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Dinner Jacket Evangelism.

Here in America, among rich non-Catholics, it used to be, just about, Christian Science or nothing. But within the last ten or twelve years something brand new has sprung up. It is known as Buchmanism, or the religion of the Oxford Group.

It all came about like this. Dr. Frank N.D. Buchman, a Lutheran clergyman, on a trip to England twenty years ago, had a great mystical adventure. In a little church he experienced a "vibrant feeling up and down the spine as though a great store of life had suddenly been emptied into him". That was the start.

Off in China sometime later the Doctor got a break. He met two Anglican bishops who had wayward sons back in Cambridge. The boys needed conversion. Evidently "always in it" when it came to conversions, Doctor Buchman hurried to Cambridge, accommodated the two Anglican bishops and incidentally started a big rumpus. After Dr. Buchman got to work in earnest, you were either Buchman or non-Buchman at old Cambridge. There was no ground, in between, worth standing on.

Not to be outdone, Oxford rushed into the movement. Various "teams" set out to put the religion across. These teams succeeded so well that the religion is now called, usually, that of the Oxford Group. Other names, such as Buchmanism, and Dinner Jacket Evangelists, have gone by the by.

At Princeton the religion first attracted attention in the United States. On account of the hullabaloo it caused, President Hibben asked Dr. Buchman to get off the campus and stay off. Yale, Colgate, Smith, and Vassar, had their flings, too.

Then it reached out to extra-collegiate groups. House parties, hotel gatherings have spread it principally among the rich. Dr. Buchman and his cohorts openly go after the big and influential, it is said, on the theory that the "lesser lights will twinkle after".

House parties are very informal. Sports, -- indoor sports, of course -- reading, etc. go on until the conversation breaks into religion. Then there is Confession or Sharing of Sin. One person states what has happened to change his life. Others follow.

A London boy confessed at a Group that once when he took a glass of beer he "felt God breathing down the back of his neck". A young lady confessed that she bought a copy of Liberty magazine and wouldn't let her roommate read it. To even up matters, the roommate confessed also that she had bought a package of shoe polish and didn't allow her friend to use it either. Sometimes these Confessions come not so printable.

Another point in Buchmanism is Guidance or "two-way prayer". The Holy Spirit dictates the course of action that directs the members of the Group. Each member is supposed to observe Quiet Time on rising in the morning when he will receive from Heaven his orders for the day.

How is the thing financed? Nobody knows. Through the right kind of "Guidance"? No one would say that. Anyway, some young men have given everything they had, it is related, on the theory that God will provide for those He "guides". A young woman, to help the movement along, is said to have cashed a large insurance policy on the same theory, that God would take care of her. In the southern states a team of 40 is "on the trek for Christ". And there have been other teams trekking among the well-to-do in New York, Detroit, and other centers. -- And yet, with this sort of wild thing running loose in the land, critics of the Church cannot see that infallibility in religious matters is not an imposition on mankind!

PLAYERS: Deceased - an aunt of Bob and Wm. Diemer; two friends of a student (auto accident). Ill - the father of Professors Devere and Donald Plunkett; Bill Murray (appendectomy); George O'Brien's brother; a friend. Two special intentions.