printing plant for the publication of "The Adelphi" monthly magazine.

**The centre has been taken over temporarily (1937-8) as a "community home" for refugee Basque children by the Peace Pledge Union. Correspondence to The Old Rectory, Larling, near Norwich.*

14. SYSKON HOUSE.

(A. Kathleen Lineham, B.A.)

Syskon, 136 Woodsley Road,
Leeds, 2

A residential student settlement for those of all nationalities who wish to come into

contact with the people and culture of other nations. The life is that of a community living, working and studying together. Fees cover board, residence and tuition.

15. DUNCRAIG.

(Sir Daniel Hamilton)

"Duncraig," Plockton, Ross-shire,
Scotland

"Duncraig stands for quality": it is the business of its workers to prove that the "manufacture of souls of a good quality" can be made, as Ruskin suggested, "a quite leadingly lucrative one". The work planned includes farming, gardening, building and weaving and is associated with the simple life of the Sermon on the Mount. Students welcomed: bed and board in exchange for a fair day's work.

Ecclesiastical Orders

1. THE SOCIETY OF CATHOLIC FRIENDS

(Cynric Mytton-Davies)

Elm Lodge, Harpenden, Herts.

Holds that pacifism is indivisible from the creation of a new social order and world co-operation. Aims at freeing the Christian doctrines from their implication with the existing social order and restoring them, by re-interpretation, to their original meaning, as the foundations of a human order of society revealed, through the Fatherhood of God in Christ and the Brotherhood of humanity, within a classless co-operative world family. Advocates the formation of small active groups of Anglicans within each parish working towards these ends in definite ways and co-operating with pacifist groups of all persuasions and denominations.

2. THE ORDER OF THE CHURCH MILITANT.

(Rev. Conrad Noel)

The Rectory, Thaxted, Essex

Believes that the perfect manifestation of God in mankind will be the Kingdom of God and that it is a duty of the Christian Church to bear

witness to the purpose of God in its teaching and life and to work for a classless, co-operative, equalitarian social order in and between all nations. The order includes in its methods the gathering of its members into groups. These, centred around a particular church, try to live *now* in the spirit and according to the values of the Christian social order, as a means to the larger end.

3. THE ORDER OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH.

(Rt. Rev. Vernon Herford)

Elmswood, 128 Woodstock
Road, Oxford

Following the original example of the Franciscan order, visualises small groups of celibate Christian men forming religious families; "leaving all" and mutually disciplining themselves to forsake self-will under the guidance of a detailed "Rule" and a "Superior" chosen as filled with the spirit of the Rule which he would express and exemplify; growing their food under skilled guidance on tracts of pasture settlement and so becoming progressively self-supporting. Teaching and preaching

would be the chief part of their work in return for bare support from the outside public. Around such a nucleus might grow up a "colony" of chosen unemployed, as far as possible supplying their own wants by manual work and passing out again when employment was available. 75 acres are available for development at Dagnall, near Berkhamstead by young single men. To War, "this wholesale organisation of irrationality and crime," the O.C.F. offers religious "poverty" as "a school of strenuous life and heroism." (Wm. James)

4. BROTHERHOOD OF THE WAY.

(Rev. C. C. Stimson)
61 Hugh Street, S.W. 1

Founded in 1927 the Brotherhood is based upon the

Sermon on the Mount as a rule of life and has as its mission the preaching of the Kingdom of God in Franciscan fashion, and especially preaching it in the open air speaking places of our cities. Also the Brotherhood seeks to set up communities in which the Christian principles shall be carried out in terms of communal living and communal industrial or agricultural enterprises. There are three Orders within the Brotherhood: a preaching Order; an Order of industrial Guilds; an Order of local Groups. Full members are confirmed and communicant members of the Church of England. A monthly magazine is published.

Councils, Fellowships and Leagues

1. AUXILIARY MOVEMENT.

(Rev. John Drewett)

"Annandale," North End Road,
London, N.W. 11

A fellowship of men and women whose purpose is to understand the Christian faith and to live the Christian life. They commit themselves to God and to one another in a common effort to bring into being a new social order which seeks to express the will of God and in which the true development of every personality can be realised. The movement seeks the worship of God, the work of reconciliation and the extension of Christian community. It co-operates with other movements in so far as they work to this end. Its activities concern education, industry, study, church and community centres, conferences and the publication of a monthly magazine, "Community." Membership about 2,000 with 1,000 associate members of local fellowships, overseas groups and otherwise.

2. FELLOWSHIP OF RECONCILIATION.

(Rev. Leslie Artingstall)

17 Red Lion Square, W.C. 1

Affirms that love as revealed and interpreted in the life and death of Jesus Christ is the only sufficient basis for human society and that those who believe in a world order based on love are called to accept it fully, both for themselves and in their relation to others, and to take the risks involved by so doing in a world which does not yet accept this basis. Believes that God is waiting to break forth into human life in new and larger ways, beyond the limit of our present experience and through the medium of men and women freely offering themselves for His redemptive purpose in whatever way this may be revealed. The Fellowship is part of an international pacifist movement founded in 1914 and working through local group membership. Publishes monthly magazine "Reconciliation."

3. CHRISTIAN SOCIAL COUNCIL.

(Social Action Committee)

Rev. G. H. Gibson)

29 Gordon Square, London, W.C. 1

Christian Social Action looks for the coming of a society of free people in our own time. Besides working towards distant goals compatible with the Gospel of Christ, its concern is also for simple matters immediately touching everyday life. By means of cell groups for Christian social action in offices, factories, clubs, churches, fellowships, youth movements and housing communities, it seeks to relate religion to life in communion with all Christian workers of whatever denomination. It visualises experiments in local community, concerted attempts at simplicity and discipline in personal living, and an effort towards identification with those who are poor.

4. SOCIALIST CHRISTIAN LEAGUE.

(Charles Record, D.Sc.)

318 Almondbury Bank,
Huddersfield

Seeks to interpret the teaching of Christ in the social and economic life today. Its activities are carried on mainly through group membership. Publishes "The Socialist Christian" monthly.

5. THE NEW ORDER OF WORLD SERVERS.

(Alice Bailey)

(English Unit), 38 Broadwater
Down, Tunbridge Wells, Kent

An international fellowship which seeks "to interpret the new attitudes and activities which must continually govern men in the coming new age" and to bring into conscious touch the men of goodwill in all fields of human endeavour. Works through correspondence, propaganda, contacts, lectures and discussions initiated by Units of Service. Publishes "The World Observer."

6. NATIONAL HOMECROFT ASSOCIATION. (Prof. J. W. Scott)

38 Charles Street, Cardiff

Formed with the aid of "The Spectator" in 1926, the Association is a public utility society which promotes the establishment of islanded communities of upwards of 5 people on a 2-acre field, working a homecroft cooperatively for subsistence, pooling individual skill and collective produce, and exchanging surplus production as opportunity allows for other necessities and services. Those considering homecroft experiment are invited to get in touch.

7. PRODUCTION FOR USE LEAGUE.

(J. Theodore Harris, B.A.)

9 Queensdown Road,
London, E. 5

Advocates the principle of Production for Consumption. Its object is "to give the unemployed the opportunity of producing for their own use the goods they need." To this end the League makes use of the machinery of the Brotherhood Trust Extension Society Limited and encourages the use of Barter Notes which should facilitate the exchange of the products of the various groups. Until groups are able to produce all that is required of the members and by the other groups, the League, through the B.T.E.S. helps to obtain goods from the vast range of the products of the Co-operative Wholesale Society Ltd. (C.W.S. manufactures cannot be obtained except

through a Co-operative Society). Correspondence invited from those interested.

8. BROTHERHOOD TRUST EXTENSION SOCIETY LIMITED.

(Sec., J. Theodore Harris, B.A.)

Registered Office :

9 Queensdown Road, London, E. 5

A Society registered under the Industrial and Provident Societies Acts which issues Barter Notes based on actual production of goods in accordance with its Rules and Standing Orders. It advocates the interchange of goods and services between (a) groups of producers and (b) between groups of producers and fellowships organised as consumer groups. The issue of these Notes of varying denominations facilitates exchange and encourages a means of emancipation from the profit-making financial system.

Four Comparative Studies from Overseas

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(1). The Llano Co-operative Colony in U.S.A.

THE Llano Co-operative Colony near Leesville in Louisiana, U.S.A. was started in 1914 by Job Harriman, a Socialist lawyer who felt the need for carrying out his principles as well as talking about them. From California, where the Colony had its beginnings, it moved later to Louisiana, passing through many phases, changing its methods of government and encountering psychological as well as economic problems in its efforts to realise the Co-operative Commonwealth.

At its foundation, the Colony was managed by a Board of Directors appointed by stockholders in a co-operative corporation. These, in their turn, appointed the general manager who nominated the managers of various departments.

Production for use was the object of the colony's work and no money was used in its internal affairs. All money required for rates, taxes, purchase of machinery and necessary products not available from the Colony, was raised by the sale of surplus goods for which an outside market had to be developed. In the immediate vicinity of the Colony, barter was carried on. Internal troubles, which created external difficulties, led to the appointment of a receiver. Elimination of inside friction and the renewal of truly co-operative endeavour promised an improvement in the position and the achievement of freedom once more from outside control.

Following a "revolution" in 1935, important changes again happened in 1937 and, with a reversion to circumstances more closely akin to the original conditions, the outlook became brighter. Friends outside offered financial support and by hard work and a strengthening of the co-operative spirit, the Colonists look with renewed hope and confidence to the future.

ERNEST BAIRSTOW.

Llano Circle, Farnham.

(2). *The Ashram Communities of India*

THE word *Ashram* is an Indian word ; in ancient India some holy man, or *Guru* would go and settle in a simple hut in a forest by a stream and gather round him a group of "disciples" who would practise a life of simplicity and self-discipline under his guidance, serving him and one another in humility and seeking spiritual enlightenment. These Ashram units resembled in some respects the older monastic foundations of Christendom. The present-day Ashram retains some of the old ideals, but adds to the ancient system the expression of the spiritual life in social service—in many Ashrams this seems to be the predominating aim. Generally speaking, the present-day Indian Ashram stands for simplicity of life, community of goods, and service for uplift of the surrounding community, the whole bound into unity by a fellowship in the search for spiritual enlightenment. Individually, Ashrams differ very widely as will appear from the following illustrations :—

- (a) *The Ashram of Mahatma Gandhi at Wardha.*
Here there is a fellowship of the members in simplicity of life ; the main aim is rural uplift tackled from the *economic* side—the *spinning-wheel* is the centre of the life at Wardha. They are against large scale production and defence of international trade by armed force, and their idea seems to be to make small village communities as nearly self-supporting as possible, partly by producing such simple articles, clothing, etc., as are essential to their own needs, and partly by refusing to be enticed into the purchase of unnecessary foreign luxuries. They would, however, allow exchange of produce between districts where soil or climatic conditions are favourable to one product rather than another.
- (b) *Santiniketan, the Ashram of the poet, Rabindranath Tagore.*
Here the emphasis is on *art* ; the poet is an idealist and a visionary, and sees the way of spiritual uplift for his people through artistic expression, in dancing, music, painting, and poetic expression. Poverty is naturally less stressed here ; the beauties of natural scenery are what are sought.
- (c) *Christukula Ashram, at Tirupattur, North Arcot (S. India).*
Two doctors, Dr Jesudason and Dr E. F. Paton have been working there for many years. Here the life is one of extreme simplicity and community of goods ;

the main activity as social service is the *hospital* work; there is also much itinerant work, members of the Ashram leading out bands of young disciples into the villages to see conditions and strive to apply remedies—they attack disease, ignorance, dirt, etc. The inner spiritual life of this Ashram is Christian, but it does not engage in Christian propaganda. It publishes a number of books, chiefly on village hygiene and methods of rural uplift, but the bulk of these publications are in Tamil, the language of the region, and intended for the benefit of people in S. India, not seeking publicity abroad.

(d) *Sat Tal Ashram.*

This Ashram was founded by Stanley Jones, the famous American preacher in North India.

Here the prevailing purpose is *religious search*; it is mainly active in the holiday season, and representatives of many different religions and beliefs meet there in community to pursue together, in quiet and in interchange with one another, research into the truths of the spiritual life.

(e) *Kodaikanal Ashram.*

This is a summer holiday Ashram in S. India to which in the hot weather some members from other Ashrams on the plains go for a hill holiday from the extreme heat of May or June. The secretary of the Kodaikanal Ashram Fellowship is Dr Mason Olcott.

(f) *Some Smaller Ashrams.*

There are a large number of smaller Ashrams recently founded in many parts of India which may for convenience be classified into two groups:—

- (i) Of the Wardha type, their motive being mainly nationalistic, with the spinning-wheel as their symbol, and sometimes with an anti-foreign bias.
- (ii) Christian Ashrams, conforming more nearly to the Tirupattur type, but generally more openly allied with the work of the Christian churches, and distinguished from ordinary missionary work mainly by the community principle and the life of poverty. Of these one of long standing is *Bethel Ashram* in Travancore, under the leadership of two women, one Indian and one English (Miss Rachael Joseph and Miss E. Neve). Along with the simple community life and work for the poor of the surrounding district, this Ashram undertakes the training of

village workers. The Ashram of Bishop Pakenham Walsh at *Tadagam*, near Corinbatore is exceptional in being an Ashram of married workers (most are either men's or women's Ashrams, like the old monastic foundations, but without celibate vows). Another recently started is that of Mr Verghese at *Palghat* (near the borders of Cochin state), where they live on a "faith" basis, not always knowing where the next meal is coming from, yet finding provision, and even supporting a blind woman and some orphans, taken into the Ashram family.

The *Sevananda Ashram*, near Nandyal, *Emmaus*, in Bengal, *Christa Seva Sangain* of Poona, are other missionary Ashrams; *Vidivelli* Ashram is also of the Christian type.

The constitution of the Ashram communities and their relation with constituted religious bodies and civil authorities follows no definite rule. Most of them have arisen as the voluntary enterprise of one or two leaders or a small band or brotherhood, going out on their own account to venture a new experiment. In the case of the Christian Ashrams, some (such as *Tirupattur*) maintain contact with Christian bodies only through individual friendships of their members; others (such as *Bethel*) have a definite part in the planned life and activities of the local Christian church. Most Ashrams do not seek aid (in matters of finance, protection, or publicity) from civil authorities, and the more nationalistic ones (such as *Wardha*) which have sometimes engaged in programmes of non-co-operation, have been watched with a hostile eye and occasionally interfered with by the police. But on the whole the Ashram life is of a sufficiently peaceful and obscure character to escape political hostility, and India is normally a land of wide toleration.

M. MURIEL FROST.

*Vidivelli Ashram,
Tinnevely District, S. India.*

(3). *The Communal Settlements of Palestine*

A PLEASANT green oasis of vineyards and fields at the foot of arid mountains; a group of large communal buildings in concrete and a scatter of small white dwelling houses, vivid in the sun; such is the picture of a typical communal settlement in Palestine.

Here community principles have been the daily life of thousands of people over a period of thirty years. Starting

modestly, these communities are no longer "experiments" but living factors in the life of Palestine; their influence deeply woven into the consciousness of the country.

*

In 1909 the first communal settlement was founded in the Jordan valley. Today there are 140, and twenty new settlements have grown up during the past eighteen months alone. It is interesting to notice that these communities, planned primarily as a refuge from anti-semitism and as a spiritual home for world Jewry, have nevertheless based their life on those ideals of social justice and healthy economy which must serve as a prototype for practical community the world over. There are no privately owned properties, no money and no social castes. Women share an equal status with men. All share the work of the colony and domestic duties such as cooking, laundering and care of children become the collective charge of the entire community.

*

Administration is fully democratic: the use of a field may be discussed by the whole assembly in session and the majority decision will be accepted. An executive committee, elected by the general assembly, elects in its turn a secretary for one, or—at most—two years. Sub-committees are appointed to deal with such various aspects of community life as cultivation, personal relations, health, education, sports and entertainment. The economic basis of the communities is mixed farming—the cultivation of oranges, olives, lemons, bananas, dates and wheat, and the rearing of flocks and herds. Produce is distributed through a co-operative trading organisation and the financial surplus may be devoted to building more houses, to raising the general standard of living, or to absorbing more members. It is significant that it is generally used in absorbing more members.

*

The membership itself is virtually international in character—it includes English, Europeans from nearly all countries, and Asiatics from China and India. The communal settlements act as a melting-pot in which all these nationalities very quickly coalesce, working happily together, speaking one tongue and—most important, perhaps—laughing at the same things. Work is organised by "works committees" who post a daily roster of duties in the communal dining-hall. In principle members may do all jobs in rotation, but experience has proved the wisdom of a certain degree of specialisation—obviously

COMMUNITY IN BRITAIN

so in such services as health, education, and crèche organisation. Drudge work such as serving table, washing up, and scavenging, however, is done by all without class consciousness. Not only do women share all but the heaviest of the men's work, but men also share the kitchen tasks that traditionally are the lot of the woman. A doctor is on the same footing as a dustman, and a lecturer of high educational attainment may be found prefacing his lecture by clearing up the tables after a meal.

*

The standard of culture is a high one. After long, hard work in hot sun, it might be assumed that the community would be "finished". Not so. Most communities have a library and much reading is done. Study circles are popular and are guided by specialists. Lectures—well up to post-graduate standard in England—are given by authorities in their own subject and discussions are of a high order. A truly cultural peasant community is emerging in which education is no longer the prerogative of any privileged group. As a corollary to education, there is much leisure devoted to games, folk-dancing, gymnastics, orchestral music and choir-singing, and to general entertainment including theatre and cinema.

The education of the young folk is planned to fit children for useful citizenship, and schools are themselves communities in embryo. It is found that children develop best in a community of youth, and it is recognised frankly that every mother is not necessarily most naturally fitted for the upbringing of her children. But the crèche system does not mean the break-up of the family spirit: parents see their children daily and share all their most pleasurable activities—this is perhaps seldom the case in English "family life," particularly where incomes are small—indeed the crèche simply makes available to the whole community the advantages of a family which is able to keep a nurse and a governess for the care of its children.

*

From the age of 7 every child shares some small duty—laying table or picking flowers—for a quarter of an hour a day. As they grow up, children take a progressively larger share in the work of the group, helping with cooking and tending flower and vegetable gardens (with prize shows of fruit and flowers every year).

Three other points are worth quoting in this brief summary of a wide and diverse subject. The manifest good faith and useful work of the communities have achieved neighbourly

relations with the near-by Arab villages, though this has not saved them from attack by roving bands from the hills. "Insularity" is avoided by interchanges of residents from different communities and by individual holidays in the towns, and, finally, in the whole history of the communities the mediation of the "personal relations" committees has been found adequate for the settlement of internal differences. The problem of violence has simply not arisen.

MAURICE PEARLMAN

Author of "Collective Adventure."
Great Russell Street,
London, W.C. 1.

4. *Ittoën—Community in the Far East.*

A FEW miles from Kyoto is a Japanese community of the Order of Ittoën, Creative Peace. You can approach it by barge, along quiet waterways. This community was born of necessity, says its founder, Tenko Nishida, who believes that the only way to establish peace in the world is to change the attitude of mind and living. "It was time to call a halt," he says, "to the insane striving for power which has enslaved men and women born to be free, and continually undermines all efforts at peace-making."

In this community, people of all faiths are welcome, for "Ittoën belongs to no sect or religion and is opposed to none." The leader does not call himself a Christian though he acts as one. People of all classes and ages live together as equals, some having sacrificed fame, position and wealth. Here many eager young Japanese who might otherwise have taken refuge in suicide have found fresh meaning to life.

It is not easy to join the community. First you must go out alone doing menial work in any village that needs help, giving service with no thought of reward. You must rely on the generosity of the villagers for food in return for work: "the labourer is worthy of his hire." People may not always consider you worthy of much—may even at first let you go hungry after hours of toil, glad enough to discover a simpleton who will work for nothing. But their attitude will gradually change as they begin to understand why you are doing it.

After several months of this difficult but valuable apprenticeship you will have proved your honesty of purpose, and learned whether you are really prepared to lead a disciplined life. If you are satisfied that your place is at Ittoën you are welcomed

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into the family. Then, by helpfulness to those around you and sacrifice of personal interests you will take your part in helping to create that new attitude to life which may one day spread through individuals to nations as a whole. Thus you lay the foundations of a new and better civilisation. "For the sin of mankind is the sin of the individual, and the predicament of mankind is the predicament of the individual." There is a dignity in this life of service which the most unsympathetic criticism fails to destroy, and those who follow it make a very real contribution to peace. For peace is not to be attained by dreaming, nor by the imposition of rules and regulations on individuals and nations. To declare against war, and defend against war is not sufficient. Dissatisfaction, envy, and the mania for possession which are at the root of the world's troubles must be stamped out. This is what the brethren of Ittoën as individuals and as a community are trying to do. "For thirty years I have followed this first principle of inwardly the life of repentance and outwardly the life of service, always railed at as if I was mad," says Tenko Nishida. "But it is a mighty power to untie the most entangled knots of life."

DOROTHY HOGG.

*Author of The "Challenge of this East."
Willington, Derbyshire.*

A Community Reading List

1. THE CHRISTIAN BASIS

Christian Freedom & Community.	<i>Edmunds.</i>
Christianity & Present World Issues.	<i>Jones.</i>
Social Teaching of the Christian Churches.	<i>Troeltsch.</i>
Christ in the Valley of Unemployment.	<i>Barker.</i>
Prayer and Social Revolution.	<i>Hoyland.</i>
Revolutionary Religion.	<i>Lloyd.</i>
The Relevance of Christianity.	<i>Barry.</i>
Creative Life.	<i>Peter Scott.</i>

2. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The Conflict of Values.	<i>Bellerby.</i>
Freedom in the Modern World.	<i>Macmurray.</i>
Ends & Means.	<i>Aldous Huxley.</i>
Social Substance of Religion.	<i>Heard.</i>
The Way of S. Francis & To-day.	<i>Hoyland.</i>
The Coming of Community.	<i>Symons.</i>
Self-subsistence for the Unemployed.	<i>J. W. Scott.</i>
Barter.	<i>J. W. Scott.</i>
Brotherhood Economics.	<i>Kagawa.</i>

3. COMMUNITY AND THE CHURCHES

The Churches survey their Task.	<i>Oxford Conference.</i>
The Church and its function in Society.	<i>Hoofst & Oldham.</i>
Church and Community.	<i>Ch. Com. & State.</i>

A COMMUNITY READING LIST

4. WORKING EXPERIMENTS

- The Bruderhof Letters. *Cotswold Bruderhof.*
The Hutterian Brethren 1528-1931. *Horsch.*
An Order of Friends, their Activities & Ideas. *Order of Friends.*
Digging with the Unemployed. *Hoyland.*
Experiments in Social Reconstruction. *Hoyland.*
Whiteway. *Shaw.*
Voluntary Socialism. *Dent.*

5. COMMUNITY OVERSEAS

- Collective Adventure. *Pearlman.*
Ashrams, Ancient and Modern. *Jesudason.*
The Challenge of the East. *Hogg.*

6. HISTORY AND AUTOBIOGRAPHY

- Francis of Assisi. *Whitwell.*
Little Plays of S. Francis. *Housman.*
The Franciscans. *Masseron.*
On Journey: an Autobiography. *Vida Scudder.*
Adventures of Service. *Gill & Pullen.*

7. EDUCATION

- The Little Commonwealth. *Homer Lane.*
The Children's Workshop Community. *Kees Boeke.*
Santiniketan—the Bolpur School of
Rabindranath Tagore. *W. W. Pearson.*

8. PERIODICALS

- The Plough. *Cotswold Bruderhof.*
Towards. *Order of friends.*
The Adelphi. *Adelphi Centre.*
Brotherhood of the Way Magazine. *Bro. of the Way.*
Church and Community. *S. Hilda's Mission.*
Reconciliation. *F.o.R.*
Community. *Auxiliary Movt.*
Peace News. *Peace Pledge Union.*
Socialist Christian. *S.C.L.*