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WRITE THE VISION!

The Lord answered me and said: Write the vision! Make it plain! If it lingers, wait for it; for it will certainly come ... In the midst of the years, revive Thy work; in the midst of the years, make it known!

HABAKKUK ii. 2–3
HABAKKUK iii. 2
(Berkeley Version)

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WRITE THE VISION!

Edwin Orr's thirty years of adventurous service

by

THE RIGHT REVEREND

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INTRODUCTION

In 1949 was published J. Edwin Orr's treatise on *The Second Evangelical Awakening in Britain.* I read it the following year. It stirred me deeply. It told of the spiritual awakening which began in America in 1858 and spread like fire all over the English-speaking world. Two million converts joined the churches. Multitudes of people were profoundly influenced by it; they gave up their old life of sin and began to follow the way of Christ with zeal. Christian organizations like the China Inland Mission and the Salvation Army began.

It was this book that gave me a new vision for the Coimbatore diocese which was newly formed on 27th September 1950. After prolonged negotiations lasting thirty-one years, the Congregationalists, the Presbyterians, the Methodists and the Anglicans in South India decided to unite and form a new diocese. There was much doubt, and even fear, on the part of some of the leaders, European and Indian. Would they have any voice in running the diocese? Would their committees and their representatives have any say in the Church of South India, of which they would be one diocese? The majority of the Christians in our area were Congregationalists. They fully believed in their right to decide all matters. They had no desire to surrender this right to the Bishop or to the Synod of the Church of South India.

I was appointed the first Bishop in the Coimbatore diocese. I was asked to preach in the service of inauguration and give the people a spiritual lead. This was an important occasion and I was much in prayer about the message I had to give.

Orr's book had convinced me that God can do marvels—even in a diocese torn by faction and filled with fear and anxiety about its future. In particular, I was impressed by Orr's emphasis that a vast spiritual movement with such momentous consequence took its rise from small prayer meetings that began in Fulton Street in New York City under the inspiring leadership of Jeremiah Lanphier. The idea of businessmen meeting for prayer during the lunch hour in New York caught on and hundreds

of them had begun to assemble daily in New York as well as in the other cities of America. When folk prayed earnestly like this, it seemed, God sent abundant blessings to them.

In my inaugural sermon I pleaded that the year 1951 might be observed as a year of prayer in the diocese and that during the year 1952 evangelistic missions might be held in all the churches. The people in our 300 congregations responded well to these proposals, and there was much earnest prayer in the year 1951 throughout many of the parishes of the area.

After 1952 various unexpected things began to happen. From the ends of the earth, evangelists came to the diocese and held missions for us. Dr. Joe Church and William Nagenda, of East Africa; Dr. Glenn Clark and the Rev. Roland Brown, of the United States; the Rev. Dan Smith, formerly of China; Mr. P. S. Kadambavanam, formerly of Burma; the Rev. Cyril Thomson and the Rev. Jack Woodward, of England; Mr. John Beaumont, of New Zealand; and Mr. N. Daniel, with members of his family from India, offered to help by holding evangelistic missions. Even the names of most of them were not known to me before that time. Dr. Billy Graham did not come to Coimbatore but 200 to 300 of our people went to his evangelistic meetings in South India in 1956. I was given a seat next to him on the platform in Madras and was able to observe his work most closely.

All these were certainly unexpected happenings. God the Holy Spirit was actively at work in our midst, sending us His servants from the uttermost parts of the earth so that there might be new life in our churches. A revival broke out and progressed for several years.

The Evangelistic Fellowship of India wrote a letter to me and asked whether Dr. Edwin Orr could come to the Coimbatore diocese and give some addresses in 1954. I gladly agreed to this. I knew that he was being used greatly by God in various parts of the world. His meetings in our midst would surely bring us much inspiration, I thought.

He decided to come to Coimbatore after preaching in the Maramon Convention, one of the largest Christian conventions in the world. That year on the last day there were as many as 50,000 people. Edwin Orr had come there as a speaker. I

had also gone there as one of the speakers. And we met. The meetings were held in an immense *pandal*, a temporary booth covered with plaited coco-nut leaves. The dry sandy bed of a river was the site of the convention. Over the heads of the immense congregation were seen the gleaming waters of the river at a distance.

Dr. Orr gave me a copy, autographed with his affectionate greetings, of another book of his—*Good News in Bad Times*—which told the story of the spiritual awakenings occurring in some cities and colleges in the United States. It gave account of the spiritual growth of Billy Graham who was being used mightily of God. It gave also an interesting picture of the Christian work which was being done among some of the cinema stars in Hollywood. In much of this significant activity, Edwin Orr had had a vital share.

After the Maramon Convention, Orr came to the Coimbatore diocese for a week in March 1954, and preached in some of our churches in the Nilgiri Hills. The reports which reached me from them were quite appreciative of the good work which he did. His visit was all too short but the impression he made was lasting.

Dr. Glenn Clark visited us in Coimbatore at about the same time. I showed him Orr's book, *Good News in Bad Times*. He was immediately attracted by it and read it with eager interest. He was himself a man of prayer and deep spirituality, working day and night for the same end—the surrender of men and women to Christ to the farthest limit. His estimate of Edwin Orr written afterwards in one of his books is worth quoting:

> Edwin Orr is one of the clearest minds in evangelism today and because of his understanding and dedication can be a bridge to help bring religious leaders together in unity and goodwill—together around Jesus.

In May 1957, I received a letter from Dr. Orr who was at that time in Australia. He wrote to me to say that he had a burden for the Coimbatore diocese and that he was willing to spend six weeks with us in the coming January and February 1958. This letter from Orr convinced us that God was sending this servant of His in answer to prayer to help us once more in our great spiritual need. It was God the Holy Spirit, we felt, who put this concern into Orr's heart. The people who had heard him in

1954 were delighted at the prospect of his coming to us again.

Dr. Orr was at that time conducting teaching missions in Australia and New Zealand for two years. From there he flew to South Africa to join his wife in spending some time with her parents. He had received an invitation to speak again in the vast Maramon Convention and was on his way there. He was willing to devote a fortnight each to Salem, Coimbatore and Erode where some of our important churches are. His work in our midst began on 12th January and concluded on 23rd February 1958.

Thus I was able to observe Edwin Orr as a popular preacher to great crowds, as a teacher of rare insight and ability, as a Bible scholar who made doctrine relevant to life, as an evangelist in college classrooms with obvious talent, as a soulwinner whose converts are still amongst us, as an authority on the subject of spiritual awakening, and as a dedicated servant of God who walked daily by faith. His campaign drew the biggest of crowds that we had seen for any such effort.

Edwin Orr stayed on our church compound in Coimbatore, so we became firm friends. Since his visit, I made it my business to read everything that he had written or that had been written about him. I shared my own literary productions with him. He sent me material on the subject so close to both our hearts, revival.

With the steady growth of the Church in all the countries of the world, the need for evangelists as distinguished from pastors is becoming more and more evident. When the revival movement began in the Coimbatore Diocese, people asked: 'Why do you want evangelists from outside to help us?'

We have had numerous evangelists, men of God, helping us in the Coimbatore Diocese; some aroused the conviction of sin and the need for repentance, but others were primarily teachers. They had studied the Bible carefully and were able to give clear and systematic instruction to the people. Yet others were experts in spiritual counselling and taught the converts how to give spiritual advice to needy souls. Others concentrated on work among youth.

In this setting it was possible for us to see how God was using Edwin Orr and his outstanding gifts. Many of our people had passed through deep spiritual experiences and had committed

their lives to Christ wholly. They were eager to grow in grace. They were keen to study their Bible. They longed to bear witness to the power of Christ. Dr. Orr's teaching mission was, therefore, quite timely.

I retired on 1st April 1959. I had then completed my sixty-seventh year. My energy for travelling and preaching was becoming limited. But I could still pray; I could still write. Under the guidance of God, I resolved that I would devote the rest of my days to pray and work for revival in the Christian Church all over the world. There seemed no spiritual need more desperate.

We had seen revival in the Coimbatore Diocese. Hundreds of people had come under conviction of sin, had repented and had received the assurance of salvation. Dozens of prayer groups were meeting regularly in the various parishes. Gospel bands of eager Christian folk were going out to share with others the good news of God's salvation through Jesus Christ. The crowded services in the churches, the keen people of all ages who came up for confirmation, the many evangelistic activities which had begun—all these showed us what revival means. We realized that thousands of people had not been touched. We realized also that many of those who had received new life had backslidden. Even so, the really changed lives gave us great hope.

My first task was to give testimony in print to what God had done for us in the Coimbatore Diocese. I completed a manuscript telling in detail this wonderful story.

When a publisher suggested that I might write upon Edwin Orr's ministry, I gladly agreed to do so. Here is an outstanding Christian leader who for thirty years and more has seen the vision of the revived Church and has incessantly worked for it. I was convinced that a biographical sketch of Edwin Orr would help in spreading the longing for revival and drive thousands of God's people to their knees.

There arose the problem of source material. The first five years of Edwin Orr's ministry had been vividly chronicled in ten books of autobiographical nature. They covered the earlier part of his ministry up to the outbreak of the Second World War.

The messages that Edwin Orr preached could be gleaned from the concluding chapters of his pre-1939 books. The messages

that he preached in post-1949 years were to be found in his books of devotional and evangelistic interest.

There were also a dozen books by other authors that devoted from one chapter to a dozen chapters to the ministry of Edwin Orr or certain aspects of it. This left huge gaps in the record and the passage of years had increased or diminished in the perspective of time the importance of events recorded.

Fortunately, a brilliant student converted under Orr's ministry engaged in research in California had undertaken to maintain Orr's library and letter files in his absence overseas for two years. He had found the material so interesting that he mentioned it to his academic advisers, who urged him to get Dr. Orr's permission to use the materials for his magisterial thesis. Orr gave permission on the condition that the thesis was to be objective and that it was not to be published for several years.

Thus to the Rev. Charles Murray Albertyn, MA, BD, STM of Boston University, now a minister in South Africa, as well as to others who have already published their materials, I owe a debt for the mine of information to which I myself have added by judicious correspondence with key people on various Continents. I feel sure that all the facts quoted in this book are substantiated, and that the opinions of the author are supported by others.

CHAPTER 1

THE SCHOOL OF ADVERSITY

The town of Ballymena is built in the middle of the County Antrim in the north of Ireland, and close by stands the sacred hill of Slemish, where Saint Patrick as a captive lad herded his master's pigs and sanctified the soil of pagan Ireland with his tears. Of that hill, the Apostle of Ireland said:

> Now, after I came to Ireland, daily I herded flocks and often during the day I prayed; the love of God and His fear increased more and my faith grew and my spirit was stirred up; hardly a single day but I said as many as 100 prayers and at night likewise though I abode in the woods and the mountains.[1]

More than 1,500 years later, four young men met together in the shadow of Slemish in a barn to pray. To this prayer-meeting is traceable the great evangelical awakening which added more than 1 million converts in a very few years to the British churches.[2]

The recognized historian of this mighty movement, the subject of this treatise, could trace his physical and spiritual life back through his mother and grandmother to this "Year of Grace 1859" that a full century afterwards the United Committee of Irish Churches asked him to help commemorate in a series of meetings throughout Ireland.[3]

His maternal grandmother Ellen Rock[4] was a convert of the 1859 Revival that brought strange happenings to Ballymena, a market town west of Slemish. Not only were the churches of the town crowded daily, but the local factories were closed for days on end on account of conviction of sin.

At that time, Ballymena had a population of 6,000. Within six months of the outbreak of a startling revival of religion, secular observers had reported the extensive social, moral and religious improvements among the people.[5]

Ellen Rock was one whose life was transformed and whose repu-

tation for saintliness continued till her death. Edwin Orr never knew her but he had heard his grandfather speak of the great revival.

These seeds sown in the little boy's heart bore much fruit in later years. Here is seen a source of that longing for revival that has characterized Edwin Orr all his life.

> My mother, youngest daughter of a family brought up in the country district where the Irish Revival of 1859 first appeared, led me to Christ when I was a boy of nine, on my ninth birthday. She held the theory that a child's heart takes impressions like wax but keeps them like marble: so she believed that no child was really too young to trust the Lord for salvation. I honour her memory for this.[6]

Edwin Orr was born in Belfast in Northern Ireland on 15th January 1912. The 15th of January continued to be an important date in his life. On that date, nine years later, he was converted. On that date, when twenty-five years old, he was married. On that date, his twenty-eighth birthday, he was ordained to the Christian ministry. And on that date, three years later, he became an Air Force chaplain.[7]

The Orrs are of great antiquity in Scotland, there having been a Baron Hugh de Orr noted by King Edward I in the thirteenth century. In 1606, sundry Orrs began to return to the Ireland from which they emigrated 1,000 years before. Some settled in the Clough district of Antrim.

Edwin's grandfather migrated thence in 1884 to Philadelphia and lived there for more than fifty years. He became a citizen of the United States. Edwin's father, William Stewart Orr, grew to manhood in the Pennsylvanian metropolis, being therefore a citizen of both Great Britain and the United States when he returned to Ireland where he married Rose Wright, a girl from the same part of the County Antrim in which he was born.[8] Edwin Orr inherited this dual citizenship—the beginning of his many international contacts.

Poverty through ill-health dogged the Orr family for a score of years, a series of afflictions bringing the family fortunes down to rock-bottom.[9] William Stewart Orr had broken his leg, and as he grew to manhood, tuberculosis of the bone set in. His health suffered a sharp setback caused by a street accident, and he sank into a decline.

Rose Stewart Orr, mother of Edwin Orr, was reputed to possess the "second sight" for which the Celtic peoples are noted. She was what Ulster folk called "a straight dreamer".

The family was accustomed to proceed by a local train from the city to the County Down[10] coast each summer for their annual vacation. It is of interest to Indian Christians that the saintly Amy Carmichael as a girl played on the same old rocks and beaches, for this was her home county too, long before she went to South India.

One night at home, Mrs. Orr dreamed vividly that, as the little train pulled out of a local station, Margaret Louise (their youngest child) was found to be missing. Her husband, William, assured her that he would get out at the next station and travel back for the three-year-old girl, and rejoin all the family at the sea-shore. In her dream, Rose Orr arrived at the destination with three children only, her husband and baby girl being missing. Such a dream filled her with deep foreboding.

That year, in the month of November, her little baby girl Margaret Louise died in a great diphtheria epidemic that swept the world after the First World War. A year later, her grieving father (who never recovered from the blow) died also. The baby girl told her mother, as she was taken to the isolation hospital, that she was going to be with Jesus; her father died in calm acceptance of the will of God, in his last hours predicting the coming of world-wide television (in 1922!) as a preparation for the expected coming of Christ. So in the summer of 1923, Rose Orr and her orphaned children arrived at the little village on the coast of Down, just as she had dreamed.

The Orrs lived on the County Down side of Belfast, south of the River Lagan, in a four-bedroomed house on Ormeau Road, a main artery running out to the towns of Ballynahinch and Saintfield. It was regarded as a "nice suburb".[11] When death removed the breadwinner, it seemed that the family would have to move, but a legal prohibition against raising rents made it possible for the Orrs to remain on in the house that they had occupied since pre-First World War days. This meant that they were assumed by neighbours to be better off than they were. Actually, they all suffered want in both clothing and food.

Rose Orr did her best to keep the children's clothing mended, but new clothes were a rarity. Any gift given by friends to the children went for "something useful". But there were times that the family felt too poorly dressed to go to church, slipping instead into a little mission hall.

Food was of the plainest. To this day, Edwin Orr has a lack of interest in some foods which other folk regard as staples, because he was not used to them. Usually, he was served the "top" of the egg boiled for his older brother who was working and thus in need of greater nourishment. They had plenty of potatoes, which Edwin always relished, and porridge and milk which he did not. His brother Alan had grown to six feet; he and his younger brother with less food available for the growing stage fell short of five feet seven.

William Orr died when Edwin was ten years[12] old. He does not remember much about his father, but his early writings give glimpses of the deeply religious life led by the members of his family.

Alan Stewart Orr, a talented artist, developed tuberculosis and was forced to give up his job to battle for life. At twenty-six, he lost the battle. Edwin in later years remembered:[13]

> My mother, sister, and brother and I had come to say good-bye to my dying brother, Alan. His death a couple of days later (in hospital) was the end of a six years' battle against disease.
>
> Alan asked us to sing something for him; many a time had our family sung together at home, but these circumstances were different—each one of us was afraid of breaking down. So Alan decided to sing something himself . . . the words of Charles Wesley's lovely hymn:
>
> O for a heart to praise my God,
> A heart from sin set free,
> A heart that's sprinkled by the blood
> So freely shed for me.

Edwin Orr's surviving brother and sister both suffered breakdown of health, but neither of them became consumptive, their health becoming good in adulthood, both of them serving in an arduous military service in the Second World War. Rose Stewart Orr, worn out with nursing a dying husband and a

sick family, was sent to a sanatorium for a lengthy period, leaving her orphaned children to fend for themselves.[14] She recovered her health fully, but died during the war period, in 1942.

The middle son, Edwin, was the most delicate of all the children, not having had a proper meal in the first fourteen years of his life. Predisposed to tuberculosis, he never fell victim to the scourge. For six years previous to reaching his majority he supported the family, the boy becoming a man before his time. He left home in 1933. His good health was unimpaired after another ten years of arduous labour as an evangelist, and, when he applied for a commission as a chaplain in the Air Force in 1943, his health was perfect.[15]

The doctor who examined him for a commission asked him to read the eye-chart, which he did very deliberately. The doctor looked at him quizzically and said: "Now read it backwards!" Orr read it backwards—to the doctor's great surprise, whereupon the candidate told him cheerfully "I learned it by heart backwards as well as forwards!" The doctor passed him, but prescribed glasses to withstand the shock of combat conditions.

Edwin Orr studied in the Ormeau Park School. Hugh Logan, the Principal of the school, stated that the Orr family was the most intelligent that ever passed through his classrooms and that of that family Edwin was the ablest student, combining intellectual gifts with religious fervour.[16]

When he was thirteen years of age, Edwin Orr enrolled in the College of Technology in Belfast on a scholarship. A man named Fletcher taught English Literature at that college.[17] He asked his class to write as homework an essay on "Give me neither riches nor poverty". With heavy irony, he said he wanted it in prose, not in poetry! Edwin thought he would play a trick; he wrote some verses on the subject and handed them in to his teacher. He also handed in an essay in prose because on second thoughts he anticipated ironic comment from his English teacher. Mr. Fletcher told the class he was very disappointed with the essays. He then asked Orr's permission to read aloud his composition. Not knowing what the teacher was going to say, Edwin agreed, with fear and trembling. Mr. Fletcher then read the poem with such understanding and feeling that

Edwin was surprised. His class mates copied it and took it home. The Principal of the college recommended Orr for a literary scholarship, but he was unable to make use of it, for family reasons. An enterprising London journalist Watts visited Belfast later on in search of material on Orr's early life. He unearthed a few of the verses which had survived:

Full wealth untold is true delight
  When happiness is in its purse;
A hoard of gold, when hid from light,
  Is miser's shame and miser's curse.

The lust of gold, the lure of gems,
  The customs of mankind on earth,
Conspire to hold our diadems
  As graded rules of sterling worth.

The standard set since Genesis,
  "The metal and the Man are one,"
Makes us forget time's menaces
  To pile up gold till we are gone.

So where on earth is reason's rule?
  For lucre's golden purse is crowned,
And human worth is lucre's tool
  To gild the Man in fetters bound.

So then of diamonds give me none:
  Life's corn and wine suffice for me;
But give me sky and earth and sun
  And I'll supply necessity.[18]

These verses were prophetic of Edwin Orr's attitude towards money all through his life. We shall on many occasions consider how this outlook determined his actions. He toiled for his Master in the spirit set forth in this poem.

Even as a boy, Edwin had many unusual interests outside his school or college studies.[19] Among the books of history and travel, his favourite book was Washington Irving's *Life of Mahomet and His Successors*. He had read this book thirteen

times before he was eleven years old! As an Irish lad, he could have had no opportunity to come in contact with Islam, an altogether new and strange world, far removed from his daily round. This close study of non-fictional books was part of the preparation for Edwin Orr's future career as a writer.

Long before the modern adventures in space travel he wrote an imaginative account of life in Mars in rhyme. He wrote in his fourteenth year a novel based upon General Allenby's conquest of Palestine. It was circulated among his intimate friends as a serial, but never published.[20]

Although he was fond of outdoor sports, he did not take much part in them; as he was the youngest boy in his class, he often was bullied by older lads. He, however, devised a lot of mischief and left it to his fellow students to carry out. Years later, he received a letter from an outstanding missionary in China, Henry Montgomery Brown, who also had been a member of this "very wicked" class of boys which terrorized its masters.

"I'm sure," he wrote, "that our old Headmaster would have been dumbfounded had he discovered how many of us became ministers, preachers, and missionaries!" Strange, but many did.

Edwin was very happy following the courses in the College of Technology. His intellectual powers were unfolding. His studies were congenial and he did well in them. He received both from his teachers and his fellow-students the respect and admiration that are given to clever boys. He says his years in college were among the happiest years in his life.[21] He reached the Matriculation standard of London University (or Junior College level of American Universities) when a domestic catastrophe put an end to his pleasant pursuits. This was the illness of his older brother Alan, an illness that proved fatal.

Edwin was compelled to become breadwinner of the family in his fifteenth year.[22] Young men of his age were continuing in college but for Edwin Orr the Lord had other plans. His education did not follow the usual pattern. For six years, he worked as a clerk in a bakery with its hard grind from morning till evening. Commented Sidney W. Murray, a government official who knew the Orrs, "The family had a hard time struggling and any extra schooling had to be done during the evening classes." Thus Orr studied first in the school of adversity.

CHAPTER 2

A CRISIS OF EXPERIENCE

Far more important than Orr's intellectual development was his spiritual growth.[1] He had been converted at the age of nine, but at college he had backslidden until his life was much like that of his worldly companions though void of the grosser sins. He had little spiritual life of his own and little influence on other souls. Whose prayers helped to shape his life?

Mrs. Ellen Grant, an octogenarian, was the only survivor into the mid-century of the large Wright family to which Orr's mother belonged. She informed me by personal letter:[2]

> I went to Canada and was there and in the United States of America for six years, after which I returned and stayed for a short time in my sister's home. I had written to her of an experience that I had in Toronto when I got to know the Lord through the personal testimony of a dear little woman belonging to the Christian and Missionary Alliance who was used of God to make spiritual things real to me—although I had professed conversion at the age of fifteen. My sister Rose had also professed but felt her need of the filling of the Spirit because somehow she had been side-tracked.
>
> I had been praying for the whole family continually, feeling that they were in a very needy condition; one Christian friend who knew the circumstances attributed to those prayers and to God's gracious answer the Lord's call to Edwin—it would give me joy to know that it was so.

The Orr family attended church morning and evening on Sundays. The children were regular in their attendance at Sunday School. For years, Edwin Orr did not attend evangelistic or prayer meetings unless his mother asked him to go with her. But slowly his spiritual life began to grow.

Although he had excelled in Sunday School, Orr had not been baptized in childhood. On his own initiative at the age of

seventeen, he asked to be baptized in the family church, the mother Baptist Church in Belfast, on Great Victoria Street.[3]

The Reverend David Henderson, its minister, recalled Edwin only as an ordinary boy among Sunday School children. Newman Watts, a London journalist, once received a letter from a veteran missionary of the China Inland Mission who had visited that church on deputation and had met the teenage boy.[4] As a result, the missionary was impressed to remember Edwin Orr daily in his prayers, year after year for twenty years, until his death bed. This faithful intercessory saint was Ernest Hudson Taylor, an earnest son of a famous father, James Hudson Taylor.

At the end of the Second World War, Chaplain Edwin Orr was alone in London and went to see the dying missionary, a victim of cancer, in the Mildmay Hospital. After a heart-warming reunion, Orr asked: "And did you remember to pray for me every day, Mr. Taylor?" The dying man's face clouded. "No," he said. "I'm afraid not." Then his face brightened again. "Well," he explained, "I don't think I missed you more than five times and the pain was very great on those days."[5]

Orr hurried away because he could not trust himself to speak. He began to understand why such blessing had been poured into his life. At the source of every river of service there are springs of intercessory prayer. God not only chooses to use the nobodies of this world but He also chooses unknowns to pray them into service.

S. W. Murray, a veteran lay leader in Belfast, "first got to know Edwin Orr when he was eighteen or nineteen (about 1930 or 1931)". Murray was interested in the work of the China Inland Mission and Orr began to develop an interest in the same society. Mr. Murray explained to me:[6]

> Belfast provides many opportunities for the training of lay workers. One of the effects of the 1859 Revival which had such a profound influence on the north of Ireland was that it provided an opportunity for the lay worker and secured a place for the unordained evangelist quite unusual in the English-speaking world.

After Orr had turned twenty, he met an old friend and said to him:

"Hello, Jim. Can you preach?"
"No," said Jim. "Can you?"
"No. But I want to. So what about starting with me?"
"But where could we preach?"
"In the open-air! What about it?"

Edwin could play on a ukulele. Jim had a loud and clear voice. They began singing and preaching in one of the streets in Belfast. A crowd gathered and they preached as best they could. It was uphill work. They had no experience. There was no older person to give them guidance. But they were eager to continue.

One evening in the month of May 1932, as it was getting dark, these two young men were talking about the power of prayer.[7] They had been preaching the Gospel in the most difficult streets. So they began to pray for a team of twenty-four young men ready to submit themselves entirely to God and to help in the work. Hundreds of young people joined them while older Christians advised.

It was decided by Christian Endeavourers with the churches that a great Evangelistic Campaign be held to reach the youth of Belfast.[8] A young man of prayer, Charles Coulter by name, had a real flair for organization. He formed 100 groups in all parts of the city and kept in close touch with them in prayer for the campaign.

The campaign ran from 29th October to 23rd November 1932. The Reverend Lionel B. Fletcher was invited to be the main speaker. Thousands of young people attended the meetings. When, on the final day, Fletcher asked for all the young people who had accepted Christ to stand up, 1,000 converts stood up. This sight much moved Edwin Orr.

Another speaker, Dr. Thomas Cochrane, told of God's power to answer prayer.[9] Edwin Orr had carried with him a pocket-sized notebook in which he had entered the various requests he had made in prayer for the team, so he rapidly ran his eyes through them and was surprised and pleased that all these prayers except one had been answered. That prayer was for the conversion of a certain stubborn young man. Great was their rejoicing when it was discovered that the young man himself had professed conversion in the same meeting.

Orr, recalled Charles Coulter, was interested in conserving the results of the campaign.[10] The team now prayed for 2,400 volunteers. Young people responding were active and vigorous and anxious to do all they could. Within a year, in co-operation with the youth groups of many churches, they had placed an open-air meeting across every main road in Belfast, aimed at reaching the thousands of young people who promenaded after church services. They issued a bulletin of news of evangelism and revival.

The prayers of these young men now centred around Edwin Orr himself, for they saw in him a man whom God could use around the world. But he had a widowed mother and his family to support hence his friends concentrated on prayer for the means of releasing Orr to full-time ministry. In turn, Orr was concerned about his own inadequacy.

> In August 1933, when our Fellowship was at its best in Ulster, I was in despair over my need of a deeper Christian experience. I turned to a friend whom I regarded as more spiritual than I, Charles Coulter, who knew how to pray. Like me, he was puzzled over the conflicting teachings of various groups on Sanctification and the Holy Spirit, but he was more definite in his views than I, for he had a Salvationist background. I was most uncertain about things in my mind, but in my heart I was convinced that the Lord who had provided deliverance from the guilt of sin must have made provision for the hunger of His child for victory over the power of sin.[11]

Charles Coulter recalled thirty years later:[12]

> Instantly we found a common denominator in our desire for "the deep things of God", and such was essential to our friendship for he was for the most part visionary and I was completely down to earth. We confided in one another a deep longing for spiritual power and he proposed to talk to a local Elim pastor. This the godly man was pleased to do, with sincerity and humility, scripturally and simply.

Orr in particular raised up every conceivable difficulty and still differed with him on terminology, but knew better than to fuss about mere words. Coulter continued:

> When the discussion was over, we knelt to pray. Within

a brief space of time both Edwin and I became ecstatic and remained so until we parted considerably later that night. Neither of us spoke in a "tongue" but together we had stood on the border of a spiritual plane that we had not known till then existed.

Dr. Paul Stromberg Rees, in his treatise upon Christian Commitment, summarizes these events:[13]

Dr. Edwin Orr, a servant of God with an international influence, has told in his book on *Full Surrender* of the crisis that came in his own Christian life when his yieldedness to the Divine will was fractional rather than full.

Kneeling one night with a few friends in Belfast, he told the Lord that he was willing to do anything, "anything to be surrendered and filled". Then came an Inner Voice saying "What about your will?" Orr remarks that if he had been asked, What about your besetting sins? he would have said, "Yes, once more I confess them." But this was different: "What about your will?"

Since he was taking a correspondence course on missions given by the China Inland Mission, he told the Lord that he was willing to be a missionary. But the Voice, not satisfied, persisted. It asked about a certain romance that was blossoming in his life. Was he prepared to surrender that to God's will? And Orr says that with his lips he could say "Yes", but with his heart he was saying "No". That was the nub and the crux of the whole thing. That bit of withholding was the undercutting of God's will in his life.

Only when he was willing honestly to confess that imperfect surrender as sin, and yield that final stronghold of the self-life to Christ, did God fill him with the Holy Spirit and release him for a ministry that has brought blessing to countless thousands around the world.[14]

To explain what some might consider "a lot of unnecessary fuss" over an adolescent love affair, Orr told the following story.[15] A businessman receiving an urgent phone call from his wife, came home by taxi expecting the worst about his six-year-old boy. Sure enough, the doctor's car was at the door, but it was not tragic as expected. Little Johnny had put his fist inside a precious Chinese vase, and could not get it out

without smashing the work of art. The mother and the doctor wanted permission from the father to break the vase. Cold water and olive oil and all other methods failed to permit the child withdraw his hand, so, as the mother pointed out that their beloved child could not be expected to go through life with a vase on his hand, the father gave a reluctant assent to the use of a hammer. It was at that point that young Johnny asked if it would help matters were he to drop his penny! The little rascal was willing to let his parents smash a work of beauty to let him keep a grubby little fist around a miserable penny! Said Orr:

> I too was willing to let my Heavenly Father smash the vessel He had prepared for my life in order to keep my fist shut tight on an adolescent token of love. I was just as determined not to let go; so I argued. The Spirit of God left off speaking within my heart, and my heart grew cold, so cold that I was frightened. So, my hunger for more of God returning, I let go, and cried to God for blessing, surrendering my will concerning the remaining unsurrendered area of my life. I accepted the blessing by faith.[16]

Orr's heart was flooded with love, joy and peace unspeakable, too great to bear. This was noticed by his friends, whom he had forgotten. The prayer meeting closed at 2 o'clock in the morning. For the first time in his life he felt that he really knew his God and Saviour, that Christianity was not merely a teaching or belief or philosophy.[17]

Next morning Rose Orr asked her son at what time he had returned home. He was reluctant to admit that the hour was 3 o'clock in the morning. He anticipated a parental lecture. Instead, he found that his mother seemed upset. It appeared that she had waited behind in a Faith Mission meeting seeking full surrender and the filling of the Holy Spirit more than twenty-one years before.[18] She had been disappointed that God did not call her to extraordinary service after that, but she comforted herself in her monotonous household tasks by hoping that the Lord would lay claim to the unborn baby within. Rose Orr wrote before she died:

> I yearned for the more abundant life in Christ and surrendered all to Him just before my son Edwin was born. It may be that the Lord took me at my word by leading him out

into this work. I am sorry that at first I wanted him to stay at home, but Edwin has been more concerned about my needs than about his own and I have not lacked.[19]

Orr's religious experience during that hour of prayer has a beauty all its own, like a growing plant bursting into bud and leaf. Apart from its beauty, it is striking for its timeliness. Only six weeks later, Edwin Orr was to begin his world-wide work for Christ. He himself did not know it, but God knew and God equipped him for this important ministry. It is significant that he was thus wonderfully fitted for the work which God wanted him to do. As Coulter reported, Edwin Orr's experience immediately gave him great visions of a world-wide commission.

In September 1933, Edwin Orr received a letter from London from a Christian leader who had come to know him and who offered him an appointment for carrying on evangelistic work on a world-wide scale. But, because he had to leave London for more than six months to engage in conferences in the Orient and America, his committee made him withdraw this offer.[20]

This posed a sad predicament for Orr. On the basis of this offer he had handed in his resignation at his office and told friends about the appointment he was going to take. His family depended on him. He was so troubled that he could neither eat nor sleep properly for days.[21]

Finally he decided that God wanted him to do such work and felt sure that He would provide the necessary funds. So he went and told his mother of his decision to begin a life of faith.

"But what will become of us?" she asked.

"I don't know, Mother. But I promise to send you the usual contribution I give you every week, less ten shillings for my own food."

"Yes, I know you'll try," said his mother. "But where will it come from?"

"I don't know. But it says in the Bible: 'My God shall supply all your need', and either that's true or else it's not. If it's true, we'll be all right; if it's not true, the sooner we find out the better. But of course it is true."

He put his thoughts into poetry at that time:[22]

A burden light I do not ask,
Nor easy way in every task,
For all I see, Lord, is to be,
At peace with Thee.

I seek not ease from every care;
I find I need a load to bear
To keep my will in harmony,
Controlled by Thee.

Nor would I cry for sunshine bright,
When troubled clouds obscure the light,
The glory of Thy face I see,
Continually.

O test me, Lord, if that I need—
Thou wilt not break a bruisèd reed:
In every state, content I'll be,
If I have Thee.

On Calvary, the work was done;
Thou gavest up Thine only Son;
I'll spend Thy gift, Eternity,
In praising Thee.

He gave his mother all his money, £3 (fifteen dollars).[23] T. W. Wynne of Belfast bought for him a ticket to Liverpool, which he reached on 28th September 1933, with an old bicycle and the sum total of two shillings and eightpence farthing (65c.)

CHAPTER 3

THE APPRENTICESHIP OF FAITH

When God wants anything done, He raises up some man or woman who does something out of the ordinary, the full wisdom of which is not always too plain to contemporaries.[1]

So wrote the London journalist, Newman Watts, an earlier biographer of the evangelist, in calling the world mission that Edwin Orr undertook as a young man "a courageous exploit worthy of permanent record in the annals of evangelical history". Mortimer Sinfield, the Methodist author of a book published before the Second World War, described Edwin Orr's experiences as more than astonishing.[2] The extraordinary demand for the published accounts of Orr's adventures confirms this opinion.

But not all observers at the time were happily impressed. Edwin Orr's adventures and answered prayers were of such an order that many people with little or no experience of Divine providence simply could not believe that they were true. For fifteen years after the publication of his first book of adventure, Edwin Orr could simply point out that his narratives named people and places and that in spite of critical checking at the sources, the story went unchallenged. By 1949, almost all the criticism had died away and only appreciation seemed to remain.

Humble and obscure Indian evangelists in our remotest villages gratefully testify to receiving help and blessing through the narrative of Orr's experiences of travel and answered prayer; and Billy Graham, basking in the floodlight of world publicity, eagerly wrote of tremendous blessing received thereby.

Sometime after the conclusion of the Second World War, Cyril H. Powell, Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy of the University of London, published a treatise entitled *Secrets of Answered Prayer* which recounted and analysed the dis-

coveries of men of faith and prayer such as Hugh Redwood, Stanley Jones, Glenn Clark, Leslie Weatherhead, Amy Carmichael, Frank Laubach, Billy Graham, Oswald Chambers and Edwin Orr, and devoted to the last-named a full chapter which he entitled "Adventuring in Faith". Dr. Powell's opinion was based upon twenty years' retrospect:[3]

> I think a George Müller and an Edwin Orr every so often help us to see, on a large and very obvious scale, that God means what He says in His promises. These people try them out in a thoroughgoing and dramatic fashion which is not meant to provide a pattern for anybody else. They themselves are careful to point out that they were led to this by God. You, if you try anything remotely similar, will need to be as sure that you are.

All of his friends were dismayed when, at the depth of the Great Depression, Edwin Orr left a good job to start out into the unknown. He told a crowd of our workers in Coimbatore, whimsically:

"Everyone with whom I talked said I was 'daft', with a single exception I remember with gratitude, and he said that he did not know whether I was crazy or not."[4]

It was a lonely and misunderstood young man of twenty-one that crossed the Irish Sea without a sleeping bunk or cabin.

The only friend within 100 miles of Liverpool, where Edwin Orr arrived with two shillings and eightpence farthing, was a Roman Catholic scoutmaster whom Orr had encountered at a jamboree. His name was Frank Nelson. To him Edwin Orr announced his plans.[5]

Frank Nelson was baffled. He told his friend that during the previous summer he had visited Brighton for a needed holiday. It was during the Great Depression when more than three million workers in Britain were unemployed, among them Frank Nelson. Nelson had run short of funds in Brighton and was forced to beg his way back. He warned his Irish friend that he faced embarrassment quite as serious.

"Then where will you sleep tonight?" asked Frank Nelson.

"I am sure I don't know," replied Orr, adding in mischief: "In bed, I suppose."

"And where will you get your next meal?" pursued his friend.

"I don't know that either, but I know where I'll put it."

Frank Nelson was baffled. He reminded Orr that he had been out of work for a long time, and that now that he had landed a job, he intended to keep it: and now Orr came along to tell him that he had given up a good job in Belfast to go out on what he called a wild goose chase.[6]

"And where are you going to?" was his next question.

"I have no idea," Orr replied.

"Well, Edwin," he said, ruefully, "you describe this as a 'call from God'. I call it a bit of rotten bad luck, I do."

He was not any more relieved when Orr told him that his heavenly Father would provide all the funds, including the next meal and bed, so why should he worry. Frank protested that those sort of things did not happen nowadays, besides . . . Then he became interested in the practical details of the journey, asking Orr how far he hoped to travel that week.

"Two hundred miles to London," ventured he.

This was too much for Frank Nelson.[7]

"If you manage to do it," he exploded, "it will be 200 miles of miracle. But it is impossible."

To which Orr replied that there was nothing impossible to God, and that he hoped to witness in every part of Great Britain within a year. So Frank Nelson made a quick calculation, fifty weeks at 200 miles a week. He put out his hand.

"Well, chummy, best of luck. Either you're a terrible fool about it all, or else it's going to be 10,000 miles of miracle, Edwin."

Edwin Orr pedalled out of Birkenhead and off towards Chester. It was 28th September 1933. As he rode, a mood of depression came upon him. He was a stranger in England. He had given up regular employment and the security of a weekly wage. He had left his home, family and friends. Was his call to preach in every part of the world truly a call or only a notion?[8]

He made a complete turn on the road, started back towards Liverpool. Then he turned again, and wearily pedalled in the direction of London. To go on or to go back? That was the question.

A quiet voice spoke within him and said to him, "Do you really believe the promises of God?" The recollection of the promises brought him a complete peace of mind. The pedals began to fly rapidly again and he regained the confidence with which he had started from home.

He reached Chester and asked for the Baptist Church there.[9] He was studying the notice board of that church when a well-dressed lady approached and asked him whether he was looking for someone. Orr asked for the minister, who was away, and went on to explain his business.[10]

Mrs. Varley was very interested in what Orr said. She asked him various questions and, when she was sure in her mind that he was a genuine evangelist, she told him that there was a women's meeting in the church; would he speak to them?

"Yes, certainly," said Orr, and went into the church and spoke at the meeting. The lady asked him after the meeting to come home and dine with her. He gladly agreed.

He found that the lady had a comfortable house; she gave him a good dinner. Then she asked him whether he would like to stay there overnight. She was in the habit of entertaining guest preachers and there was always a room ready for them. Orr insisted that he must go on to Shrewsbury. Though he declined the hospitality of Mrs. Varley then, he often returned there. In fact, she became as a second mother to him. For long years she was a trusted friend of the family.[11]

When he went out into the evening, he regretted his decision, for it began to rain and he did not relish the idea of getting wet away from shelter. He saw a lorry loaded with bags of sugar standing on the road. The driver had stopped to cover it with a waterproof.

"Hallo, there," shouted the driver, in surprise.

His tone suggested that he had mistaken Orr for someone else, so the latter asked him:

"Did you mistake me for somebody?"

The driver laughed apologetically.

"I thought you were a friend of mine called Bert Cook!" he explained.

Edwin Orr had spent not more than ten days previously in Great Britain. He had met a young student for the Methodist

ministry, Herbert J. Cook, who so resembled him in feature and size and colour that his mother, Mrs. Cook, had for a moment mistaken Orr for her son. Of the forty million or more in Britain, this lorry driver had mistaken Orr for a fellow that he had already met.[12]

The driver invited the cyclist to ride with him. He said he was going as far as Wellington, which is ten miles from Shrewsbury. Orr put and tied his bicycle under the waterproof. He himself sat with the driver in the cabin. The rain was heavy. The road was slippery. The night was dark. He spoke to the lorry driver earnestly about Christ. The driver declared his faith in Christ *en route*.

Edwin Orr was set down safely at Wellington. By that time the rain had stopped. He took his cycle from the lorry and rode on to Shrewsbury. At 11 p.m., he reached Shrewsbury. He did not know anyone there with whom he could spend the night. He thought of going to a Salvation Army Hostel where he could get lodging for the night for a shilling. He saw a policeman and inquired from him where he could stay. The policeman checked his credentials right away.[13]

"What do you do for a living?"

What could Orr say? He had been an office clerk, but had given that up. He was not in any sense a clergyman, so he answered that he was an evangelist.[14]

"You don't look like an evangelist to me!" said the policeman.

"Well," countered Orr, "what is an evangelist supposed to look like?"

"You're very young! How long have you been an evangelist?"

"Not very long,"

"How long? I have reasons for asking."

"Well, if you must be technical," said Orr, "I started at 8 o'clock this morning."

The policeman's eyes twinkled.

"Do you have anything to show that you are genuine?"

To introduce himself, Edwin Orr carried with him half a dozen letters from Ireland from well-known leaders in the Anglican, Baptist, Brethren, Methodist and Presbyterian churches. The sixth letter was written by one named William

Phillip.[15] It was the most enthusiastic letter of the lot. Orr showed it to the policeman, calculating that most ministers would be unknown to him anyway so far as another country was concerned.

Ramsay Maule read the letter carefully. Not only was he a policeman, but he was also a keen church officer; and it happened that he was a "close friend" of the writer, William Phillip. He provided the evangelist with accommodation for the night, and a hearty breakfast followed.[16]

Frank Nelson had asked Orr where he would sleep at night, and where he would get his next meal. Orr had dined in a lovely home in Chester and had occupied a well-furnished bedroom in Shrewsbury, and eaten two eggs for breakfast. He left Shrewsbury with an exhilaration in his soul. If the heavenly Father could take care of him one day, he could provide for tomorrow, this week, then next week, this month, then next month, this year, then next year, as long as he walked in His way. He had exercised just a little faith, and it worked.

This then was what it meant when the disciples asked the Lord to increase their faith. He did not say that He would grant them a great faith equal to all exigencies. Rather He said that it was quite enough to use the speck of faith that they had!

Years after, A. J. Russell, author of a best-seller, said to Edwin Orr, "You tell the story of meeting a policeman in Shrewsbury. It is one of the best accounts of providential leading I know. But I'm a hard-bitten journalist, so I have wondered if the policeman's story would tally with yours. I am not reflecting upon your honesty, but I know from experience how different versions arise."[17]

So Orr took the sceptical Russell to Shrewsbury and introduced him to Sergeant Maule. The policeman not only confirmed the story, but added an important fact that he had come to that particular police-box that memorable night by a mistake. This mistake had enabled him to give timely help.

In due course Orr reached London.[18] This was a large and expensive city to live in and his funds were limited. He prayed to God that he might find a place in London from where he could do his work. This prayer was also wonderfully answered. He met an Irish vicar and his wife who were looking after a

modest London parish. They offered him free boarding and lodging as long as he wanted to stay. Orr made the vicarage his headquarters until the end of that year.

When Edwin left Belfast he had agreed to send to his mother a sum of money every week for her expenses and the family's. On Sunday night Edwin knelt down to pray that the money might be forthcoming. He wrote an encouraging letter to his mother but did not close it, hoping to put into it any money which might arrive before 11 o'clock on Monday when the letters for Ireland were cleared.

At breakfast on Monday morning, the maid in the vicarage placed a letter beside Edwin's plate. It did not have any stamp and had not come by the post. It was addressed to Mr. Hoare (cockney for Orr). Inside the envelope there was an anonymous note which simply said that the writer felt that it was the will of Jesus that this be given to Orr. In it was the exact amount needed for his mother.[19]

When Orr tried to find out who could have sent the letter, neither the vicar nor his wife nor the maid could throw any light upon it. Several years later, Orr called to see a very sick man in one of London's hospitals, and happened to tell him the story of what had happened when he first came to that part of the metropolis.

"I don't suppose," said the invalid, "that it would be improper to tell you now that I was the one who sent you that money. I had heard you in the home mission meeting after evensong. I did not know how much to send."

With London as headquarters, Orr toured the country around.[20] When he visited a town, he would study the bulletin boards of the churches, then call on a minister and share with him the burden of a spiritual awakening. Most pastors would become interested in his ministry, and ask him to address a meeting in their church on a weekday, to the young people or to a Bible class or at a prayer meeting. He would be given hospitality, perhaps a small gift of money. Then he would leave next day for another town.

There were several occasions when Orr's own faith in God was sorely tested. He was returning to London from Edinburgh, without his cycle.[21] In Berwick-on-Tweed, he was stranded with

less than two shillings on hand. After a cheap supper, he started to walk 300 miles to London! He knew it would take two weeks to get there.

The night was bitterly cold and he had to keep moving to feel any warmth at all. He prayed for a lift but there was no car or lorry in sight after midnight. Suddenly a car stopped and its occupants asked him to get in quickly. The people in the car had mistaken him for a friend of theirs returning late from a theatre. Another man gave him a lift into Alnwick and a lorry driver took him farther to Newcastle upon Tyne, where he managed to get a bed in a tramp's boarding house.[22]

In the Newcastle area, Orr had an uncle whose home he had never visited. The next morning he contacted his uncle who invited him to spend a few days in his home, meeting the members of the family. His uncle tried to persuade him to return to Ireland, and, failing that, pressed him to accept a loan of money which Orr at first refused but then took and returned intact at the first opportunity.

On another occasion, Orr was cycling the many miles from Glasgow to London.[23] The moon shone brightly and the air was bracing. He decided to cycle all night. At 4 o'clock in the morning, he was stopped by two policemen on patrol in the town of Nantwich. What was he doing there at that time of the night? They refused to entertain his explanations. They seemed ready to charge him with vagrancy, saying that he had "no fixed abode and no visible means of support".

Orr insisted that he was an evangelist. They challenged him to prove it. He told them that if they would give him five minutes he would prove that he was an evangelist. He began preaching and they listened to him with interest. After a discourse of twenty minutes, they let him go.

At the end of 1933, Edwin Orr was unable to return home to Ireland for lack of funds. Will Hopkins, a kindly Kentishman, invited him to spend the Christmas holidays at his home in the town of Gravesend. On the way out of London, Orr's old bicycle broke down.[24] He found that his bicycle needed a complete overhauling; so he prayed for a new bicycle or for the money with which to buy one. This prayer was answered in a strange way. A minister had been taken ill in Essex and the people in

his church were badly in need of someone to take their Christmas services. A deacon telephoned Orr at Hopkins's house.

"But you don't know anything about me!"

"Mr. Orr," said the deacon, "we are so hard up that we would take anybody!"

After he had given the Christmas address, one of the officials of the church met him and asked if he might give him a Christmas gift—the best bicycle made in Britain! Yet he knew nothing of his need of a bicycle at that time.[25] With it, Orr visited every county in Great Britain, from Land's End in the south-west to John o' Groats north-east. Custom-built, hand ball-bearinged, it was a cycle which made the long journeys easier, three-speed gears taking care of the gradients.

Orr described himself in those days as a tramp preacher. Often he did not know where his next meal would come from, and sometimes he had to fast for a whole day. Occasionally he would sleep under the sky as he did not have the money to pay for a bed. He began taking a keen interest in the tramps whom he saw on the road in large numbers, victims of the Depression.[26] Their problems were brought on them sometimes by their sin and partly by the social and economic condition of the country. He loved them in spite of all their dirt and defiance and sought to lead them to Christ, the Saviour who had nowhere to lay His head.

In Manchester, he planned to spend a night at a lodging house run by the Salvation Army and on the way went to a cheap restaurant for a snack of fried fish and potatoes.[27]

A red-faced fellow, not quite sober, staggered over to him and commented rudely upon his accent and his face, which he said was "pious looking". They talked politics first, and religion later.

"No, mate," said he, "religion don't never interest me at no time, in no place, now how, it don't. I'm a Communist, I am. I believe that yer popes and archbishops and clergy and all the rest are just parasites! Here's me, mate—can't get no work—I've been out all night before now. Why, mate, I'm going to stay in the Army hostel tonight, because I've got only three bob! What would yer God do for me, eh?"

Orr told him that he was a minister of the gospel, that he had

been out all night too, that he was on his way to spend the night at the Salvation Army Hostel and that instead of three shillings he had only two shillings and fivepence. He added story after simple story of adventure and answer to prayer. The man's jaw dropped lower.[28]

"Blimey, mate," he said at last, using an old English minced oath, "you're a most extraordinary kind of Christian, you are. Why, you're doing wot Jesus Christ tells yer in 'Oly Scripture. That's wot I says, show me a Christian wot follers 'Oly Scripture and I take off me 'at to 'im, I does."

Orr took advantage of his interest to tell him what the same Holy Scriptures said about his bad habits of drunkenness, profanity and the like.

'You ask me what God could do for you? I'll tell you. He can clean up your black, sinful heart."

Orr expected him to strike, but instead found that he was dealing with a man under deep conviction of sin. He became sober and serious and talked till midnight. He never saw him again. But he met many a man like him in England.

Then Orr returned to Ireland for a brief stay.[29]

> On the morning of 6th January 1934, I stood upon the deck of the good ship *Ulster Queen* as she ploughed her way up Belfast lough. What a pleasure it was to view the panorama before me—the Mountains of Antrim, the Hills of Down, and the grey-blue Waters of Moyle.

During an intense, though limited, local revival in the Donegall Road City Mission in Belfast, the power-house of the movement was undoubtedly the early morning prayer meetings which went on for six months. At 6 o'clock in the morning, there would be forty intercessors in prayer. The type of praying there was not eloquent in style. Instead of that, there was brief and pointed petition in the crudest vernacular. As Orr recalled it:[30]

> One morning, there came into our midst a young man, who, alas, had big ideas of his knowledge of the Scriptures. He determined to show all around, including the Almighty, what a profound Bible student he was. He began by praying that God would triumph in the meeting ... that He would work His purposes out ... Not content with that, he began

to explain to the Lord how to do it. He quoted the case of Adam and Eve in the Garden. Next he flitted to Enoch. Then he dwelt volubly upon Noah. Next came a sermonette on Abraham's obedience. Then a wealth of reflection about Isaac . . . and Jacob. The people had not got up out of their beds at 6.30 a.m. to listen in a cramped position to a sermon. They kept shifting position. They lost interest. The prayer meeting was being killed.

Orr wondered what the city missionary would do. He was quite a humorous fellow who had once told the younger man his philosophy of prayer in public places:

"Y'know, when a man prays for three minutes, you pray with him. But when he prays for another three minutes, you pray for him. And when he prays for another three minutes, you pray against him."

The learned and voluble brother had been a-praying for twenty-three minutes, and was travelling at great velocity through the Second Book of Kings. Suddenly the city missionary roared out:

"Open your eyes, man—you're preachin'."

The prayer died away, and the people returned to intercession.[31]

Orr's was a happy experience in the Donegall Road City Mission. Asked to speak in a meeting there, his text was, "That thou mightest know the certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed", from the opening verses of the Gospel of St. Luke. The meeting began with an earnest prayer for the Holy Spirit. Orr felt that he was speaking with a power certainly not his own.

One man came to the meeting drunk and using foul language. The Spirit of God spoke to him. He wept like a child and confessed: "I am a leper with drink and sin. You wouldn't speak to me if you knew me." Orr told him there was no case too hard for the Lord. A little later he received assurance of salvation. He returned to later meetings, his personal appearance so much changed that Orr could not recognize him at first. He was one of many conversions.[32]

He ministered in Ulster for a while, renewing contacts with old friends, spending time with the members of his family, his

mother and sister and brother. His mother's attitude was a mixture of quiet satisfaction that one of her sons was serving the Lord and an anxiety over the hardships that he endured as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

Edwin Orr's journeys took him often into the bonnie land of Scotland. There he stayed with nobility and the poor alike. His best friend in Glasgow was Dr. David M. MacIntyre, a son-in-law of Andrew Bonar, and like him as saintly a man as ever lived in Scotland.[33] Lord Maclay of Kilmalcolm took a kindly interest in Orr too.

Edwin Orr was stirred by Scotland:

"Who is there that does not love Scotland, the land and its people, the home of lofty mountains and lofty character? I was captivated."

He loved beautiful Scotland, but it was not the Scotland of pretty postcard views taken under rare sunny skies. When he arrived in Stranraer in March 1934, it was a balmy day, rhododendrons blooming in the sheltered valley.[34]

> I rode for a while, then wheeled my bicycle up to the pass known as the App. Going down the other side, I encountered a terrific north-easterly hailstorm, which blew me to a standstill. Four times I was blown from the cycle, once nearly over the cliffs into the briny cauldron spuming far below. Through sleet and hail and rain, I stuck it out. My legs ached, my back felt broken, and my strength was ebbing fast. I stood upon the pedals, yet seemed to make but little headway against the howling storm. At last I reached Girvan, where I found there was a suitable train to Ayr. I shivered so miserably that I began to pray that I might not catch pneumonia so far away from home.

Orr knew no one in Ayr, but determined to go on with his work of enlisting prayer for revival. He sought to interview the minister of the parish church of Ayr.[35] At the door of the manse, he met the reverend gentleman attired in top hat and all the necessary magnificence expected for a wedding. He noticed the pools of water that Orr dripped, and immediately ordered a hot bath saying good-bye in the middle of it, leaving the cyclist in a strange house but with a warm meal awaiting him.

In 1934, James E. Duncan, formerly director of the Kalimpong

Schools in the Himalayan foothills, used to meet with young businessmen at lunch in Glasgow, including William T. Sloan of the well-known shipping family. Of a guest, Mr. Sloan said:[36]

> At once I was impressed with this slight young Irishman's utter confidence in His heavenly Father. He was launching out with his bicycle, his Bible, one or two coins in his pocket and with a quiet and unbounded faith. Add to these a fascinating Irish brogue and a directness of approach, a puckish humour and a burning concern that Christians should be revived and that souls should be saved. I believe that the impact of his unusual personality was most marked on those who had personal contact with him though he was a very ready and interesting speaker.

Mr. T. Lawton Loveridge, an octogenarian businessman of Cardiff, told me how Edwin Orr had arrived there on bicycle.[37] On St. Mary's Street, he noticed a car with a tasteful text in tiny letters upon it, so Orr opened the car door and sat in awaiting the return of its owner. When the owner, Mr. Edwin Willie, returned to find a stranger at the wheel, he asked his identity and was told that he was a servant of the same Lord. Mr. Willie introduced Orr to Lawton Loveridge, who presented him to Mrs. Morgan of The Mount, Llandaff, a wealthy widow, who became his Welsh hostess on innumerable occasions.

While travelling in Wales he met Evan Roberts who had taken a leading part in the Welsh Revival in 1904–5. A hundred thousand people were led to Christ in those momentous days. Evan Roberts had had a serious breakdown and was no longer able to continue his public ministry. But he spent much time in prayer and promised Edwin Orr to intercede regularly for him. Then they talked together about the value of prayer, the need of vision and the prospect of a great revival.[38]

"Working for God is prayer in action," Evan Roberts commented. "Being wholly yielded ensures that God will direct you all the day, therefore one's task is to listen for the voice of the Lord, and then to obey."

Roberts further said:[39]

"Vision is as desirable a gift as faith. I have seen men who have had great faith, but who have never exercised it because

of their lack of vision. I have seen others who had vision, but who never responded because of their lack of faith."

Orr had read much about the revival in Wales. This conversation with the man God had used so mightily left a lasting impression in Orr's mind. He longed to have both faith and vision increased.

Wherever Orr went in Wales he saw chapels and churches "Built 1860: Rebuilt 1905". Spiritual life flowed in these places in the '59 Revival, and to provide for that flood the churches were built. There was another flood in the wonderful revival in 1905, and to cope with it the churches were extended.

During the first two years of Orr's ministry, he often did not know where his next meal would come from and whether he would have a room or bed to sleep in at nights. Nor did he always know whether he would have the wherewithal for his journey on the morrow.

On his way to Gloucester in England, Orr called to see a lawyer who was an active Christian, hoping to enlist his prayers for spiritual awakening. The man was interested. Their parting conversation[40] throws light upon Orr's method of living in those early days.[41]

"Well, young fellow," said the lawyer, "I am certainly glad that you called to see me. Before you go, let me ask: where do you get your financial support for this sort of work?"

"From the Lord," replied Orr, with a smile.

"Yes, I know," said the other. "But the Lord uses agents, doesn't He?"

"That's true," agreed the evangelist.

"Well, then," he went on, "don't you tell your friends what your needs are, and they respond?"

"No," replied Orr. "Perhaps they find out, but I try conscientiously not to let them know. I never make appeals for myself."

"I understand what you mean," said the lawyer. "That's the principle of the China Inland Mission. Now, would you say that it was wrong for the Salvation Army to ask for money?"

"Not at all," insisted Orr. "God called William Booth and God called Hudson Taylor. Every man to his particular leading. I have no objection to salaries at all. But I do not approve of

those who say that they are dependent upon 'faith', and then advertise their needs just like the other fellow."[42]

"But, Mr. Orr," said the man with the analytical mind, "don't you tell people what God has done for you in past days? Isn't that an indirect appeal?"

"It may," explained Orr, "give a Christian some idea of my manner of life but none of my specific needs. George Müller of Bristol handled millions for the Lord, and never made an appeal to the world or to his friends while he was able to tell the Lord alone his needs. But he did give reports of God's goodness as a testimony, except where the report might be construed as an appeal."

"I see," said the lawyer, "Well, now, take a specific case. I am interested in you. I would like to give you some money. How much do you need? If you tell me what you need for today, I'll give it to you providing it is not too much."

He watched the evangelist closely.

"I don't want to sound ungrateful, sir," replied Orr, after a pause. "But I do not feel led to tell you my specific needs. I am not saying that it is wrong to do so, or that an organization should not make a specific appeal for funds for a good cause. But I have felt led to make appeals to God alone, and if He wants you to contribute to my needs He will guide you as to what to give."

The lawyer looked at Orr for a long time. Then he spoke:

"You're a funny boy, but I admire you for being loyal to your ideas. Now I shall have to ask God to guide me what to give you . . ."

He took out his pocket book and passed a Bank of England note to the younger man. He did not know that it was one-third more than the amount for which Orr had prayed that day. So Orr got to Cheltenham.

CHAPTER 4

THE KING'S COURIER

It was fortunate that Edwin Orr liked to travel. As a boy, he walked 100 miles a week for the sheer pleasure of walking. In the city he found the quickest ways along its streets, and out in the beautiful Irish countryside he discovered the best roads through its hills and valleys. He enjoyed company but did not mind being alone, camping in the woods in weather that scared other Scouts away.

The use of a bicycle increased his mobility, and thus he was prepared for the peculiar work of his early ministry, on the road day by day. If there was another way to return to base, Edwin Orr generally travelled that way for the sake of exploring the country. Some would have accused him of seeking a good time but for the fact that trying out a new route usually brought hardships that an old way often travelled had overcome.

The Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore was a man of the road, of the Indian road. Said he:

> The road is my wedded companion. She speaks to me under my feet all day, she sings to my dreams all night. My meeting with her had no beginning; it begins endlessly at each daybreak, renewing its summer in fresh flowers and songs, and her every new kiss is the first kiss to me . . .

Orr could have used these words of himself and his love for the road. Tagore was used to the heat and the dust. Orr to the cold and the rain.

It was fitting that Edwin Orr should begin his extraordinary travels in a modest way, on a push bicycle, riding sixty miles a day, for the time was to come when he would fly 6,000 miles in the same time. It was fitting that he should serve his travelling apprenticeship in "the tight little island" of Lilliputian dimensions, for later he was to explore the corners of the greatest Continents. He was to become a most travelled man.

In these days of incredible speeds covering boundless distances

in travel, when an ordinary passenger may breakfast in Bombay and dine in London that evening, most people would nominate a jet pilot as the world's greatest traveller.

But ask a shuttling pilot whether he has ever climbed a Himalayan foothill or penetrated an Amazonian jungle or tramped in the snows of Greenland or traversed the sands of Libya or scanned the cliffs of Pitcairn or viewed the Midnight sun in Lapland; he would likely say no.

The subject of this biographical sketch has visited all but ten of the world's 150 countries and 500 of its 600 major cities. The Director of the historic Royal Geographical Society said simply of that record: "In my experience, I have seen nothing to equal it."[1] It is certainly a record.

There are thirty-two counties in Edwin Orr's native Ireland and early in his career he visited all of them by road, generally by bicycle. There are forty shires in England, a dozen in Wales and thirty on the mainland of Scotland, and Orr toured all of them, more often by bicycle than otherwise.[2] His adventures in the British Isles included hitting a stone bridge which hospitalized him in Wales for a fortnight, sleeping under haystacks as he did on Dartmoor in Devon, tramping from one end of the country to the other, and sleeping in the crypt of St. Martin-in-the-Fields in Trafalgar Square in the heart of London.

There are thirty countries in Europe, and Orr toured all of them except tiny Albania, visiting 130 big cities of 100,000 population or more in the process.[3] His tours took him from the walls of the Kremlin to the parks of Madrid, where he was robbed at midnight, from the fjords of Norway to the islands of Greece.

In the Americas are thirty-five countries, and Orr traversed all of them from the Arctic shores of Canada to the Antarctic shores of Argentina—this included visits to all the capital cities and to each city over 100,000 population, 180 cities in all.[4] He experienced mid-summer snow in Patagonia and humid heat in the Mato Grosso, winter darkness at noon on Baffin Land and stifling fumes inside the crater of Irazu, an active Costa Rican volcano.

Orr's travels in Asia included visits to thirty-five out of forty countries and to seventy of their major cities.[5] He viewed the

lowest depths of the earth at the Dead Sea and its highest heights on the Himalayas at Mount Everest.

Orr's travels in Africa took him to forty of its countries, in fact to all major units then in existence.[6] The emergence of several unheard-of African republics added another five to the list yet to be visited. Orr visited forty of the major cities. These travels took him from the Cape of Good Hope near Capetown to Cape Bon near Tunis, from the bulge of Somalia to the point of Senegal, from Kilimanjaro's side to the Rift Valley bottom.

In the vast distances of Oceania, there are only fifteen administrative units, countries or island groups, and Orr visited them all with twenty of the larger cities, journeys encompassing all Australian states, most of the Indonesian and Philippine islands, every part of New Zealand, New Guinea from end to end, and islands scattered throughout the Pacific in Polynesia, Micronesia and Melanesia.[7]

Orr toured faraway places with strange-sounding names scattered around the globe—Saint Helena in the Atlantic Ocean, Mauritius in the Indian Ocean, Kamaran in the Red Sea, Kwajalein in the Pacific and Curação in the Caribbean, and many more—just as he did the more familiar places in my own country—Srinagar in Kashmir, Nagercoil in South Madras, Amritsar in the Punjab, Gauhati in Assam.

This does not mean that Orr briefly touched countries in every case. I read that Brazil's leading churchman declared that Edwin Orr had far outdistanced every missionary and national known to him in visiting in 1952 every state and territory in Brazil. Orr also visited every state in the United States of America, crossing Canada from Newfoundland to British Columbia. He went as far north as Churchill in the Canadian north and as far south as Ushuaia in Argentine Tierra del Fuego, as far east as Recife on the Brazilian bulge and as far west as Kiska in the Aleutians.

Albertyn records a conversation between Orr and the Prime Minister of New Zealand who had expressed amazement that the traveller had seen North Cape, South Cape, East Cape and West Cape in that lovely land, and traversed territory marked "unexplored" on their maps.[8] Australia is the world's loneliest inhabited Continent. Few Aussies have visited all the Australian

states and the Northern Territory, but Orr's tours took him through these and sixty of sixty-eight administrative divisions of the Commonwealth.[9] He crossed the Continent from east to west and west to east and north to south and encircled the whole circumference of it.

I was amazed to learn that Edwin Orr already had visited each state of my own country, India, and also traversed the neighbouring countries of Ceylon, Burma, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Nepal and other Himalayan states.[10]

Orr was on the "wanted list" of the Japanese Secret Police during the Sino-Japanese War, so Japanese occupation of much of China restricted his travels in that vast country, yet he was able to visit ten provinces from Shanghai to Tibet and from Shantung to the Burma Road; and he also toured the neighbouring states of Vietnam, Burma, Thailand and Malaya.

An officer of our Indian Army encountered Edwin Orr in uniform in an out-of-the-way airport in the Pacific. The former was *en route* from rescuing some Gurkha soldiers from enemy camps in the Pacific and the latter was flying to occupied Tokyo. They were forced to wait all night for an overdue military plane so, both being lovers of travel and geography, they kept awake and alert by quizzing each other on countries and capitals. The Indian officer said afterwards that it was a most refreshing experience.

The intrepid British explorer, Sebastian Snow, who traced the Amazon from its Andean sources to its Atlantic mouths, tells of meeting *en route* "an Irish-American missionary, who had just arrived from the River Xingu in the Brazilian backwoods" who befriended him in need.[11] What was Orr doing there? He had come down the Rio Purús, preaching the gospel in the Green Hell of the Mato Grosso and Amazonia and had concluded a preaching mission in Manaos, 1,000 miles up the mighty Amazon.[12]

At the end of the Second World War, Edwin Orr wanted to pursue researches in Oxford University but found a total absence of available transport from desolated Tokyo to bombed-out London. So the undaunted Irishman hitch-hiked westwards over Korea, China, India and other Asian countries to Cairo, then traversed the length of Africa twice back to Casablanca,

arriving in England after six months of amazing and amusing adventures.[13]

Roland Metzger, a Baptist missionary in the Congo, was on trek one day in the bush, headed away from civilization. He and an Englishman were at the head of a long line of bearers. The sun was blazing hot overhead when the missionaries gave the word to halt for a rest. Gladly the natives lowered their burdens.[14]

It was quiet, but for the buzz of insects and the noises of the jungle. The missionaries looked up in surprise at the sound of broken brush in the undergrowth. Who could be approaching? They saw a Congolese in European clothes and, coming from behind a tree which obscured him, an officer in the uniform of the United States Air Force—surely not! A Belgian officer? No, an American! It was hot. Metzger was startled. It was too much out in the Congo bush. As the man came closer, Metzger noticed that his face was vaguely familiar—like that of an old college chum. The blood began to ebb away from his face. Had his old friend been killed in the Pacific War?

The approaching hiker held out his hand.

"Dr. Livingstone, I presume?" he said.

"Who is it?" asked the missionary.

"Don't you know me?" protested the hiker.

"Who is it?" repeated Metzger.

Metzger sat down again weakly when the hiker announced that he was his old friend Edwin Orr.

"That's who I thought it was!" said he.

Orr was hitch-hiking across the Congo on his way from Elizabethville to Matadi. He happened to have met a Congolese Christian named Samuel Lutete who mentioned Roland Metzger quite by accident, and then agreed to help Orr find his old friend from Chicago college days.[15]

Orr's travel books sold by the hundreds of thousands. They abound in fascinating glimpses into travel adventure. In New Guinea, he was engaged in his most taxing task of exploration, accompanied by Papuan bearers and cannibal savages through a virgin jungle so dense that he did not glimpse the sun for days while visibility was limited to ten yards or less:[16]

At 5 o'clock we stopped to make camp. The bearers cooked

rice and we opened another can of pork which tasted appetizing after ten hours' hiking. We were now at our farthest point inland, two days from the coast, separated by two mountain ranges therefrom. The place had never before been visited by men, though some had passed many miles east.

The natives cut down two forked saplings and rammed them into the ground six feet high and ten feet apart. Then they cut two more and made a square, the other two being four feet high. They placed some saplings across the forks, tied crossbars with creeping vines, and within half an hour there was a thatched house ready for our sleeping quarters. Though I wore a warm field jacket, I was cold: and I felt glad when morning came. The Papuans took turns to watch by a camp fire for intruders.[17]

It was not only the cold that made Orr welcome the dawn. The savages had told him the day before that they had eaten an enemy two weeks previously. (Orr told me that Dr. Rajendra Prasad, our first President of India, had asked him more about the habits of cannibals than about anything else. As a strict Hindu vegetarian, he was horrified!)

The Chinese author, Andrew Gih, described his adventures travelling with Orr in war zones:[18]

We had rocks for breakfast and we were so hungry and thirsty. The truck driver got tired of the rope breaking and wanted to go on without us. By this time we had learned of a man who had been robbed and stabbed the night before, and we knew that we could not stay there any longer, for the bandits would have gotten word of our broken car, so we had to risk leaving the car behind and begged the driver to give us a lift . . . it meant life or death for us.

In the mountain town of Presidente Soares in an inaccessible corner of Brazil, Edwin Orr was preaching in the local college to great crowds. Dona Cecilia, wife of the college President, was talking to a businessman in a neighbouring town.[19]

"How can he travel without money?" asked he.

Patiently Dona Cecilia explained the principle of simple trust in God. The businessman could not understand. He said, however, that he would like to meet the Irishman and offered

to fly him in his own private plane to Cachoeiro over the mountains.

"But I still don't understand how he can travel without money!" he said.

A critic of Orr's journeyings commented:[20]

> To travel around without visible means of support is no impossible accomplishment. Hundreds of tramps and vagrants do it regularly. Even travel around the world, paying one's way, is no unusual experience. The late Ramsay Macdonald, as a young Socialist, travelled around the world studying political conditions and paying his way by journalistic activities. The annals of biography will reveal quite a number of similar exploits of travel.

Edwin Orr and his friends did not reject such comparisons. What they affirmed as different was a spiritual factor, that Orr was not travelling for pleasure or education but as a man with a message from God. He was more than a traveller. He was a courier, in fact, the King's Courier.

CHAPTER 5

SCANDINAVIAN AWAKENING

Edwin Orr's first book[1] had received a warm welcome from the reading public, continuing edition by edition until after a decade there were more than 100,000 copies in circulation and not a few translations into other languages.

One of the earliest criticisms made was that, Britain being a Christian country, it was easy for a "faith" evangelist to live off the kindness of the Christians in the country. Edwin Orr believed that God could answer prayer anywhere, so he began to plan to go farther afield and visit Soviet Russia—surely not a Christian country in the accepted sense of the term.

The first stage of Orr's journey took him to Scandinavia, where he witnessed the phenomenon of nation-wide revival for the first time in his life, for an evangelical awakening had already begun in Norway under the preaching of Frank Mangs.

Orr met in Cardiff a coal-exporter who gave him a free passage in a tiny collier to Oslo.[2] It sailed bravely up the English Channel through the Straits of Dover into the North Sea. The month was January (1935) but it was warm enough for sunbathing on deck in the English Channel.

Then broke a fierce storm which raged in the North Sea for three days and two nights. For forty-eight hours, the captain held to his bridge. His face showed considerable anxiety. The ship was in danger. With the Londonderry Air in mind, Orr wrote the following verses:[4]

To follow Thee—
  My heart's desire, O Saviour!
Close by Thy side, as near as one could be,
That men may see,
  By every day's behaviour,
That "to abide in Christ" is following Thee.
How can I swerve

If Thou art guiding all the way,
Providing all and watching over me!
I'm undeserving!
But 'tis true that every day
My greatest joy, O Lord, is following Thee.

The path is steep,
The road is rough, oft where I go,
But 'tis the pathway Thou, O Lord, hast trod;
One need not weep—
There's joy enough to learn and know
That every step is upward, home to God.
The winds may blow,
Or clouds befog with icy breath,
And storms may whip us in an angry sea;
But this I know,
In sunshine, shadow, life or death,
My greatest joy, O Lord, is following Thee.

During the second night, Orr woke up. The engines were no longer throbbing. The winds were howling. The waves were dashing against the ship. The storm raged in all its fury. Seas were pouring over the deck, for the ship was lying at the mercy of wind and wave. The captain feared that his lifeboats would be smashed if he steamed farther into the tempest.[4]

North-east were the snow-clad mountains of Norway, too far away. The little coal-boat was tossed on the mountainous seas, but Orr felt that he was in the hollow of God's hand. The danger passed and the little ship limped into port.

A newspaper account indicated that the young unknown evangelist had arrived in Oslo without a friend, but had preached in the Tabernacle and Bethlehem Church and Albert Lunde's Assembly Hall in Möllergaten. Welcomed by leaders of the various denominations, he had exercised a busy ministry with great results. So great was the demand for his first book that Norwegian and Swedish translations were being rushed.[5]

Among those who impressed the young evangelist was Albert Lunde, the Lutheran preacher who had led the revival movement of 1905 in Norway, the most remarkable work of God

ever witnessed by Eivind Berggrav, as the latter told Orr after forty years' consideration, when Bishop of Oslo and a world-renowned figure. Lunde, like Jakob Öhrn and Ludwig Johnson, gave Orr a hearty welcome.

Edwin Orr's visit to Norway proved to be quite an important event in development of his spiritual life. He had heard much about revival movements. He had read a good deal about what happened in times of revival. But for the first time in his life he actually saw a revival in progress, confirming and deepening his longing for revival in all parts of the world.

Nightly, there were meetings in the churches of Oslo. In one church where he spoke on revival, he was followed by Karl Andersson, a Swedish evangelist who spoke with great power.[6]

"And now," said Andersson, "we will leave this meeting open for confession of our failure . . ."

Something irresistible forced Orr to his feet again, and he hesitatingly told them (through an interpreter) that besetting sin had kept him from blessing for years, adding that the Blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us . . . "if we confess our sin".

There followed a long period of waiting, then a young lady walked to the platform and in a low voice confessed that she had been a hindrance to revival. She burst into tears and many in the audience began to sob. The Irish evangelist had not till then ever seen such deep emotion in a meeting, certainly not in the British countries.

One after another, members of the church and visitors stood to request the prayers of the people. Sometimes the Swedish evangelist challenged this one or that. The meeting closed at quite a late hour.

The remarkable thing was not so much the unusual meeting, but that scenes like these were being witnessed in many churches round about at the same time. It was a movement of revival. Orr addressed meetings in various places. One of his interpreters, certainly the most skilful, was Arnold Öhrn, afterwards General Secretary of the Baptist World Alliance with its 20,000,000 members. They became life-long friends.

At the end of the week, on Sunday night, Edwin Orr had retired to the little guest room above the Baptist Tabernacle

and was praying about his journey next day by train and ferry to Copenhagen, capital of Denmark. He had received various small gifts from Norwegian friends but not enough for his journey to Denmark. He rose from his knees to procure a handkerchief from his overcoat, and with it pulled out a roll of Norwegian banknotes.

His augmented funds being sufficient for the train ticket, with approximately five kroner or five shillings over, he proceeded east and south from Oslo through Göteborg in Sweden to Denmark, He found the Danes much the same sort of people as the Norsemen, although their glottal accent seemed an incomprehensible one after the clarity of Oslo diction. Many Danes spoke English.

That same day, *Kristeligt Dagblad* published a long interview; the editor asked Orr: "Do we stand on the verge of a world-wide revival?" It concluded with the question:[7]

"What, in your opinion, is the greatest hindrance to world revival?"

"It is not Rationalism, Communism, or the like, but the indifference of believers themselves. Revival will come to us—only by the way of obedience to the Word, of living faith, and of unceasing prayer—when, as Paul writes in Romans xii. 1, 'we present our bodies as a living, holy and God-acceptable sacrifice'."[8]

When Orr arrived in Copenhagen, the temperature was down to zero, his funds were five kroner and he knew no one in Denmark.[9] But he had been given the name of a Mr. Sörensen, a Christian businessman, who could arrange meetings for the Lutheran and Free Church people. Orr looked up the name in the telephone directory, and found to his dismay that Sörensen was the commonest name in Denmark.

Back of his mind came the recollection that the man's first name was Nils, so he looked up the directory again, and found five thus listed. Making a note of the first address, Kleinsgade 2, he walked in the bitter cold to the apartment house. He rang the bell. A lady came to the door.

"Good day," said Orr. "Be so kind as to tell me is Herr Sörensen at home?"

The lady replied in incomprehensible Danish to Orr's under-

standable Norwegian. Orr repeated the question, the lady her answer. Orr was about to ask again, when the lady closed the door on him.

As Orr descended the staircase, the lady opened the door again and called him back. In her hand was a copy of Orr's first book, published only five weeks before, printed in English, but with a photograph upon the cover. She pointed at the photograph and at Orr. Orr replied in faultless Danish:

"*Ja. Ja, ja. Ja, ja, ja.*"

She invited him in. She talked to him in Danish which he could not understand and he talked to her in English which she could not understand. She telephoned her husband, who spoke business English.

"This sounds impossible," said Herr Sörensen. "A Danish lady missionary in the China Inland Mission sent me your book the other day. So I prayed that you might come to Denmark. But I did not expect that you would come. And now you telephone me from my own house. This is the hand of God."

Orr was invited to stay for lunch. His hostess could speak no English and he could speak no Danish, but both could eat, so they ate. He was invited to return for supper. Orr secretly was hoping that this kind couple would ask him to stay for the night as well, but it proved that they were a married couple without children and had no extra bedroom in their apartment. Sörensen then asked Orr to address an evangelistic rally in the ballroom of the Technical Institute, the evangelist Eric Larsson giving way for him.[10]

At ten minutes after 10 o'clock, the meeting was over. It was bitterly cold outside as Orr lifted his heart in prayer for something that had preoccupied his mind throughout the day—a place to sleep. As if in response, Sörensen said to him:

"I want you to do me a favour. I want you to change your hotel. Down by the City Hall, there is an excellent hotel, Missionshotellet, to which we take all ministers and missionaries."

"Now," he went on, noticing the puzzled look on Orr's face, "I will go with you to the hotel where you are already staying —to apologize for you for changing your plans so late at night."

Orr had left his single suitcase at a little shop, so he waved off his friend's proffered assistance, ran a couple of blocks and returned with his bag.[11]

"You were not long," said Sörensen. "Did you have any trouble? Were they not disappointed that you did not sleep there for the night?"

Orr suppressed a smile and observed that they did not seem a bit disappointed. Sörensen carried the suitcase, and presented its owner at the desk of the hotel, taking his farewell before Orr was checked in. The booking clerk looked down his list of rooms and then observed that they did not have a single room vacant!

"Don't misunderstand," he said. "We have double rooms, and apartments, and suites of rooms but the single rooms are all occupied. *Ja, vel*, Herr Sörensen is such a good friend of ours that we shall be glad to let you have a more expensive room for the cheaper price. Come upstairs."

Orr had been praying all day for such a room, so as they walked along the corridor, he was already thanking God in his heart for the bed. The man threw open a door and switched on the light.

"This is a family apartment," he explained, waving his hand over a sofa, a table, a writing-desk, a reading lamp, an easy chair, four other chairs, and four beds!

"You may sleep in all four beds if you like," he went on. "We shall charge you the same price."

Edwin Orr reverted to Irish type and slept in all four beds that night, turn about. He believed that his heavenly Father had a sense of humour.

Orr's final meeting in Copenhagen was unforgettable. The Sunday evening congregation had crowded out the ballroom, with 700 seated and many standing inside and outside the vestibule doors.

Orr's interpreter was his good friend Herr Sörensen. They prayed for a breath from heaven. Orr first attempted to speak and sing a little in Danish. Then followed the message on the text "He shall be satisfied".[12]

It was getting late when the closing hymn was sung. Orr appealed to all who desired blessing to remain behind. Scarcely

a score went home. The meeting remained as crowded as before as listeners outside made their way in.

Then followed an appeal to all who were either unhappy or dissatisfied to come forward to the platform to confess sin, or backsliding, or some spiritual need. At first, nobody moved. Then one, then two, then a dozen, then a score, came to the front, coming up the aisles weeping and praying. The pastor prayed with them. After a second invitation, another score of Christians penitently took their place. Then another group, and another.

Someone began to sing softly a hymn about the sufferings of Christ. Nearly everyone joined in. A young man stood before the platform for ten minutes and would not return to his seat. "I am not a Christian," he said, "and I want to be."

Pastor Eric Larsson made a hurried exit with the young man to a little prayer room, used as an inquiry room. A dozen people seeking salvation followed. Many found their peace in Christ and returned to the meeting with real joy written on their faces.

When at last a young woman came forward to say something *sotto voce*, the people seemed more deeply moved. About 100 endeavoured to come forward at once, so a young man spoke up:

"Many of us here still want to confess our need of revival. Let us confess Christ where we are. There is not enough room at the platform for all whose hearts are being touched. We mean quite as much as those who have found enough space to go forward."[13]

Altogether, about 500 people thus confessed or witnessed that night.

There was an interesting sequel to that visit to Denmark, short as it was. The editor of a large Danish daily paper professed experience of conversion, left the journalistic field for the ministry, and became a leading Lutheran priest noted not only for his faithfulness to God but for his loyalty to Denmark during the Nazi occupation when he became a leader of the Underground.

From Denmark, Orr travelled by ferry and train to Örebro in middle Sweden.[14] In Stockholm Edwin Orr preached upon

arrival in the famous Bethlehem Church which had housed the congregations attending the ministry of George Scott and his successor, Carl Olof Rosenius, the leader of the mid-Century Awakening in Sweden which paralleled the revival of 1859 in Great Britain. Orr met many local leaders in Stockholm, including the saintly Prince Oscar Bernadotte, brother of King Gustaf and a humble Christian man as well as an outstanding Christian leader.

Edwin Orr lived a life of faith in Sweden also.

I was writing in my bedroom at the hotel. A knock came to the door. It was the guest from the room at the end of the corridor, bringing a postcard (or something like that) for me. He spoke good English.

"Give him some of that money," said a voice in the depth of my heart. I hesitated. I needed the money. "Freely you have received, freely give." I called him back.

"That is from the Lord," I said, reaching him a banknote. "What?" Bewilderment was written on his face. I repeated what I had said. Tears came to his eyes. Hurriedly he said: "No, oh, no! You must not. You are a foreigner here. You will need the money. You have no friends. Oh, no! Thank you! No!"

"That is very strange," said I. "I am quite sure that the Lord told me a moment ago to give it to you ... May I ask you a question? Are you living by faith? And did you pray for this today?"

"I prayed for this this morning," and he seemed broken down as he took it.

The man told Orr his story. He was a minister who had suffered a breakdown in health. With a friend, he embarked upon a cycle tour of Europe and the Holy Land. At that moment, he was busy writing an account of his adventures. He had run short of funds, and had prayed earnestly that the Lord would show him His approval of the project by sending him ten kronor that day.[15]

They had a delightful time of fellowship together. He rejoiced that the Lord had provided for him, thus showing His sign of leading. And Orr rejoiced that the Lord had used him as a channel, showing His seal of approval.

Orr continued his travels through Finland, finding open doors in that country as well as in the other Scandinavian countries. It was in the depth of winter, with not only the streets of the cities snowbound but even the sea frozen twenty feet thick. The evangelist used English or words in Swedish to make himself understood, not even attempting to learn the difficult Finnish language.

In a restaurant in a town now within the Soviet Union, Edwin Orr ordered fried eggs for breakfast, first in Swedish, then in German, then in French, then in English—all to no avail, for the giggling waitress spoke only Finnish and Russian.[16] Giving up, Orr told her to bring him anything she liked: but this too went by not understood. As a last resort, the Irishman stood to his feet, waved his arms and cackled like a hen. There was much laughter in the dining room and in the kitchen, but the waitress returned with a well-cooked omelet.

Although Edwin Orr did not attempt to learn Finnish, he succeeded in becoming fairly fluent in Norwegian and understandable in Swedish. He mastered what little he learned of the language by the most practical method, everyday use.

In the Bedehus Cafe in Ålesund, the evangelist ordered a pastry with cream for which Norway is justly renowned. The waitress brought the delicacy together with a cake-knife. The latter seemed unsuited to cutting the creamy pastry, so Orr asked in his best Norwegian:

"Be so kind and bring me a fork!"

Every word was in good Norse except the word "fork" which was in English. The waitress could not understand the English word, nor could Orr recall the Norwegian for "fork". The impasse continued until Orr finally said in good Norse:

"Be so kind. Bring me the wife of the knife."

That is how he learned the word *gaffel*, and many another word came the same way.

Scandinavian customs appealed to him just as much as did the viking people. He developed such an enthusiasm for them that he went out of his way to speak to Scandinavians anywhere in the world. Marriage then was far from his thoughts, but deep down in his heart he resolved to marry some typical Scandinavian beauty, other things being equal—culturally and spiritually.[17]

Twenty years later, he brought his African-born, Norwegian-descended wife to the land of her forbears. Carol Carlson Orr spoke English as her family language, Afrikaans as a telephone operator, and Zulu as the language of the people on the borders of Pondoland. She had learned French but no Norwegian.

The Orrs were greeted on arrival in Ålesund by cousins who spoke Landsmål, the language of western Norway, which differed from Riksmål, the language of eastern Norway, as much as broad Scots differs from King's English, Landsmål was incomprehensible to Edwin Orr, who had learned what little he knew in Oslo dialect; but Mrs. Orr found to her surprise that she could understand her cousins talking the same language as did her grandmother, though of course she was unable to reply. Conversation continued one-way until Orr hit upon the idea of asking his wife to translate their remarks into English, to which he replied in Norwegian Riksmål, the language of Oslo. The local newspaper heard of it and reported:

> A remarkable couple is visiting Norway. Mrs. Orr can understand Norwegian, but cannot talk the language. Dr. Orr can speak Norwegian, but does not understand what he says!

It was the beginning of many visits to Norway and the rest of Scandinavia, for Carol Orr had many cousins and a host of second cousins who overwhelmed their kinfolk from far away with a gracious hospitality. Edwin Orr conducted his preaching and teaching missions not only in the Baptist and other Free Church congregations but also in stately Lutheran churches of the Church of Norway, with episcopal goodwill and support. Half a dozen of his books were translated into the Scandinavian languages, and he lectured in many Scandinavian schools of higher learning. Norway held the place it had won in his heart.

In 1962, Edwin Orr visited Norway, Sweden and Denmark, accompanied by Mrs. Orr. His first campaign was conducted in the big State Church of Volda, a college town near which his saintly mother-in-law had been born. This was followed by a series likewise interdenominationally supported in the bigger town of Ålesund. This 1962 visit to Norway concluded with a meeting of clergy in Oslo presided over by the Bishop of Oslo. Orr also preached in his old haunts in Denmark and he lectured in four theological colleges in Sweden.

CHAPTER 6

TRAVELS IN EUROPE

When Edwin Orr told his friends that he was proposing to travel to Russia, they warned him against the dangers of going behind Stalin's iron curtain.[1] Soviet Russia was then in the throes of a purge which startled the world.

In Helsinki, capital of Finland, Orr met a Swedish-Finn who was part amused, part incredulous to hear that Orr was *en route* to Russia. He fixed Orr with a reproving stare and said:

"They will not let even one Bible into Russia, let alone one preacher!"

Orr replied that he was going just the same.

"Brother," said the Finn. "I have been in jail there, in Leningrad . . ."

"How did you get out?" asked Orr, innocently.

"The Swedish Consul got me out," he replied.

Edwin Orr explained that he felt guided of God to visit Russia, that he had travelled successfully thus far . . .

"Listen to me, Brother Orr," he interrupted. "You will never get in! You will never get in!! You will never get in!!!"

His way of dogmatizing his opinion with a descending pitch of voice made Orr laugh as he reiterated:

"The Lord will help me to get in!"

His only reply was:

"Brother Orr. You will never get in! You will never get in!! You will never get in!!!"

Orr's passport described him as an author. Although he did not possess either a return ticket or the funds to take him back to London, he was granted a visa as a journalist. Immediately Orr sought out the Swedish Finn at the Y.M.C.A.

"What do you think of that?" asked Orr.

"You will never get out! You will never get out!! You will never get out!!!" he retorted.

Other Scandinavian friends tried to dissuade Orr, even cabling

their warnings. His British friends did not even know of his plans to go.

When Edwin Orr arrived in Leningrad, the Intourist Bureau, in charge of tourist travel, made arrangements for him. In Leningrad and Moscow he made at least twenty excursions. He visited schools, baths, hospitals, factories and houses of rest in order that he might understand the social side of Russia, museums, churches and famous buildings so that he might know what religious and cultural conditions prevailed in the country.[2] He sought faithfully to follow the advice of a friend, a newspaper editor, "Observe well, record well."

Orr reckoned that there were 10,000,000 or so Evangelicals in Russia, of whom 5,000,000 were Baptists and affiliated groups. Reliable statistics were as difficult to get then as later.

> In another place, I went exploring on my own account. It was a Soviet working day, but our Sunday. At last, unexpectedly, I found a church. Not knowing whether it was Orthodox, Roman Catholic or Protestant, I went in. Immediately I felt the presence of the Holy Spirit in the meeting. I could scarcely understand a word, but my heart soon grasped the fact that these folk were members of my Father's family . . .[3] They kneeled to pray, and stood during the reading of the Word of God. Then followed a Communion Service (in which I joined) to show forth the Lord's death till He come. It brought tears to my eyes and a prayer to my lips. "Even so, come quickly, Lord Jesus."
>
> I introduced myself after the service. The pastor to whom I spoke understood German, then we found one who could speak English. They were frightened. "It is dangerous, dear brother," they said, "We are glad to see you, but—"

Orr told them of God's call; how he left home to encourage believers all over the world to pray for revival: how he had prayed that God would enable him to meet some of His own in Russia to whom he might pass on the same message with a word of cheer: how God had answered that prayer. His listeners were deeply moved. "Thank you for coming. It is indeed a miracle that you have come." He was given a message to deliver to their fellow Christians in other parts of the world.

"You may say that it is very difficult for us to be Christians.

We do not know what may happen next. Some have been sent away—and some have not come back. It is so impossible that we almost despair, but we are still holding on. We pray continually for revival. Take our love to every other congregation of the Lord's people. Ask them to pray for us."

A few kilometres west of the border of Estonia and Russia, Orr met a pastor who had heard him preach in Sweden.[4] Although Orr had only twenty-four hours to spare, the pastor notified his people of a special meeting to be held. An indefatigable Russian Christian went around the market place to pass on the news which brought a crowd to the place of worship.

The message was translated into Russian and through that medium the people were asked to share the burden of spiritual revival. The Holy Spirit moved the congregation and the direction of the meeting was taken out of the leaders' hands. A young Russian came to the platform to say:

"My heart was once warm towards God. I used to love the place of prayer. I used to love God's Word. But my love has grown cold. God has spoken to me in this meeting, and I have come to confess my great need."

Immediately the people were broken down. Only sobbing and earnest prayer could be heard. Many confessed failure and sought blessing. There came a change of atmosphere in the meeting as a note of triumph began to replace the tones of despair. Then praise ascended to God.

At the same time, a remarkable thing happened. Just before the meeting, the pastor had informed the evangelist that a church member lay dying in a near-by room. During the meeting, the sound of crying and confession reached his ears. When the meeting closed at 11 p.m., the pastor said:

"I feel that we ought to go and pray with the brother who is so ill."

When they reached the sick room, they found the "dying" man praising God and his nurse in tearful distress. The pastor was amazed. He asked some questions in Russian, then explained that, according to the sick man's story, his heart had been touched at the same time that the Spirit was outpoured in the meeting. He had confessed his need and had felt physical restoration immediately.

Edwin Orr was convinced that the religious persecution in Russia produced one good result.[5] Hypocrites, hangers-on, parasites and the like were swept out of the Church; political priest-craft had been destroyed; and the remaining believers who dared name the name of Christ were purified gold passed through refining fires. And this seemed true of former Orthodox and Roman Catholics. Robbed of their churches, deprived of pastors, often meeting in secret, they seemed to turn to treasured and guarded Holy Scriptures.

In view of the heroic defence of Russia by the Red Armies in the Second World War, it is interesting to read Orr's good impressions of Russian might.[6] In later years, Edwin Orr made very good use of the insight he had gained into the political and social and religious conditions of Russia. People in all parts of the world were eager to learn about Russia, available information being contradictory: some wrote glowingly about Russia while others painted a dark picture of conditions there. After the Second World War, when churchmen and regular tourists began to visit Russia in ever-increasing numbers, the reports brought back confirmed what Orr had observed twenty years before.

In Tallinn, capital of Estonia,[7] the secretary of the Bible Society made arrangements for Edwin Orr to preach, and in Riga, capital of Latvia, he addressed great crowds of up to 2,700.[8] Latvia at that time was experiencing a measure of revival, as evidenced by the reports of the work of visitors such as Oswald Smith and James Stewart.

In the big Agenskalna Church, Edwin Orr had "discerned a spirit of resistance to the message" and felt led to rebuke "someone" for secret sin. At the close of the meeting, Orr was asked to pray for a woman seeking healing. He found the woman doubled up on a seat, in great physical pain and distress, unable to move. He prayed for her. Then with much sobbing, she began to beseech the Lord to cleanse her heart from secret sin, crying out that she was not ready to die. The woman was so stricken that three people were needed to help her away. Orr was told later that this woman had deserted her husband to bring another man's children into the world. She received peace upon repentance.[9]

One may recall that when the Methodist Revival began in England in 1738, there were many such instances. People fell to the ground as though they had been given a sudden blow; they shouted in much agony; their bodies passed through many cruel and unseemly convulsions. Sometimes they continued thus for a number of hours. Their misery was followed by an immense joy that their burden of sin had been lifted and that they had found peace in God.

There was much controversy about the value of such experiences. John Wesley studied the many instances which came under his observation with genuine sympathy and careful criticism. After twenty years' observation and reflection, he wrote in his *Journal* on 25th November 1759:

> The danger was to regard extraordinary circumstances too much ... as if these were essential to the inward work, so that it could not go on without them. Perhaps the danger (now) is to regard them too little, to condemn them altogether, to imagine that they had nothing of God in them, and were a hindrance to His work. Whereas, the truth is, (1) God suddenly and strongly convinced many ... the natural consequence whereof were sudden outcries and strong bodily convulsions; (2) to strengthen and encourage them that believed, He favoured several of them with divine dreams ... (3) in some of these instances, after a time, nature mixed with grace; (4) Satan likewise mimicked this work of God, in order to discredit the whole work ... At first it was doubtless wholly from God. It is partly so at this day. And He will enable us to discern how far, in every case, the work is pure, and where it mixes or degenerates.

This sound and judicious summary holds true of Edwin Orr's experience in Riga and elsewhere, and is in keeping with his conclusions as a critical historian regarding such manifestations during the Great Revival of 1859 in his native Ireland.[10]

Edwin Orr crossed into Lithuania and Poland, visiting Germany, Holland and Belgium on the way back to England. His travels in northern Europe had occupied nine weeks. When he left for the Continent, he had not even one friend expecting him. No one arranged his meetings beforehand. He was wonder-

fully guided of God day by day. He spoke at fifty-four meetings, the audiences ranging from six people to 2,700. Twenty-two thousand people in all heard his message, and with 1,000 Christians individually given counsel, there were more than 100 conversions.[11]

In Paris, Orr was the guest of Jacques Blocher, a talented French Baptist leader who showed him both the beautiful face and the seamy side of the great capital city.[12]

In Switzerland, Edwin Orr felt guided to go and visit Frau Doktor Gertrud Wasserzug, wife of a retired missionary.[13] After paying his lodging in the Alpine town of Thun, he found that he had just enough money to take him one way to Beatenberg, high in the Swiss Alps. Supposing the lady was away? Supposing—? He found Dr. Wasserzug a woman of faith. She was encouraged by his visit, for just at that time she was beginning her chalet-school which grew into the great *Bibel Schule.*

Orr found something very fascinating about the River Danube, its 2,000 miles from source to mouth full of interest. Rising in the Black Forest in southern Germany, emptying its millions of gallons into the Black Sea, the Danube meanders through Czechoslovakia, Austria, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Rumania, and Edwin Orr followed its course, preaching all the way.

> The Blue Danube is an interesting, beautiful, fascinating and romantic river. After leaving the land of its origin, it washes the soil of six great countries whose total population is more than 50,000,000.
>
> Only a tiny fraction of these have ever heard the gospel of free salvation. The Blue Danube is a river of sadness.

The outstanding experience of Orr's Danubian travels came in Hungary.[14] In Budapest, he was the guest of Professor Ference Kiss, professor of anatomy in the University there. The Spirit of God was moving in Hungary, and a number of His servants were preparing the way for a movement of the Spirit, Captain Godfrey Buxton, Dr. Gertrud Wasserzug, the Rev. E. L. Langston as well as Edwin Orr being visitors with a message of revival. The main movement came shortly afterwards in the remarkable ministry of James Stewart, the young Glasgow

evangelist, which resulted in a great awakening that touched Reformed folk as well as Lutherans.

In Istanbul, Edwin Orr came into contact with an interesting group of believers who were passing through revival experiences. In *The Christian* of 4th July 1935, an American missionary, James K. Lyman, reported the details of Orr's work in the Turkish metropolis.[15]

Through the witness of a young Armenian named Vahram, a man of little education, forty or fifty young people had been converted. Orr found himself in their company.

> Four hours after my arrival in Constantinople, I had my first meeting. It was held in the large room of a private house, and there I first saw the eager faces of Vahram and company. They drained in every word I had to say. I spoke of sin as the hindrance to revival, and left the door open for results. The Holy Spirit took charge of the meeting. One after another, these young people arose and confessed their failure and shortcoming and sin. That they were in earnest no one can doubt. Many of those present were in tears, and so real was their penitence that a couple of the unconverted listeners were broken down also, and made a public decision for Christ.[16]

Vahram followed Orr home, wanting to ask a few questions about full surrender and the fullness of the Spirit. He then presented the questions with which he had challenged his friends, and when Orr explained some points, he asked more.

"Are you willing to surrender your life to God, and to be filled with His Spirit? If God were to order you to go far away, would you be willing?"

"I am willing to die," said Vahram, earnestly.

Such an assertion might sound sentimental in the ears of English-speaking Christians, so it should be added that relatives and friends of Vahram and company had been cruelly butchered for their faith during the Armenian massacres.

They got to their knees, Vahram in deepest emotion. Orr prayed that God would give him the great blessing that he sought. Then, in simple faith, Vahram returned thanks to God for the gift.

Next night, Monday, the people had to move to a larger

room for their meeting. It was packed full, the bedroom adjoining being used also to accommodate the people.

Again, Orr had great liberty in speaking and again the Holy Spirit's power was manifest in the meeting. Vahram rose to his feet to state that God had revealed to him that in the past he had been harsh and critical in his judgement of other Christians and that his hardness of heart had been a hindrance. Some of those present had previously been offended by Vahram's zeal, and it was their turn to be broken down. Again came the unusual confessions of sin, and again sinners were converted to God. At a late hour, Edwin Orr shook hands with all the people and said good-bye, fully expecting to leave by steamer on the morrow.[17]

Much to his annoyance, Orr was unexpectedly delayed by Customs and passport regulations. He was able thus to meet the same group in four other meetings. Forty people made profession of faith and more than 100 sought victory in their Christian living. Most of these friends were of the Armenian Gregorian Church.

Orr had been told that the fourth class (deck) passage by steamer was £12 Turkish.[18] He prayed in secret for that amount. Unknown to him, the Istanbul friends took up an offering, which to his surprise amounted to £22. Orr was already on board the ship sailing down the Bosphorus when he discovered that the agents had made a mistake in quoting £12. The fare to Athens fourth class proved to be £21, 50 piastres. The extra fifty piastres Orr converted to Greek drachmae.

Paul Yphantides, pastor of a Greek Evangelical Church in Piraeus, had been taken ill and badly needed someone to take his Sunday services both morning and evening. He therefore turned over the opportunity to the young stranger who arrived from Turkey.[19]

It was a hot mid-summer day and the doors and windows of the church were wide open. Orr was speaking by interpretation when a stranger came into the church and up the aisle towards him, gesticulating with a dagger. The interpreter left off interpreting and talked in Greek to the man—at least, it was Greek to Orr. Then a remarkable story was told: the man had been lying in wait to kill the alienator of his wife's affections; being nervous, he had been walking up and down until

he heard the foreign voice, so he stopped to listen. Soon he was under deep conviction of sin; Orr conducted a three-way personal talk with him in the hearing of the whole congregation, whereupon he finally professed to repent and turn to Christ. Twenty-nine others followed suit.[20]

From Athens to Haifa, Edwin Orr travelled by deck passage. In reaching Palestine, he realized a long-felt ambition. From childhood, the Bible had been the family book. He became eager to see for himself the Land of the Book, its towns and villages, its rivers and mountains, the people from whom had sprung the stern law-givers, the fiery prophets and the sweet singers of Israel.

> This pilgrimage to Palestine was one of the great desires of my heart. As a boy, I used to read travel books galore, secretly vowing that when I became a rich man I would travel. Strange, is it not? I did not commence travelling until, giving up all prospects of business success, I became a poor man for the Lord's sake.[21]

Likewise I recall the immense joy I had when I spent two months in Palestine in 1922, when Orr was a child of ten. I had been studying the Bible for seven years in theological colleges in Europe and America. My stay in Palestine came as a wonderful climax to this study. It gave me a vivid idea of the land where the Bible had been written and the people whom God had used to write it. I realized how God had chosen a barren and rocky land so as to give His people a most hardy and austere training for their great mission to the world.

Edwin Orr spent only a week in Palestine; but it was a busy week. Palestine is a small country and he was able to see much of it in that short week. His impressions were frank:

> The spiritual state of Jerusalem is a tragedy. Religion among the Latins, Greeks and Eastern churches is a farce—such a farce that one can attribute the hardness of the Moslems to it. Evangelical witness is almost entirely spoiled by reason of the great number of "cranks" in the city. There are no less than eighty sects to add to the confusion, and ever so many "queer birds" who imagine that they are Elijahs and Messiahs and so forth . . .[22]

In the social life of Jerusalem, Edwin Orr met interesting

people such as the Bishop in Jerusalem, and Sir Flinders Petrie, the famous archaeologist. He was staying with the manager of the leading bank in Jerusalem, Mr. Stanley Clark—a strange place to stay for a poor man until one learns that Stanley Clark was a devoted Christian among the Brethren, as careful to seek God's guidance as was his guest.

A Brethren evangelist showed Orr the sights of Jerusalem, taking him first to the Garden Tomb which appealed to Orr as being the place of the true Calvary rather than the ornate Church of the Holy Sepulchre. They viewed the Place of the Skull and then entered the tomb itself. The two evangelists kneeled down to pray in the sacred spot, praying for one another and for a revival of true faith throughout the whole world.

In a church in the Street of the Prophets, Orr addressed a large meeting which proved responsive to his message.[23] A Jewish lady present in the meeting approached the evangelist and suggested a talk about her spiritual welfare. Eight o'clock next morning they met with a couple of friends. It was a new experience for Orr to take the Old Testament alone and from it preach the Messiah.

"I have been in Palestine for twenty years," said the lady, "and never heard of these things."

A couple of Hebrew Christians who had dropped in told the Jewish lady of the way in which they had been converted. All these factors combined to make a deep impression. Joy came to all their hearts when, after each had prayed in turn, they heard the seeking woman say:

"O God, I pray Thee, give me this change of heart. I believe in Jesus, so help me never to sin any more."

From Haifa to Brindisi, Orr travelled by ship. He spent little time in Naples and Rome, Spezia and Genoa, crossing southern France to Spain. He was robbed in Madrid, and spent his first night there sleeping on a park bench, yet, such being the way of walking with God, he preached next day for a congregation of evangelical Christians.[24]

In Lisbon, Edwin Orr met in prison the noted swindler Alves Reis.[25] Alves Reis, as a few may remember, was the Portuguese engineer who had persuaded a British firm of banknote printers to print in good faith 500-escudo banknotes to the value of

£5,000,000. This money he began to use, establishing his own bank for the development of Angola. Full of ambitious schemes, he appeared to be a financial wizard whose aptitude for handling money might have made him famous if it had been in legitimate channels. For a while, he pursued a successful game of bluff.

At last, a flaw appeared. Alves Reis was held, cross-questioned, but lied so cleverly and laid his plots so deeply that he implicated men of highest standing in commerce and government. For four years, he managed to keep his trial postponed, using every loophole in Portuguese law.

But the way of transgressors is hard. Alves Reis tried to commit suicide and lay between life and death. Another prisoner afterwards lent him a Bible which he read solely for the purpose of ridicule. Instead the sword of the Spirit wounded him. He came under conviction of sin. The most natural thing for him to do was to send for a priest, which he did. Then he made a public confession, making a clean breast of his crimes before a court which of course condemned him.[26]

In the meantime, after his conversion, he continued in the Church of Rome. He had been very successful in condemning himself but failed to clear other innocent dupes. Burdened, he began to study the Bible for relief of soul. Through an evangelical tract he came into touch with other believers and finally abandoned the Roman faith.

Alves Reis was sentenced to twenty-eight years in prison, a special act of legislation being passed to make his sentence trebly severe. One of his innocent dupes was converted through his witness in prison, and later laboured as an evangelist in northern Portugal. Edwin Orr continued his fellowship with Reis by letter for many years.

Edwin Orr's European journeys showed his intense preoccupation with spiritual revival in the Church. Here and there, he participated in local, limited awakenings—movements that were profound in their effect upon the lives of groups and congregations.

His travels were also having an effect upon himself. Edwin Orr was a good traveller. He had read many books of travel, even to the Travels of Sven Hedin in Central Asia. In his teens, he had devoured every book of travel he could find. In this

way, he learned to describe attractively his experiences as a traveller. Into the bargain, he learned to observe well and to describe faithfully what he saw. He could tell a story; he knew what drama to put in and what trivia to leave out. His books were full of Irish humour. People enjoy reading about other countries, the strange folk living in them, their manners and customs. So his tales of travel gained immediate popularity.

His series of books about his experiences were read by the tens of thousands of people. Often a man cultivates his literary ability in the quiet of his study: it may be that some of his manuscripts never see the light of print! That was not how Edwin Orr developed as a writer. As a football player improves his skill by playing in matches watched by thousands of spectators, Edwin Orr grew to be an attractive author by writing from his twenty-second year books which were immediately published in large editions. There were tens of thousands of readers in all parts of the world who followed with interest the growth of this promising young man. They read his books and persuaded their friends to read them. The toil involved in writing them was the hard way by which Orr grew. It took the place of the college life which is normally the lot of most clever boys. This is how the Lord led him into pastures new and strange. Years later, Orr was mildly embarrassed by the immaturities of his journalistic style, but he saw that one could not expect otherwise at that age.

Edwin Orr learned new languages. He used to say, when people asked him how many languages he spoke, "one and a half" and add that the half was comprised of smatterings of half a dozen dialects. While his knowledge of languages may not have been advanced, he took great pleasure in making himself understood to people who spoke in a foreign tongue.

Orr did not know it himself, but when he set out on the third stage of his world travels, he was partly equipped for a new development in which, at the bottom of the spiritual depression which matched the economic depression, he addressed crowds of a thousand, five thousand, ten thousand in the great English speaking countries around the world. His apprenticeship was ending.

CHAPTER 7

TIMES OF REFRESHING

On the 28th of September 1935, Edwin Orr sailed on the ship *Newfoundland* for Canada. There arose a terrific storm and the westering ship rolled and tossed on the wild seas of the North Atlantic. Most of the passengers did not leave their cabins in such stormy weather, and Orr himself remained for two whole days within his cabin. "I spent the time sleeping, reading, eating, praying, thinking—chiefly thinking."[1]

Exactly two years before on 28th September 1933 he had begun his ministry for the cause of Revival. God had wonderfully provided numerous opportunities for service in Great Britain and on the continent of Europe. Now he was going much farther to preach the Good News.

His arrival in North America proved to be the opening of a remarkable new chapter in his own ministry for God. The door opened wide to let him speak to thousands of people where hitherto he had been addressing hundreds.[2]

And not only did he preach to as many as ten thousand people under one roof but he soon was privileged to preach in some of the more famous churches of Canada and the United States, such as The Peoples Church in Toronto and St. John's Cathedral in Saskatoon and in the great Moody Church in Chicago and in denominational churches of every type from Seattle to Jacksonville, from Los Angeles to Boston.

These were days of both economic and spiritual depression, when there was much distress among the people and great discouragement in all the churches. Orr's ministry reached nothing of the proportions evidenced in the Awakening of the mid-Twentieth Century, but it was fruitful everywhere —times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.

Before he left London, Orr had received a letter from the Rev. Oswald Smith inviting him to hold a series of meetings in The Peoples Church in Toronto. While visiting Latvia, he

had heard about Oswald Smith and the excellent missionary work which he promoted there.

Oswald Smith believed intensely in Revival, and had earlier written a book with the title: *The Revival We Need.* A copy of Edwin Orr's book *Can God—?* had been sent as an anonymous gift by an interested friend to Mr. Smith; this in turn led to the invitation to Orr to hold a campaign in The Peoples Church.[3]

The meetings went on for two weeks. Edwin Orr spoke on such subjects as *Past Revivals, the Need of Revival, Hindrances to Revival, Victory over Sin, Full Surrender, The Filling of the Spirit and the Secret of Abiding.* The Holy Spirit blessed the preaching.

In one of the after-meetings in the Church, a crowd of three hundred people stayed behind, confessed their sins with tears and surrendered themselves to God. The crowds were increasing and after two weeks it became necessary to move to the Massey Hall to accommodate three thousand people.[4] Oswald Smith announced the farewell night as an "Irish Night". He challenged the meeting:

"All of you who were born in Ireland and proud of it, stand up." A thousand people stood up.

"Well, what do you think of that?" (Laughter).

"And now, all who are of Irish parentage, stand up." Another thousand rose to their feet, leaving a thousand sitting and looking ashamed of themselves. Oswald Smith turned to Orr:

"Well, Brother Orr—you aren't the only Irishman in Toronto."

The addresses were broadcast and thousands of people were reached in that way. Some of the folk who listened to him on the radio professed lasting conversion.[5]

Toronto people proved very hospitable. Orr was continually invited out for meals. One complaint he had to make. Canadians regarded as a great delicacy pumpkin pie. They offered it to him in every home he visited and for every meal. He wrote:

"And so it was—I had pumpkin pie for lunch, dinner, supper. It even haunted my dreams. Of course, the first time it was delicious; the second time it was fine; the third time it was very nice; the fourth time, it was good; the fifth time, it was all right; the sixth time, it was not so bad; the seventh time,

it was pumpkin pie: the sixteenth time—what more shall I say? If it had not been for the lovely people who produced it . . ."

A minister from another city wrote regarding arrangements, and asked some questions about Orr's services. He must have received a mild surprise when Orr telegraphed via Canadian Pacific "No pumpkin pie!"[6]

Oswald Smith reported the meetings thus:[7]

> What times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. It is surely heaven on earth . . . a spirit of revival permeates every service . . . Orr, unlike many preachers and evangelists, makes the application throughout—drives home his points one after the other, and does not tack on the application at the end. He speaks of the sins of gossip, dishonesty, prayerlessness, unbelief, impurity, criticism, etc. . . . being not only scholarly but logical in presentation of truth. The after-meetings are becoming so large that it is necessary to stay in the main auditorium. Very few leave . . . the people desirous of spiritual blessing being in no hurry to go home. The message is clearly Keswick teaching which has been such a blessing to untold thousands. Mr. Orr's diction is almost perfect, and he has an unusual vocabulary.

* * *

Five years later, Orr returned to Toronto to serve for some time as the associate pastor of The Peoples Church.[8]

* * *

A lady in Hamilton had been sitting on a park bench reading aloud to a companion from Orr's book, *Can God—?* A man who had seated himself at the other end of the bench began to fidget, so the lady said to him apologetically:

"If this reading is annoying to you, I'll stop."

"To tell the truth, Madam," he replied, "I was going to ask you if I might sit beside you while you read more."

Before very long, the man was brought to faith in Christ. When the lady travelled to Toronto to tell Edwin Orr about it, she pressed him to consider visiting her home city. And so he did.

After a preaching series in Winnipeg, Edwin Orr travelled west to Saskatoon at the invitation of Principal Haslam of Emmanuel College. He stayed at the college and preached in the Anglican churches. He donned cassock and surplice and preached in the Cathedral of St. John's.[9]

From Saskatchewan, the evangelist proceeded to Alberta and arrived unheralded in Edmonton. Before long, he was sharing the platform of a big rally with the Prime Minister of Alberta, the Honorable William Aberhart. Orr preached in Calgary, then crossed the Canadian Rockies whose magnificence made a lasting impression on him.

His final meetings were held in Vancouver and Victoria in British Columbia. He had arrived in Newfoundland two months before and had preached in the Maritimes and each other Canadian province.

Early in December, Edwin Orr crossed the border into the State of Washington and so began a tour of all the States of the American Union which occupied the next hundred days.[10] He began a series in Seattle of which Abraham Vereide, executive director of International Christian Leadership, wrote ten years later:

> It was our privilege to have Edwin Orr with us in Seattle in the winter of '35, speaking at the Metropolitan Theater, the largest downtown theater, which was filled each noon, messages being broadcast throughout the Pacific Northwest. He addressed various union services throughout the city and surrounding territory at night or business executives at breakfast groups. He was the vehicle of the Holy Spirit and scores of people were converted under his ministry, and many Christians led to a consecrated life. He was also instrumental in leading business executives to Christ, among whom was a prominent rich young man. There was an amazing spiritual upsurge throughout his ministry.[11]

This was the beginning of a life-long friendship with Dr. Vereide and a life-long association with International Christian Leadership.

Not only were people converted in Orr's Seattle meetings, but in his everyday personal contacts. He had asked his host, Dr. N. A. Jepson, to secure the services of a stenographer,

who turned out to be a clever, talented and intellectual young lady who was obviously unconverted.

Wrote the evangelist:[12]

"I did not feel very joyous over the prospect of asking a non-Christian girl to co-operate with me in the Lord's work. While I was thinking it over a quiet whisper came to me. 'Your first duty is to lead her to Christ.' "

Orr broke a rule of procedure and asked his secretary to lunch, hoping for an opportunity to discuss things spiritual with her. He heard her difficulties, concentrated on the necessity of a personal experience of God's saving grace, and saw a remarkable answer to prayer.

" 'But, Mr. Orr, you seem to get your prayers answered. Mine go unanswered, although I pray as a child of God.'

" 'And when did you become a child of God? When were you born into God's family? When did you realize the fact of your salvation?' "

That evening Dr. Jepson asked Orr: "What happened to that stenographer of yours? She phoned me, and she seemed to be in tears as she told me that she had accepted God's gift of salvation."

Edwin Orr spent four days in Minneapolis. He spoke morning and evening on a Sunday in the First Baptist Church, seating three thousand.

Most of his meetings in the Chicago area were held in the great Moody Church, of which Dr. H. A. Ironside was the pastor. Dr. Ironside reported in his church magazine:[13]

> It seems that God has particularly chosen him for three reasons: First, to exemplify in actual experience the reality of the presence and the power of God with the believer who is willing to trust Him implicitly and to fellowship with Him from day to day. Second, to urge the saints of God wherever found to forget their differences and unite in one great appeal to Almighty God for a Heaven-sent revival. Third, to call upon individual Christians to confess their sins and to pray that the long-sought-for awakening might "begin in me".

The young Irishman preached to four thousand people in the Moody Church, and three weeks later he reached his greatest

audience preaching to ten thousand in the Chicago Coliseum under the auspices of the Christian Business Men's Committee.[14]

Edwin Orr was always anxious to work among men of all races with their different backgrounds and temperaments. He gladly accepted an invitation to conduct a meeting for the coloured people in Detroit. In England he had often heard Negro spirituals. He had sung them himself with real feeling. Now in America he heard the Negroes sing their touching songs.

Orr could not readily forget the meeting that he had one afternoon with the coloured folk. The room arranged for them was overcrowded, so he moved to the main church hall, which was rather cold. It was his first meeting with coloured folk.[15] At his special request they sang some spiritual songs, making great melody in their hearts to the Lord. Orr spoke that day on "Ye are not your own, ye were bought with a price", taking first as subject the price that our Blessed Redeemer paid with His own Blood on Calvary, tears began to stream down from many eyes. Some of them began to sob. Orr was interrupted by a baritone singing with the people responding:

"Were you dere when dey crucified my Lawd? were you dere?
Were you dere when dey crucified my Lawd?
Oh, oh, o-oh. Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble;
Were you dere when dey crucified my Lawd?"

"I found it necessary to use my handkerchief, and looking around I saw scarcely a dry eye," Orr said. "One visitor was sobbing as if his heart would break. That song made the crucifixion real to us."

They took up the second verse. "Were you dere when dey nailed Him to the Cross?" Some cried and sang alternately. One big fellow began to cry out loudly, "Oh my soul. Oh my soul. Oh my soul." Many were the decisions made.

It was not until World War II that Orr came into close contact with American Negroes again. His native city, Belfast, had half a million people and no racial prejudice, so happily he possessed none. He went out of his way to minister to the Negro soldiers in the American services.

At our first meeting, I looked around the sea of faces

black faces, brown faces, nearly-white faces, and the first thought that struck me was that probably they were as curious about me as I was about them.[16]

Instead of introducing himself, he sang out in the baritone part of a negro spiritual—and back rolled the full chorus of blended voices. Homesick conscripts enjoyed the concert of praise and enthusiasm became so intense that they refused to conclude the meeting. Sunday attendances then jumped from a full chapel to a full tent to more than a thousand men in the open air, all this in addition to attendance of air cadets.

Orr sought out opportunities of ministering to American Negroes in combat and got the same sort of response. Orr stated bluntly that the policy of segregation then prevailing in the American Army was unwise. It was abolished after World War II. Orr recognized that many of the American Negroes were of low educational and cultural standards but the presence of highly educated, highly cultured men among them indicated the real truth. He saw them as different but fraternal comrades.

Orr's American journey took him across the Rockies to Los Angeles, where Dr. Paul Rood as President of the Bible Institute of Los Angeles reported a considerable stirring. Orr moved from California to Texas and spent some time ministering in the South.

In Atlanta, the Irishman preached for a Scot who was minister of Westminster Presbyterian Church and who reported the visit thus:[17]

> We had the pleasure and privilege of having Mr. J. Edwin Orr occupy our pulpit on Sunday night. An attendance of about four hundred and fifty people were very much thrilled by Mr. Orr's message, and already I can see the results of the heart-searching and the inspiration he brought. Men like Orr who have a message as worth while will always be welcome.

Westminster's pastor was destined to become far-famed as a preacher, for the same man Peter Marshall became chaplain of the United States Senate in Washington, where Orr encountered him next time. His was a powerful ministry, and his untimely death did not terminate it.

The published accounts of Edwin Orr's first North American

journey reported instance after instance of the confessing of sins so typical of revival movements. Orr did not encourage indiscriminate confession of sin in public, but urged his hearers to put things right where necessary—secretly, privately or publicly as required.

The local awakening at Columbia Bible College in South Carolina demonstrated Orr's objective in preaching the confession of sins where necessary:[18]

> We have been singing of the "marvellous grace of our loving Lord, grace that exceeds our sin and our guilt"—thank God for that. Once I stood on the north coast of Ireland and gazed across the rolling waters of the Atlantic Ocean. In my hand was a huge rock, as big as I could carry—a heavy burden, more than I could bear. I pitched that rock over the cliff into the water. I did not see it again. It was big to me, but it was not too big for the Atlantic Ocean to cover. You are standing on the edge of the ocean of God's grace. In your hand is the burden of your sin—more than you can carry, greater than you can bear. Pitch it into the ocean. It seems big to you, but it is not too big for the vast ocean of God's grace.

Orr's journeys took him to the Middle Atlantic States and New England. A quarter of a century later there were middle-aged people who clearly remembered the impact of those meetings, even though the visiting evangelist preached at single meetings far apart. The minister of a popular Presbyterian Church in central Phildaelphia gave a glimpse of Orr's ministry in 1936:[19]

> The service was announced to begin at 8 p.m. and I was amazed to learn that our auditorium was filled at seven. So I called a friend and had him rush to the church with his amplifying system, to make it possible for people to hear in the Sunday School auditorium. It was estimated that there were at least two thousand persons crowded into the church and hundreds turned away. All available space was taken.
>
> I wish we could broadcast to the whole world what we experienced and saw in that service. The God-given message pierced to the heart. Christians and unsaved alike were convicted of sin. Hard hearts were broken; cold hearts were

melted; tears flowed; sins were confessed; and there followed forgiveness and peace and joy as hearts were filled with the Holy Spirit. I cannot say how many, but I know that a number of souls were saved; and I am sure that hundreds of God's children received a filling of God's Spirit. The service lasted till midnight.

Many men prominent in evangelistic and missionary endeavour were moved in those meetings—the evangelist Phil Saint in Philadelphia and a young man named Jack Wyrtzen moved in similar ways in Long Island.

By the time that his tour ended in Florida, Edwin Orr had had a strenuous time.[20] He had visited every one of the then forty-eight states. He had worked fourteen hours a day, seeking to spend an hour in prayer besides reading four chapters of the Bible every day. For a hundred days he had been preaching an average of two addresses daily. One who had taught thousands of people had himself to learn. That was why he yielded to the urge to pray regularly and to read the Scriptures devoutly.

In May 1936 was published a book recording his work in the United States, *This Is the Victory*. It was written immediately after the events described, when his memory was fresh and clear. One thing which attracted his readers was no doubt his candid writing. He wrote about his own failures as well as his successes. He explained how he steadily learned from experience. He repeated frankly the criticisms which were made of his ministry—that he lived by his wits, that he earned too much money for a young man, that he was an impostor, and that he had a huge bank balance in London. None of these things were true, he said, and explained that he contributed to the support of his widowed mother and used royalties to support missionary causes.[21]

In 1950, the *Sunday School Times* of Philadelphia published an editorial on the Awakening which was then manifesting itself in the United States at the mid-century. As a factor, it cited "the remarkable ministry of Dr. J. Edwin Orr" back in the thirties as well as in the late forties. Considerable space is given this factor in the survey books published by both Gingrich and Hoffman on American Revivals.[22]

CHAPTER 8

UNDER THE SOUTHERN CROSS

At Eastertime in 1936, the Rev. A. S. Wilson, well-known devotional speaker and writer, cabled the religious press in London to announce that an extraordinary local revival had begun during Orr's ministry at the Easter Keswick at Ngaruawahia and other camps in New Zealand, with hundreds of people publicly confessing sin and scores professing conversion during sanely intense meetings of tireless crowds.[1]

Ngaruawahia is a little Maori town where two rivers meet, the name is Maori meaning "meeting of the waters". For many years, Easter Keswick Conventions were held there, the work having begun through the efforts of Mr. Bruce Scott, a lawyer in Auckland. A mild autumn with warm sunshine was beginning, and as most of those attending were young folk they preferred camping under canvas.

We turn to an account of that 1936 Ngaruawahia awakening written by the present General Director of the China Inland Mission, J. Oswald Sanders, published in *The Reaper* in 1936:[2]

> For some time before Easter, a spirit of unusual expectancy had been kindled in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, but the reality greatly exceeded the expectation. Those of us who were responsible for the conduct of the camp had the joy of sitting back and seeing God work in a sovereign way. We were as men that dreamed.

Charles Rolls and Edwin Orr were the main speakers that year and attendances at the Camp reached a record mark of 1,250.[3]

> The meetings proceeded in orderly fashion throughout the Friday, and most retired at about 10 o'clock for a much-needed rest. But in the Men's Camp at least rest was out of the question. In one tent, several men who had been revived in soul before Camp gathered for prayer and were visited by Mr. Orr. It was not long before other tents were

being visited by these enthusiasts and soon a meeting was in full swing in the big marquee. A real breaking down commenced among the young men present. Tears flowed, sins were confessed and reconciliations effected. The meeting did not conclude until 1.30 a.m., with songs of praise. Some began to complain, but the next night they were doing the same things . . .

Shall we ever forget that (Saturday) evening meeting? Orr spoke in restrained yet searching terms on Hindrance to Revival, and the searchlight of God's Word penetrated every heart. Secret sin, prayerlessness, criticism, lack of love and unbelief were named as hindrances. As soon as opportunity was given, many rose and confessed the sins of which the Spirit had convicted them and from which they sought cleansing and deliverance . . .

Mr. Sanders was deputed to take charge of the meeting for those who had so risen and adjourned with them to another large tent.[4]

What a scene that dining marquee presented, a scene such as we read of but are seldom privileged to see. Young and old flocked in and knelt quietly at tables with bowed heads, many with tears flowing, until some one hundred and fifty had gathered. They were encouraged to confess their sin to God in prayer and to receive the forgiveness and cleansing promised (1 John i. 9). The tent was filled with the voice of prayer as a dozen or more prayed in subdued tones at the same time. Each seemed totally oblivious of the other, anxious only to lose a burden of sin. As they got through to victory, they quietly returned to the large marquee where similar scenes were in progress.

At ten, all assembled in the marquee for a service of praise. With exultant joy, hymns and choruses of praise and rejoicing were sung until the whole township rang and rang again. At midnight, the young men were still singing, and I went in to persuade them to go to bed. "We have a heavy programme tomorrow, so you should go to bed now," I began. "It's not tomorrow, it's today," a youth replied.

Mr. Sanders reported that while this work was going on among the Christians, many unconverted were being won to

Christ. Two Chinese who could not speak English were led to Christ through an interpreted conversation. Sunday morning was devoted to teaching, but a gospel address in the evening added numerous inquirers for counsel. At eleven p.m., the large marquee was still full and at midnight the people retired reluctantly. Mr. Sanders reported the final meeting thus:[5]

> Perhaps the outstanding meeting of the whole Camp was the final Testimony Meeting, commencing about 6.30 p.m. although many had gathered before that. When it was announced that all who desired to testify must come up to the platform and speak through the amplifier, it was thought that few would face the ordeal. From the very first moment however, the platform was crowded and sometimes the aisle too, with those eager to tell of blessing received. As it neared ten o'clock, and the meeting had been going on for nearly four hours, an endeavour was made to close, but young folks jumped from their seats and literally ran down the aisle lest they should miss opportunity . . .
>
> Once again, midnight was drawing near when the meeting concluded with singing such as one expects to hear in heaven.

Mr. Sanders commented that there were many remarkable features about the movement. There was great spontaneity and freedom, and yet no extravagance. In spite of consistently late nights and long meetings, campers did not seem unduly tired. While there was no great wave of emotionalism, a subdued but contagious holy joy was in the air. Twenty years later, Christians were still talking about the movement which Mr. Sanders did not hesitate to describe as "Revival at Ngaruawahia". Many were those whose lives had been impressed by the work of the Holy Spirit therein.

The news of the Ngaruawahia Revival spread rapidly through New Zealand and opened many doors of service for Edwin Orr. In succession he engaged in campaigns in Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin and Auckland as well as single meetings in the smaller towns.[6]

One Sunday afternoon found Edwin Orr in the Wellington Town Hall speaking on the subject of "Adventures in Soviet Russia and Why I am a Revolutionist," one of his dodges for

luring the unconverted to meetings. A crowd of Communists turned up and it appeared that they would try to spoil the meeting. To avoid heckling, Orr began:

"It gives me much pleasure to speak to such a well-mixed crowd. We have Anglicans here, Baptists, Presbyterians, Methodists, Brethren—and also agnostics, Communists and plain-clothes policemen."

Even the Communists laughed at the gentle warning, and Orr went on to say that he was glad that the Communists present were not rude and rowdy types but rather intellectual persons. So, knowing that they were people of good taste and intelligence, Orr said that he felt assured that they would not interrupt in the vulgar way but instead write questions on slips of paper. Two thousand five hundred attended the meeting and Orr both answered questions and preached the gospel with great liberty. Charles Willcox, later known as a local builder and Brethren overseer, was converted during the Wellington visit.

The Rev. A. S. Wilson cabled from Auckland:[7]

> Edwin Orr's wonderful five weeks' tour of a hundred meetings culminated in twice packing Auckland Town Hall with three thousand on Sunday. Thousands of New Zealand Christians revived, backsliders restored, over four hundred public decisions. Impressive ministers and leaders, gatherings in Christchurch, Dunedin and Auckland with decided foretastes of far reaching awakening. Country prayer groups multiplying spontaneously and a rising tide of blessing.

Did Orr's meetings in New Zealand in 1936 produce any lasting results? The New Zealand Challenge, twenty years later, in its survey of evangelism in that country noted lasting results and cited instances of well-known converts then engaged in Christian work.[8] These facts spoke for themselves.

Another generation of young people had grown up, but in 1956 there were numerous Christian workers of about forty years old or so who had entered upon Christian service at Ngaruawahia or other meetings during and after Easter 1936. It was a breath of the Spirit.

These manifestations of revival in New Zealand did not constitute anything resembling a national awakening of the

type of the Welsh Revival, but they were part of a movement which was felt all over the North and South Islands. It was truly a general movement of all denominations.

Though a convinced evangelical, Orr tried to understand the difficulties of the modernists and to be of help to them. In Dunedin, he addressed a joint luncheon meeting of the Bible League and the Council of Religious Congregations, seventy people attending, representing all shades of theological opinion from modernist to fundamentalist.[9] There were Anglican clergy, ministers and officers from the various denominations and Brethren oversight. Orr concentrated upon the spiritual message, stressing hindrances among Christian workers, including the unbelief of the modernist (who calls it intellectual difficulty) and the unbelief of the fundamentalist (who pays only lip-service). There was an immediate response, as modernists confessed unbelief and fundamentalists cried out for a baptism of love.

In the concluding meeting in Auckland Town Hall, Robert A. Laidlaw gave a public appeal at the conclusion of Orr's address, and forty were counselled in the inquiry room. Up until that time, Edwin Orr had regarded his ministry as being directed to believers only, preaching revival and letting other Christians better equipped do the reaping. Aboard the ship for Sydney, Orr prayerfully revised his ideas and asked the Lord to set His seal upon his resolution by giving 100 professions of faith a week in Australia.

There were more than 1,200 who made public profession of faith in Christ in the six weeks that Orr spent in Australia, and there were ten times that number of Christians who publicly avowed a decisive dedication of heart and life. Edwin Orr preached on an average twenty times a week, provoking the Marechale (eldest daughter of General Booth) to warn him that "the Lord has a good, young, willing horse, but don't let the devil drive it to death".

News of the blessing in New Zealand prepared the way for Orr's series of meetings in Australia. His first meeting was one for professional people in Sydney, a meeting so overflowing with blessing that a future Anglican bishop, Stephen Bradley,[10] recalled it with enthusiasm as a landmark in the spiritual life

of his immediate group of Christians. The second meeting likewise bore blessing, held in the church of Dr. C. J. Tinsley, later President-General of the Australian Baptists who presided at the Baptist World Alliance assembly in Copenhagen. Of the third meeting, held for welcoming clergy and ministers, a Methodist minister declared that he had seen nothing like it for thirty-five years and *The Methodist* in describing the results said "What followed is too sacred to unveil in detail."

Dr. J. J. Kitchen, Australasian Director of the China Inland Mission, cabled London to report that a local awakening in Melbourne during Edwin Orr's ministry had brought an aggregate attendance of 20,000 in five days, necessitating the hiring of the Olympia Stadium, with many ministers quickened, believers revived and more than 200 others professing faith in Christ.[11]

Similar cables described similar stirrings in the Australian capital cities of Brisbane, Adelaide, Hobart and Perth. The senior Methodist minister in Fremantle reported an overflowing meeting of 600 people in which 300 made a full surrender to God and 77 inquirers sought counsel.[12]

Two years later, Edwin Orr returned to the Australian Continent with a team of evangelists, including Stanley Donnan, Brinley Evans and the Chinese revivalist Andrew Gih. This time they left the main eastern cities to the ministry of Dr. Oswald J. Smith, while they concentrated on the needier smaller towns. There were about 2,000 professions of faith in fifty campaigns.

It is a commentary upon the need of country towns in Australia to notice that, of the total of fifty campaigns, thirty came as the first united evangelistic campaign in the history of the town, and fifteen of these proved to be the first gospel campaign of any kind ever remembered.[13]

It was most encouraging for Orr to encounter many people who had been helped in his earlier series in 1936, scattered from Fremantle all the way to Brisbane. It is always a thrill for a man of God to meet converts in after years. It was even more gratifying not to meet certain converts because they had already left for overseas service on the mission field, but took the trouble to send greetings through relatives and friends. It

was just as encouraging to find united prayer meetings in capital cities begun in the 1936 series still going on in blessing.

The 1938 campaigns in Australia came to an end. The Revival Fellowship Team had had a strenuous tour. They had travelled 100,000 miles to reach Australia, and another 100,000 miles in Australia itself. The Team had enjoyed internal harmony. But more than a dozen years later, Edwin Orr confessed that the tour was not the success that he had planned. He blamed that partly on his attempting things in his own strength, and partly upon some hidden scandal in the life of auxiliary workers. In fact, Orr called it "a time of eclipse".[14]

In 1956 and 1957, an interdenominational team of evangelists visited New Zealand and Australia.[15] It was comprised of Mr. and Mrs. Robert B. Doing, Anglicans; Dr. and Mrs. J. Edwin Orr, Baptists; Mr. and Mrs. Max H. Bushby, Methodists; and the Reverend and Mrs. William A. Dunlap, Presbyterians, together with Miss Corrie ten Boom, a Dutch Reformed lay-worker, world-famed speaker and writer.

Much post-war apathy lingered in New Zealand when the team began its labours in Auckland for four denominational ministers supported by a few laymen. The campaign began in the Auckland Baptist Tabernacle and concluded in the Auckland Town Hall, bringing a measure of revival and a number of conversions plus gratifying goodwill.

Half the churches of Christchurch supported the Team effort there and the inter-church co-operation continued for years. Two-thirds of all the churches of Dunedin backed the inter-denominational teaching mission, the main meetings of which were held in the historic First Church, the cathedral of Presbyterianism in New Zealand. Team members conducted meetings in the Anglican Cathedral and Baptist, Church of Christ and Methodist churches in the city and suburbs. It demonstrated the most cordial interdenominational co-operation since the days of Torrey, fifty years before.[16]

Goodwill began to spread throughout the whole country, so what was planned as a six-weeks' visit was extended to a full year.

Consequently, when the National Council of Churches of New Zealand met in executive on 8th May 1956, declaring its thanks to God for the reports of great things accomplished

through the ministry of the Team and of its good spirit of co-operation with the churches, it commended the Team unanimously to its whole constituency.[17]

The fourth campaign, in Palmerston North, packed out all accommodations in turn, forcing Orr to preach at 7.30, 8.15, 9.00 and 9.45 p.m., alternating in crowded churches. The series was extended for a week in the Grand Opera House. The other members of the Team conducted four campaigns in South Island.

The Wellington and suburban campaigns which followed encountered peculiar difficulty, for mid-winter storms from the Antarctic howled across wild seas, making attendance at meetings nearly impossible. The public knew of these obstacles but only the team and friends were aware of team discipline problems which led the evangelists of the team to demand the resignation of the musical auxiliaries. With the departure of the dissidents two months later, the Team emerged from a cloud under which they had been labouring.[18]

Professor E. M. Blaiklock of the University of New Zealand reported in *Christianity Today* an extraordinary spiritual awakening in Dargaville in the Northland, characterized by a Presbyterian minister there as his "first experience of revival."

At the opposite end of the country in Southland, the Invercargill Ministers' Association reported an extraordinary awakening which affected the city for a year or more. St. Paul's Presbyterian Church soon was packed to capacity and on a final Sunday night the Civic Theatre was packed with an overflow filling the Victoria Concert Chamber. The Invercargill Ministers' Association stated:[19]

> Many decisions and rededications were recorded, but the real significance lies not in this so much as in the degree to which the church life in this city has been affected. Within many churches has come a revival of spiritual zeal and a renewed interest in private prayer, and keener support of the week-night Bible study groups. Many personal problems have been righted, and better relationships within the fellowship at the local and inter-church levels established. For three months now, a strong inter-church prayer group continues to meet.

After six months' study, the Presbyterian in charge of follow-up in the Dunedin Campaign told his fellow ministers that the response of inquirers had been almost 100 per cent satisfactory. An equally encouraging report came from pastors in Palmerston North. The same was true of the Dargaville mission.[20] A year later, the Invercargill Awakening was reviewed as having been the deepest spiritual stirring in the memory of the city. Then the year 1959 brought the Graham Crusades.

After thirty-six campaigns in New Zealand, the Team moved to Australia where twice as many teaching missions were conducted, almost always under the auspices of ministerial councils. The Team enjoyed the support of Anglican Archbishops and Presbyterian Moderators, of the Presidents of the Baptist, Church of Christ and Methodist and other bodies throughout Australia.[21] Edwin Orr felt it better to enlist the support of sympathetic key leaders than to wait for the moving of ponderous denominational machinery in support.

In Melbourne, the first campaign was poorly attended, partly because of the lingering effects of the rumours of team problems already dealt with, but the suburban campaigns picked up in strength, and support of the clergy and ministers became almost unanimous.[22] Dr. Stuart Barton Babbage, Dean of Saint Paul's Cathedral, spoke of Orr's teaching ministry there as "outstandingly brilliant".[23] A thousand inquirers were counselled.

Similar missions were held in the suburbs of Sydney and in New South Wales towns, often in the Anglican parish churches as in Victoria. To the surprise of many, the Archbishop of Brisbane (a High Churchman) encouraged his clergy to support campaigns held in Brisbane suburbs and Queensland towns, which reached far into the tropics. Orr held in Darwin its "first evangelistic mission, united or denominational". This was also the case in Alice Springs, in the heart of Australia.

Team campaigns were held in Tasmania also, Orr commencing his preaching in St. John's, an Anglican parish church in Launceston, and concluding the first series in a packed-out central Methodist Church, "the most outstanding event of the quarter".[24] Other towns were visited.

The Dean of Adelaide chaired the meeting for clergy and ministers of South Australia. In the first Adelaide campaign

the attendances rose from 300 to 1,200 and 200 inquirers were counselled. The Team campaigns in South Australia and Western Australia, where the series concluded, generally enjoyed maximum denominational goodwill in sharp contrast to the suspicion and opposition usually presented to the inter-denominational evangelists. Pioneering work it was, for the apathy encountered at first was staggering. The Lord had His purpose in it.

In October of 1957, the editor of *New Life* magazine announcing that Billy Graham had just accepted an invitation to campaign throughout the Commonwealth, noted that the preliminary work had been done by the Revival Fellowship Team. In 1958, *New Life* magazine published very encouraging reports of the abiding value[25] of the Team Missions given by leaders in all the Australian States. Not only were the converts reported as "standing", but ministers found a deeper satisfaction in their work and inter-church co-operation was more cordial.

Apart from the discipline problem resolved, there was nothing but cordiality in the relationship of the ten Team members. Max Bushby of Launceston continued his work in Australia as director of the Navigator Bible Study courses which increased fourfold as a result of the Team missions. Later he was elected a member of the Tasmanian Parliament.

Dr. Billy Graham wrote to Edwin Orr upon the conclusion of his Australasian campaigns:[26]

> I am convinced that the Lord sent you to Australia at the time He did. He has used you in stirring the hearts of the ministers toward Revival and evangelism. We are not coming with any false illusion. It is going to be a hard mission field. We are going tremblingly upon our knees.

Billy Graham forwarded to Edwin Orr a very generous cheque for a thousand pounds towards his next planned venture in the ministry of revival, the largest gift he received in the work.

The Graham Crusades in New Zealand and Australian cities were extraordinarily successful, with vast crowds attending and thousands of real conversions.

CHAPTER 9

TREK THROUGH SOUTH AFRICA

On the last day of June 1936, Edwin Orr left Fremantle on board the steamer *Nestor*, reaching Durban on 15th July. In a pile of letters waiting for him was one from the Rev. Lionel B. Fletcher, as follows:[1]

My Dear Edwin Orr,

This is just a line to welcome you to South Africa. I want you to know that I am praying that God may give you great and mighty blessing right throughout this glorious country. To a certain extent you will be going over some of the ground that I have already covered. If, by the goodness of God, you can stir up those thousands of converts to pursue a life of prayer and consecration, then you will have been God's instrument in doing the most important work that can be done in these days, when I am sure the revival tide is lapping at the very doors of the South African Churches.

I have followed the reports of your work with constant prayer, and have been very deeply moved by the news that has come from New Zealand and Australia. Here, in South Africa, God has been giving us tremendous blessings, with overflowing crowds and thousands of professed conversions.

Orr's contacts with Lionel B. Fletcher may be regarded as a formative influence in his life. It was during the Fletcher Campaign in Belfast that Orr developed his open-air preaching band.[2] Fletcher was holding evangelistic missions greatly blessed of God all over the British Commonwealth. He was called the Empire Evangelist. He was well known for his thorough and careful methods of evangelism, although in later years Orr held that Billy Graham's follow-up procedures were vastly superior to those of Fletcher or Gipsy Smith. In the relationship between Fletcher and Orr there was much tenderness and solicitude on the part of the older man and a great deal of

affection and respect on the side of the younger. Fletcher described Orr as "a sort of Timothy" of his.

Edwin Orr was pleased to receive Fletcher's greeting and good wishes, and went on his way. When, several weeks later, Fletcher was leaving South Africa, the two friends met in Capetown.[3] Fletcher was returning to England after many successful evangelistic campaigns. The two men went into the Capetown Gardens, took a seat and had a long and profitable talk together. Edwin Orr talked frankly, put before him his difficulties and asked for advice. Lionel Fletcher explained his method of dealing with inquirers, which precluded the use of personal workers. He much preferred to follow his evangelistic talk by giving counsel *en masse* to the inquirers who tarried.

Most of Lionel Fletcher's conversation with Edwin Orr concerned the pitfalls in the life of an evangelist. He asserted that he had not known of anyone so young (Orr was twenty-four years of age at the time) reaching a place of world-wide usefulness in so short a period. This spelled danger.

Upon the basis of observation, Fletcher was of the opinion that the two greatest temptations in the life of an evangelist were love of money and love of women. He warned the younger man of a world-famous evangelist (Orr had heard him in Ireland) who had undermined his own ministry in America, repeated the scandal in Britain and was caught in the act in New Zealand. Orr told Fletcher that the only cure he knew for such a serious problem was to maintain whole hearted dedication in the realm of sex as well as money.

A quarter of a century later, Orr's friends who knew him most intimately could say that Fletcher's prayers for Orr had been answered through the keeping grace of God—although this contemporary and that had fallen by the wayside, not a majority of evangelists but a minority of tragic cases of the weakness of the flesh, even among Orr's own friends and acquaintances. Orr became as strongly convinced as Fletcher that sex and money were hazards to those who travelled far and wide and in public acclaim. He became grateful to Fletcher for warnings, grateful to God for deliverance.

Mischief makers had made insinuations and thrown doubts

when they found two international evangelists working in the same country at the same time, suggesting that they were rivals. Such however was not the truth. In Capetown, Fletcher caught Orr's arm and said to him:

"I want you to meet a converted prize-fighter."

Orr shook hands with a Fletcher convert. The boxer happily told them:

"And my mate, another boxer, was converted in Orr's meeting the night before last."

Friends rejoiced to see the love and friendship between the two evangelists and their converts.

* * *

From Durban, Edwin Orr proceeded by train to Bulawayo in Southern Rhodesia. From the point of view of numbers, the campaign held in Bulawayo was not remarkable. The European population in Bulawayo was then 12,000; there was very short notice; and some of the ministers were unfriendly. But even so, of the two hundred people who came to the meetings, fifty made public profession, some backsliders.[4]

Orr's opportunities for sight-seeing were strictly limited. He travelled quickly from place to place. Wherever he went his time was fully taken up with meetings and interviews. It was rarely he had time to see all the sights. There were not many ancient buildings in Rhodesia other than the Zimbabwe ruins.

But he did enjoy the various aspects of nature—rivers, mountains, deserts, animals. Far beyond Livingstone on the Zambesi, he flew with a bush pilot over wild, unsettled country:[5]

> We sighted a herd of roan antelope grazing quietly, with the leader on guard. We went lower, zooming down over his head, leaving him utterly bewildered not knowing which way to turn. The herd bolted at a terrific pace across the veldt; we went after them at about twenty feet from the ground. About thirty beautiful animals of the size of an ox, but graceful in movement, went streaking away like greased lightning. They appeared to be travelling at forty miles an hour. The plane with double the speed was bound to overtake them
>
> "Keep them on your right," I roared in the pilot's ear.

He did so. I got out my "movie" camera, and took a film of the bolting beasts. I have seldom seen anything so beautiful as a herd of antelope in full flight alongside. We passed them. A minute later I looked back; the herd had wheeled to the right, but was unable to pull up, and a great cloud of dust followed their stamping hoofs. I laughed heartily to myself —I was thinking that when I started out on a push bicycle to tour the world on half-a-crown, I did not quite visualize myself in an aeroplane chasing a herd of big game across the skyline.

The following day he paid a visit to the Victoria Falls. There he saw a singularly attractive sight. Nature made a deep impression on him. His faith in God became deeper and stronger when he beheld its wonders.

Dr. David Livingstone, famous explorer and missionary, discovered the Victoria Falls in 1855 and named them after his sovereign. These magnificent falls are formed by the Zambesi, a mile and a quarter wide at this point, suddenly plunging into a narrow chasm 400 feet deep. The Victoria Falls are about two and a half times as high as Niagara and far surpass their American rival in grandeur. Just imagine—eighty million gallons of water falling every minute from a height greater than the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral in London—and this spectacle a mile wide.

* * *

We have a glimpse of Orr's life of prayer during his campaign in Durban. The first meetings were held in the afternoon, and made a good start. The big, general meeting overcrowded the Central Baptist Church, and on that very first occasion, the real expectancy of revival was created. The meeting lasted for two and a half hours.[6] Orr commented:

Nevertheless, in my own heart there was not much hope of blessing—I felt dry and mechanical. But it so happened that I was sitting at a piano next morning when memory suggested the beautiful chorus learned in Auckland when revival began there:

Calvary covers it all—
My life, with its guilt and shame:

My sin and despair
Jesus took on Him there:
And Calvary covers it all.

I felt that I could not go on playing, so I slipped away to the secret place. "Calvary covers it all"—the wonder of it dawned on my soul. I am not ashamed to say that I wept and prayed for about an hour—over my own hardness, subtle backsliding, in the face of the need of souls.

The meetings in Central Baptist Church became overcrowded, with people standing in the doorways and vestibules, in overflow meetings and outside the church windows. Hundreds of people professed conversion in the five week-night services although the topics chosen for preaching were meant for the Christians.

Two thousand people gathered in the City Hall on Sunday afternoon and an even larger crowd in the Princes Theatre on Sunday evening with a tenth of those attending making public profession of faith. The Rev. Charles Albertyn, a Methodist minister, was transformed in his ministry in the 1936 Orr Campaign, according to his son Charles Murray Albertyn.[7] The older Albertyn died in war service.

In Kokstad, capital of East Griqualand, Orr was pleased with the co-operation of an Anglo-Catholic rector, the Rev. Reginald Veel, who declared that he most certainly would support the preaching of the Gospel of Christ as an evangelical Anglo-Catholic and attend the meeting as Mayor of the town. Mr. Veel proved his worth in counselling in the crowded after-meeting.

There was a very cordial feeling between the leaders—Anglican, Dutch Reformed, Methodist, Presbyterian and a visiting Brethren evangelist—and their prayers were more than answered when half the adult population of the town turned up at the meeting and a tenth of the population professed conversion. The movement among Europeans and Griquas was still effective after two years.[8]

In Bloemfontein, the Orr Campaign packed the Town Hall and brought 1,000 inquirers. In the Orange Free State capital, Edwin Orr spoke to the ministers of the Dutch Reformed Church. His host, Dr. H. C. DeWet, wrote:[9]

One was surprised to note the similarity between the methods employed by Edwin Orr and those of Charles Finney, the American revivalist who did such lasting work last century. Both take a firm stand on the Word of God and make the appeal to the conscience primarily, insisting at the same time upon the necessity of facing each sin separately. Finney considered it impossible to reach the unconverted till Christians got into right relationship with God—a truth emphasized by Edwin Orr."

Edwin Orr was told this so often by observers that he obtained a copy of Finney's *Lectures on Revivals of Religion*. His whimsical colleague, an Englishman named Jack Sherriff, looked up from reading these lectures and commented:

"I say! This chap Finney seems to have used a lot of your material!"

* * *

As Orr and Sherriff were driving to Pretoria with a Baptist pastor, J. Charles Stern, they saw a terrible motor smash on the highway.[10] They saw a motor lorry approaching at about thirty to thirty-five miles an hour. Suddenly it crossed right over their line of approach—ten seconds farther along and they would have been smashed to matchwood. As it was, the heavy lorry bounced on the bank, and, before their horrified eyes, turned two complete somersaults—the steering rod had broken and it had punctured the hydraulic brake system.

The three men rushed across the road. Neither Mr. Stern nor Mr. Sherriff saw the terrible sight that Orr saw first, an Indian with his head shattered . . .

In the meantime, Mr. Stern was bandaging the head of a native and Sherriff was attending to another. On the lorry there had been an Indian, two natives and a coloured driver. One of the natives and the coloured driver escaped serious injury. The lorry driver was utterly distraught.

"My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" he kept crying. "Oh, the Indian man is dead. Oh God, he is dead. What'll I do?"

I tried to soothe him. He told me something about the Indian which startled me. It appears that the Indian, a customer

of the firm, asked him for a lift to Johannesburg. Just before the accident, he looked at his watch and said:

"Half past twelve. My watch is fast. However, every minute is numbered by God, and every day. We do not live a minute longer than He allows."

He was a Moslem and a fatalist. Thirty seconds later, the brain that controlled his speech and formed his words was dashed out on the road. I shudder every time I think of it.[11]

As soon as they helped the injured native out of the ditch and sent for the ambulance, Orr took the driver for a walk. He was a "near-white" and very intelligent, but his speech was incoherent at first. Edwin Orr asked him gently if he had been prepared to die. The coloured folk are naturally religious, so Orr was not surprised when he told him that he had been neglecting God. Half an hour later, while they were waiting for the police, Orr sat beside him in the ditch and listened attentively to his prayer in Afrikaans. He was pleading with God for forgiveness of sin. He made his profession of faith in Christ, and he vowed his whole life's service to God, telling the evangelist that the Lord had sent him to meet him in his need.

All this took place long before Edwin Orr's war experiences in which sights of blood and of sudden death became commonplace. In Pretoria, the memory of the two men—one beyond spiritual help and the other spared to make his peace with God through Christ—stayed with the evangelist to give him a deeper passion for perishing souls. His evangelism took on a new urgency.

In Johannesburg, Edwin Orr greatly relished an opportunity of addressing a crowd of African gold-miners.[12] At 9 o'clock on Sunday morning, in the native compound of the City Deep Mine, his interpreter (A. W. Baker) by fluent language and descriptive gestures conveyed Orr's message of the Cross of Christ that cleanses from sin. They listened well, and twenty men came forward upon Mr. Baker's invitation to accept salvation. The professed converts were of Xhosa, Shangaan, Bechuana and Basuto tribal affiliation. Orr sang the chorus of a Zulu hymn for them. The meeting adjourned with a vote of thanks

on the part of the Bantu audience and an invitation to Orr to return and work with them for three months. Edwin Orr earned a Zulu name—"Tanda Bantu" which means "Loves the People" Everywhere, the Bantu folk seemed immediately aware of his friendship.

The Johannesburg meetings were sponsored by the Witwatersrand Church Council and began with noonday meetings in Wesley Hall, evening meetings in the Centenary Hall in De Villiers Street, both series being transferred to the larger Central Hall to accommodate the crowds. The final meetings on Sunday were held in the Bijou Theatre, with more than 2,000 people present in each service. Again there were more than 1,000 inquirers in the campaign, 55 per cent Dutch Reformed, 15 per cent Methodist, 8 per cent Anglican, 4 per cent Baptist, and 3 per cent Presbyterian, the remainder divided among a dozen categories of preference.[13]

After meetings in the Eastern Province cities, Edwin Orr was welcomed by the Cape Peninsula Church Council to Capetown, where the Evangelical Fellowship organized the mission in the historic Groote Kerk, South Africa's oldest and biggest church whose minister (Dr. A. J. van der Merwe, a long-time Moderator of the Federal Council of his denomination) became a life-long friend.

Orr completed his tour in South Africa. He travelled 12,000 miles in eight weeks and spoke in 120 meetings. Over 100,000 people had listened to his addresses, given generally in town halls or large churches. There were different degrees of revival in various places according to the readiness of the people. Several thousand persons made public profession of faith in Christ.

Over fifty per cent of the people to whom Orr preached in South Africa belonged to the Dutch Reformed Church, the Church of Andrew Murray. The spiritual situation in South Africa differed quite a bit from that of Britain and Europe where lived masses of pagans without belief in God or concern for religion. The Afrikaans-speaking people (and in a lesser measure their English-speaking compatriots) generally believed in the Christian religion and knew orthodox teaching, but often lacked a vital religious experience.

Various criticisms of the ministry of Edwin Orr were made in South Africa, particularly in ultra-conservative kirk circles. He was rebuked for wearing a brown suit with a rosebud buttonhole in the pulpit; this was regarded as a scandal worthy of newspaper protest. It took him a long time to live down the indiscretion of teaching the melody and harmony of a new hymn by humming and whistling—there is a superstition that whistling was originated by Satan. (Orr would never repeat the indiscretion of youth.) There was even criticism of his open-air preaching, considered by some to be an affront to the predestination of the church as the vehicle of grace.[14]

Nevertheless, Edwin Orr won the hearts of the Afrikaners as did few before him or since. His Irish birth, his attempt at the language, and his appeal to the Scriptures combined to overcome the suspicions of a conservative people.

The race problem in South Africa was already becoming acute. This was Edwin Orr's reaction based upon first impressions:[15]

> First of all, South Africa is not and never will be a white man's country, like Australia or Canada. The Europeans are outnumbered four to one; and the natives are increasing much more rapidly than the whites. South Africa benefits from a superabundance of cheap labour and suffers from it too.
>
> There are many sides to the question of colour prejudice. (To some) it is a bread-and-butter matter, for unless the native and coloured person is made "to keep his place", some day he may displace the white man.
>
> In Natal, there is a great outcry against the Indians. But who brought the Indians there? The white man who wanted cheap labour. In the Cape, comments are made about the increasing number of coloured people. What brought them there? The white man's interest in native women was the cause.
>
> The Bantu themselves are very intelligent, and respond tremendously to education. So that (to some) either they must be kept ignorant or else they will demand a share of civilized life that the white man is not prepared to give them.
>
> My sympathies are with the South African legislators,

They have ever-growing, complex problems to deal with year by year.

Edwin Orr wrote this in 1936. Since then, race relationships within South Africa have deteriorated steadily. The segregation of different races by law in South Africa has outraged world opinion.

The race question apart, Edwin Orr developed a sympathy for South African nationalism. The courageous struggle of the republican farmers for freedom earned his sympathy. He admired the generous granting of self-government by Britain and the brilliant Afrikaner leadership since 1910. The white South Africans landed at the Cape about the same time that the black nations were crossing the Zambesi 1,000 miles north. South Africa is home to them as much as to the Bantu.

Charles Murray Albertyn reported of Edwin Orr's views on the South African race problem twenty years later.[16] As before, he condemned the attitude of the White Supremacist equally with that of the Race Radical. He showed sympathetic interest in the position of Progressive Integration as well as of Parallel Development, his own view lying between the two but demanding the grace of true Christian understanding on all sides.

What were the permanent results of Edwin Orr's 1936 South African Campaign? One of the converts who became a Methodist minister later[17] wrote in 1953 an article entitled "The Test of Time in Evangelism", concluding by saying that the Lord Jesus Christ had left behind three great agencies for the spread of the Gospel—the Church of God, the Spirit of God and the Word of God. He added that the 1936 Orr meetings had helped the churches under the guidance of the Holy Spirit to preach the Word of God effectively and powerfully.

Gibson claimed that when Orr returned to South Africa in 1953 hundreds of converts claimed him as their spiritual father. These included pastors, evangelists, teachers and missionaries, and their leaders formed a committee of converts of the Orr 1936 Campaign to sponsor the 1953 Orr series.[18] Their chairman was a Methodist minister, their secretary was an evangelist who served ably as President of the national Youth for Christ work, and the 1953 campaigns were supported by the Archbishop of Capetown, Anglican and Lutheran

Bishops, the Moderators of the Dutch Reformed and Presbyterian Churches, and the Presidents of Methodist, Baptist, Congregational and Disciples connections in South Africa.[19]

So, in 1953, Edwin Orr commenced his ministry in Capetown but instead of filling some central hall with the thousands of people who attend every last campaign, he tackled the Capetown suburbs and concluded ten weeks later in the City Hall, the Metropolitan Church and the Groote Kerk. Each local campaign was supported by a majority of the churches in the neighbourhood. The ministry was directed towards reviving the churches but there were hundreds of conversions. The fullest support of the Church leaders was forthcoming.

The second ten weeks in 1953 were spent in the Pretoria-Johannesburg-Rand complex of the Transvaal. Meetings were held in a dozen towns with the widest support of all denominations. The Pretoria meetings commenced in St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, packed out Central Baptist and Wesley Methodist and concluded in the Groot Kerk filled to overflowing. There was similar blessing in Johannesburg, and the committee for the series reported much reviving in the churches as well as seven hundred inquirers.[20]

The third ten weeks in 1953 were spent in the coastal cities of Port Elizabeth, East London and Durban. In the Port Elizabeth campaign, Anglican and Dutch Reformed and Interdenominational Fraternals supported the effort which filled St. John's Church and the Moederkerk in turn.[21] There was similar blessing in East London, but the Durban campaigns during the holiday season were poorly attended, though I understand it was in the poorest attended meeting of the poorest attended mission that young Murray Albertyn professed his faith—going on to colleges and universities in Britain and United States to earn three graduate degrees.

The fourth ten weeks in 1953 were spent in the interior cities of Bloemfontein, Kimberley and far away Windhoek and other towns. As in the other series, the reports stressed interdenominational co-operation as something unexpected because of the tensions over race, language and theology.

CHAPTER 10

SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY

Alan Paton's classic novel of life in troubled South Africa, *Cry the Beloved Country*, begins with a striking paragraph:

> There is a lovely road that runs from Ixopo into the hills. These hills are grass-covered and rolling, and they are lovely beyond any singing of it. The road climbs seven miles into them, to Carisbrooke; and from there you look down on one of the fairest valleys of Africa. About you there is grass and bracken and you may hear the forlorn crying of the titihoya, one of the birds of the veld. Below you is the valley of the Umzimkulu, on its journey from the Drakensberg to the sea; and beyond and behind the river, great hill after great hill; and beyond and behind them the mountains of Ingeli and East Griqualand.

It was in the valley of the Umzimkulu, one of the fairest valleys in Africa, within sight of the winter snow-clad peaks of the Ingeli, in a pioneer cabin, that Ivy Carol Orr was born.

Edwin Orr travelled 10,000 miles from the arctic darkness of Lapland to this beautiful valley in Africa to lay claim to a treasure that enriched his life throughout his ministry both in practical benefit and undiminished romance.[1]

Orr's sentimental journey began late in 1936. In the heart of Westminster, close by Big Ben and the Houses of Parliament and Westminster Abbey so fascinating to Indian visitors, stands the Westminster Central Hall, the cathedral of World Methodism, known in London as the building most used for central rallies, also famed as the first meeting place of the United Nations Assembly.

In October 1936, Britain's then best-known religious journalist, Hugh Redwood, told his wide constituency of readers:[2]

> The least conspicuous figure on the platform at the Westminster Central Hall last night was the man whom everyone came to hear. And they came in astonishing numbers. They

filled the great main hall to capacity and they filled the overflow accommodation below.

In the presence of this assembly sat Edwin Orr, twenty-four years of age, until a few years ago a Belfast clerk, now an evangelist of world-wide repute . . .

Only a boy to look at, and a little chap at that. But when he arose to his feet he became a flame and a scourge—still very much of a boy in his speech, but a boy ablaze with conviction, and perhaps in some danger of burning himself out, though he won't mind taking the risk . . .

This was Edwin Orr's welcome meeting after the completion of his first around-the-world tour with the gospel. About 4,000 folk attended.

Meanwhile, in his native Belfast, his friend[3] Coulter had noted that "although the younger generation hailed Orr as an embodiment of faith, the older and more influential circles styled him as an adventurer, wise heads shaking disparagingly."

His first world tour over, a "welcome home" meeting was arranged in the Grosvenor Hall (seating about 2,000) in Belfast. Quite unaffected by the whole affair, shabbily dressed and hatless, he sauntered in with the crowd surging past and chatted happily in the foyer. Viewed from the gallery he looked even less impressive as he addressed the audience, but he held it between his thumb and finger.

Orr had an air of preoccupation and seemed to look beyond one rather than at him; in a word, a mystic. His ability to assimilate and appropriate spiritual truth was uncomplicated to the point of being naïve. Unbelief in Christians was to him incredible. In keeping with this simplicity was a befitting humility which in the early days served as a shock absorber when opinion was harsh and critical.

His friend Murray also noted idiosyncrasies in Edwin Orr's public manner, speaking of his "absent-mindedness and almost a casualness in dealings with people on ordinary occasions" that contrasted with his remarkable public rapport.[4] Orr tended to freeze when flattered, sometimes chilling the bearers of friendly flattery.

For some weeks, particularly during his South African tour, Orr had felt quite tired. He had to consult doctors and even

cancel some of his meetings. In England also, after his welcome meeting, the doctor he consulted advised rest for some time.

It is not surprising that Orr felt tired. He had made the severest demands on his mind and body. Quite a young man, with no university or theological training and with little or no preparation for public speaking, he was continually addressing hundreds of large meetings each month, some of them being attended by enormous crowds. These exertions naturally brought on much fatigue.[5]

Orr had many personal problems to face. What was his future work going to be? Was he going to continue this evangelistic work ... he recalled a pessimistic English friend who, after publication of his first book, told him:

"I say, Orr. Don't you think that you would serve the Lord better, and cause less concern to the Lord's people, if you were to go back to Belfast and continue working in the bakery office?"

What did God want him to do? Orr wanted a clear leading. He was quite willing to go back to his humble occupation as an office clerk if that was God's plan for his life.

So, in the closing paragraphs of the seventh book of his first series, he announced that he would take himself out of the limelight, leaving no contacts behind to ensure a minimum of distraction:

> ... up to the mountains, perhaps, or anywhere that one can find quietness. If my work is finished, it will finish with a period of prayer in the wilderness. If it is beginning, it will begin in a quiet time of preparation: and I will know what to do.[6]

Orr's earliest biographer, the late Newman Watts, was greatly struck by this decision made by Orr in late 1936:

> After 1936, Orr took himself out of the limelight, calmly and deliberately. Many readers of maturer years will understand me when I say that the test of a man with a career is what he does with himself when the limelight has died down and the publicity is quenched. Orr has stood the test well. Many a smaller man would have traded on his past achievements and attempted to ride on his reputation for the rest of his life.[7]

Newman Watts wrote those words without realizing that it

would be twelve years before Edwin Orr would engage in the same kind of ministry again. The intervening years were to bring him marriage and family, university and theological education, and a period of gruelling service in combat in the armed forces during World War II.

Meanwhile, Orr took off for the unknown. There was a touch of originality in many of the things that he did. He headed for the Arctic regions of Norway in mid-winter. With his friends, Stanley Donnan and Evan John, he crossed by motor ship to Bergen.

From Oslo, where they were swamped with invitations to preach, they moved to Brumunddal in Hedmark, where a friend of 1935 had settled in a little church. Unknown to Orr, Alfred Dahl was on his honeymoon, but he insisted that Orr should stay with them while his friends stayed with Einar Lundby, the local physician, recently converted.

The three friends spent their time chiefly in exploring the country. It was healthy and it was interesting: and so they visited lakes and hills, all the while relishing every contact with their hosts, the wonderful Norwegian people.[8]

Edwin Orr was quite impressed with the radiant happiness of Alfred and Esther Dahl. He could understand the affectionate language as well as the loving glance and gesture. It made him think again of a vow that he had made to God upon starting out that he would remain unmarried, unbetrothed and unattached for the duration of his first objective, the ministry of revival around the world. That tour was now completed . . .

Leaving the other two men preaching and singing in the district, Orr travelled farther north in search of peace and quiet. *En route* to Lapland, he had a happy visit with Prince Oscar Bernadotte, brother of the King of Sweden. It was bitterly cold when he reached Kiruna, where snow lay deeply. Orr crossed the border into Arctic Norway, to Narvik. Bjarne Taranger, notified by telegram, met him with a party of friends, all ministers.

Instead of peace and quiet, Orr found that the friends in Finmark had arranged a meeting that evening at 8 p.m., another in the local cinema at 11 p.m., followed by three meetings the next day.

"We are so glad you have come to North Norway for a rest," they told him.

It was dark all day and all night in the Polar regions. The sun had set—as far as Narvik was concerned—in middle November and would not rise above the horizon again until mid-February. It was cold, and there was plenty of snow. There was local revival in the Narvik churches, but Orr decided against staying much longer.

Now his mind was preoccupied with the big question that remained unanswered: Should he consider marriage? He had given up one hope of marriage in Ireland because of his call. He had seen other attractive young ladies in the course of his travels, but had avoided any snare of his heart. His mind went back to a girl whom he had met in South Africa, just before his tour had concluded. She was the youngest daughter of a Norwegian couple. They were aware of mutual interest but there was no understanding. Much as Orr prayed about it, he could get no light on the subject. Was it God's will or just his will?

Edwin Orr encountered a Lutheran minister who had been converted during his first visit to Scandinavia.[9] So he set a proposition before him, without being too specific:

"How can one be sure of God's will in a matter of personal guidance?"

The Lutheran pastor looked at him amazed.

"That was the question I asked you when you first visited us here," he said, "So I think I can answer you out of your own mouth."

Orr could not recall the incident, let alone the details of what he said on that occasion.[10]

"You said," explained the Lutheran, " 'If you are willing for God's will, God will make His will known to you. And remember God generally gives guidance enough only for the first step. You must step out by faith.' "

Orr retired to a quiet spot in the parsonage. When he emerged, his friend asked him if he had received any light upon his problems.

"Yes. I am going to send a cablegram to South Africa to propose marriage to a young lady."

Under the twinkling stars that night, on board a ship braving a chilling breeze, in the bitter cold of a Scandinavian winter, Orr was so happy that he sang aloud old hymns of praise to God for His care. He was completely at peace in heart and soul.

Orr was back with his honeymooning friends in Norway when the answer to the cablegram arrived. He showed it to Donnan. It was not an acceptance, though it did not close the door to a friendship. Orr packed up.

"Where are you going?" asked Donnan.

"South Africa", was the reply. "To get married."

That next day, when Orr reached Newcastle, the urchins on the street were singing a parody:

"Hark, the herald angels sing,
Mrs. Simpson's got our King."

The abdication crisis was rocking the British Commonwealth. Orr visited his mother in London and told her that he expected to marry the girl of God's choice within a reasonably short time.[11] Who?

"I'll tell you just as soon as she accepts my proposal," he said.

With typical Irish teasing, Edwin Orr sent a cablegram from each port *en route* to announce his approach to the young lady. Quite a crisis was building up in the Southern Hemisphere, in one family at least.

Ivy Carol Carlson had been born near the borders of Pondoland, in Southern Natal, a part noted for its tropical beauty. Her father, Ivar, had come to Africa as a fisherman, switched to farming virgin lands, and then became a builder, often giving his time freely to the building of the mission stations round about.

Marta Carlson, wife of Ivar Carlson, had been converted through the witness of a Zulu servant. She immediately began to gather the Zulus into her kitchen to teach the gospel, long before any missionary had settled in the territory. One of her sons had scarcely begun to minister the Word on earth when he was called to a higher service. Carol was the second daughter to marry a minister. The journey to Capetown was not without its hazards of indecision. Orr was travelling a long way with-

out assurance of success, but he carried a reminder of faith—a return ticket for both himself and his bride. It was not that he was too sure of himself, but rather sure of God's choice.

It took a while to convince everybody else that this was the case. But Edwin Orr took courage in noting that his proposal seemed to gain a greater acceptance as the days went by. Finally their engagement was announced at Isipingo, a beach resort where the bride-to-be's brother was the stationmaster. Relations flocked to the wedding which was set for 15th January 1937, the twenty-fifth anniversary of Orr's birth and the sixteenth anniversary of his conversion.

Stephen C. Bradley, later an Anglican bishop, performed the marriage ceremony in Durban and the couple spent a brief honeymoon in the foothills of the Drakensberg. A combined wedding reception and godspeed gathering for friends was arranged.

Not having had any experience of such affairs, the bridegroom concluded his words of thanks and farewell with an explanation of the way of salvation and invited any inquirers to come for counsel. A number of the audience did so.[12]

The honeymoon was continued on board the ship *Stirling Castle en route* to Southampton. Orr had promised to be a main speaker in the great Moody Centennial Meetings in London in February 1937.

There were four children of the marriage, two girls and two boys. Eileen Muriel was born in Ballymena in Ireland. She was a frail baby, so it was decided that the young mother and child would stay in the sunshine of South Africa rather than risk the varied climates of other countries. She died of pneumonia in 1938, not four months old.[13]

Carolyn Astrid, a sturdy baby, was born in the snows of Toronto in Canada in 1939, when her father was pastor-evangelist of The Peoples Church associated with the famous Dr. Oswald J. Smith. Alan was born in summer 1942 in Chicago when his father was studying at Northwestern University and Northern Seminary. David was born in Oxford in autumn 1946 while his father was engaged in research at Oxford University.[14]

Carol Orr's great contribution to her husband's ministry lay in companionship and home-making on all six continents,

trying task for a woman whose husband was away from home half the time. It was her training on the farm and her knowledge of her father's building methods that enabled her to be a handyman around the house, while she inherited from her mother a selfless care of the family that was automatically extended to all in need. Carol Orr's description may be found in Proverbs, chapter xxxi.

The first family home was in Toronto, then a three-year spell in Chicago, then a series of posts and bases in the Air Force. When Edwin Orr was shipped to the South-West Pacific, Carol Orr took her little girl and baby boy all the way through submarine-infested seas to Buenos Aires, there to await transshipment to Capetown. It was then that Alan became critically ill and was rushed to hospital, his life despaired of—with his mother distraught, not knowing whether to cable the news of impending death to her husband, about to embark for the theatre of war.

By a strange telepathy (which the Orrs practised or experienced more than once) Edwin Orr became very much concerned about his wife just before the date of sailing on the troopship. He placed a call by intercontinental telephone to Mrs. Carol Orr, in Buenos Aires, not knowing any address, or that she was even there. Within twenty minutes, the New York operator had connected the base near San Francisco with a hospital in Buenos Aires. The relieved young wife was able to explain that the baby boy had passed the crisis and was on the mend. Some weeks later, she sailed for Capetown and arrived there about the same time that her husband's ship made landfall at Guadalcanal.[15]

In 1945 at Christmas time, the separated family was reunited for a couple of months, then parted because of varied means of military transport to be united in Oxford, home for a happy two years.[16]

In 1949, the Orr family made its permanent home in Southern California, in the only North American climate which could match that of South Africa or our own Nilgiri Hills for perfection.

Their permanent residence in California was interrupted by lengthy preaching trips abroad, for the whole family moved to Brazil for the year 1952, to South Africa for the year 1953,

to New Zealand for the year 1956, to Australia for the year 1957. This enabled them to maintain family life in an otherwise unbearable situation.

New Life magazine of Melbourne published a humorous insight into the peripatetic life of the "Orrs and Orchids" in 1958. Alan (when fifteen) had been arrested in Yokohama for going ashore without his passport. An interrogation followed:[17]

Sergeant: "From where do you come?"
Alan: "From Hong Kong, sir."
Sergeant: "Do you live in Hong Kong?"
Alan: "No, I have come from South Africa."
Sergeant: "Are you a student?"
Alan: "Yes, sir."
Sergeant: "You study in South Africa?"
Alan: "No. I have been studying in Australia."
Sergeant: "You live in Australia?"
Alan: "No. I live in California."

Had the sergeant of police asked Alan Orr just where his father happened to be, he would have been told "in India". They held him a while.

While the Orrs had the sorrow of losing their brothers and sisters on either side of the family, they and their "Orchids" enjoyed uniformly good health. Raising a family gave them insight into common humanity, with its joys and cares.

CHAPTER 11

STUDY AND RESEARCH

When, in 1940, Edwin Orr began to consider studying again, he had behind him ten years of ordinary schooling and three years of study in the City of Belfast College of Technology, with passes in five subjects in examinations set by the University of London, in which he matriculated later.[1] There his education was interrupted to allow him to become the bread-winner of the family because of the death of his father and elder brother.[2] This was a great disappointment to him. Under normal circumstances he would have completed university training with distinction.

God had led him along different paths. For six years he had worked in an office. For six or more years he had travelled widely, preaching the gospel of Christ in many countries. He was receiving his education in an unusual way—some years in business, some years in lay evangelism, wide travel in many lands, successful literary work. These experiences brought out many of his latent gifts. Even so he felt the need for disciplined study in well-known institutions under men who had devoted their whole life to study, research and teaching. There are very clear advantages in such study, yet Orr knew that many evangelical friends thought of evangelists as men whose gifts would be spoiled by formal study.

Orr knew that D. L. Moody had been greatly blessed in his evangelistic ministry though he had received only the rudiments of education. He also knew that Moody felt this gap in the development of his mind and personality so keenly that he devoted himself to founding schools where any boy or girl could receive an education. Moody anyhow was a remarkable exception. Many of the great evangelists of the past had received university education and had held academic posts of responsibility. John Wesley had been a fellow of Lincoln College in Oxford and had enjoyed all the advantages of moving in university circles.

And Jonathan Edwards became President of Princeton College Charles G. Finney was a Professor of Pastoral Theology in Oberlin College. These men were intellectual giants and were fully equipped to meet other well-educated men on a footing of full equality. Edwin Orr, longing to serve the students of his day and generation, and wanting urgently to serve as a chaplain in the armed forces, decided that his own ministry among students and soldiers would be more effective if he had adequate academic qualifications.[3]

So, in 1940, Orr decided to take regular theological training during the next few years. It was true that he had been preaching for many years with great acceptance to large congregations, and was then serving as associate pastor in the largest church in Canada.[4]

When he mentioned his desire to his senior colleague, Oswald Smith, the Canadian asked him why he needed to bother with formal education. Did not Orr realize that he could go on preaching for years on the strength of a unique experience? Did not Orr realize that there were hundreds of thousands of Christian people eager to hear the man they had read about?

To this Orr replied that he knew that he had been given an unusual opportunity, but that there were many young men regarded as successful in their twenties who were failures in their forties. Orr did not want to adopt the cheap devices that some such men used to maintain their crowds.[5]

Theological teachers know that students under them derive most profit after some years of practical experience in the school of life. Eager and receptive, unlike young men in their teens, they are able to assimilate readily what is given to them in college lectures. The dozen years of unusual opportunities which Edwin Orr had enjoyed now stood him in good stead.

In Illinois, Orr knew a Christian institution that combined the highest standards of academic propriety with the highest standards of evangelical concern—Wheaton College, twenty-five miles from Chicago. The Wheaton registrar told Orr that it would take three years for him to complete the Bachelor of Arts degree; and after that, another three to complete the Bachelor of Divinity degree.

Orr was then twenty-eight years of age. He felt that the

utmost time he could spare for study was three years. After much prayer, he entered himself as a student in Northern Baptist Theological Seminary in Chicago for the Th.B. degree.[6] Having the equivalent of American junior college standards, he was permitted to take by examination a year's work in subjects for which he was already prepared. He next registered for the M.A. course in Northwestern University near by, taking geography as his main subject, for he was at an unusual advantage in taking geography. At the same time, he took the courses required for the B.D. degree at Northern. This meant carrying a full load at the Seminary in morning work and a full load in university classes each afternoon, but he managed, with good grades, went on to register himself as a candidate for the Doctor of Theology degree in Northern Baptist Seminary, carrying courses also in various denominational theological colleges in the Chicago area—Brethren, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian and even Jesuit.

Orr had come in contact with many churches in the course of his ministry; he wanted to work intelligently with them. What did Christian denominations stand for? What were their convictions?

He chose as the subject for his thesis the mid-Nineteenth Century Awakening in America. Till then, he had been reading here and there about it, for pleasure.

Now he was to go deep into the matter. He had to read whatever had been written on his subject, weigh the evidence carefully and make sure of the facts. His wide travels and knowledge of the movements of the Spirit helped greatly.

Such a variety of courses at the same time was possible only in American graduate schools and by means of extraordinarily heavy work. For three years he attended as many as thirty-two lectures a week and wrote papers and examinations required, often sitting far into the night to complete his full assignments. His overall marks were 90 per cent plus.[7]

It was not that he was favoured by the faculty in any way. In fact, his Dean was so anxious to slow him down that—to make up for classes and an examination missed though preaching for a sick professor between terms—he assirned Orr 560 questions to answer and twenty-four papers to write in the

month before graduation. Orr hired two stenographers and worked night and day to meet the deadline.

At Northern, which was fully accredited by the North Central Association of Universities and Colleges, Edwin Orr enjoyed the fellowship of classmates marked for distinction—Dr. Adrian Heaton, Dr. T. Leonard Lewis and Dr. John Herrman, soon to become presidents of colleges, Dr. Torrey M. Johnson who became founder of Youth for Christ International, and Dr. Carl F. H. Henry, theologian and editor of *Christianity Today*.[8] In fact, Carl Henry arranged Orr's first series of evangelistic meetings in Chicago, and Adrian Heaton drove with Orr each evening 135 miles to Champaign-Urbana to fulfil a week's ministry, leaving Chicago at 4 p.m. and arriving back at 1 a.m. Orr's interest in evangelistic meetings was still powerful and he preached on an average at twenty evangelistic meetings a month in addition to his many courses of study, reporting many conversions. His professor of Evangelism was Dr. Faris D. Whitesell, author of many books on the subject.[9] His professor of Greek was Dr. Julius R. Mantey, co-author of the standard textbook, Dana & Mantey's *Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament*. His professor of Church History was a Norwegian, Dr. Peder Stiansen, who made the subject live for his students.

Orr's thesis on the American Awakening of 1858 was published after the War.[10] The present writer has often been interested to see that when the rains fall after periods of drought farmers are tremendously busy. During the drought nothing can be done. The soil is too hard to be ploughed. No seeds can be sown; they cannot sprout without rain. Gardens which are irrigated with water from wells by painful human efforts look dry and parched; they are waiting eagerly for showers. When the rains fall, farmers take their ploughs to turn the land which is damp and soft. They sow seeds in fields dug up and ready. The standing crops in gardens get new life; their dust is washed away and the roots of the plants are watered heavily. It was thus that pastors and laymen in America laboured in 1858. Some may have been critical and indifferent but those who had vision and energy worked day and night. Thousands of men and women were influenced by the revivals. The leaders welcomed

these thronging crowds and arranged services for them; they met them in private in ones and twos and gave them spiritual advice.

A major outcome of the Revival was a million professed converts.[11] Orr emphasizes this extraordinarily large number. In any spiritual movement it is difficult to be quite accurate about its statistics. While the author has ransacked diligently the relevant church records they cannot be expected to give us completely accurate figures of true conversions. It is quite probable that thousands of converts who joined the Churches were not profoundly changed. The transformation in character might not have been deep. For some months or even for some years, they might have continued in their new experience. But after a time, they might have gone back to their old life of sin. The conversion of a man can be said to be real only when its results last throughout his whole lifetime. We cannot trace the histories of all these million new members. We must allow a large margin for the many spiritual casualties which normally occur in life. Human nature being what it is, men do not always live on spiritual hill-tops. While all this is true, Orr's investigations prove abundantly that thousands of men and women were profoundly influenced by the mid-Nineteenth Century Evangelical Awakening.

Orr had planned his theological study in view of the Second World War, which commenced in 1939. His mother was in London which was being bombed continuously. His wife's brother had been killed in the North African Desert where his own brother was serving. Orr found it hard to study in the quiet and peace of a theological college.[12]

He carried on his researches at a rapid pace. He read numerous biographies and histories related to the period. He naturally expected to get a good deal of information from the religious magazines which he studied. But to his great surprise he found some of his most valuable materials in the daily papers, yellowing with time.

In 1943, Northern Baptist Seminary decided that he had fully completed the requirements for the Doctor of Theology degree and the relevant diploma was handed to him. By that time, Orr wore chaplain's uniform, in which he addressed the convocation of the Seminary.[13]

How was Orr able to carry six years' work in three calendar years? I asked Charles W. Koller, President Emeritus of Northern Baptist Seminary, who cited Orr's "extraordinary capacity for study". He wrote:

> [Orr] first earned the five-year Bachelor of Theology degree, then a Master of Arts degree at Northwestern University, then the Bachelor of Divinity and Doctor of Theology degrees at Northern, and finally the D.Phil degree at Oxford University. So far as I know, no student here has ever matched this record and covered so much material in so short a time. At no time did Mr. Orr seem to be laboring under any particular strain. A bright mind and a rare giftedness for sustained concentration appear to be the only explanation.
>
> He held weeks of special meetings with the Seminary in succeeding years. There was a powerful spiritual impact, a true revival with many confessions, rededications and reconciliations. He has been mightily used of God.[14]

Dr. Peder Stiansen, formerly Dean of Northern, wrote me along the same lines of assessment. He had served as Orr's supervisor and close friend. The Th.D. dissertation was published in 1952 by Marshall, Morgan & Scott of London with the title *The Second Evangelical Awakening in America*. This was after Orr had made his reputation by his D.Phil. thesis submitted to Oxford.

Mr. A. Lindsay Glegg, the industrialist, commented to me that "British people (a little unkindly) questioned whether Orr's Amercian degrees were of much value". He was delighted when subsequent studies remedied that![15]

* * *

Edwin Orr had just witnessed a fierce air-raid in one of the islands of the Pacific. Heavy damage had been done. In harrowing situations, men around him had perished. When would it all end?[16]

Orr was walking along the beach-head alone, absorbed in thought. What would happen to him? Would he also die out there or would he return to normal civilian life when the war was over? Was there still a work for him to do afterwards? That night there came a clear assurance from God that he

would survive—for two important purposes. He would live to write a history of the Second Evangelical Awakening in the English-speaking world. He would live to see beginnings of a third Evangelical Awakening. The conviction filled him with new peace and purpose.

At the end of the war, Chaplain Orr hitch-hiked 24,000 miles from the occupied city of Tokyo to the University of Oxford.[17] He had always been greatly attracted by Oxford as the senior University in the English-speaking world. His historical reading had convinced him of the immense part which Oxford had played in the religious and intellectual life of the world. In its many libraries and lecture-rooms he would find the scholarly spirit so necessary for writing a thesis on the great movements of the past. And he needed the endorsement of a great university for the publication of his work.

The first setback that Orr experienced arose from the fact that the Overseas Adviser with whom he had corresponded regarding enrolling had died, and as all his letters had been written in quaint longhand there were no records to show that he had even applied. On top of that, Oxford was so overcrowded with returning ex-servicemen that the faculties were refusing to take any more and lodgings were impossible to find within twenty-five miles. It looked impossible.

But Orr's British publishers helped him to find a house, and the Faculty concerned was persuaded to consider his application. The Master of Arts degree from Northwestern was sufficient to admit him to advanced standing, and the Doctor of Theology degree from Northern was considered the equivalent of Oxford's first research degree. Orr made use of a scholarship for study given by the United States Government to those whose studies had been interrupted by the war. So he registered himself as an advanced student for a D.Phil. degree.[18] Then his problems began.

More than forty years ago, between 1919 and 1922, I wrote a dissertation for the D.Phil. degree in Oxford University; so I have some idea of the requirements of the University and the kind of help which the University customarily gave. A supervisor was appointed by the University to guide the student. He was an expert in the field. The supervisor whom he met at

regular intervals mentioned the courses in the University which might be of use in his particular line of research and the titles of books available on the subject.

In the University of Oxford there were many research workers studying for post-graduate degrees. These scholars came to Oxford from all parts of the world, so the social life of the University with all its opportunities for informal meetings and talks provided stimulating contacts with them. The libraries at Oxford at hand were always supplemented by the libraries in London, only an hour's railway journey from Oxford.

In Orr's case, the supervisor was the Reverend Claude Jenkins, the Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History in the University of Oxford.[19] Orr said that his supervisor gave him "patient, kindly, forceful and pertinent help, advice and criticism." A decade later, obituary notices in Oxford paying tribute to Professor Jenkins' undoubted erudition underlined the fact that he was considered to have been an authentic Oxford "character". Celibate, wearing a heavy cassock day and night (students insisted that he slept in it and sewed it up for the winter, but this is a legend), he seldom ventured out of his quarters in Christ Church quadrangle, though he never missed an Oxford Union debate. Edwin Orr was thus privileged to have a brilliant man to guide him. Although considered eccentric, Professor Jenkins was a clever historian, head of his department, Archbishop Temple's chaplain. One of Orr's fellow-students took a course under Jenkins in a highly advanced subject, so advanced indeed that the class dwindled until only Jenkins and this student remained. But the professor faithfully gave the lonely student the full benefit of his scholarship. Dr. Jenkins' cat-naps were notorious. On one occasion, he fell asleep while lecturing, dozed for ten minutes, awakened, then proceeded with the lecture from the exact point of interruption. Finally, Professor Jenkins, a middle High Churchman, was a very great saint in human kindness. One of Orr's colleagues had a financial setback, and the good professor dipped into his own pocket very substantially to enable the struggling ex-soldier to continue.

In Orr's chosen field, there were no published authorities. Professor Jenkins endeavoured to persuade Orr to give up his line of research on account of this paucity of published sources.

So Orr made the fullest use of the many libraries within his reach.[20] He also consulted the scholars who lived in Oxford, Cambridge, Edinburgh and London and found no one with any knowledge of his subject. It was not until he crossed to Belfast that he managed to enlist Professor Scott Pearson as academic support for his projected thesis. The scholars were right—there were no published books covering Orr's project. He had the academic good fortune to embark on a project which involved so much primary research that he became an expert.

Thus from mid-1946 to mid-1948, Orr was able to concentrate in the quiet quadrangles of Oxford on this task of research. The conditions under which he worked now were quite different from the adventurous life he had led as an Air Force chaplain during the previous three years. They were also very different from his three years of theological study in Chicago, when he had attended many heavy and exacting courses of lectures.

During his Oxford study, Orr's interest in a world-wide revival was kindled once again. Young American evangelists called on him at his home at Wolvercote, where he was resident with his family. He sought to inspire them with his own longing for Revival. These evangelists would spend the whole day with him and often talk far into the night about the need for Revival. He was now becoming something of an authority on the subject of revivals.[21]

On one occasion, Edwin Orr happened to be showing a younger evangelist around the lovely city of Oxford.[22] He took him up a rickety stairway in Lincoln College, unlocked a couple of doors, watching the reactions of his friend as he looked around the study-bedroom of students long since departed. The American was impressed.

"Where is this, Edwin?" he asked.

"Guess!" said Orr.

His friend shrugged his shoulders. Then he began to inspect the panelled walls, the Latin inscriptions, and the souvenirs of the past. In the alcove which at one time held a student's bed the Carolinian paused before a wood-cut; and his eyes lighted up with interest.

"That's John Wesley . . . and that's Charles Wesley . . . that's

George Whitefield . . . I don't recognize the others. Say, where is this?"

It was John Wesley's bedroom in Lincoln College, where he and a group of students had gathered together in religious discussions, thus forming the Holy Club which gave rise to the mighty movement of Methodism.

"How old was John Wesley then?"

"About twenty-six," Orr ventured.

"You mean that all that began with a group of students on their own?"

That evangelist was a comparatively unknown young man named Billy Graham who had been blessed through Orr's pre-war ministry. Before they left Lincoln College they kneeled together, to pray for another great awakening:

"O Lord," prayed Billy Graham, "do it again!"

What was this Second Evangelical Awakening[23] in Britain about which Edwin Orr wrote? In 1857, an extraordinary religious awakening began in the United States, and in 1859 it crossed the Atlantic as an active movement of the Holy Spirit in the United Kingdom. It affected all the denominations. There were a million professed conversions in Great Britain and Ireland.

Armin Gesswein, a Lutheran expert, wrote:[24]

> It seems utterly amazing that a spiritual awakening so volcanic in eruption and world-wide in its flow—and marked by some historians as the event of the century—could have become almost extinct in the mind of man! By his pen, more than any other man, Edwin Orr has kept it alive. Though that Revival is now a hundred years old, its story and testimony are among the most telling of our time.

Two Principals of Oxford Colleges, Nathaniel Micklem and Julian Thornton-Duesbery, were appointed as Orr's examiners. They told him frankly that they had no major criticisms to offer. The coveted D.Phil. degree was conferred upon Jacobus Edwinus Orr by the Vice-Chancellor of the University in June 1948. Professor Jenkins broke his rule and appeared at the ceremony in full regalia. Orr's patient helpmeet was on hand to see her husband receive the honour in scarlet and blue.

Edwin Orr rendered a real service to the whole Christian Church by writing his scholarly accounts of the Second Evan-

gelical Awakening in America and Britain. Many of the reports were buried in newspaper files not easily accessible to the public. Single volumes had been written about the Revival in certain localities. Biographies of the leaders of the Revival had also been written. Edwin Orr brought together into a compact and readable form these inspiring stories.

Orr performed another service. He took the long range view and considered the many events which happened during a period of fifty years as integral parts of a mighty movement of the Spirit.

The Oxford thesis was published by Marshall, Morgan & Scott, Ltd. of London with the title: *The Second Evangelical Awakening in Britain.* It was warmly received. *The Church of England Newspaper* regarded it as one of the best ten books published during the year 1949. Dr. William E. Sangster, President of the Methodist Conference, recommended all ministers in Conference to read the book.[25] It received similar commendation from Presbyterian and Baptist authorities. Soon it was cited in standard texts, such as Latourette.

The President of the Royal Historical Society, Professor R. Seton-Watson, personally recommended J. Edwin Orr for full Fellowship in that distinguished body of historians seriously elected as authorities in their fields.[26] Orr later became a member of the American Historical Association. Already a Fellow of the Royal Geographical and American Geographical Societies, and later of the American Scientific Affiliation, Edwin Orr was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature whose roster of Fellows has included the greatest names in English Literature.

CHAPTER 12

PREACHING UNDER FIRE

A low, whining siren began to wail. Said Gih:

"That's the signal! They're coming."

It was late in 1938, and the scene was laid in Hengyang in the embattled Province of Hunan.[1] Edwin Orr and Andrew Gih had just addressed a hospital ward full of seriously wounded soldiers.

Helter-skelter, people began running to safety. Grim-faced, civilians and soldiers, old men and little girls, women carrying babies and men with household goods ran to get away from the messengers of death fast approaching. It was pathetic to see hundreds of wounded soldiers, unable to crawl or get help, make themselves comfortable on the rough ground, stoically calm.

The evangelists reached the mission-station in time to find the mission folk getting into underground dug-outs. Orr ran to his room and stuffed film magazines into his pockets.

"Where are you going?" called Andrew Gih as Orr started to run again.

"Back to the Red Cross headquarters," said he, adding that Colonel Liu had promised to take him out to succour the wounded in bombed areas.

Andrew Gih shouted back something about people being forbidden by the military to move through the streets during an air-raid, but Orr was soon out of earshot, running rapidly down deserted streets, drawing curious looks from sentries, police and people peeping from places of safety. Colonel Liu gave him a soldier escort.

Down below, streets which had been densely packed fifteen minutes before were pervaded by a silence of death, an omen of the destruction that would soon hurtle from the skies. Above, the heavy hum of aero-engines grew deeper and deeper. Suddenly, the raiders appeared, twenty-seven planes flying in a formation

of three Vs. Orr and his escort began to run, to little avail, for the planes were nearly overhead, and were loosing their bombs.

Three or four bombs struck the ground on the west side of the river, rocking the buildings. The two men ran on. Anti-aircraft guns opened up, and, looking up in fascination, Orr noticed puffs of black smoke near the planes, the curling smoke of shells that had got the range but missed their mark. The multiple drone went steadily on. The two men were still running when the ground was shaken again.

"That's getting closer," thought Orr.

His soldier escort and he dodged into a narrow street five feet wide. The soldier shouted some warning to Orr, then flattened himself against a wall, then slipped under an archway. Orr ran on alone. He could not understand the Chinese words though he guessed their meaning.

Amid the noise of bombs and battery, Orr hammered at the mission gate and was admitted immediately by a frightened woman. Bounding upstairs with his camera, he reached the wide verandah just in time to photograph the bombing of the east side of the city. Carrump!

Thick black clouds spouted up and then wider drifts of thinner smoke. The enemy planes were bombing the airport and railway station. Fires burst out here and there, and the whole water-front had a backdrop of smoke. Danger past, the people began emerging from the near-by dug-out and stood on the veranda to watch, for it was a fascinating sight in spite of the tragedy involved. Eighty-one bombs had been dropped, each aimed at some target, for the raiders had not come five hundred miles without deadly purpose.

It was then that Orr's uniformed escort found him. Back they went through deserted streets and reached the Medical Unit in time. Putting on a Red Cross sleevelet, Orr joined the company on its errand of mercy. Colonel Liu and Edwin Orr marched at the head of a khaki-clad column of first-aid men. Police and sentries saluted.

Chinese cities in the 1930s were a haphazard mixture of east and west, of ancient and modern, occasional modern avenues displacing a warren of labyrinthine lanes. Through narrow, winding streets they marched in quick-time upon uneven pave-

ments. Already morbid curiosity was drawing crowds of people in the same direction. Here and there, the first-aid men dealt with casualties—a man with a badly gashed arm, someone with head-wounds, and others hurt by bomb splinters or shrapnel from anti-aircraft shells falling down.

Cutting in between buildings, they came across a woman wandering aimlessly and crying loudly like a hurt child. There was nothing left of her home but a pile of wreckage three feet high. Three houses had been blown up, and there was a crater more than ten feet deep where the 300 lb. bomb had left its mark. When Orr climbed into this hole, he found it twice his height and thirty feet in diameter.

Edwin Orr had expected to see freshly torn and splintered wood, but this was old-looking wreckage, for the explosion had covered everything in a layer of grey dust. It was a deadly explosion. One woman was lying under her bed with her husband and three children, and the youngest closest to her. When the bomb burst she turned to protect her baby; the husband was killed outright and so were the two older children; the baby was saved; and the badly-wounded woman gave birth to another baby at the hospital a few hours later—a fatherless, homeless, penniless, bereaved, innocent little one.

Colonel Liu was eager for Orr to photograph medical evidence of civilian injury. He called him over to the other side of the crater. A little girl of ten was crying brokenly outside a still-intact house. Some of her family had been killed. Though the evangelist knew that she could not understand him, he patted her shoulder and spoke in a comforting tone.

Orr went into the house. In the semi-darkness, he saw a woman weeping half-hysterically. A baby boy was feeding at her breast On the bed, her little three-year-old son was lying white and. still, the top of his head blown off. Her other boy, about six years old, lay dead there too. The picture engraved itself upon Edwin Orr's memory—the sucking babe, the weeping mother, and the two dead children.

"We cannot do anything for them," said Colonel Liu. Orr did not take any photographs there.

* * *

This air-raid upon Hengyang was Edwin Orr's baptism of fire and it occurred about two years before the blitz on London.[2] Why was he there?

China with its vast population and ancient culture had always attracted Edwin Orr. As a young man, Orr had wanted to go out to China as a missionary under the China Inland Mission, which impressed him much, for their faith in God to supply daily needs produced a profound effect upon Edwin Orr's thought and life. The missionaries of that Society were earnest men who identified themselves with China and who toiled hard for the spread of the Christian Gospel in that land. In different countries of the world Orr had met China Inland folk on furlough or on business and had profitted very considerably by his fellowship with them.

Again, in recent months Edwin Orr had become a great friend of Andrew Gih who had assisted him in Australia.[3] Gih was a lovable personality and his zeal for Christ was closely akin to Orr's.

In 1925, during times of tension in Shanghai, a remarkable awakening began among Chinese Christians and spread throughout the length and breadth of that vast country. One of the converts was Andrew Gih, who with Dr. John Sung, began to evangelize China by means of indigenous bands, soon to be called the Bethel Bands.

In four years, a Bethel Band travelled 50,000 miles and preached in 133 cities in a total of 3,389 meetings attended by 500,000 people, one-tenth of whom professed conversion. Edwin Orr travelled with a Bethel Band across South and West China. He was accepted as one of them.

For several years there had been bloodshed and revolution in China and conditions of life were risky and threatening. The Japanese had invaded China and life became even more difficult. But Orr was not the man to be afraid of adventures and imminent death in a country torn by war. So he and his young wife Carol had travelled from Australia across the Philippines to Hong Kong.

In the Colony of Hong Kong, Orr's meetings began on 12th October, 1938.[4] He had learned to say a few words in Chinese; the people appreciated this and were eager to listen to his

messages. Orr gave one series of addresses to the Chinese people, poor from an economic point of view but rich in deep spiritual longings. About 700 came every night to Peniel Church to hear messages translated efficiently by a Chinese girl who worked hard during the day as a nurse and interpreted in the evening.

Orr also gave addresses to English-speaking people. Of the European population of over 30,000 in Hong Kong, most were indifferent to religion. The people who attended were mostly missionaries and Christian workers, a few men in the King's uniform came, but business people were conspicuous by their absence. Evangelistic invitations resulted in a number of conversions, among them a young man named Willard Grant, who later became youth evangelist in the Mission Covenant denomination in America.

One interesting visitor to Orr's meetings was Madame H. H. Kung, wife of Dr. H. H. Kung, the war-time prime minister of China. Madame Kung was a daughter of a praying mother. There were three Soong sisters and each married a famous man. One married Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, and the youngest married Dr. Sun Yat-sen, afterwards becoming a Communist.

It was difficult to enter Free China, for the Japanese had taken Canton and cut off Hong Kong from the Interior. Orr and his Bethel friends took ship from Victoria to Kwangchowan, a port under French control.[5] They were driving a car which had been in China before, but all documents showing its entry and payment of duty had been burned in the Canton Post Office. There seemed to be no way of avoiding the payment of £500 duty, so the evangelists committed the matter to God. At the border, the commissioner of customs asked to whom the car had belonged in Canton. He found that the former owner was one of his intimate friends and that he had ridden in the car times without number. He reversed his decision and waived all duty or deposit The party continued their hazardous journey north, preaching all the way. They were stranded in no-man's land but managed to get to Kweilin unharmed.

When at long last Andrew Gih and Edwin Orr arrived at the embattled capital of Free China, Chungking, they were invited to meet Dr. H. H. Kung, the war-time Prime Minister. Dr. Kung gave Orr a message for the Christian world, which Orr

passed on through the columns of the *Christian Herald*, for which he reported his observations:

> China, as a nation, is very grateful for all that Christians have done for her. We especially appreciate the self-sacrifice of the missionaries of the Christian gospel.
>
> But just now the people of China are disappointed with the attitude of professedly Christian countries. Cowed by brute force, they have lost their courage in the face of evil aggression.
>
> If a fire breaks out and seizes hold of your neighbour's property, it is all very well to say "It does not concern me." Who knows that the wind may change direction, and your own house may be involved in the conflagration?
>
> China will fight on. To the surprise of the world and the consternation of her enemy, we have been stubbornly waging a defensive war, undismayed by the temporary loss of any city, unbroken in spirit, united as a people—as never before.[6]

Orr ventured a reply, and told Dr. Kung that, as one born in the United Kingdom but with family ties in the United States, he was ashamed of the obvious selfishness shown by the professedly Christian countries in the present trouble. But, he added, as a Christian he was not surprised at the lack of Christian principle shown by them in international affairs.

"Our so-called Christian countries," said Orr "are not really Christian at all. They possess only a minority, numbering less than ten per cent, who profess to be born-again believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. The rest of the people are certainly under Christian influence. But if the truth can be told, both the great English-speaking nations have backslidden from God. And until there is a religious awakening to bring them back, there is little hope of seeing national or international righteousness.

"Nevertheless, I would remind Your Excellency that the bulk of the people who are individually and collectively giving disinterested help—caring for war orphans, helping the refugees, giving medical aid—are Christians ... And no matter what their nation may or may not do, they will go on helping the people of China for the sake of Christ."

"That is so," said Dr. Kung, "and we have nothing but our heartfelt thanks for them."

Dr. Kung then asked about Edwin Orr's books. The conversation was quite warm and cordial now, so with a knowing glance at Andrew Gih, Orr began to tell his distinguished listener what great things God had done for him. His response showed his Christian background, for he too was a believer.

Then the Prime Minister said:

"You have not learned any Chinese yet?"

"Oh yes," said Orr, "I have learned a little."

Orr paused and then repeated what he told the street urchins in obscure villages:

"Ngo sih yang kwei-tse."

Dr. Kung laughed heartily for Orr had just explained that he was a foreign devil. Andrew Gih added that he was an Irish devil.[7] Thus came to an end a happy half-hour's interview. Orr went on with his united campaign for Chungking churches.

With an optimistic note, Edwin Orr closed his book *Through Blood and Fire in China*. Then the religious situation in China was quite hopeful.[8] After the Boxer trouble the Church had grown in numbers. Christianity came to be appreciated. Chinese authorities were friendly to Christians because they respected them and not only to make amends for all that had happened during the great Boxer Massacres. Ordinary people were drawn to the Church all over China for no material or social benefit but because in the chaotic conditions of the country their spiritual hunger grew. Life was uncertain. Revolts and repressions were the order of the day. So the Chinese people were eager to hear the gospel.

One night, sleeping under the stars in Kwangsi, Edwin Orr reflected upon the amazing patience and fortitude of the Chinese common people under fire.

"They are wonderful people, Andrew," he said. "But I am glad that they are on the side of right in the present struggle. What a problem they would be if they were on the side of wrong."

Little did Orr or Andrew Gih think that one day the latter would be a refugee from a Communist government in China. China's National Government became tired and corrupt. The Chinese Communists took over province after province by

military force, winning the support of the masses by promising better things, which they performed in part. Then they fastened dictatorship upon the masses.

* * *

The American and Australian forces landed on Morotai on 15th September 1944, much to the enemy's surprise. Morotai is an island off Halmahera, a larger island between Celebes and New Guinea. Chaplain Orr went in on a Flying Fortress before the engineers had extended the air-strip to full length. There he found Advanced Headquarters of the U.S. Thirteenth Air Force, and there reported, spending a month under fire.[9]

The allied forces dug in. Japanese planes in nuisance raids interrupted their sleep as many as five times a night. Japanese infantry harassed the outposts day and night from jungle points. But MacArthur's forces secured the island as a stepping stone on the way to the Philippines.

On Morotai were a score of evangelistically minded chaplains. When the Senior Chaplain of the Thirteenth Air Force appointed Orr as the Chaplain-at-Large, the other chaplains made the most of his services and talents.

Orr had an unforgettable series of meetings with Chaplain Moorehead and the men of his Fighter Group. The chapel was packed, and the spirit of the audience was excellent. Orr talked on that tremendous theme, the Existence of God, to learn at the conclusion that he had spoken for 121 minutes. He gave an invitation, and the first man to rise publicly was the major commanding the local Fighter Squadron, till then an avowed agnostic, but so thoroughly convinced that he now decided to declare his new-found faith in God, accepting Christ as Saviour. Others followed.

In later years, Orr often spoke along this line and God blessed it abundantly. He realized so clearly the need for such pre-evangelistic talks in these days of materialism and unbelief.

* * *

It had been a long way from the bombing of Hengyang to the invasion of Morotai. For a year (1939) Edwin Orr had shown his films of the war in China to audiences of church people in

Canada and the United States, raising the support for a war-orphanage in Tuyin in Kweichow thereby.[10]

At the end of 1942, Orr entered the Chaplain School at Harvard University. His first tour of duty took him to Westover Field in Massachusetts where he became base chaplain.[11] From there he went to Jefferson Barracks in Missouri where the candidates for pilots and navigators were given their basic training. After a year, Chaplain Orr shipped his wife and two small children off to the family farm in South Africa, while he sailed on a troopship from San Francisco, making the first landfall at Guadalcanal.

Orr visited Milne Bay, Oro Bay and the base at Finchhafen in eastern (Australian) New Guinea. At the latter place, while waiting for assignment, he busied himself preaching for other chaplains. Richard E. Holz (a Salvationist in service) wrote:

> ... he agreed to conduct evangelistic services for me at "Liberation Chapel". These proved very successful and soon Orr was preaching to 800 men at the Sunday night services. There were many conversions. One of the most dramatic was the occasion when Orr gave his classic talk on the third commandment. When an appeal was made, an estimated eighty men stood to their feet solemnly to seek One Who could cleanse hearts from this impurity—a touching scene, for these were the sweating, swearing engineers of airfield construction fame, the pride and joy of the Army for their ruggedness and ingenuity.
>
> As a result of this evangelistic campaign, it was my privilege to link up many of these men with the church of their choosing. Some of the men were baptized in the ocean on the site of the Scarlet Beach where so many Americans and Australians mingled their blood till the waters ran red in the original assault. These new Christian soldiers are still with me and they bear witness to the salvation of our Lord Jesus Christ.[12]

Chaplain Orr continued west through Hollandia, Biak and Noemfoor in western (Netherlands) New Guinea. Not only did he serve his own American comrades, but wherever possible he went out of his way to preach for the Australians also. Bill Clack, later Dean of Melbourne Bible Institute, said:

> ... he was not a very impressive figure in tropical uniform,

but I invited him to address the fellowship meeting in the Y.M.C.A. hut. On the Sunday night, the hut was packed out and crowds of fellows stood around outside the hut to listen. The service lasted two and a half hours, and not one man moved away in all that time. For about one hour and three-quarters, Chaplain Orr spoke of the fact of God. It was the clearest, most pungent presentation of the subject I have ever listened to, illustrated by apt, witty stories that held the interest and attention of the men for every moment on that hot, muggy night; and it was a convincing message. His sane, reasonable appeal brought over forty men to their feet to acknowledge their desire to accept Christ as Saviour. Many of these were officers in the R.A.A.F., many of them pilots and navigators. Several of those men who stood on that night have since gone to be with Christ.[13]

For several months, Orr served as chaplain of the 347th Fighter Group on an island off Sansapor in the Vogelkop of New Guinea. Attendance at Sunday services built up to 6,000 a month though the strength of the groups there was 1,500. There were many converts. Orr even went on infantry patrol and (in a rescue plane) on a bombing run, and the pilots and crews responded in attendance. It was a happy tour of service.

Some of the converts decided to start taking correspondence courses for the ministry and the mission-field.[14] One came seeking baptism, and Chaplain Orr had the joy of baptizing him at Middelburg Island. This sergeant insisted upon speaking to the men after his baptism. He made a profound impression as he stood dripping in the shallow water, telling his comrades:

"This is the happiest day of my life, fellows. I want you to pray for me, for I am going to become a missionary after the war, God helping me!"

Later he went to the jungles of Ecuador.

On one occasion, a party of savages in canoes were blown off course on to Middelburg. They were dirty, diseased, thieving cannibals, no menace to well-armed troops but a cause of sudden disgust on the part of the men. Said one to the Chaplain:

"They are no better than animals. What would your missionaries do for them?"

Chaplain Orr arranged to bring over a party of 100 converted

Papuans led by an Ambonese pastor. It made a powerful impression.

The upsurge of missionary interest was the most gratifying feature of Orr's last couple of months in New Guinea. A missionary programme promoted by Dr. Oswald J. Smith in The Peoples Church, Toronto (where he had been associate pastor) had made a profound impression on him. Though not sure how such a plan would work in the jungle battlefields, Chaplain Orr decided to emulate Oswald Smith. It worked. In three months, the airmen gave 1,000 dollars for missionary work in China and the Indies, yet not a single appeal or collection or offering was made, simply the preaching of the word of God on the missionary task of the church.

These men had learned that missionary work overseas required real heroism, real sacrifice. And when told of missionaries so poor that they could not afford mosquito nets, they responded. Their giving amounted to ten dollars per head. One at a time, men would come into Orr's office, open up their pocket-books, and quietly give some money for missions, and not a few gave as much as fifty dollars to make up for back time in which they had neglected tithing for God's work.

Chaplain Orr kept a careful account of their gifts, and forwarded the money to six Australian-based missionary societies working in New Guinea.[15] Some money was earmarked for China, and this was sent through U.S. Army chaplaincy channels to the Bethel Mission in Chungking.

Time came for the Fighter Group to move to the invasion of the Philippines. Their mighty convoy of ships moved into the Mindanao Sea and there Orr saw a landing ship blow up, torpedoed. The island of Leyte had been seized. Soon Orr was ashore on Mindoro, nearer Manilla. He had already learned the way to combat the tension that builds up during pre-landing bombardment.

Eventide

I sit on the deck of a landing ship.
  On a metal rack rest my heel and my hip,
And I watch the sun splash the Sulu Sea,
  As the day is done for nature and me.

On the Philippine hills fall the shades of night,
The firmament fills with its star-pointed light;
But my heart isn't here—it is far away
Remembering you, dear, at the close of day.

There's a bomber's moon on a target bright,
And a raid too soon may disturb the night;
I give it no thought while my mind is afar
For I'm thinking of naught wondering how you are.

God bless you, my dear, while you're all alone:
May you know no fear and no sorrow own,
No dread make you fret, nor care make you weep,
When your sun is set and you turn to sleep.

I'm lonely, 'tis true, but I feel no sting
What tomorrow may brew or the next day bring;
There's a war to be won and a job to do—
But when day is done, my thoughts turn to you.

Do I need to say that I love you still?
Yes, come what may and I always will!
If I live or die, I'll be glad you knew
That the evening sky made me think of you.

Edwin Orr "took a few chances" during days of combat. Knowing that American forces were driving down from Lingayen Gulf toward Manila where many of his friends were, Chaplain Orr asked his C.O. for a verbal order to permit him to fly to Leyte to meet the Theatre Chaplain. As Orr had hoped, the Chaplain was away, so Orr hitched a ride on the "wrong" plane, one ultimately bound for his station but flying to Manila to pick up desperately wounded men.

When the pilot set the chaplain down at Clark Field, the Japanese held one end of it and the Yanks the other, with all sorts of metal pieces filling the air between them. Chaplain Orr hitched a ride by jeep into the Battle of Manila, worked as a hospital chaplain that week, and was one of the first chaplains into the Santo Tomas University internment camp, where missionaries were dying slowly of starvation. Orr had brought

"missionary funds" with him for relief of such distress. His plane took off from a wide street, Quezon Boulevard. When Orr reported back for duty, he made full confession to his commanding officer.[16]

A heavy naval bombardment preceded their landing at Puerto Princesa, where the enemy took fifty helpless prisoners and soaked them in petrol and burned them alive.

Orr spent six months on the island of Palawan, which lies north of Borneo. He often feasted his eyes on its lovely scenery. But fatigue and strain were beginning to tell on his health. He recalled:

> After the first two months on Palawan, I began to feel quite depressed. In the first place, I was run down in health bodily, for I began to suffer from insomnia, loss of appetite, loss of weight, and general tiredness. Likewise, I was run down mentally, for the petty vexations of military life had begun to tell on me after a year in the tropics. Again, I was run down spiritually, for the enforced association with profanity, lewd conversation and drunkenness hurts any decent man's spirit.[17]

One night the Group Ambulance picked Chaplain Orr up unconscious on the highway. It was two in the morning. For his insomnia, the squadron doctor had prescribed the sedative usually given pilots suffering from combat fatigue. One pill had no effect. The third put Orr to sleep in an inconvenient position. Later, Chaplain Orr was hospitalized for ten days with a fever "of unknown origin".

The Group was preparing to participate in the invasion of Japan when the tragic dropping of the atomic bombs upon Hiroshima and Nagasaki brought the War in the Pacific to an end. When Orr reached Tokyo, the whole central city was a shambles. B-29 bombers had destroyed it utterly.

Chaplain Orr met Dr. Toyohiko Kagawa in Tokyo during the first weeks of the American occupation. So nearly blind that he had to hold his Testament within a couple of inches of his eyes, Dr. Kagawa was nevertheless as busy as the busiest in Japan. There was a long line of hunger-smitten Japanese outside his office. He had not much time to spare, and conscience would not permit Orr to trespass.

The most striking thing that Dr. Kagawa said to me was that he felt that the current crisis in Japan presented an opportunity for real evangelism even more than for social reconstruction. He further said that as soon as he fulfilled his commitments as adviser to the Japanese Cabinet on food problems, he intended to devote all his energies to evangelism.[18]

Chaplain Orr was overdue for repatriation to the United States, but, because his family awaited him in Durban and because he wanted to study at Oxford University, he requested inactivation from military service in the Philippines.

He hitch-hiked to Tokyo, thence via Korea and China to Calcutta, thence via Malaya and Ceylon to Bombay, thence westwards to Cairo. The way was packed with adventures.[19] He rode south from Cairo with the R.A.F. through the Sudan and Kenya, arriving at Durban before his cablegram came. After a happy couple of months recuperating at the Carlson family farm on Oribi, he regained the thirty pounds weight that he had lost.

Arrangements made for his wife and children to go by military troopship to England, Orr went north through the Congo and West Africa, from Dakar across the Sahara to England. His long hitch-hike of 24,000 miles had taken six months.

CHAPTER 13

QUADRANGLE AND CAMPUS

During his first two years of ministry in the countries of Europe, Edwin Orr had no experience of ministering to students. But he was of college age and had a warm sympathy for young people. There is no published record of his having talked to university students in his first two years. It was at the end of 1935, in the United States, that he began to find opportunity in the colleges and other institutions of higher learning.

Abraham Vereide, founder of the International Christian Leadership movement, welcomed Orr to Seattle late in 1935 and accompanied him to the University of Washington campus. He observed:[1]

> It was a singular thing to meet on the university campus with the fine body of university students to hear Mr. Orr's fearless presentation of God's plan of redemption through Jesus Christ, given with a clarity, tenderness and power which, gripped hearts and led students to a decision.

Sterling Keyes, a student leader, commented that a number of the students were taken by surprise when they realized the nature of the series. Some came, as in a speech class, to criticize, but remained to profess faith.

Edwin Orr spoke at other university gatherings in the United States in 1936.

In 1936, Edwin Orr addressed meetings in the Universities of New Zealand and Australia—the Evangelical Union in the University of Sydney reported a breath of revival; but Orr spoke not only to Christian students on the Christian life, but he used somewhat sensational methods in reaching the crowd of unbelievers in the colleges, indicated by a student report in facetious strain:[2]

A Sheep in Wolf's Clothing

The University feels that it has been taken in, as indeed

it has. For days our notice boards have been aflame with the news that one Edwin Orr was to address us on "My Adventures in Soviet Russia: Why I am a Revolutionist!" Of course, the notices did say that the speaker was sponsored by the Adelaide University Christian Fellowship, but then we all thought that that body, inspired by a desire to hear all sides of a question, had invited a travelling comrade to come along and give us "the oil straight from the gusher". The Students' League was all agog; the Politics Club a little restive on Monday morning.

The Rennie Theatre was three parts full. Even the remarks of the Chairman (the Hon. Sir David Gordon) left the general expectancy undiminished. Then Orr himself rose to speak. The Irish wit called forth much laughter. The admission that "I am a regular Bolshi", if somewhat flippant, raised hopes even higher.

The report recounted the utter astonishment felt by the students as the evangelist delivered his address, telling of his experience with God. In facetious student strain, it concluded:[3]

> Then Mr. Orr told us what sort of a revolutionist he himself was. Revolution he defined as a complete change from one state to another. He—like Shylock—wanted from each of us the pound of flesh which included the heart, but only as a loan. The heart he would return completely rebored and decarbonized, and so the revolution would be effected. The world would be well again with sin thus extracted. This evangelical revivalist-revolutionary displayed a whole-hearted faith in the authority of the Biblical text. We may say quite definitely that Mr. Orr never at any time misrepresented himself or his attitude, but we shall in the future treat circumspectly anything bearing the initials AUCF.

In these reports of student meetings in Canada, United States, New Zealand, Australia and South Africa, there is no hint of the ministry of popular apologetics which Orr was later to exercise upon student platforms. For this development, one must look to his military experience.

After serving a tour of duty as base chaplain of Westover Field in Massachusetts, Chaplain Orr was assigned to Jefferson

Barracks near St. Louis in Missouri. His family accompanied him there and lived outside the base.

At Jefferson Barracks, there were sometimes as many as 68,000 men and seventeen chaplains were ministering to them. one of them Jewish, four Roman Catholic and a dozen Protestant.[4]

The aviation cadets to whom Orr ministered had completed a first-rate high school or junior college curriculum. Many of them had received university education. Some were Masters of Arts or Science. A few were Doctors of Philosophy. These cadets in training at Jefferson Barracks were of the intellectual type, not easily swayed by emotions. Orr was delighted with the prospect of working with men of this calibre. His own recent theological studies had given him a new confidence. He felt that, first, he had to get the men to attend a church service; second, to get the men to make church attendance a habit; and third, to preach the Word so attractively that they would respond themselves and bring others in.

Orr had been an evangelist all these years. He realized the supreme need for this work and also God's call to him to engage in it. Now he was free to concentrate upon winning men for Christ. It was reported that in his ministry at Jefferson Barracks 587 men decided to follow Christ. These results filled him with gratitude as well as humility. But he was unable to do more than help the converts for the limited period of their training.

A clever musician, proceeding from a Master's to a Doctor's degree in music when the draft overtook him had been playing the piano for Orr's predecessor at the chapel. He was transferred to hospital for treatment of migraine headaches. It being a long walk from the hospital he notified Chaplain Orr of the termination of his services.[5] To Orr's surprise, he kept coming back to play, the messages claiming his attention even more than the music, for he had been the organist in a fashionable Illinois church where conversion was never mentioned.

One evening, the pianist came to announce that he was being discharged as incurable. He added:

"Chaplain, I have been following every sermon you have preached, and I think I have grasped the idea, or plan, or whatever you call it, of salvation. I never knew before that I needed to be saved. Of course, I knew that I was a sinner, but not a

very bad one. Now, I wonder if you would mind talking to me about my spiritual state?"

"As long as you like," said Orr, sitting down.

"I believe that Christ some way or other is the Saviour of sinners. I have repented of my sins, and will be glad to give them up. But I have a will of my own, and I have plans for my own life. Now, how do I know what God may require me to do, or how do I know that He won't interfere with my plans, for instance, music?"

"Do you believe that God's plan is best?"

"Yes! But I am only human, and would like to know what's in the future before I commit myself."

"Listen," said the Chaplain, "when I raised my right hand and took the oath, and was expected to swear to obey the officers placed in command over me, did I say 'Colonel, you've got to explain to me first what you are going to do with me, and what part of the front you'll send me to!' I would have been told that I had to promise to obey before any plans could be revealed to me. Do you see?"

Light began to dawn upon his face.

"Well," he said, after a long pause, "there's nothing else to do but to make the vow, is there?"

They knelt in prayer. He committed his will.

Meanwhile, attendances at all services grew.[6] On Wednesday night following, the crowd of new men was so large that they had to sit down in the open field in the dark, the chapel being too small, while Chaplain Orr and his assistant went off to look for a lantern. When they returned fifteen minutes after starting time, they were surprised to see someone already addressing the men. It was the newly converted pianist, who wound up in mild confusion when he saw his Chaplain. He saluted in a rather embarrassed way, and said:

"Sir, I hope you'll forgive the presumption. I came to say good-bye to you, and when I found this crowd of men waiting for you, I felt I simply had to tell them how happy I have been since Sunday night."

At Jefferson Barracks, thanks to Orr's effort to reach the incoming trainees, together with the preaching of the Word in a way designed to create and maintain interest, attendances of

Protestant men in one area reached an all-time high of 1,522. This appeared to be an impossible figure, for of 3,000 assigned to Chaplain Orr, 1,500 were given week-end passes and left the field. Then it was discovered that many men were drawing Sunday passes valid from 6 a.m. but waiting on the post for the services, or going to town and returning with friends.

Attendance actually reached the point where it doubled the attendance at the Sunday night cinema, and the Special Services officer complained to the Commanding Officer about the competition. Orr was delighted to hear of the complaint:[7]

> One of the biggest thrills of this religious awakening occurred when we drew twice the number attending the Sunday evening movie in Theater No. 1 which served the groups in our chapel area and two other areas besides. We had 750 men that night in the Wing Bowl.

This kind of work, which was pure evangelism of an elementary sort, produced vital apologetics. The lessons Orr learned at Westover Field and in Jefferson Barracks were applied throughout his military chaplaincy with great success. He used the same methods in reaching German prisoners of war at Oxford in 1947.

* * *

After his return from Oxford in 1948, Edwin Orr began to devote considerable time to primary evangelistic work among non-Christian students. A new spirit of enquiry and receptiveness to the Christian Gospel was now active in arts as well as in theological colleges. Liberal theologians confessed that Modernism was bankrupt. Philosophers already accepted the fact that Humanism had its severe limits and some of them (such as C. E. M. Joad) had become Christians.

In this atmosphere of open-minded enquiry and earnest search for truth, Edwin Orr delighted to exercise his ministry, for his recent work as a post-graduate student in a first-rate university had taught him the value of scientific research and had given him a new confidence in dealing with alert and critical youth.

As an Air Force Chaplain and then at the University he had come to know intimately all sorts and conditions of men and

had realized the force of the moral and intellectual problems with which they were struggling. His love for young people, his fund of stories, his quick wit, his friendly manners, his wide interests and other social gifts, stood him in good stead.

It so happened that Orr was invited to join a team of speakers at the Religious Emphasis Week at the University of Washington in February 1949.[8] The student who had been placed in charge of the lecture arrangements appeared to be out of sympathy with evangelistic meetings of any kind, even of the serious lecture type. Consequently, this student took it upon himself to arrange that the visiting rabbi, priest, and minister would lecture in the Hub, the centre of student activities, while the avowed evangelist would be permitted to hold forth off campus in Eagleson Hall where evangelism would prove "less academically embarrassing". What happened is shown in the Chairman's report:[9]

> The Religious Council of the University of Washington invited Dr. Orr to lecture 12th–17th February 1950. Dr. Orr arrived a week early and commenced an unofficial, unadvertised series of meetings on campus for Christians for the deepening of spiritual life. Soon extra chairs had to be brought into the classrooms. The second week, the official series began in the Eagleson Hall but the accommodation was so overcrowded with students sitting on the floor and standing in the doorways that it became necessary to move to larger and larger lecture halls on campus, each one becoming crowded to capacity. The approach was evidential, dealing with questions of faith, philosophy, science and reason, described by the student "Daily" as "religion in easy-to-take doses". Evenings were spent in the fraternities and sororities. It became necessary to continue for another week, with classroom meetings for skeptics on campus and an evening series in University Presbyterian Church. The meetings ended with overflowing crowds; and a great number of young people declared their faith in Jesus Christ. More than 20,000 aggregate attended the lectures in Seattle.

Moving from Oregon and Washington to British Columbia, Orr lectured in Vancouver at the University of British Columbia.[10] A prominent article by a student columnist in the daily *Ubyssey*

arising out of an earlier blast he had made at the local Student Christian Movement referred to orthodox Christianity as comic opera, saying that it was not right for the sawdust trail boys to upset other folks' lives with unproven revelation of dubious interpretation. It ended with the paragraph:

> The only way, then, to get rid of the comic opera is to work out something new. We have got to find a better social philosopher than Jesus Christ.

The Student Christian Movement, representing the liberal tradition in organized Christianity, and the Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, representing the conservative, both agreed that this blast from a rationalist deserved an answer from the Christians as Christians. Together therefore they challenged the columnist to debate his last sentence.

The debate was held in an engineering lecture hall, the largest available, and it was utterly overcrowded by faculty and students, who sat even on the floor space and stood out in the corridors. It was a friendly debate. Edwin Orr's opponent began by defining the topic as the Social Philosophy of Jesus Christ, declaring that it was difficult to decide just what Christ taught seeing that the New Testament Gospels were written four hundred years after Christ died. This was not hard to invalidate, and Orr did it gently.

It was enough to show what the evangelical Christians had done for the working man, what Lord Shaftesbury had done for social reform, what Kier Hardie had done for Labour, what all Christians had done in initiating schools, colleges and universities until the enlightened State took over the responsibility, what evangelicals had done in prison reform, what Wilberforce and Finney and Livingstone had done in the anti-slavery movement, what Christians had done in starting hospitals and aslyums and leprosaria until State enterprise had followed suit, and what Christianity had done for women and children.[11]

The opposition's case was so weak that Orr had to be doubly careful and courteous to avoid a swing-over of popular sympathy to the underdog. The debate concluded with an explanation of the dynamic of the Christian faith. It was pre-arranged that no vote would be taken, so there was no visible result of the debate; but a number of men at the next evangelistic meeting

requested spiritual counsel, having been moved by the debate.

In the 1950s, Edwin Orr visited the Southern Hemisphere countries of South Africa and New Zealand and Australia. In these countries there developed a ministry among high school students which surprised and delighted the visitor.

Edwin Orr often said that he had found the intelligence of the high school senior in British countries equal to that of the college student in the United States. Indeed, high school seniors in the British countries are admitted as American sophomores when they complete their year and transfer to an American university.

In March 1953, the Principal of Rondebosch Boys' High School near Capetown invited Orr to address a school assembly on "Science and Faith". The response was so enthusiastic that a voluntary assembly was called, attended by the whole body of students, at which Orr explained the Christian faith. One hundred and fifteen lads requested a measure of counsel. Their housemaster, Stan Edkins, reported six months later that 100 of the inquirers were attending a weekly class of instruction. Five years later, Principal Edkins reported in retrospect that the great majority of these inquirers had continued in the faith and that of these a number had commenced study for the ministry of the churches.[12]

As a result of the Rondebosch meetings, school after school opened its doors to the lecturer. The first meeting in each high school was an official assembly arranged by the Principal, but the next was voluntary, attended by the school chaplains or interested clergy, attracting from 60 per cent to 100 per cent of school enrolment. Invitations came from both Afrikaans and English-speaking high schools. In all, there were more than 10,000 inquirers registered, but these included four categories—Christians making a first public profession of faith, the lukewarm returning to active profession, the uncertain entering into assurance of salvation, and the hitherto uninterested professing Christ.

The Reverend Edgar Wilkinson, President of the Methodist Conference of South Africa in 1958, commented thus after five years:[13]

This ministry met with remarkable response, and there are many young people throughout South Africa (some still

meeting regularly in Bible class) who made their decision for Christ as a result of Dr. Orr's appeal to their mind and heart and will.

In New Zealand, the Principals of High Schools opened their doors for similar lectures by Edwin Orr in 1956. The Principal of Southland Technical College in Invercargill wrote to his fellow Headmasters as follows:[14]

> His address was one of the most worth while from every point of view that I have ever heard from a visitor to a school. It held the lively and responsive interest of every pupil present, and won the appreciative commendation of all the teachers.

Meetings were also arranged in the various centres of the University of New Zealand. Prof. E. M. Blaiklock reported in *Christianity Today*:[15]

> It is natural that I should first commend Dr. Orr as a student's evangelist, for such preachers are a rare breed. Christian colleagues in universities and other institutions of higher learning will, I am sure, understand that relief with which a visitor is welcomed who can preach to students with a clear understanding of their problems and prejudices, without slurring the essentials of the faith and without embarrassing academic sponsors by painful anecdote, arrogant dogmatism or irrelevance. Orr clearly understands students. There is light and shade in his preaching and he is rich in relevant anecdote, but the solid biblical foundation in which he builds his appeal is always evident and ably laid. The response is heartening.

Edwin Orr continued this type of ministry in Australia in 1957, beginning in Melbourne High School, whose principal, the famous cricketer, W. M. Woodfull, informed his colleagues:[16]

> Dr. J. Edwin Orr was recently invited to speak to the Assembly of Students at Melbourne High School. Throughout the address, he held the interest of the students by his informative, thought-provoking discourse on his philosophy of life. It was in no way sectarian in approach. It was quite apparent that he was at home in speaking to young men, and I have nothing but praise for a highly entertaining, educational, sound yet informal address.

The opportunity in Melbourne was followed by open doors

throughout the Commonwealth of Australia. A year later, despite a lack of proper follow-up arrangements at the time, the Navigator organization which provided inquirers with study materials reported a 250 per cent rise in enrolment in instruction courses, chiefly of students.[17]

Orr also ministered in the Universities of the eastern states, from Brisbane to Adelaide, under auspices of the conservative Inter-Varsity Fellowship or the more liberal Student Christian Movement. One such series of meetings resulted in a third of those attending notifying the secretary of the student organization in writing that they had made a clear-cut decision for Christ. Some of these meetings were small, others overflowing.

From Australia, Edwin Orr moved to India. While Bishop of Coimbatore, I had occasion to observe Edwin Orr's methods with students, and I reported at the time, in 1958:[18]

> After Dr. Edwin Orr's arrival, meetings were quickly arranged in four of the colleges at his request—the Government Polytechnic, the Government Arts College, the P.S.G. Arts College, the Government College of Technology. More than 1,000 students in all attended these meetings. In view of the fact that many young people in India do not believe in God or religion because of the widespread communistic or secularistic influences of today, Dr. Orr's approach riveted the attention of his student audiences. He invited them to attend the later meetings in the Stadium to hear the gospel message and hundreds came.

So effective became Orr's ministry to students that he began to devote his time more and more to reaching the universities and colleges. He did not wish to lose contact with the churches. He found also that student ministry was financially unremunerative to the point of hardship for his family dependents. So he hit upon a plan of combining ministry in colleges with ministry in the near-by churches that naturally showed interest in reaching their neighbours on campus.

Thus, in 1962, Orr was preaching in the Waco churches as well as conducting meetings in the oldest university in Texas, Baylor University. A programme was arranged by the Chancellor, Dr. W. R. White, who reported to International Christian Leadership:[19]

Dr. J. Edwin Orr was with us at Baylor University delivering addresses and conducting conferences for a week.

He was well received by faculty and students. His approach was most effective. His messages were rich in content and most stimulating to all. He met problems and difficulties facing students with intelligence and spiritual depth. He was perfectly at home in the academic atmosphere.

Dr. Orr strengthened the faith of many and stimulated the full commitment of many others. He presented the great verities in a most clarifying and convincing manner.

In 1963, Edwin Orr was lecturing in Eugene at the invitation of the University of Oregon and in Tempe at the invitation of the Arizona State University. An interdenominational student group at the University of Minnesota in Duluth received a much-prized official award from the University as a result of sponsoring a series of lectures in which Orr's ministry was eminently successful. As a result, Edwin Orr extended his Mission to the Academic Community under the auspices of International Christian Leadership indefinitely.

To follow up the interest of the students in his popular apologetics, Edwin Orr made tape recordings of his most popular addresses, had them transcribed and edited into book form, entitling the production *Faith That Makes Sense*. It was published in Britain by Marshall, Morgan & Scott of London and in America by the Judson Press of Valley Forge, and translated into other languages immediately.

CHAPTER 14

STUDENT AWAKENINGS

On 13th January 1936, Edwin Orr gave an address on Spiritual Revival in the Coliseum in Chicago to more than 10,000 people. Earlier that day, he addressed the chapel assembly of Wheaton College, pouring out his heart to them on the subject of Revival. Of the two meetings, the smaller one bore more fruit in his life and the lives of other Christians. He left a group of Wheaton students ardently praying for awakening on the campus.[1]

Several weeks later, Orr received a telegram from the president of Wheaton College, J. Oliver Buswell, announcing that "a remarkable revival independent of human instruments" had stirred the Wheaton College community.[2] Orr returned to Wheaton to learn everything he could from it. What he heard and saw profoundly impressed him and drove him to renewed prayer.

A godly man, Dr. Robert C. McQuilken, had observed the remarkable workings of the Spirit at Wheaton College, and, returning to Columbia Bible College in South Carolina to share the news with faculty and students, he invited Edwin Orr to visit the college. The same phenomenon of Revival was reported at Columbia during Orr's meetings there in February. McQuilken stated:

> There were prepared hearts when Edwin Orr came on February 24. But scarcely did we expect what happened that very night; the regular weekly prayer meeting adjourned to a larger hall at 8 where over 400 crowded to hear the message. The message was followed by confessions and prayers that lasted until midnight. Next morning, the 9 o'clock chapel scheduled to close at 9.20 ran through the morning with thanksgiving and intercession. There was no doubt that revival had come.
>
> Mr. Orr's was a Spirit-guided leadership. Wisdom and spiritual maturity rarely belong to youth, but are natural

results of following the Spirit's leading and these were manifest as he wisely guided both in the confessions and the intercession that followed. There was no false emotionalism nor were there any unseemly confessions.

The following Monday was the monthly day of prayer, and not in the twelve years of the life of the school has there been a prayer day filled with such power and evident presence of the Lord. . . . The work has deepened, with a new spirit pervading the dormitories, classrooms and prayer meetings, and, best of all, new power in Christian service. Constant reports come of a completely changed atmosphere in the classes and meetings led by the students, with many decisions for Christ.[3]

There were similar student awakenings during 1936 in the United States, accounts being published of movements in colleges from Los Angeles to Boston. Orr was happily involved in each one of them except the Wheaton movement which seemed to trigger the others.

The special features of the 1936 awakenings in American Christian colleges included unusual prayer, a great expectancy, faithful preaching, a personal challenge, deep conviction, a thorough confession, immediate restitution, certain forgiveness, contagious joy, happy testimony, renewed power and tender concern for others—according to a study of the reports made twenty years later.[4]

What impressed Orr most of all about these movements was their effect upon unbelievers. He saw the results of a dedicated evangelism on the unbelieving majority in universities during organized campaigns. He saw these results far exceeded by the impact of the testimony of truly revived Christian students on their neighbours. He was convinced that revival was the better way. What might not result if revival among Christian students was harnessed to effective evangelism?

Yet one can find no record of a student revival in Orr's ministry for the dozen years following. Only in America is there such a profusion of degree-granting colleges that are communities of believers, more or less.

It was not until Edwin Orr had completed his research at Oxford University that he was to see the next stage of development in his ministry to students. In 1948, Orr conducted a

preaching mission at the University of Wisconsin in which there were a few professions of faith but no great outbreak of religious fervour.

In the meantime, Orr became involved in the Ministers' Prayer Fellowship movement led by Armin Gesswein. Dr. Paul S. Rees and leaders of the Ministers' Spiritual Advance Committee of the fellowship in Minneapolis-St. Paul sponsored a retreat in the below-zero cold of New Year 1949 at Camp Ihduhapi near Minneapolis.[5]

A Lutheran pastor there asked Orr's opinion:

"When the other pastors and I were revived in spirit last October, we returned to our churches expecting to see real revival in our respective congregations. So far we have seen an increase in the prayer meetings, greater attendance upon the preaching on Sundays, a small but definite number of conversions, and other blessings for which we thank God. But that is not what we are praying for; we want to see something sweeping our congregations."

He stated the point of his question:

"On the basis of your study of the movements of the past, how long would you say we shall have to wait before we experience the reviving of our congregations?"

"I believe," said Orr, "that the Revival for which we pray has begun, but that it is developing by stages. To my mind, the next step will be the reviving of Christian students, in the theological seminaries and Christian colleges and secular universities. Christian students are among the leaders of the coming generation."

Edwin Orr felt so convinced by the Spirit that this was a prophetic insight that he decided to go to Minneapolis and spend a couple of months in student work exclusively, with the assured support of 100 pastors.

In California, he took counsel of the group of student leaders, and as a result of these contacts, two young men, William Dunlap and Jack Franck of Los Angeles decided to drive the 2,300 miles from Los Angeles to Minneapolis with the express purpose of sharing in a long-prayed-for college awakening. Their prayers and Orr's prophecy were fulfilled.

Early in 1950, newspapers throughout the United States spread

highly sensational stories on their front pages telling of extraordinary religious fervour at Wheaton College in Illinois, Asbury College in Kentucky, and at the other schools. The national magazines, such as *Time*, *Newsweek* and *Life* carried friendly editorials as well as the news.[6]

None of these journals were aware that this movement had been going on for ten months, but one or two discerning Christian newspapers had reported the beginnings of the movement in 1949. An editorial in *The Sunday School Times* dated November 1950 traced the movement back to the Bethel College Revival in Minnesota, as did both Hoffman's and Gingrich's books on Revival.[1]

In April of 1949, Dunlap and Franck and Billy Graham and Edwin Orr pledged their prayers in a little midnight meeting in Graham's office in Minneapolis just before a first student campaign.

Orr's first invitation came from Bethel College, a liberal arts college at St. Paul, Minnesota, fully accredited. Dr. Henry C. Wingblade, its president, was a man of God; members of the Faculty were consecrated Christians; and the student body, 600 strong, already had earned a good reputation for Christian zeal and fervour.

The meetings began in unemotional apologetics, dealing with atheism, agnosticism and Christian faith. Within a few days, a movement of the Holy Spirit began, so extraordinary that the *Standard*, organ of the Baptist General Conference, reported under Dr. Wingblade's signature (6th May 1949): "The Holy Spirit has wrought a marvellous work indeed on our campus!"

The preaching in Bethel Chapel became very strong. There was much prayer in the dormitories, followed by intense conviction of sin among the students in chapel and in classroom. Conviction was relieved only by outright confession, restitution, restoration or conversion to God.

One student asked for a three-days' leave of absence to return to his home state in order to make right a serious wrong, the pilfering of up to $900 in a period before his conversion. Other students were constrained to confess cheating to the professor and class they had wronged. Some came for advice on personal matters of private or secret import. There were no hurtful public

confessions made, though not a few prayed for deliverance from impurity.

So great was the stirring in Bethel that the president declared himself willing to cancel all classes as long as the movement warranted it.[8] But it was felt that the sooner the school returned to normal schedules and channelled the revival into the everyday activities of the students, the better. Thus there were no long meetings after midnight, each meeting closing in good time.

There was no reaction against the movement at Bethel. At the height of the conviction, when hundreds of students wanted to confess failure or ask for prayer or testify of deliverance, the full chapel service was broken up into a dozen smaller meetings where everyone had a chance of participating without waiting long wearisome hours to speak, as in some other schools during the general movement throughout the United States. Two years later, Bethel's president stated that the movement had been "utterly wholesome and lastingly effective".[9]

Thus began the awakening in Bethel College which provided a pattern for two score or more movements in colleges in the 1950s to follow, a revival among students which was reported in the national press from one side of America to the other. Revivals of this type took place in schools from Atlantic to Pacific, from Canada to Texas, until they were considered no longer newsworthy. Edwin Orr kept busy in the movement for three years in all.

One of the most effective of student revivals took place at Forest Home Conference Centre in the San Bernadino Mountains of California. Many hundreds of college students attended the College Briefing Conference in August 1949. It was here that there was such an outpouring of the Spirit that an evening service lasting two hours was followed by a score of after-meetings continuing till midnight. From this movement came, directly or indirectly, such varied enterprises as Campus Crusade for Christ evangelizing students, and the Hollywood Christian Group evangelizing the world of entertainment, and the sudden expansion of the ministry of Billy Graham who (by his own account) experienced the crisis of his ministry and began his remarkable Crusade ministry thereafter.[10]

Edwin Orr remembered longest a series of meetings at Seattle

Pacific College in 1950, held each night at 10 o'clock and continuing in power till midnight, the school's deepest stirring.[11]

One of the awakenings which Edwin Orr did not witness was the student revival at Baylor University which affected the life of Howard Butt, Junior, the Texan businessman-evangelist, and many others.

The general awakening in Christian colleges in America did not escape criticism. Strange to relate, the secular press was most commendatory; most of the criticism came from insiders. There was an anonymous letter in a leading journal that admitted that much good was accomplished in one unspecified college but deplored the general superficiality of the work.

Alastair C. Walker, then president of student body at Northern Seminary and later an outstanding pastor in the Southern Baptist ministry, wrote to the president of each of the colleges experiencing revival. Some of the replies are worth quoting:[12]

> "The spiritual level of our college was uplifted definitely, and since the meeting, through the witnessing of the students and faculty who have gone out, we have records of more than 20,000 people who have made definite commitments to Jesus Christ . . ."
>
> ". . . the messages brought by Edwin Orr were strongly doctrinal, soundly biblical and centred in the person and the work of Christ."
>
> ". . . the college revivals did much for higher education in America. Since those meetings, it has been easier to talk spiritual language and emphasize spiritual truth in higher educational circles."

In 1952, Edwin Orr's ministry to students was confined to opportunities in theological colleges and Bible schools. The Brazilian journalist, Sr. Lauro Bretones, devoted a chapter of his book[13] entitled *Whirlwinds of the South* to Orr's visits to Brazil's Escolas de Profetas.

The President of the Faculty of Theology in São Paulo, the late Professor Walter Ermel, has published an intimate account of the awakening there in 1952:[14]

> The year 1951 was very difficult for me. Our Seminary had moved to a new and spacious building, and that meant more work. Fifteen days after the move, my sister in Rio (Dona Else

de Magalhães Lima) wrote me to say that Dr. Orr was arriving in São Paulo for a quick visit, so I left everything and tried to arrange meetings, and in consequence I received marvellous blessings. At the last meeting, I had an experience of victory over sins which until then I had been unable to conquer. The students of the Seminary were also revived spiritually and began morning prayer meetings for Revival in Brazil.

The Lord heard our prayers and sent Dr. Orr for a longer visit to Brazil. The São Paulo Campaign was begun in the Presbyterian Seminary in March 1952, the climax coming on Friday March 22. I rose that morning with a strange sensation, weeping without knowing why. Then I opened my Bible at the words: "Harden not your hearts, as the Holy Spirit says". I had a deep conviction that the Lord was going to bless His people in a special way, and that is what happened.

That night, the whole company was moved by the Holy Spirit, and many came to the place of penitence and prayer, among them Prof. Ermel. It was such a striking manifestation of revival that the good professor prophesied in the Spirit to announce that Revival had begun in Brazil.

The movement which followed, Reavivamento Brasileiro, was so vast that it warrants fuller description in another chapter. Local awakenings continued to be felt in Baptist, Congregationalist, Methodist and Presbyterian theological colleges.

Arno Otto Kiehl, a German-Brazilian at the Methodist Seminary in São Bernardo in São Paulo, published his impressions of the movement:[15]

We have just had a marvellous Revival in the Methodist Seminary, so marvellous that it has become the main topic of conversation in all our meetings. Dr. Orr came to speak to us about certain themes of the spiritual life, particularly Revival, discussing sin, repentance, confession, cleansing and the victorious Christian life in his conferences and discussions with the students.

On the Friday, we came together to hear him for the last time. After ending his address on Full Surrender, he invited us to confess our sins to God and our faults to one another. Many were sceptical about this, not knowing whether such a thing were possible. But God was present and the Holy Spirit

worked among us. All present stood in turn and confessed in sincerity and humility our sins and our failures, asking the prayers of our companions. It was a wonderful experience. Many wept, feeling the real power of God in the forgiveness of sins. We all opened our hearts and felt anew the presence of God.

Dr. Orr left us immediately afterwards. During the evening, the theme of our discussion was "the Revival". At night we had two very inspiring meetings of prayer and praise. Next day we had no classes. We celebrated the Lord's supper, then many students fasted remaining in their rooms in secret communion with God. Hearts and spirits were changed and life in our Seminary is now completely new.

The Baptist Youth magazine carried a report of Edwin Orr's visit to the Rio Seminary, very favourably recording the impact. The Moderator of the Presbytery of Recife, the Reverend Victor Pester, described the meetings in the Seminary of the North thus:[16]

Never in my life have I so felt the presence of the Lord in power as in the meetings we had during the week of Dr. Orr's visit. Each morning, at the Presbyterian Seminary, when the Spirit of God came on us with power, veteran servants of the Lord who had never done such a thing in their lives before stood up, often in tears and always with deep emotion, to confess sins and get right with their brethren. In all this there was invariably an atmosphere of decency and order.

Far different from the warm atmosphere of a Brazil on the verge of Revival was the pessimism that Edwin Orr found in Great Britain during his visit in 1961. He had crossed the Atlantic by air to preach in a united churches' campaign in the Thames Valley communities around Richmond. There was a goodly attendance and response but Orr was appalled by the largely empty churches abounding in England.

Mr. A. Lindsay Glegg, a "grand old man" of British evangelism as well as an industrialist, wrote me personally:[17]

In 1961, Edwin Orr spent a fruitful time in Great Britain. I organized a tent campaign in Richmond for a week and he crowded it with people. He then went over the British Isles speaking to groups of students and ministers.

Instead of continuing in evangelism, Orr took an apartment in the Selly Oak Missionary Guest Houses and devoted his time and energy to the task of indoctrinating the young theological students of Britain about Spiritual Revival. Doors opened suddenly, and he was able to lecture upon the Progress of Evangelical Awakenings in Modern Times in the University centres at Oxford and Cambridge, Edinburgh and Glasgow, Cardiff and London and other cities, extending his visits to Scandinavia and the Continent. Invitations came from Anglican, Baptist, Brethren, Congregational, Lutheran, Methodist, Pentecostal and Presbyterian Principals and Faculties. Mr. Glegg added:

> He made entry into many theological colleges and universities. Though a strong Evangelical, standing without compromise for all the great truths of the gospel, he knows how to approach liberal theologians. He has charm and humour which is very captivating and people of modern views will flock to hear him. He finds his way into all kinds of company and therefore is held suspect by some, but the intelligent Christians realize the great work he is doing.

CHAPTER 15

CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP

To Edwin Orr's pre-War biographer, Newman Watts, Abraham Vereide reported his earliest association with the Irish-born evangelist in 1935 in the city of Seattle:[1]

> I reflect with much gratitude to God upon Orr's ministry and the way in which he presented the message to various groups—first, the business executives at the Athletic Club, after which he led a young millionaire to Christ: second, the metropolitan area business executives at the breakfast in the Olympic Hotel. The Holy Spirit spoke through His servant.

Thus became fruitful Edwin Orr's friendship with Dr. Abraham Vereide, an association which continued over more than a quarter of a century. From Vereide, Edwin Orr received a vision of reaching the leadership of government, industry and the professions with the message of Christ.[2] International Christian Leadership began during that time of revival in the Pacific Northwest.

Abraham Vereide was born in the little Norse village of Vereide in Nordfjord, in the same part of Norway from which Carol Orr's Norwegian forebears sprang, beautiful beyond words, a land of snow-capped mountains and deep fjords with a sturdy and God-fearing peasantry.

Young Vereide emigrated to the United States[3] in 1905, and made his way to Butte, Montana, where he sought employment at ten dollars a week. After surviving the vicissitudes of an immigrant's early months in a rough-neck town, Vereide met a kindly Norse-American Christian who introduced him to Christian company. Soon he was a part-time preacher, part-time worker in a saw-mill. Increasing opportunities led the Norwegian boy to Evanston, where he carried a programme of study in Garrett Biblical Institute and Northwestern University while acting as a student pastor. After two years of happiest service in the little church, where increasing dedication to God

helped him to withstand the radical theological sabotage of the classroom, Vereide's health became affected and he was forced to return to the wide open spaces of Montana. Here he married the daughter of the preacher who had first befriended him.

Thus it was that Abraham Vereide became an American Methodist minister, one who had succeeded in maintaining the radiant spirituality of his boyhood Christian experience. Not only had he enjoyed the usual pastoral experience, but also the opportunity of social service in the Good Will Industries during the depression, a work which brought him into contact with such national figures as Governor Franklin Delano Roosevelt of New York. In 1935, the Vereides moved from New England to Washington State.

It was then in Seattle that Vereide became so concerned about the corruption in the government of the city. He invited the leaders to meet with him to discuss their responsibilities in the light of God's Word. An abiding fruit of that stirring was the International Christian Leadership work. Businessmen and legislators came together once a week at breakfast for Christian fellowship, Bible study and prayer.

Seven years later, Orr visited the Vereides in Seattle again and they toured the State of Washington by automobile, visiting groups in Seattle and the smaller cities.[4] Among the products of the Seattle group were two up-and-coming men, Arthur Langlie and William Devin, who had decided at a retreat for prayer on Mount Rainier to enter civic life on behalf of good government. Arthur Langlie became Mayor of Seattle, then Governor of Washington. William Devin succeeded him as Mayor of Seattle. Both were a credit to their Christian profession. Governor Langlie served three terms before his retirement from politics. Langlie and others in Washington suggested raising a salary to enable Orr to become Vereide's associate, but Orr had already decided to enter the military service.

In 1942, the Vereides decided to move to the nation's capital, Washington. With the help of friends, especially Mrs. Marian Johnson, a huge house on Massachusetts Avenue at the Sheridan Circle was secured, and soon it became a sort of Christian Embassy right on Embassy Row amid the residences of the ambassadors. From here Vereide reached out into the life of the

Congress, both Senate and House, of the Courts and even of the White House.

At Easter in 1945, Orr flew from Oxford at Vereide's invitation and rejoiced to see what God had done, visiting the various Washington Breakfast Groups, including those meeting in the Senate and House of Representatives. At a regular weekly meeting for Senators, he found about a dozen gathered for breakfast in the Vandenberg Room in the Capitol. They opened their Bibles to read around, and then expounded for themselves the story of the workers in the vineyard who had been paid the penny promised irrespective of the length of time they had worked for the Master. It was like a well-equipped Bible class. The meeting closed with several sincere prayers, then the Senators hurried off to urgent business. The House meeting gave time for an exposition by a visiting speaker. More than a score of Representatives gathered. One would judge that the meetings were more for fellowship than for evangelism, but qualified observers described as profound the influence of the Christian fellowship on the personal and political lives of members.

In 1950 Edwin Orr spoke at the Annual Meetings of International Christian Leadership, and there renewed acquaintance with many. He wrote:

> I still remember kneeling in prayer with Vereide in Washington. He was concerned about the outcome of the elections, but his main burden was "Lord, whatever happens, send us more converted men to Congress".[5]

That prayer was answered. When Missouri Representative O. K. Armstrong was elected to Congress in November 1950, he reacted warmly to Washington's evangelical life: "I am delighted to find so many of my colleagues here in Congress who are devout and active churchmen." This was at a time when Russell Hitt, an editor, estimated the hopeful minority of evangelical legislators in excess of 100 Baptists, Congregationalists, Disciples, Episcopalians, Lutherans, Methodists, Presbyterians and many others. A hundred were participating in local church activities.

Abraham Vereide's vision was not only for the national capital, but for the leadership in government, industry, management, labour and the like. In Chicago, there was a Breakfast

Group meeting in the Union League Club, and there were similar ones in Boston, New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore. Alas, much of the good seed scattered by Abraham Vereide fell by the wayside, or in rocky places or among thorns. Vereide's great virtues were love for people and utter winsomeness. Understandably, because of this, Vereide was rather uncritical—a handicap in dealing with people theologically naïve.

Russell Hitt in *Christian Life* wrote:

> Some have criticised Vereide for his inclusivistic policy in permitting men of varied theological stripes in places of leadership in the Breakfast Groups. Vereide, however, preferring to foster autonomous rule, smilingly goes on with his work.

Edwin Orr described his friend Vereide in the following paragraphs:[6]

> Vereide was tall, broadly proportioned, and ruggedly handsome after a Viking manner, with a shock of silver grey hair crowning a noble brow. He was charming, courteous, polished to a degree that made him at ease in the most cultured society in Washington and yet he had the freshness and frankness of the far northern fjords. Vereide possessed the difficult access to many big people, including the highest officers of Executive, Judiciary and Legislature, yet he never traded on these relationships.
>
> Spiritually, Vereide was a man of prayer, a man with a burning love for sinners great and small, a man with such a zeal that he worked himself within sight of the grave. His critics were chiefly narrow fundamentalists who, attending one of his meetings for the first time, were shocked to see one of the guests smoking. Vereide, non-smoker and total abstainer, believed that it was his duty to get after the outsider in his natural habitat. He made friends with the theologically illiterate, seeking to reach the lost. His pious critics had the idea that the sheep that was lost ought to come and visit the sheepfold every Sunday morning. Vereide loved the sheepfold but was often found outside looking for the lost sheep among the rocks.
>
> Vereide's success among governmental and business leaders made a profound impression upon my mind. Undoubtedly,

God was blessing his attempts to carry the message of Christ to the most influential classes in the country.

Norman Grubb's *Modern Viking* published in 1961 tells the remarkable story of Vereide and the enormous growth and influence of International Christian Leadership throughout the world in reaching many outstanding and powerful leaders in politics and business, putting before them the need for the practice of Christian principles in every sphere of human life.

Edwin Orr wrote to Vereide in 1949 to tell him of what he was doing in Southern California to put I.C.L. principles into practice.[7] Using Vereide's methods, Orr helped to build up the Hollywood Christian Group for two years, affiliating it with the Washington Headquaters, and turning it over to Dick Halverson who moved from Los Angeles to Washington later to become Dr. Vereide's close associate. Orr then moved to fields overseas and continued leadership contacts.

In Brazil, Edwin Orr carried letters from American Senators, Representatives, Governors and Mayors to their Brazilian counterparts.[8] It would be difficult to say what impact this introduction had upon his ministry there.

In South Africa, similar letters introduced him to the Governor-General, Dr. Jansen and to the parliamentary leaders in Capetown.[9] With leaders of both parties he discussed the vexed issue of apartheid and ventured an interpretation of Christian doctrine on the matter. In the great island of Madagascar, Orr was received by the French Governor-General and met also with the national leaders of the Malagasy who were looking forward to independence.

In India, Edwin Orr presented his credentials to the President of the Republic. His Excellency Dr. Rajendra Prasad.[10] This Gandhian gentleman spent a lengthy time in conversation with his Irish-born guest, discussing every possible topic from the lives of Hollywood stars to the habits of New Guinean cannibals. Orr found him most engaging and enlightened. The President invited Orr for a second visit to Rashtrapati Bhavan.

Orr was even more fascinated with the former (and last) Governor-General of India, the Tamil scholar Rajagopalachari. Something in their exchange drew "C.R." out and he sparkled

with gems of wisdom. Indeed, Orr suggested to him that he should dictate them to a secretary.

"Oh, no!" protested Rajagopalachari. "One cannot sit down and dictate these things coldly to one's secretary. These are sparks drawn from the friction of our fellowship."

Orr met with and enjoyed conversation with others of our Indian leaders. He greatly admired Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, the Christian princess who was then a member of Nehru's cabinet. She asked him many questions over afternoon tea.

In New Zealand, Edwin Orr and his colleagues entertained the Prime Minister, the Leader of Her Majesty's Opposition, the Attorney General and other ranking statesmen to breakfast in the capital, Wellington.[11] He maintained contact with both the Right Honorable Walter Nash and the Right Honorable Keith Holyoake, who alternated as Prime Minister. On their part, they welcomed news of spiritual fellowship among American statesmen, too often thought of as merchants of dollar diplomacy and sheer materialism. Orr met other heads of state and chief magistrates, but did not often discuss the conversations he had with them.

Edwin Orr was cheerfully aware of the fact that he had not been endowed with a presence as commanding as his friend Vereide. He was not sensitive about his lack of stature or good looks; in fact, by being humorous about it, he turned it to good account.

In anticipation of Orr's address to a Group in the United States Capitol, Vereide stopped this Senator or that, introduced the guest of the day and invited the Senator to hear him.

"Look, Abram," said the long-suffering Orr, "go ahead and invite these Senators to the meeting, and name the speaker! But don't tell them that this fellow alongside of you is the speaker. They take one look at me and decide not to come."

Governor Langlie told a similar story about his first encounter with Orr. Orr himself was fond of introducing himself with the story of his meeting in the Westminster Central Hall when the London *Star* took his picture and put it on the first page, omitting to put Orr's name under it. Gleefully, Orr would show his friends a sorry-looking photograph of himself with the caption directly underneath "Murder at the Zoo"!

CHAPTER 16

EVANGELIZING ENTERTAINERS

It was a lovely summer evening in California. The month was July, and the year was 1949. The beautiful sitting room of a lovely Westwood home between the Bel-Air hills and the University of California at Los Angeles was the scene of an event unique in both the world of entertainment and the world of evangelism. A dozen or more famous stars of stage and screen had gathered to hear a message from One who cared about them in their world of tinsel and make-believe.[1]

The hostess that night was Henrietta Mears, Director of Christian Education in the Hollywood First Presbyterian Church. The speaker was her house guest, Dr. J. Edwin Orr. The guests of the evening included stars of Western entertainment, Roy Rogers and Dale Evans, the song-writer Tim Spencer, the star of Twentieth Century Fox Colleen Townsend, such famous actresses as Jane Russell, Gale Storm and Barbara Britton, Connie Haines of singing fame, and others of brightest magnitude in their profession. Fifteen years later, that meeting was still having its effect.

Dr. Henrietta Mears was a remarkable personality. Moving from Minnesota to California, she took up her appointment in the later 1920s. She had a powerful influence upon young people, particularly college students who attended her Bible classes in hundreds. As a result of her wise and prayerful guidance, over four hundred young men entered the Christian ministry and many made their mark in their denominations.[2]

But there was one class of people whom she longed to reach and for whose spiritual help there seemed to be no special help. Once, as Henrietta Mears concluded a stirring message in Hollywood, a beautiful actress came up to greet her, threw her arms around her and said, "Wonderful! You have what we all want!" But, before Miss Mears could say a word, she had slipped away and was off to the madding crowd again. Not long afterwards,

the Bible teacher heard the newsboys crying: "Thelma Todd suicide! Thelma Todd suicide!" Henrietta Mears became burdened to reach the stars of Hollywood who had fame, fortune, folly and frustration—everything? No, nothing! She waited many years.

A number of movie stars attended the First Presbyterian Church of Hollywood, a fashionable but evangelical church. But their contact with the church was formal and not of much spiritual value. Miss Mears shared her vision with the Reverend Richard Halverson, an associate pastor of the church, afterwards well known around the world for his participation in Pastors' Conferences. They and their circle of friends prayed much for the hitherto impossible work of reaching the stars.

Edwin Orr, on the other hand, had been brought up in Puritan Northern Ireland. His main contact with the world of entertainment had come through unsought acquaintance with the films and shows put on to entertain the troops he served in battle. He had heard a good deal about the drunkenness and immorality prevailing in Hollywood and about the many divorces and suicides there. He knew nothing of the many hungry hearts and decent folk. A pretty radio singer approached him after an address at Forest Home Conference, and asked him to come and address a group of her friends.[3] He was deeply concerned. He had not spoken to such people before and had no intimate knowledge of their particular difficulties. He had never been impressed by the glamour of Hollywood.

For days, Orr prayed over the matter of what kind of message to bring to these people. Orr knew that professing Christians in Los Angeles adopted one of two attitudes towards movie stars: the unworldly regarded them as enemies of the Gospel, beyond the pale of religion; the worldly rushed them for autographs. If a star attended a strict type of church, he was liable to be offended by the scarcely disguised hostility; if he attended a slack type of church, he would get the impression that he had conferred a favour on Almighty God by deigning to attend a service. Orr prayed earnestly for guidance, and prepared his heart and mind for the message.

Edwin Orr told us in India that he had been the victim of an unfortunate accident that morning. It was his custom to

relax by reading in bed late at night, after which he usually put his glasses under the bed. His good wife trampled upon both lenses while making the bed, and left Orr unable to see the features of a single beautiful girl or handsome man in the meeting.

The group listened attentively to the words of our Lord: "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."

That night Orr explained the way of salvation as clearly as possible. He told them his honest opinion that he did not believe that all entertainment was necessarily unwholesome but that some of it surely was; and that, if they became truly converted, the Holy Spirit would show them whether or not their particular field of entertainment was displeasing to Him or hurtful to others. He told them that they could not enjoy an easy religion of serving Christ on the side and doing as they pleased. He must have first place.

> As the guests were introduced to me, I recognised many names, and found all of them friendly and approachable. The actors looked like easy-going sportsmen or college boys. The actresses were all of them attractive, but no more so than some evangelists' wives.[4]

Edwin Orr returned to address the group at their request. It was decided to meet regularly on Monday evenings thereafter for prayer, Bible study and spiritual fellowship. Often the stars gathered in the home of Henrietta Mears. Other times they moved from the home of one star in Hollywood to another in Bel-Air to another in the San Fernando Valley.

During the first year more than forty stars attended the meetings of the Hollywood Christian Group, but the names were not published. This kept away many curiosity mongers: twenty guests had attended that first meeting; of these, ten were leading actors and actresses. They kept coming.

T. B. Rees, a prominent British evangelist, wrote in a London paper about one meeting:[5]

> I was invited to address this fabulous meeting. I must say that what I saw both astounded and impressed me. The meeting was held in the home of a millionaire film director in Beverly Hills. (What a house! It made Hildenborough Hall

look like a slum!) My plane made me an hour and a half late, but nearly everyone waited for me, about forty of the most gaily dressed folk I have ever seen. I told them when I stood up to speak that I felt like a wheel-barrow in the motor show!

At their request, I spoke on "How to pray and enjoy the Bible". After speaking for about twenty-five minutes, I said: "Don't let's talk about it; let's do it, let us pray. Can any of you folk pray?" To my amazement, the answer came back, "Yes, sure we can pray."

Almost before we could close our eyes they started—and what praying! Simple, sincere and delightfully free from evangelical jargon.

At the invitation of one of the converted film actresses, I was taken around one of the great film studios in Hollywood—the Paramount Studios. I was impressed by the wealth of the film industry, but far more by the straightforward testimony of my film actress guide. She is a real trophy of grace . . . her devotion to Christ warmed my heart. As I stepped out of her car, she said, "Be careful, Doctor (!) Rees. That book is my commentary on Romans. I couldn't live without that book.'

Knowing that Tom Rees was quite critical of American evangelism with all its advertisement and boosting, Edwin Orr was greatly gratified to find that Rees had appreciated the excellent work done by the Hollywood Christian Group.

Colleen Townsend, a star of Twentieth Century Fox Studios, became the first secretary of the Group.[6] She was a girl of Mormon upbringing who had been converted through the college work of the Hollywood Presbyterians. She became a most ardent Christian witness, in church, on the set, in military camps and hospitals. Many of those she met in the industry were helped by her word.

It was Colleen Townsend who first thought of asking the comparatively unknown evangelist, Billy Graham, to address the group; so just before his sudden rise to fame, Billy Graham became the second visiting speaker. He often returned to it and became a lifelong friend. Billy Graham has spoken of the Hollywood Christian Group as "one of the most amazing evidences of religious resurgence in the United States."

Edwin Orr first heard of Colleen Townsend from Bill Dunlap,

who was driving him out to a 6.30 a.m. prayer meeting in Westwood held each week by a crowd of college students.

"You know," said Bill, "Colleen Townsend will probably be there this morning if her overnight plane gets her in from Kansas City on time. She's starring in a picture, but she does not let her work interfere with her spare-time work for the Lord. She's a real eager beaver. Hardly ever misses the early morning prayer meetings on Saturdays."

Orr found himself among a score of college men and girls. They were on their knees praying. Orr was asked to bring a brief word. He noticed the young actress there, who had flown overnight from Kansas City but apart from an occasional blinking of tired eyes, was most attentive to the Word of God. That was the beginning of fellowship weekly in the Holywood Christian Group, as well as in other ministry occasionally.

One Friday night, while addressing several of the Deputation Teams in the Hollywood Church on "How to Find God's Plan for One's Life", Orr was asked by Colleen Townsend:[7]

"Is it possible to have absolutely clear guidance to engage in a certain calling, and then get guidance which is different entirely?"

"It's like this, Coke," explained Orr. "A couple of years ago, I was standing on the forward deck of a little Norwegian steamer making its way up the northern fjords. It was dark. And I was trying to guess where the skipper was trying to take the ship. He seemed to be headed for a sheer wall of rock on which there were two lights. There did not seem to be much sense in heading there, with just a pile of rocks at the foot of a cliff, and no town. But he kept on straight for those lights. When we got within a hundred yards of the cliff, we suddenly changed course to the east. From that point I could see away up into another fjord where the twinkling lights of a town were beckoning. Why didn't the skipper head straight for the town before that point? He couldn't. He had to wait for a certain time and a certain position, and then it was right to change course. See?"

It was not long until Colleen Townsend quit her job to find God's final plan for her life. When she did, she had reached stardom in her own right. Had she quit before stardom, critics might have said that she could not make the grade. But her

withdrawal, she claimed, was not because of any dissatisfaction with what she was doing, rather "a positive tug" of distinctively Christian service.

"During the three years I worked in Hollywood as a Christian," she said, "I felt increasingly that I was to spend my life in some type of Christian work. It seemed so much greater to me than anything else."

When Orr asked her if she proposed to stay in the movies—a recurring question to her, she said:

"As long as I can witness for Christ or until the Lord calls me to some other kind of work."

She felt more and more an urge to give up this work to serve God more fully. When in 1950 she announced her decision, there was extraordinary interest in it all over America—although some thought that it was a publicity stunt on the part of her producers to bring her into prominence. She married Louis H. Evans, Junior, then a theological student. They now have four children and she has experienced all the difficulties and hardships of bringing them up as a parson's wife in striking contrast to the luxurious life of a cinema star. She never regretted it.

I noticed that, twelve years after this step, she wrote in *Decision*, Billy Graham's magazine, how she regarded her work in her home and in Christ's Church as of far greater importance than her work as an actress. She took time out to participate in two of Billy Graham's films.

Roy Rogers, "The King of the Cowboys", his wife Dale Evans, "The Queen of the Westerns",[8] and many other members of the Hollywood Christian Group came to the conclusion that they must stay in the world of entertainment and give their witness for Christ in it. Many staunch evangelical Christians could not understand why Roy Rogers, for example, did not immediately abandon his profession and enter the ministry. Roy told Orr that he regarded his profession as honourable as that of a teacher and that he would continue in it until called to do otherwise. After twelve years of observation, those qualified to speak could say that Roy and Dale maintained a good confession of Jesus Christ around the world.

For many years, Roy Rogers acted as chairman of the Hollywood Christian Group. He succeeded his close friend Tim

Spencer in that responsibility. Tim Spencer, a cowboy singer and song-writer, was a heavy drinker but his wife Velma, who had been converted in her early teens, kept praying for him. Tim Spencer had written two hundred songs for which he depended upon liquor for his inspiration. Then he was wonderfully converted. Without his drinks, his muse dried up. So he prayed:

"Lord, I'm so new that I don't know properly Thy way of doing things. I want to write a song, a good, clean, wholesome song. Please bless me in the writing of it . . . I want to serve Thee until my dying day. Amen."

Orr met Tim Spencer at Forest Home Young Adult Conference in the beautiful San Bernardino mountains in July 1949.[9] He was obviously a novice in Christian things but his sincerity was plain to see. He sang a number of "spirituals" and then played and sang his newest composition, "Roomful of Roses". Tim asked Orr to pray that the Lord would bless the song. It was a new thought to Orr but he agreed. Within a matter of months, the song was published and became an immediate success in America, "top of the hit parade" for months. It made the Spencers enough money to catch up with debts and responsibilities, so they bought themselves a house with a drawing room large enough to accommodate a large company willing to hear the Good News.

Orr took Tim Spencer with him to a campaign in Pomona, an orange-growing town in California. One of the pastors protested against Spencer's participation in the meeting, saying that a parishioner who had known him in his alcoholic days had refused to believe the story of his conversion, insisting that he must be a fraud. Spencer's own testimony rang so true however that the minister apologized for ever having doubted the grace of God.

Tim Spencer soon became a tireless personal worker in Hollywood, nicknamed by one that he had apprehended for Christ "The Lord's Sherlock Holmes". He continued his association with the singing group Sons of the Pioneers for many years. Then he engaged in the dissemination of Christian songs and music, through his company, Manna Music. There is a connection with India in the story of Tim Spencer's greatest musical service, the popularization of the hymn "How Great Thou Art". The

author of the English words, Stuart K. Hine, published the story:[10]

> In April 1954, the writer received a letter from Dr. J. Edwin Orr, written from India: "Near the sacred city of Nasik, I heard a choir of Naga tribespeople from the jungles of Assam sing the hymn, 'How Great Thou Art'. It was a great blessing to missionaries and nationals alike, but most of all to me. That night, I could not sleep for elation of spirit but spent the time in praise and adoration of God."
>
> Dr. Orr sang the hymn on his tours of the U.S.A. and introduced it to Christian firms there who published it in 1955.

It was at Forest Home that Edwin Orr introduced the hymn "How Great Thou Art". The conference of students took it up with profound fervour. Tim Spencer, hearing it, recognized its worth and negotiated through Edwin Orr with the author in London.

Meanwhile, Cliff Barrows and the Graham Team heard the hymn in London. Tim Spencer arranged with the Graham organization to make the hymn available by the million. It soon became the best-used hymn of the English-speaking world.

Georgia Lee, a television dancing star, owed her conversion partly to the influence of Colleen Townsend's testimony on the set:[11]

> "Colleen invited me and my husband to one of the first meetings of the Hollywood Christian Group. The next week, Ralph and I were there and listened to Dick Halverson tell of his conversion, how he had sinned and then saw that not only he but everyone needed a Saviour. There was a discussion after the message in which Dr. Orr and Miss Mears explained Jesus Christ the Saviour to us, so that Christ became a reality in my life instead of just a fact in my mind.
>
> "That night, I knelt to pray as usual, but in a different way I prayed that the Lord Jesus would come into my life, forgive my sins and use me to His glory. Since that night, Ralph and I have studied Scripture almost every day."

Soon after her conversion, Georgia Lee began to make her Christian testimony her first concern in her daily life, besides maintaining the highest standards of Christian propriety.

But Edwin Orr had a conviction from God that both of them one day would enter Christian service. They assured him that they preferred to be Christian entertainers, serving the Lord in their field. Almost monthly Orr asked them if they had given further consideration to the higher form of Christian service. They said that they had prayed about it, but felt sure that they ought to continue in their chosen profession. Orr did not argue with them.

In mid-1951, when Georgia Lee had her own television programme, she called Mrs. Orr to tell her that she and Ralph had news for her absent husband. Mrs. Orr invited them to supper with the evangelist upon his return. Unknown to the eager entertainers, Edwin Orr was writing his book *Good News in Bad Times*, and had felt so sure that Ralph and Georgia would enter the full-time Christian ministry that he had included their story prophetically in the section dealing with stars who had given up their careers. When they announced their decision to the Orrs at table, they were at first disappointed.

"We thought you would have been surprised and delighted after all the talking you did with us!"

Orr took them to his study. There he showed them the manuscript of his new book. They were utterly dumbfounded. They often told the story.[12]

Ralph Hoopes entered college, helped at first by the earnings of his wife. Then they both went to theological college in San Francisco, by faith, and were helped by a mysterious, anonymous donor.

Ralph Hoopes became minister of a church in California, with Georgia helping him in the parish while dedicating her own talents to the Lord for use in Christian films. Her first assignment was a starring role in Dr. Bob Pierce's true story of the war among men and peace of God in Korea. Then she took leading roles in Billy Graham films. Her work and testimony took her hundreds of thousands of miles throughout the United States and the world at large.

Nudie was a tailor, an expert in making cowboy clothes for the stars of Western films such as William Boyd, Gene Autrey and Roy Rogers,[13] Nudie was not a profane man, but if a customer "cussed" a lot, Nudie "cussed" a little to make

him feel at home. Judge his surprise when an old friend rebuked him for his language.

"What's the matter with you?" asked Nudie, and his friend told him that he was now converted. The next customer in to see him also professed to be converted. It was not long until Nudie and his wife showed up in the Hollywood Christian Group. They came faithfully to every evangelistic meeting, to every devotional meeting and even showed up at a business session in the Orr family home in Brentwood Glen where the Group leaders were thrashing out such questions as the utter renunciation of intoxication and profanity and impropriety by all new converts. Nudie seemed impressed when all present ended the session with a round of earnest prayer.

In due course, Edwin Orr received an invitation to visit Nudie and Bobbie in their lovely home. After supper, Nudie explained:

"The thing that got me about the fellows and girls in the Group meeting was that they talked about Jesus Christ as if He was alive and as if they knew Him personally. I thought that Jesus Christ was a good Jewish teacher who died a couple of thousand years ago. But when the fellows and girls told how they talked to Jesus about their problems, and how they got answers to prayers, I started watching them very carefully.

"I must say," he went on, "that I noticed a big change in all of the ones I had known previously. And not only did they live clean lives, but they seemed to enjoy it, and they seemed to love each other just like a big happy family. Then I began to see what was the matter with me. I was no worse a sinner than they had been but I wasn't happy enough though I was doing well in business.

"So," said Nudie, "I decided that I needed to get to know Jesus Christ personally. I was not so much concerned about changing my religion as changing myself, getting converted . . . That's why I asked you to come tonight, to help me."

Orr looked at him with mixed feelings. All of his adult life he had been seeking sinners to present to the Saviour. Here was a sinner seeking him out instead. Before he could trust himself to speak, Nudie started again. There was a catch in his voice and a tear in his eye.

"But now I must apologize, Dr. Orr, for bringing you all

this way when you are a busy man. You see, I couldn't wait any longer so I went and got converted Monday night."

From 1949 until the end of 1951, Edwin Orr was the chaplain of the Hollywood Christian Group. Then he left for evangelistic meetings in Brazil, South Africa and India, being succeeded by the Rev. Richard C. Halverson, who served as chaplain for another couple of years until he entered the service of International Christian Leadership in Washington. Edwin Orr continued as Chaplain Emeritus.

When Edwin Orr returned to Los Angeles in 1954 from his evangelistic tour around the world, he was delighted to see that during the three years of his absence the sapling he had helped to plant had taken deep root and was beginning to bear fruit. It was one of the greatest joys of his entire Christian life to find that in five years the Hollywood Christian Group had become an established work of God. The good work was continuing as in the first flush of success.

In the first two years of the work, fifteen of the Group's members gave up their careers and devoted themselves to full-time Christian service as ministers, ministers' wives or evangelists.[14] Some members of the Group began to act in the new evangelistic and missionary films. Others with talent for song-writing wrote choice songs of deep religious feeling, some of which became prime favourites. Yet other Group members took part in evangelistic rallies, such as those of the Youth for Christ movement, and the Billy Graham Crusades. Their names were well known and thousands of people came to hear what they had to say. The effect of their testimony was only one step in the direction of a Christian life. Other steps had to be taken. Even more important than all these was the work that lay closest to the hearts of all the Group members—Christian witness in the entertainment industry itself. This was well expressed by two members, the Harveys:[14a]

> "Day after day, on movie and television sets and in the various studios of Hollywood, God leads us to the men and women He wants. We find them empty and hungry for God's love, and yet—as we were—confused and afraid to reach for Him. God gives us the words to say and leads us in our witness We have had the pleasure of seeing several men and women

find Christ in our home and in the Hollywood Christian Group meetings We are looking forward to helping many more put their feet (and hearts) in the only Way!"

One cannot say that all the members of the Group gave clear and convincing testimony Many did and many failed, as in any community. The loyalty with which people practise the principles of Jesus Christ differs so much with individuals. But the Hollywood Christian Group kept these ideals constantly before this important class of people whose influence today in the world, for good or ill, is tremendous. "The failures and the phoneys" in the work were outnumbered by the genuine.

In the year 1955, Edwin Orr was requested by the Directors of the Group to write a book which would correct many wrong impressions of the work of the Group. This Orr entitled *The Inside Story of the Hollywood Christian Group*. It gave an account of the purpose of the Group, its steady growth, its many problems, its leading personalities, the criticisms which were made and the pitfalls which it sought to avoid.

The Hollywood Christian Group embarked upon a pioneering work and many problems were faced. There were no blue-prints to follow. Is it possible for Hollywood stars to be true to Christian standards? Should people who are converted continue in their profession as entertainers or should they give it up for more specialized forms of Christian work? How much publicity should be permitted? The men and women who came to the meetings were known all over the world. People were only too anxious to learn details of the work done among them. If it was reported that they had given up big salaries or had declined to act in pictures of doubtful morality, the reports were not believed. Should criticisms be answered? There was much demand for the converts to bear witness in evangelistic meetings. Some who had just taken the first step in the Christian life were urged to give public witness to their new experience, sometimes with disastrous results to their spiritual life. How could new converts be protected from such dangers? What sort of disciplinary action should be taken against members who were accused of living in sin or of getting drunk? This happened rarely.

Edwin Orr helped to draft the constitution of the Hollywood Christian Group.[15] It was his keen insight that helped to safe-

guard it against the inroads of cultists who tried to capture it as well as of careless people who tended to sabotage it.

The Hollywood Christian Group changed very considerably after its first few years. In early days, the Group met in the homes of famous stars and attracted the attendances of first-rate people. Many years later, the Group transferred its Monday meetings to the Knickerbocker Hotel in Hollywood. By that time, it had widened its appeal until anyone in the entertainment industry was welcomed, providing he or she held a membership card in one of the entertainment guilds in stage, screen, radio or television. Soon its membership rose to the hundreds, and a couple of hundred people attended its weekly meetings. But the stars of brightest magnitude stayed away, excepting a few who were truly converted and wished to help the prospects and converts in the lower echelons. Orr held the view that it was impossible to hold a fellowship meeting which included generals and privates, or even colonels and sergeants—not as far as fellowship among true Christians was concerned but evangelism among those unregenerate. So also with stars and ordinary workers.

The Hollywood Christian Group had its ups and downs. The more successful it was in attracting the truly needy worldlings of Hollywood, the more diluted became its standards of Christian propriety. But the hand of God seemed to be upon it, and each period of spiritual decline was followed by revival.

The rise of the Hollywood Christian Group coincided with the production of many wholesome motion pictures, such as *The Man Called Peter* based upon the life of Peter Marshall, chaplain of the United States Senate. It also coincided with the introduction of television to almost every home in the English-speaking world. The latter caused a strange development in motion pictures. It was necessary to have a reasonably high standard of film for viewing in the family circle, so certain producers took this as a challenge to compete with television by producing films which were more "sophisticated"—that is to say, immoral or amoral. The same producers tried to cash in upon the public interest in the Bible. In narrating Biblical stories, many films went to extravagant lengths, inventing numerous additions in order to give them a sex appeal. Hence these producers sought

out themes such as *Sodom and Gomorrah* and *Samson and Delilah.*

Christian interests took advantage of the move to produce better quality films of Biblical or of evangelistic interest. Before the Second World War, there had been Christian pictures but they had not been taken as carefully and as beautifully as in recent years. Since the Second World War, Christian motion pictures became widely and effectively used for evangelism, teacher training, retelling the stories of the Bible and for the stirring up of missionary interest. It is clear that people want to see stories from the Bible acted for them with all the beauty and gripping interest of a good cinematic direction.

There was the striking film *Martin Luther.* Its actors were well-qualified persons, the direction excellent, and the production of the best. Churches were glad to co-operate in showing the picture and many theatres were eager to feature it. This film showed that it was possible to produce a picture which was both spiritually stimulating and financially remunerative.

Dick Ross, active in the Hollywood Christian Group, teamed up with the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association to make films like *Mr. Texas* and *Oiltown, U.S.A.*, which were somewhat lacking in the production polish of later films in colour such as *Souls in Conflict* and *Touch of Brass.*

It was significant that Billy Graham used the talents of his friends in the Hollywood Christian Group to launch his venture into film evangelism. Graham and his associates claimed that more decisions were made after the projection of these evangelistic films than even in the appeals of the evangelist in person.[16] Dr. Bob Pierce used the same medium to advance the cause of Missions.

CHAPTER 17

MID-TWENTIETH CENTURY AWAKENING

One day in 1948, in London, Edwin Orr sat listening to a man of God, Principal Andrew MacBeath, secretary of the Keswick Convention.[1] He told a striking story of a visitor to France who used to pray in the quiet of a little French Roman Catholic parish church. The British visitor noticed that a middle-aged French lady used to come each morning regularly, make the rounds of the Stations of the Cross, and then spend half an hour in rapt adoration of a beautiful picture of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The visitor commented upon her devotion, but the priest reluctantly told him that, thirty years or so before, the lady had posed for a Parisian artist's picture of the Virgin, and that she was really only contemplating what she once was.

That story convicted Orr, for he had dearly loved to contemplate the days when he had been getting attention as a world-wide evangelist in 1935 and 1936. The upshot of it was that he began to pray that God would give him something to be grateful for in 1949. The burden returned, not only for revival but for the Filling of the Spirit.

God had raised up a deeply spiritual friend in Armin Richard Gesswein who, for several years, kept burning in Orr the fire of longing for a world-wide Revival, even when that fire tended to die down. The story of their close friendship is quite interesting.[2]

Gesswein was born in Missouri on 28th November 1907 and so was more than four years older than Orr. He had been theologically trained and ordained in the Missouri Synod of the Lutheran Church, so exclusive in its dealings with other Christian denominations including Lutherans. He held his first pastorate in Long Island, near New York City and his work there was greatly blessed of God. The people liked him and he liked the people. He doubtless would have continued to work in that congregation but the leaders of his denomination frowned upon his ideas of friendly co-operation with other evangelical Churches,

so much to the grief of all concerned he resigned. His second pastorate was in a Community Church in Long Island which gave him greater freedom.

In 1937, Gesswein crossed the Atlantic and visited Britain, Scandinavia and other countries. He wrote to Orr: "I do not want to hurry back now. I am praying for more fire before that. I feel like a vessel in the Potter's hand when he must break and make it again."

At that time there was a remarkable Revival going on in Norway, and Gesswein came into close contact with it. This was a new experience for him. He was familiar with evangelistic campaigns in the United States, crowded meetings, hundreds of people coming forward, the testimony of what God had done for them, immense advertisement. But the sights he saw in Norway were different, for whole communities came under the direction of the Holy Spirit, not merely during a special evangelistic campaign, but for weeks and months. This was Revival. Modern publicity methods had nothing to do with it; it was the work of the Holy Spirit who put new life into whole communities. He saw with his own eyes things which have been described in the classic accounts of the historic Revivals. And he returned to America with a passionate longing to awaken in ministers a great eagerness to experience such awakenings.

In 1941, Gesswein wrote to Orr from the city of Los Angeles: "More and more am I burdened about the large field in the old-line denominational churches. I could go on and on in churches like the Alliance or others very congenial. But that will not reach our age and generation. It seems to me that like yourself I must strike out for the larger field with the message of Revival and be given wisdom from on high to adapt without compromising."[3]

Gesswein settled in Los Angeles and spent the war years calling preachers together for prayer. Orr returned to the United States after military service and studies at Oxford and in October 1948 took part in a week of meetings with Gesswein in Minneapolis, sponsored by eighty ministers of many denominations —Lutheran, Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, Covenant, Pentecostalist, Nazarene and the like in a prayer fellowship then directed by Dr. Paul S. Rees of First Covenant Church and others.[4] Dr. Rees later became vice-president of the missionary

organization World Vision and became known all over the world as a gifted Bible teacher in hundreds of pastors' conferences held to stimulate the spiritual life of national pastors, many of whom live in far away places without opportunities for spiritual fellowship.

The meetings in Minneapolis were held in the First Covenant Church and there had been much prayer. Orr fresh from his research at Oxford gave a lecture on the 1858–9 Revivals in America and Britain. This acted like a spark upon tinder. Prayers were interrupted by tears and there resulted many confessions of failure, neglect and sin. Reconciliations took place between pastors who had quarrelled or parted company.

There had been a similar meeting held a few weeks earlier in Los Angeles. Six months later another pastor's conference which proved significant was held in early March 1949 at Pacific Palisades Presbyterian Conference Grounds in Los Angeles. The director was the Reverend Armin Gesswein who had invited Drs. Harold J. Ockenga and J. Edwin Orr to be speakers. More than 300 ministers and their wives came. Half of them continued in penitence and prayer for hours after midnight. The Holy Spirit was powerfully at work, convicting many of sin and leading them to confession and surrender.[5]

This spirit of prayer spread on a wide scale throughout Southern California.[6] Though no large gatherings took place, many pastors were engaged in earnest prayer for an Awakening. They met in small groups, often not more than two or three dozen people, in different cities and districts. As there was no central organization behind them, no central office sending out topics for prayer, these groups met informally on their own initiative and continued in prayer for months.

Though they met in different places without central direction, there were certain characteristics common to all. The important business of the meetings was prayer. Often reports were heard from missionaries who had passed through genuine movements of Revival on the mission-field. Methods of preparing congregations for Revival were discussed. Addresses were given on the personal responsibility of pastors and other leaders. All these were meant to stimulate prayer. They were not academic discussions. Repentance of sin was another characteristic of these

meetings. Spiritual offences, such as jealousy, pride, unbelief, slackness in prayer and neglect of personal witness were confessed most often. There was real penitence followed by the joy of deliverance.

A Presbyterian pastor was moved to start a meeting in a small town in the San Joaquin Valley, so he sent out postcards to all the local ministers inviting them to a prayer meeting. No one came.[7] He sent out a second series of postcards. It met with the same result. Then he began to telephone his fellow pastors with a personal invitation. They gave various excuses—one saying that he was too busy to come, another saying that he prayed alone, and another commenting: "I'm really too busy to come to your prayer meeting but I have a good sermon on prayer and I will be glad to deliver it to your prayer group some time."

The pastor decided to try another method. On the morning of the prayer meeting, he called on the pastor of the First Baptist Church and asked if they could pray together right away in church. After a moment's hesitation, the Baptist agreed and they prayed together for some time in true spiritual harmony. The following Thursday the number increased to three with a Nazarene; then a Lutheran minister joined them, then a Methodist minister, then an Episcopal rector and so on. In the meantime, the praying ministers organized Saturday evening rallies for the young people and before long attracted attendances exceeding the population of the town. After six months of such fellowship, the Baptist minister said to the Presbyterian: "You know, brother, before the Lord revived my heart, when I met a minister who did not believe in believers' baptism the way we Baptists teach it, I treated him like a heathen and a publican. Since the Lord has revived my heart, now I just let him be wrong."

These many prayer groups and the earnest prayer that was offered in them must be reckoned as the essential background of the great spiritual movements which took place in America about the middle of the twentieth century. God does answer prayer. God does respond to the earnest longing of His people. God does open the heavens and pour down His blessings when men humble themselves and confess their sins.

There were several significant spiritual movements arising in California about this time such as the crusades for mass evan-

gelism led by Billy Graham, the formation of the Hollywood Christian Group, the awakenings in the Christian colleges, the work of international Navigators, World Vision and perhaps a total of forty organizations that were organized or expanded at the mid-century.[8]

The general movement that spread over the United States was at first a deep movement, later a much more superficial one as calculating men tried to make use of the genuine spiritual hunger. Church membership and church attendance reached an all-time high. Religion became news in secular journals. Christian books and films became popular. But within twelve years observers both secular and spiritual agreed that the popular peak had passed.

But only the peak of the popular movement had passed. With more than a million correspondents writing to him in Minneapolis, no one is better placed than Dr. Billy Graham to report on the situation. It is well to remember that in his early years, he was very cautious in his use of the word Revival, stressing that his own Crusades were evangelistic endeavours, not Revival. After twelve years, he reported in *Decision*, July 1962 as follows:

> In a very glorious way, the Holy Spirit is beginning to move quietly across America. Prayer groups unrelated to each other are beginning to spring up here and there throughout the nation. Remarkable conversions are occurring in the most unexpected parts of the nation. In my opinion, there is taking place a deep spiritual revival of which many of its spiritual leaders are unaware.
>
> I wish you could read some of the thousands of letters we receive from our television correspondents. The stories of conversion and rededication are astounding. In addition, hundreds of letters have come informing us of thrilling instances of the Holy Spirit's working in dozens of communities. While Satan is labouring overtime, stirring up division, hatred, jealousy, envy and greed, the Holy Spirit is bringing believers together here and there with a desire to know the Scriptures and obey God.
>
> This is precisely what happened after the Wesleyan Revival in the eighteenth century in England. Had you been living in

England during the middle of the eighteenth century, you would never have suspected that a religious awakening was in progress. Very few clergy in Britain recognized that they were in the midst of one of the greatest religious awakenings of all time. Yet, here and there, little prayer groups were being organized. Laymen were assuming new responsibilities. Astounding conversions were reported across the land. The people who gathered together in these little class meetings were called in derision, Methodists. Yet two hundred years after Wesley, church historians say that the revival in the middle of the eighteenth century changed the course of English history.

Edwin Orr stressed that each great Evangelical Awakening began in an outpouring of the Spirit on individuals and groups, followed by an evangelistic phase, followed by consolidation and extension, with further outpourings of the Spirit. Future historians writing about the mid-century period will find Orr's book *Good News in Bad Times* of real value—if they can manage to ignore the "catchy" title, its lack of learned footnotes and absence of books cited, none being available. It is clear that Orr's information came from his personal knowledge and participation.

Stanley High, an editor of *Reader's Digest*, stated in his popular biography of Billy Graham that "Billy Graham's associates speak of his career in two major parts: before Los Angeles and since Los Angeles . . . it is difficult even for a journalist to escape the conclusion that at Los Angeles a power greater than Billy Graham began to take Billy Graham more directly in hand."[9]

Those who knew Billy Graham better fixed the point of his enduement with power a little earlier. Billy Graham was passing through a crisis in his work as an evangelist in late August 1949. He had been asked to lead a campaign in Los Angeles that September. There had been many difficulties. He and the Crusade Committee had various differences of opinion, so much so that both considered seriously whether they should cancel the arrangements for the Crusade. Billy Graham was troubled in spirit over these petty controversies.

At this time, a conference was held at Forest Home in the beautiful San Bernadino Mountains in Southern California.

Several hundred students had assembled in this conference centre, 5,280 feet above sea level. It was a lovely spot. Even when the inner valleys had to endure the great heat of summer, Forest Home, in the shadow of the big trees, enjoyed pleasant days bright with sunshine and delightfully cool nights. It was here that the future world-evangelist met with God.

Among the chief speakers were Edwin Orr and Billy Graham. Graham was delivering a course of addresses in the mornings and Orr in the evenings. Of the latter, Billy Graham said:[10]

> The messages Dr. Orr gave as one of the others speakers were of tremendous blessing in my own life. His logical development of the whole subject of full surrender and the outpouring of the Spirit stirred the whole conference, evening by evening.

Seven years later, Billy Graham wrote in an issue of *Christianity Today*:[11]

> In 1949, I had been having a great many doubts concerning the Bible. I thought I saw apparent contradictions in Scripture. Some things I could not reconcile with my restricted concept of God. When I stood up to preach, the authoritative note so characteristic of all great preachers of the past was lacking. Like hundreds of young seminary students, I was waging the intellectual battle of my life.

At 1 o'clock in the morning, Billy Graham sat down with Edwin Orr beside the fish-pond outside Orr's cabin. Seventeen simultaneous after-meetings had just concluded and Graham was deeply moved. Orr's book, *Good News in Bad Times*, tells how the conversation began with the subject of surrender and how he felt led to suggest that perhaps his need was in the realm of the mind and not heart or will.[12]

When Edwin Orr talked to him, he did not know that Billy Graham's intellectual problem involved the question of the authority of Scripture. One of the faculty at the conference was passing through a period of unbelief which afterwards resulted in his renunciation of the ministry, and he tried to shake Graham's faith in the Scripture.

After half an hour of conversation, Graham walked off into the woods to pray. "Out of that sacred hour", wrote F. W. Hoffman in his volume[13] *Revival Times in America*, "came a new Billy Graham." And Graham himself wrote:[14]

I remember walking down a trail, tramping into the woods, almost wrestling with God, I duelled with my doubts, and my soul seemed to be caught in the crossfire. Finally, in desperation, I surrendered to the Living God as revealed in Scripture.

I knelt before the open Bible and said: "Lord, many things in this book I do not understand. But Thou hast said, 'The just shall live by faith'. All I have received from Thee, I have taken by faith. Here and now, by faith, I accept the Bible as Thy Word. I take it all, I take it without reservations. Where there are things that I cannot understand, I will reserve judgment until I receive more light. If this pleases Thee, give me authority as I proclaim Thy Word, and through that authority convict men of sin and turn sinners to the Saviour."

Orr was still awake when Graham returned to say that he had been filled afresh with the Spirit of God, adding that God had given him a vision of what was going to happen down the mountain in Los Angeles—Orr remembered this, though he had put it down to enthusiasm at the time. Orr[15] reported these events by letter to Paul Rees with whom he had agreed to pray, since that spring, for special unction for Billy Graham.

Within six weeks, Billy Graham started his Los Angeles Crusade and during that Crusade he applied the secret that changed his ministry. He had never before seen such crowds of people in his meetings. There were sensational cases of outright conversion. The newspapers began to splash with headlines the doings of the Crusade.

At first, the evangelist was alarmed by the publicity and told Orr that some of his advisers thought that the publicity might be "the kiss of death" to the whole movement. The evangelists were sitting in a parked car in the darkness, for privacy's sake. On Orr's lap was a copy of his recently-published Oxford thesis on the Awakening of 1858–9. He held it to the light and showed Graham a paragraph dealing with the '58 Revival:[16]

> The press, which speaks in the ear of millions, is taken possession of by the Spirit, willing or unwilling, to proclaim His wonders and go everywhere preaching the Word in its most impressive, its living forms . . .

"That was ninety years ago, Billy," said Orr, "and the news-

papers were giving a tenth of their total space to religious news. I believe it will happen again, if this is truly an awakening. The Government has to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to get newspaper space to publicize an idea. I believe that the Lord may make the American press act as His publicity agent for nothing, so don't be afraid of it."

The sudden thrusting of fame upon Billy Graham had its amusing side also. He telephoned Orr in the fourth week of the Crusade, which had been extended indefinitely:[17]

"Say, Edwin. I have a problem. I am out of outlines for sermons . . ."

Orr advised him to borrow freely. So Graham called a mutual friend in Pasadena to ask him what he intended to preach upon on Sunday. The pastor told him that he had an outline based upon four men from the Acts of the Apostles—of whom Gallio was indifferent, Felix procrastinated, Agrippa sneered 'Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian?" and the Philippian jailer said "What must I do to be saved!" said Billy:

"Had you not better preach that sermon about six months from now?"

"Why?" asked the puzzled pastor.

"Because," replied Graham, "by a strange coincidence, that's what I expect to be preaching about tonight in the Tent."

Billy Graham's first book published after Los Angeles was *Revival in Our Time*, and it contains a chapter dealing with the movement of the Spirit in preparation for the Crusade. Edwin Orr's share in that ministry was a month spent in the spring urging the Christian people of Los Angeles to pray for a genuine Awakening.[18] Orr spoke five times a day under the sponsorship of the Christ for Greater Los Angeles Committee which was preparing to launch the Graham Crusade.

Edwin Orr occasionally sat in upon Graham Crusades elsewhere. His friendship with Billy Graham, already close, continued cordial.[19] Unlike some of his friends, Edwin Orr never felt led to join the Graham organization, though at the start the evangelist suggested that to him. Occasionally Graham consulted Orr about matters of strategy, but as both men became even busier in their ever so different ministries, they lost contact and only renewed it when their paths crossed. Edwin Orr prayed for

Graham daily, and was gratified to learn from the evangelist directly that he prayed daily for his friend, Orr. Ruth Graham spoke of her regard for Carol Orr's shy Christian strength of character, though they seldom met.

With Cliff Barrows, Beverly Shea, Grady Wilson and other members of the Graham Team, Edwin Orr was on very good terms. Most of Graham's organizational executives were old friends also. There were some exceptions.

Late in 1950, the *Sunday School Times* carried an editorial on the Awakening then current in the United States. It commented on the movement of the Spirit of God in Los Angeles, the remarkable college awakenings, and other evidences of real revival, then cited men like Wadsworth, Gesswein and Orr who had been instrumental under God to create revival hunger.[20]

"In this connection might be mentioned the remarkable ministry of Dr. J. Edwin Orr . . . More recently he has been at work among students and ministers, an active figure behind the scenes in college revivals and other awakenings." Thus was prefaced and concluded a paragraph dealing with twenty years of Orr's ministry.

While acknowledging the impact of campaigns of extraordinary proportions, full attendances at Sunday services and many other gratifying evidences of mass interest in religion at the mid-century, the editor observed that a sweeping revival throughout the churches had yet to come.

Edwin Orr, while eagerly helping more than one national evangelist in mass crusades, nevertheless emphasized the need of real revival within the local church, God's ordained unit of nurture for saint and sinner alike. Billy Graham had urged Orr to form his own team and engage in evangelism. Orr felt that far too few were engaging in the work of reviving the Church, so he concentrated on that needed ministry.

Charles Murray Albertyn, to whose research I owe much of this information, cited the case of a Lutheran church in Lynwood, California as very typical of Orr's type of ministry upon the local congregation. The organ of the inter-synodical Lutheran Evangelistic Movement, in July 1950, reported a movement of the Spirit which it had designated "The Real Thing":[21]

Dr. J. Edwin Orr has just concluded here in St. Paul's

Lutheran Church in Lynwood, Calif. a series of meetings through which God graciously sent a revival. The pastor of the congregation, a conservative Lutheran, although having heard of the good reception given to the speaker (a non-Lutheran) in the Lutheran churches of Scandinavia and elsewhere, was a bit hesitant—not so much as to how the speaker might be received by his people as to what the attitude of his fellow-Lutheran pastors might be.

The meetings commenced on Sunday. The speaker's approach was that of teaching evangelism and his messages were well-suited to Lutheran doctrine. By Wednesday evening, the officers, members and friends of the congregation were in deep concern. There was open confession of need, reconciliation and restitution, and some were restored from backsliding. On Friday, in the midst of Christians seeking help and blessing, some began to confess spontaneously their need of conversion. On the second Sunday, there were more than a score of conversions together with such a flood of testimonies that it was difficult to close the meeting. (The meetings were surprisingly long, beginning at 7.30 and often continuing until 10 o'clock, yet the people were reluctant to leave.)

Never before in the history of this congregation has there been such a working of the Spirit of God God kept His promise, that He would open the windows of heaven and pour out upon His people great blessings. Several Lutheran pastors present highly commended the messages. Because of the results and the manner in which the meetings were conducted, the congregation asked Dr. Orr to continue . . .

Albertyn interviewed the Reverend Allan D. Hansen, minister of St. Paul's, nearly a decade later. The effects of the awakening of 1950 were still being felt, he said. The messages delivered by Dr. Orr had brought about under God an intense conviction of sin among the members, resulting in wholesome humbling before Almighty God and producing the works meet for repentance. Private and public confession of sin had been made in a blameless way, without a single instance of indelicate expression. Besides confessions, there were costly restitutions and reconciliations. Orr's teaching was agreeable to Lutheran doctrine and

no controversy arose, but rather a general yielding to the promptings of the Spirit. The minister and his wife and many lay members of the church increased their enthusiasm for winning souls to Christ, and other ministers in the Synod showed the utmost goodwill in retrospect. As for actual church membership, it increased threefold in ten years, as did Sunday morning attendance.

Hansen attributed extraordinary growth of the congregation to the permeation of the church by the spirit of revival and the adoption of the pattern of scriptural victorious living, as taught by Edwin Orr in 1950. The keynote of the life of the church became freedom of expression, quite unexpected in a church worshipping liturgically. Cell meetings for all ages abounded, and in each group meeting the spiritual needs of each member were prayed for by another, the needs of the church were prayed for by each group and the needs of the community were prayed for by the whole congregation. Startlingly significant was the fact that the greatest strength of the church lay in the activity of its men.

It would be foolish to suggest that such results occurred everywhere that Edwin Orr ministered. Nevertheless, a goodly number of congregations of all denominations experienced a reviving of real significance. Edwin Orr conducted a series for the deepening of the spiritual life from coast to coast in the United States and Canada. Revival was still the burden of his heart—revival for the individual, for the church, for the community.

CHAPTER 18

AWAKENING IN BRAZIL

The auditorium of the Colegio Presbiteriana in the town of Presidente Soares, high up in the mountains of Brazil, was crowded with more than 1,500 people. There was a large overflow into the street and roofs of buses and cars were occupied by younger people listening to the message over the loud-speakers. It was an unusual crowd for a town of 1,500 inhabitants plus the students in residence during the school year

The speaker in the college auditorium was Dr. Edwin Orr who had come from the capital of the State of Minas Geraes, the beautiful city of Belo Horizonte, where he had said farewell in the last meeting of a stirring evangelistic campaign to a crowd of 5,000.

That night among the audience in Presidente Soares were many hundreds under deep conviction of sin. When Orr came to the porch of the auditorium to say a word over the loud-speakers, the street was filled with kneeling people, 3,000 in all.

There were four evangelical churches in the mountain town —Baptist, Methodist, Pentecostal and Presbyterian. Hurriedly their pastors opened their doors, and the great crowd of penitents soon filled each one to overflowing. The main meeting lasted three hours. The crowded after-meetings continued until 10.30 p.m., resulting in reconciliations of enemies, confession of shortcomings, restitution of things wrongfully taken, restoration of backsliders to the faith, and the conversion of sinners, including a good number of non-evangelicals.

At 10.30 p.m., the people began to return to the main auditorium for a service of praise that lasted until midnight. At midnight, the buses and cars loaded with singing people made their way into the night and the town settled into sleep. But next morning, classes in the college commenced with songs of praise, the town barber sang as he clipped his customers' hair and passengers were singing in the bus occasionally passing by.

One of the favourite songs was "Vem, visita tua igreja, O bendito Salvador!" "Come, visit Thy Church, O Blessed Saviour!" sung to an old-fashioned tune from Wales. The scenes in the street that week were reminiscent of the 1904 Welsh Revival. And yet this was Brazil in 1952.

I am indebted for descriptions of Reavivamento Brasileiro, the movement of 1952, to the author Lauro Bretones who published the only full account of it.[1] My friends in Edinburgh House were kind enough to send me a copy. Besides a typewritten translation of this book, published only in lucid Portuguese, there are briefer reports found in English in the *International Review of Missions*, the *Annual Reports of the Bible Societies*, and statements by the Evangelical Confederation of Brazil and other denominational bodies. Also available are articles and reports from both secular and religious press in Brazil, some of them fortunately available in English form.

Lauro Bretones, in a book *Whirlwinds of the South*, has described Edwin Orr's first visit to Brazil in 1951, when he met with ministers and theological students and lay workers to discuss the topic uppermost in his mind, Revival in our time. Such was the impact of the meetings that the Presbyterian Church of Brazil, contemplating the celebration of its centenary in 1959, officially decided to ask the Baptist evangelist to help them commemorate by preparing the leaders for the coming of Revival, a phenomenon hitherto unknown in Brazil.[2] As soon as Orr arrived in 1952, the Baptist and Methodist ministers associated themselves with the Presbyterians in the venture and soon Congregationalists, Episcopalians, Lutherans and Pentecostalists were doing the same. It was the first truly united work of evangelism in Brazil.

The General Secretary of the Church Council (Evangelical Confederation) of Brazil reported:[3]

> In 1951, an unknown evangelist visited our country, an unusual combination of zeal and scholarship. His was a prophetic message, telling the churches to prepare for Revival, a phenomenon which Brazilians had read about without experiencing. The response was immediate. Eighty churches in São Paulo commenced weekly prayer meetings for Revival. To Orr's dismay, the Commission planning his itinerary

decided to restrict his ministry to speaking by interpretation to the ministers and theological students, feeling that ultra-national prejudice might cause resentment of a more public ministry. But the secretary of the group, the Reverend Boanerges Ribeiro, overwhelmed by the correspondence involved and unprepared for Sunday evening service, asked Orr to speak by interpretation in Bras Presbyterian Church in São Paulo. Of the more than 300 in the crowded church, more than 100 waited for counsel to receive Christ as Saviour.[4]

The Commission immediately reversed its decision, and made Orr's ministry available to united ministerial groups in thirty cities. Edwin Orr stayed eleven weeks in São Paulo.[5] The Orr family made its home in the neighbouring city of Campinas. Orr was joined by three Americans, William Dunlap, a Presbyterian, Carl Hahn, a Methodist, and Don Phillips, a Baptist; he was assisted by Brazilian ministers in various parts of the vast country.

Edwin Orr's work in Brazil would have been gravely handicapped but for the provision of a truly remarkable interpreter. Dona Else Lima, whose husband, Dr. Durval de Magalhães Lima, was a high official in the Federal Commission of Immigration, had attended a meeting in 1930 where an American visitor had spoken on Revival. So moved was Dona Else that she went forward to seek prayer, and impulsively placed her infant daughter in the arms of the missionary, asking him to pray that the baby girl would be used of God in the reviving of the work of God in Brazil.

A score of years had passed. Silvia Lima, the daughter, had returned from academic success in the United States, but with a cold heart spiritually. Visiting São Paulo, she attended out of curiosity a packed-out meeting where Orr's interpreter had failed to show because of ill-health. Edwin Orr begged the reluctant young lady to help out. It was an immediate and striking success. Dona Silvia entered into a deep spiritual blessing through the ministry shared, and was invited to join the Orr team for the ministry throughout Brazil. Hers was the most linguistically exquisite, and most spiritually effective, ministry of interpretation known in Brazil until that time.[6] Dona Silvia met a splendid Christian engineer in the final Orr Campaign, and settled

to a happy family life in Porto Alegre in Rio Grande do Sul.

In the 1930 Census, 69,527 Brazilians called themselves Evangelicals; in the 1950 Census of Brazil there were 1,657,524 Evangelicals noted.[7] This represented a three-hundred per cent gain. The American Bible Society *Annual Report* for the year 1952 observed:

> While most of the growth of the evangelical movement could be attributed to the day-by-day witness of its members, special efforts also drew the attention of the people. In a nation-wide evangelistic crusade that crossed denominational lines and drew the interest of the multitudes, a special evangelistic team went from centre to centre calling for repentance and dedication to Christ. Time and time again, the largest auditoriums could not seat the thousands who came to hear the gospel, and hundreds upon hundreds came forward to accept Christ as their Saviour. Some there were who compared this movement with the great nation-wide revivals which laid the foundation for the Protestant growth in the United States, and there was a strong feeling that 1952 had been a crucial hour of victory in the winning of Brazil to Christ.[8]

The *International Review of Missions* claimed[9] that the Brazilian evangelical churches were growing faster than those anywhere else in the world, and added that the churches of many denominations "had been greatly stimulated by the evangelistic campaigns of Dr. Edwin Orr who, using air travel, covered almost the whole land." Of this movement, the British and Foreign Bible Society reported:[10] "Brazil is being shaken by the winds of the Spirit as never before," describing 1952 as a year of triumph. It was a year of revival.

Edwin Orr visited each of the twenty-five states and territories of Brazil, a tremendous undertaking, causing the Secretary of the Church Council to remark that Orr had outdistanced any missionary or national known to him. The awakening which began during his visit to the Mato Grosso (Great Jungle) towns continued for years in effectiveness. He preached in the ornate Grand Opera House in Manaus, 1,000 miles up the Amazon, By air he visited the vast interior of Brazil as well as the coastal cities.

In Governador Valadares, a town in Minas, no church could

hold the crowds, so the meetings were moved to a sports field.[11] Orr felt sorry for the audience standing all evening, so he asked the four churches to bring their pews and benches to the field. This was done, for the reluctance of the church committees was overcome by enthusiasm. Church people occupied the benches, so Orr told them to bring their own chairs and leave benches for visitors. The effect of seeing church people carrying chairs balanced upon their heads was too much for the unchurched. They crowded the field.

In Niteroi, capital of the State of Rio de Janeiro, the Municipal Theatre was crowded, with hundreds standing the first night, and it remained so throughout the campaign until the last night, when 3,000 attended and the police would not permit any more to enter the building. There were hundreds of conversions and restorations.[12]

In Cachoeiro do Itapemirim, in the State of Espirito Santo, the ministers of seven churches were facing the problem of where to accommodate the people when the evangelist came. The Gloria Theatre was suggested, but it was pointed out that one of the churches was larger than the theatre. Its pastor protested that the church could not hold more than a quarter of the believers in town. It was remembered that the Bartolo Circus had just come to town. The committee interviewed the circus manager, offered him his operating costs, filled the arena with chairs and filled both arena and banked amphitheatre with people.[13]

Edwin Orr waited five nights before giving an evangelistic invitation. The arena was too full to ask anyone to come forward, and the people in the amphitheatre were sitting upon planks without support for their feet. The first man to stand to declare his faith in Christ forgot that his feet had nothing to support them, and he fell between the rows of seats, causing a ripple of laughter which became the joke of the town, bringing more still.

The movement throughout Brazil was free from all sensationalism. There were tears but no emotionalism, confessions but no scandals, rejoicing but no extravagances, and meetings protracted for hours but always in decency and in order. And no unfavourable reaction from people attending these meetings reached the Secretary of the Brazilian Church Confederation, whose opinions are quoted.[14]

The Orr campaigns set the pattern for more direct Scriptural preaching, instruction in righteousness and effective evangelism in Brazilian churches. Many Brazilians, sharing in the series, went forth to preach in new power with success even greater than their teacher from overseas. This also was the opinion of the Confederation's General Secretary, Rodolfo Anders.[15]

The Orr campaigns marked a coming of age in Brazilian evangelism, 100 per cent of the support of the ministry and travel coming from Brazilian sources.[16] Not a penny came from outside. Ten years later, there were Brazilian pastors in the churches of the denominations and Brazilian missionaries abroad, converted or called in 1952.

Noteworthy in the 1952 Revival were churches that were crowded for prayer at 6 o'clock in the morning; and evening meetings moved from the largest churches to larger theatres, or sportsfields or the open air; and protracted preaching. Some churches increased by fifty per cent in a week. And the upsurge continued with various fluctuations for a decade.

The Board of Ecumenical Missions of the American Presbyterian Church made a minute of record in late 1952 regarding the remarkable series of evangelistic campaigns by the Orr team in Brazil, "resulting in a deep and widespread spiritual revival in the churches and in thousands of conversions". And the Brazilian Presbyterian church echoed the sentiment by claiming that all Brazil was "vibrating with works of revival and evangelization."[17]

Methodist support was enthusiastic. A leading Methodist journal, summed up thus:[18]

> And the results? A total of 10,000 persons recorded decision. In São Paulo are churches which received a hundred new members. A great movement of revival has surged through Brazil these past few months, calling churches to repentance of sin and hearts to acceptance of salvation.

The final review of Reavivamento Brasileiro in April 1953 in the *Jornal Batista* claimed that there was general acceptance of the movement by Baptist people in every part of Brazil. The long article reviewed the extraordinary impact of the Orr Campaign in Belo Horizonte and other cities.[19]

Strange to relate, it was among a minority of Baptists that the only significant opposition had developed. A few of the Baptist

missionaries held the view that Baptists should not co-operate with other Protestants, and they resented Edwin Orr's work.

The controversy became more serious when the conspirators accused Orr of fomenting divisions among the Baptists, forcing confessions of sin, raising the spirit of the Brazilians against the missionaries, agreeing to organize colleges and seminaries with schismatic intent—all of which was palpably false. The matter was not settled until 1953, when a champion in the person of a university professor universally regarded arose in the Brazilian Baptist Convention to give messengers of the churches the actual facts. By three votes, ranging from an overwhelming majority to an absolute unanimity, the 1953 Convention showed itself on the side of the Orr campaigns. Ten years later, the matter was forgotten and Orr was graciously received by former critics.

One extraordinary feature of the Reavivamento Brasileiro movement of 1952 was the remarkable support of the secular press, which publicized Orr in its own way on front-page and in editorials.[20] In a country where the Evangelicals numbered a bare five per cent of the population, this was a remarkable development. A missionary in Curitiba reported that the local newspaper dedicated a page of news and pictures to the visiting evangelist.

The leading newspaper in Salvador, Brazil's oldest city, protested against the attempt made by Italian priests to drown out Orr's voice in the city plaza by ringing their church bells. Instead of distracting the thousands who had gathered, the bells attracted a much larger crowd and gave a great boost to the evangelistic meetings held in a suitably large auditorium. The editorial of protest was entitled "For Whom the Bells Toll!"[21]

Edwin Orr told me personally in India that the year 1952 was the happiest year of his life. His work brought him much praise from Brazilians but the very nature of the movement was such that all concerned gave thanks to God for His blessing. In surveying "a year of revival in Brazil with Orr", Lauro Bretones concluded his book with the words "The movement demonstrated the opportunity in Brazil for the operation of the Holy Spirit"; and Professor Benjamin Moraes, Vice-President of the Presbyterian World Alliance, added briefly that "Dr. Orr had an excellent ministry here, and an evangelistic mind has since remained over all the Brazilian Church."

CHAPTER 19

INDIAN ODYSSEYS

On his way home from military service, Edwin Orr visited Calcutta, Madras and Bombay, getting his first glimpse of India. He decided to return.

It was not until the year 1954 that this became possible. His travels took him from East Africa via India to the Philippines, so in due course he arrived at the airport in Bombay. From there he made his way to the sacred Hindu city of Nasik, near which, in the Anglo-Indian school at Deolali, the Evangelical Fellowship of India was holding its annual convention.

Orr had met Indians in the United Kingdom, but now he was meeting them in their native India, an India recently become a free and independent nation. At the Deolali convention, he was able to see of what a diverse company the nation of India was comprised; here were Tamils from the south, Punjabis from the north, and Nagas from the east among the registered attendants, sharing not only Indian nationality but Christian faith.

Edwin Orr relished every moment he spent at Deolali. If he found the sacred shrines of Nasik something alien and forbidding, he found the zeal of the Christians very much to his own satisfaction. Here were people who loved the Lord Jesus Christ with as much fervour as others abroad.

It was at Deolali that he heard the soul-stirring hymn "How Great Thou Art"! being sung by a choir of Naga tribes people from Assam. There also he renewed a friendship with Mr. I. Ben Wati, a Naga who had studied at Northern Baptist Seminary in Chicago, who later became the secretary of the Evangelical Fellowship of India.

From Bombay, Edwin Orr made his way south to the State of Kerala to become the guest of my fellow-bishop in the Church of South India, Bishop Jacob.[1] He held a successful campaign in Kottayam Cathedral. Malayalam-speaking clergy of our church

speedily arranged for Orr to address a number of congregations in the beautiful coastal flats and mountain villages of Travancore. Orr also ministered to people of our sister Church, the Mar Thoma denomination. Thus he began his Kerala ministry with 400 hearers in Kattanam and concluded with 40,000 at Maramon.

In North India, Edwin Orr had been received by the President of India, Dr. Rajendra Prasad,[2] who found his guest so interesting that he had invited him back to Rashtrapati Bhavan. In South India, Orr found himself a kind of Pied Piper with Indian children, who followed him in droves as he took his evening exercise walking. He amused the children, few of whom could speak English, by talking the language of domestic animals with them. The children shrieked with laughter as the friendly Sahib initiated a conversation with some farm dog which replied to his mimicry in best of faith! Indian adults, respectful of guest-sahibs, watched in amazement as a crowd of a hundred children of all ages followed the visiting Sahib on his evening itineration. Adults always respect the intuitive judgment of character made by their children. Orr took advantage of the situation by arranging to have meetings for children only.

What amazed missionaries more was that Edwin Orr "lived by faith" in India, allowing the Lord to supply his needs on the spot, generally through the grateful offerings of Indian people poor in this world's goods but not too poor to make some little contribution of annas or pice.[3]

On one occasion, the Reverend Cyril Thomson (minister of an English-speaking church in our Tamil-speaking area) assisted Orr in meetings in South India. He reported in a Youth for Christ of Madras bulletin as follows:

> It is one thing to hear a well-known preacher stand up and hold forth; it is another actually to live with him. I can honestly say that this was a privilege given to me by the Lord, in that I shared a room for several days with Dr. J. Edwin Orr. He had been invited by the Evangelical Fellowship of India to come to India, but had told them that he would, according to the custom of many years, look to the Lord for his support. This challenged me deeply; no church was supporting him; he had no guaranteed salary; yet his faith was serene. The last thing he worried about was money. Neither did

he possess an excess of beautiful American shirts, suits socks, etc.

Yet his needs were daily met, often miraculously, as for example when the following happened. He told me one day that he had been talking to the Lord about the places he should visit while in India, and he said "If I am to do all of these things, it will cost about a thousand rupees". On the very next day, an Indian (who was dressed in a shirt and dhoti) asked him to accept an envelope, a thank-offering which contained ten one-hundred-rupee notes.[4]

This was the money which Orr had calculated for his North Indian travels from Amritsar on the western border of the Punjab to Gauhati on the eastern marches of Assam.

In Amritsar, a fortune-teller approached Orr as the latter was sitting in a motor-car, saying:

"Sahib, I can tell your fortune from the stars! I can read your future in your eyes!"

Orr waved him away. He returned to his task:

"Sahib, I can tell your fortune from the stars! I can read your future in your eyes!"

Orr waved him away again. When the fortune-teller solicited custom the third time, Orr said:

"That's nothing! I can read your thoughts!"

The persistent fortune-teller was taken aback. This was a new development, a Westerner who claimed oriental powers of magic, no less!

"Are you a professional, Sahib?" he asked.

"No," said Orr. "An amateur!"

"But you claim that you can read my thoughts?"

"Yes," replied Orr.

The disconcerted fortune-teller stepped back for a moment. Then he approached the car again.

"Very well, Sahib," he said. "Kindly read my thoughts, if you please."

With a smile on his face, Orr replied:

"You think that I am a big fool and that you will get some money out of me. You are mistaken!"

The fortune-teller brought his hands together in Indian Salute, laughed pleasantly, and said:

"Sahib, you must be a professional!"

Orr's journeys across the top of India took him into Afghanistan through the Khyber Pass, into Kashmir via Jammu, into Nepal by a route unauthorized, and into other Himalayan states.[5]

His arrival in Srinagar occurred during the Indian-Pakistani dispute, when Indian troops were in occupation and tourists had dwindled to a trickle. In fact, it seemed that he was the only tourist to dismount from the IAC plane that day. A horde of touts soliciting custom for houseboats, rugs, ivory, jewellery and the like descended on Orr. Orr laughed them off and increased his pace. The competing mob of men grew less and less as Orr disclaimed any interest in any merchandise or services, until only one man persisted.

"Sahib," he said. "I can get anything you want—houseboat, jewellery, anything!"

"No, thank you!" said Orr firmly.

After half a mile of refusals, the Kashmiri smiled knowingly and said:

"But the Sahib must want something!"

Orr stopped in his tracks.

"How about shooting?"

"Ha!" said the guide. "I can arrange that. What do you want to shoot?"

"You!" said his victim, with a smile.

The man capitulated. Instead of trying to sell something, he attached himself to Orr to enjoy the conversation further. So he and Orr became good friends.

In New Delhi, Edwin Orr applied for a visa to visit Nepal. The Royal Nepalese authorities were so far behind in modern business methods that they were refusing to consider applications to visit Katmandu without at least a month's notice. Orr still had not received his visa when he reached the borders of Nepal. So he simply walked over and hired a guide for his itineration. In Calcutta, many weeks later, the Canadian agent forwarded a Nepalese visa which Orr treated as retroactive permission to visit the hermit kingdom.

North of the border at Kalimpong, Orr encountered a Tibetan caravan of yaks and men slowly wending its way to Lhasa. It was an expected scene, with a mountain backdrop, prayer-wheels,

beasts and men. Alas, he noticed the sign they were carrying: Drink Coca-Cola.

Edwin Orr found that the view of Kanchenjunga from the bedroom window of Kalimpong far surpassed his glimpse of Everest. He thought that Kanchenjunga looked more impressive than any peaks he had ever seen, whether Mount McKinley in Alaska, or Aconcagua in the Andes, or Mont Blanc in the Alps, or Kilimanjaro in East Africa, or Mount Cook in New Zealand.

When Pandit Nehru, many months later, was addressing a croud of 100,000 in South India, Orr was surprised to hear him say, instead of political haranguing:

"What is India? It is the snows of the great Himalaya. It is the swaying palms of Kerala. It is the people who live in this land . . ."

Orr thought to himself:

"Then I too know India!"

His travels had taken him through fifteen of India's states, After several trips, he had spoken to more than 1,000,000 in aggregate. Edwin Orr felt the spell and call and appeal of India.

His last 1954 campaign was held in Calcutta in the William Carey Memorial Baptist Church. Calcutta in April is oppressively hot and cholera stalks the streets. The Reverend Walter Corlett, the minister of that church, ventured to sound out Orr about the financial aspects of their campaign.

"I can estimate what my congregation will give in the way of a thank-offering," he said, "so I am wondering how you will be able to proceed on your way to California."

"Don't worry," said Orr. "The Lord always sends what is needed when it is needed."

One afternoon, Mr. Corlett greeted Edwin Orr with a cablegram which had just arrived. It was from Dr. Billy Graham, at that time campaigning in Harringay in London. The cable stated that he was hearing of the great blessing in Orr's Indian ministry and offered his fare home via London—about £250 or $700 in air transportation.

Orr shared the cable with Corlett, who was delighted. But his delight turned to dismay when Orr said quietly that he was

going to turn down Billy Graham's kind offer. Corlett protested, but Orr explained, as Corlett recalled it:[6]

"I think that Billy has made this offer just out of the kindness of his heart. It would be so nice to accept it. In fact, many folk would take it just because it is Billy who is offering it. But I feel that the Lord can supply the need in the place where it is needed. Besides, if I take it, someone is sure to say that a man who found that the faith principle operated all around the world discovered that it did not operate in India. That is not fair to God or to Indian Christians."

So Edwin Orr cabled Billy Graham his thanks but assured him that the Lord would provide in some other way. The thank-offering of the Carey Church was sufficient to carry the evangelist via Singapore and Jakarta to Manila. There his funds dwindled. He paid a visit to the headquarters of the Thirteenth United States Air Force, where the Adjutant to the Commanding General gave him the liberty of the post and every favour befitting a former combat chaplain at large of that organization. Quite incidentally, the Adjutant offered Orr base transportation—the use of a jeep. Orr declined in favour of enjoying the comparative luxury of the base after the hardships of travel. The Adjutant then offered his transportation to an air base in California, which Orr gratefully accepted, flying across the Pacific as guest of the Air Force.

What had prompted Billy Graham to cable his generous offer? Murray Albertyn in his research discovered a letter from Orr to various friends including Graham which mentioned that some of the poorer people in India had put little gifts of farthings, eggs and tapioca in the thank-offerings.[7] Only Billy Graham in the pressure of his work at Harringay responded in typically generous way.

When the clergy of the Mar Thoma Church pressed Orr to consider returning for ministry, Orr, knowing that many American visitors brought substantial donations in cash, told them:

"If I return, it will be on an apostolic basis. Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I unto you!"

In Kerala, the Metropolitan of the Mar Thoma Church, the four Mar Thoma Bishops and Bishop C. K. Jacob of our Church

of South India in central Travancore were enjoying afternoon tea with their guest, Dr. Edwin Orr. The conversation was quite lively and entertaining.

Bishops of the Mar Thoma Church are bound by a rule of celibacy which does not apply generally to the Mar Thoma clergy, whereas Bishops of our Church of South India are as free to marry as our presbyters and laymen.

Mischievously, one of the Mar Thoma Bishops asked Edwin Orr:

"Do you think that the rule of the Mar Thoma Church regarding the celibacy of their Bishops is better for all practical purposes than the rule of the Church of South India in this matter?"

Orr glanced around the gathering. He and our Bishop Jacob were outnumbered heavily and though both were happily married, there was no gainsaying the fact that these dedicated bachelor bishops were unencumbered in their devotion to the work.

"No," said Edwin Orr, with a twinkle in his eye. "The Bishops of the Church of South India have the greater advantage . . ."

"But why? Tell us why!" demanded one of the younger Bishops.

There was a broad smile on Orr's face.

"Well," said he, "The married Bishops not only have a better half but also better quarters."

The Most Reverend Juhanon Mar Thoma, the Metropolitan of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar, wrote in *Evangelical Fellowship*:[8]

> Following Dr. Orr's visit to Travancore last year, our Bishops and Clergy were unanimous in their desire to bring him back for parish evangelism throughout our Dioceses. His first meetings were held in the village of Mavelikara, with 500 people under a pandal in the Mar Thoma churchyard. The crowds increased till 5,000 were gathering nightly causing the cinemas to abandon their shows. There were larger crowds at Mallapally, and well-sustained interest in village after village. After six weeks of preaching, with only two days rest, the Evangelist had preached the Good News to an aggregate of 400,000 people, concluding in the historic Maramon Convention. The Reverend C. G. David interpreted.

Two meetings were outstanding. A meeting of the clergy had been convened to discuss serious difficulties in the Church. Through the ministry of the Word and the moving of the Spirit, there was a precious reviving of all present. On March 3, there were 20,000 men gathered under a pandal in the dry river bed at Maramon. The gospel was preached in great power, and more than 2,000 men came forward to register their names for counsel, repenting and turning to God.

Two of the great needs of Indian Christianity are the practice of Christian giving, tithing being greatly neglected, and abandonment of dissension all too common. Dr. Orr's ministry was used of God to provoke many Christians to the good works of financial support of Indian missionary work at home and abroad.[9] His messages in Anaprampal resulted in the church there sending missionaries to the borders of Tibet. Orr also helped considerably to reduce some clerical bickerings.

Not only did Orr preach for the Mar Thoma and Church ot South India people in Kerala, but also for the Jacobites af Kuruppampady. There were many who read his book, *Full Surrender*, in Malayalam.

When, in 1958, Edwin Orr returned to Tamil Nad, he had already preached in campaigns in places as varied as Coonoor, a hill station, and Vellore, the great medical centre, and Madras, the metropolis. In 1958, he campaigned for us in Salem, Erode and Coimbatore.

From the year 1952, a Revival had been going on in our midst. Though the results had not been spectacular, several hundred conversions already had taken place, and dozens of prayer groups had been praying for the spread of the Revival movement, many of our people having realized the immense possibilities of a revived Church while many voluntary workers actively engaged in the preaching of Christ and Him crucified.

In 1958, Edwin Orr was invited to be one of the principal speakers in the vast Maramon Convention conducted by the ancient Syrian Church in Kerala. But before going to the Convention, Orr helped us in our Diocese for six weeks, spending a fortnight each at Salem, Coimbatore and Erode, where some of our important churches are. His work in our midst began on 12th January and concluded on 23rd February 1958.

I am able to write in some detail about his meetings in Coimbatore as I was able to attend most of them and came in very close contact with him at that time. They began on 27th January. During the first ten days of his Mission, he spoke to our Christians. There were fourteen churches in the city and they all worked together in a fine spirit of fellowship. The pastors as well as the congregations of the Church of South India, the Mar Thoma, Lutheran, Brethren and Pentecostal churches attended his meetings in large numbers. These took place in the spacious grounds of our Immanuel Church of South India. The audiences ranged from 1,000 to 1,500 each evening. Many Roman Catholics as well as Hindus came to hear him.

Dr. Edwin Orr is a born teacher. He asked for a blackboard and taught this huge class, writing on the blackboard the essential points of his address. He often asked questions of the audience; he also invited them to ask questions, being quite ready with apt answers to questions. This gave an informal character to his address.

Edwin Orr demonstrated a thorough grasp of the teaching of the Bible on fundamental Christian doctrines and quoted it constantly from memory. He gave the references to help his Tamil interpreter, who turned up the passages and read them. When speaking to Christians, his subjects were Sin, Forgiveness, Confession, Sanctification, Surrender and the Holy Spirit. To nominal Christians, he spoke on such subjects as Backsliding, False Profession, and Assurance of Salvation. His teaching was clear and logical and every point was well illustrated, mostly with incidents for which he could vouch himself.

He used his book *Full Surrender* as a text book for his large classes. Most men hear an address and go away with a vague impression of what they hear. Even immediately after a meeting, they forget the main outline of an address. To help people to keep a permanent record of what they heard, Edwin Orr asked that copies of *Full Surrender* in English be sold in meetings. Most of our folk cannot read English. So Orr arranged for a Tamil translation of this book to be printed and ready in time for his meetings. Hundreds of our people who had passed through experiences of revival were hungry for spiritual instruction based closely on the Bible, so they appreciated this opportunity to

listen to Orr's oral teaching and to read the book in which was written out simply and clearly the same message.

We arranged three public meetings for Orr. One of our workers had the happy idea that they might be held in the large stadium which belongs to the Coimbatore Municipality, near the Church where he was speaking. Continually, important public meetings are held in the Stadium, as for example, for Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and other famous men. Permission for Edwin Orr's meetings was given willingly and readily, and all that the Municipality charged was a rupee a night for the use of electric lights!

On the 7th, 8th and 9th February, Edwin Orr delivered three addresses. 2,000 people came to hear him on the first two nights; on the third, there must have been over 5,000 people, including hundreds of Hindus, both men and women. The last day of the Mission fell on Sunday. A procession started from Christ Church at four in the afternoon, marched to the Lutheran Church and then proceeded to the Stadium. Three thousand persons walked in the procession, with fifty banners which displayed verses from the Bible written in bold and artistic letters. The audiences in the Stadium listened intently to all his three addresses. Practically no one left the meetings. The Fact of God, the Problem of Sin and the Way of Salvation were the themes upon which Edwin Orr spoke.

When arranging the programme for Dr. Orr we requested him to lead a prayer meeting each morning and to give an address every evening. About 200 persons gave us their names and addresses and told us that they needed further instruction in the spiritual life. All this made Dr. Orr's days in Coimbatore quite full.

In addition, he gave to our Christian workers four lectures on Revival Movements in the Church. Facts were well stored in his retentive memory. Without any notes whatsoever, he kept us listening with close attention as he showed us how God the Holy Spirit had been actively at work in His Church throughout the ages. I know of no other English-speaking scholar who has made such a deep study of this subject and who has written so extensively upon it. He fully believes in Revival Awakenings, but at the same time studies them with a critical and well-trained mind. Our Christian workers were given a clarity of vision in

their minds to match the depth of feeling stirring in their hearts.

We had experienced several big evangelistic campaigns in Coimbatore during the previous six years. The Orr campaign drew far larger crowds than any others. In previous campaigns we had failed to do the follow-up work effectively. So we became anxious to keep in personal touch with the men and women to whom God had spoken in these meetings in 1958. The results were all better conserved.

The teaching methods Orr used appealed to some of our people who had tended to regard revival meetings as merely emotional and not of lasting value. By natural temperament and by extensive study, Dr. Orr had learned to take a more restrained and sober view of what happens in revival movements than some of the visiting evangelists who had visited us in previous years. It was good to see the close co-operation of both Indian presbyters and European missionaries.

When Edwin Orr came to Coimbatore, we saw for ourselves how he lived by prayer from day to day. From Australia he had travelled via South Africa to India, from which he had to return to his home in California after an absence of two years. These long journeys had to be paid for. A poor Diocese could not afford to pay such heavy travel expenses. There was no organization behind him to meet them. His faith led him to undertake this work; he was quite confident that God would provide all that was needed.

In his meetings, we took offerings. Always they were small amounts. One or two women who had been blessed offered their gold bangles. Orr was very grateful for all the gifts which were handed over to him. We clearly saw God at work in providing immediate needs. This was not enough for all his journeys in India, but he was not at all worried and went about his task believing that God would supply his needs in His own good time.

War-time journeys in Oceania and the mainland of China occupied another chapter of this volume. In Asia, our great continent with its majority of the world's population, Edwin Orr had already traversed Japan, Korea, ten provinces of China, Vietnam, Thailand, Malaya, Burma, Ceylon, the Himalayan kingdoms of Sikkim, Nepal, Kashmir and Afghanistan.

In previous years, he also had toured Islamic countries,

Pakistan, Iran, Iraq, Transjordania, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Aden, Syria and Turkey, besides those in North Africa.

In 1953, Edwin Orr was within a few miles of the Holy Places of Islam, farther inland from which an adventuring "infidel" would have been put to death as a trespasser.[10] He was always very interested in Islam, having read the life of the Prophet Mohammed through thirteen times and that before his eleventh birthday.

On his way to India, Orr flew alongside of Sir Zafrullah Khan, Pakistani Foreign Minister, who practised the requirements of his faith *en route*, interrupting conversations to kneel in prayer. Orr surprised him with his knowledge of things Islamic. He enjoyed talking to Muslims. Yet Edwin Orr had come to the conclusion that the world of Islam was the most difficult of all the world's mission-fields.

CHAPTER 20

MULTIPLIED MINISTRY

When Edwin Orr stayed in Coimbatore, he carried with him a little black notebook which listed, one would guess, between 600 and 1,000 names and addresses arranged systematically according to geographical area and alphabetical order. Geographical divisions were distributed by the days of the week, so that on a Monday Orr was able to pray for many of his friends in India and the Orient, on a Tuesday for Australia and New Zealand, on a Wednesday for all of Africa, on a Thursday for Ireland and Scotland, on a Friday for England and Wales, on a Saturday for Scandinavia and the rest of Europe. He prayed likewise for the Americas—Canada, the Eastern, Midwestern, Southern and Western States, the West Indies and Latin America.

Apparently he planned no intercession for the Lord's Day, though he had two lists of names of people for whom he prayed daily—his family and relatives, and his "children in the faith" who were engaged in full-time service or, rather, as many of them as had come to his notice.

Orr had a remarkable memory. In his early days, he used to pray for (and write a semi-form letter to) hundreds of friends, relying upon his memory only. He prayed for his friends daily. He said, however, that it became a spiritual impossibility to pray for hundreds of people daily. Hurried remembrance defeated its own purpose, so he limited daily intercession to a hundred or so and found it easier to pray for them in their places of residence or labour grouped together.

To glance over these lists was an education. Some were names of famous people in church or state, others utterly unknown. Most of them were ministers or missionaries or national Christians poor in this world's goods.

Orr was dumbfounded on one occasion when a religious

worker in America tried to bargain with him for the use of his prayer list, apparently to be used to raise funds.

"Look," said Orr. "This is not a solicitation list. I know that there are people who send out solicitation letters and call them prayer letters. I do not. Almost every one on my list is not in a position to contribute to my work or another's. My lists are of those who pray for my work or for whose own work I pray. Nothing doing!"

Orr's correspondence with his friends prompted Albertyn to write a chapter of his thesis upon Orr's friendships.[1] Albertyn had access to Orr's filing cabinets for a couple of years during Orr's overseas tours. I became interested in the names and reports of Orr's own "children in the faith" already engaged in full-time Christian service all around the world.[2]

Ronald Waine, a young businessman from the town of Gillingham in Kent, was converted to God during a campaign which Edwin Orr conducted for the National Free Church Council of Great Britain in the Medway Towns in 1937. He studied at All Nations' Bible College near London and proceeded to Algeria, as a missionary of the Algiers Mission Band. Waine became a pioneer missionary, making hazardous forays into the Sahara in peace-time and maintaining a strategic ministry in Algeria proper during the terrible days of Algeria's struggle for independence. He rose to a position of leadership in the Mission before evacuation with his family to Britain.

During the same year, 1937, when Orr was sharing the platform of the Moody Centennial Campaign in Britain with Mel Trotter, a young London pagan attended the meetings with his aunt. He was converted, but not in any spectacular way. In due course, Fred Pontin became a colporteur-missionary in the Republic of Eire, as difficult a field for evangelical work as Moslem Algeria.

Norman Krebbs, a resident of Pittsburgh in Pennsylvania, attended a meeting conducted by Orr in the Northside Christian and Missionary Alliance Church in early 1936. With reluctance, the pastor Tracy Miller opened his church to a young stranger, Edwin Orr. The attendance was good in spite of the fact that he was unknown to the congregation. Norman Krebbs remembered his address as "reserved, dignified and unemotional", adding:

A significant number of us were touched by the Spirit of God and responded to the simple invitation. Considering the quiet presentation of the message and the unemotional content, it is astonishing that anyone responded. Clearly, it was the work of the Holy Spirit.

Unencouraged by my parents, I had been attending faithfully another church in the same city. The Gospel had not reached my heart; I was pointing toward a life of sin and shame. I went each of the three nights. The first night God spoke to me about my need of salvation but I successfully resisted the call of the Spirit. The second night I responded, and accepted Christ as my Saviour. The third night I dedicated my life to the service of God. I sensed God's call into the ministry immediately.

Following his conversation, Norman Krebbs attended Moody Bible Institute, then the College of Wooster in Ohio, entering the ministry of the Presbyterian Church from theological seminary. Krebbs built up a vigorous, new congregation on the south side of Kansas City in Missouri, and the congregation built a magnificent church in colonial style of architecture, Colonial Presbyterian Church, a strongly evangelical lighthouse. With great satisfaction, Edwin Orr conducted meetings for this congregation in their new building in 1960.

In San Diego, in 1950, a young man professed conversion in a deeper life conference conducted there by Edwin Orr at the invitation of Dr. Edward Cole, a Baptist. Wayne Lockwood decided to enter another phase of Christian ministry and became a staff member of Forest Home Conference Centre. Forest Home, founded by the late Henrietta Mears, was justly famed for its amazing influence on the Pacific Coast and throughout the United States. Out of movements of the Spirit there came the ministry of the Hollywood Christian Group, Campus Crusade for Christ, and many other endeavours, and it was there that Billy Graham's ministry blossomed out in 1949. Orr often ministered at Forest Home and almost always saw great results there.

In the Church of the Open Door in Los Angeles, in 1949 when Orr was guest of Dr. Vernon Magee, a gangster kneeling in misery at the communion rail professed conversion. He had

spent time in prison for crimes committed, so when he tried to engage in preaching, his background was such that it made conventional training for the ministry impossible. Orr prayed faithfully for this man, in spite of disappointments, praying daily for him. Louis Nelton married a girl whose faith and fortitude were strong enough to help them through all the vicissitudes of life. They established a happy family, and Nelton spent his winters working as a carpenter, his summers as a rural evangelist far and wide.

In December 1956, the New Zealand *Challenge* devoted an entire issue to a survey of evangelism in that country, mentioning Orr's ministry in 1936 and 1956.[3] It pointed out in retrospect that the first convert of the first meeting of the first tour of evangelism in New Zealand by Edwin Orr was a lady who engaged in a remarkable ministry of evangelism, now (Mrs.) Major Claire McCallum assisting her husband Major Robert McCallum in a ministry of rehabilitation of alcoholics run by the Salvation Army on Rotoroa Island. Both the McCallums were well known for their zeal. The article pointed out that the last convert of the last meeting of that 1936 tour was a young man who became a pioneer missionary in Bolivia, now a veteran of Andean service, William Simpson of Russell who excelled in pioneer colportage.

Two young men who were converted in the 1936 Orr Campaigns in South Africa entered the South African Methodist ministry—Desmond Adendorff of Pretoria and John Gibson of Durban.[4] The latter served in the Transvaal and Natal in suburban churches. Gibson also served as the chairman of the Committee of Converts of 1936 in the Ministry that sponsored the Edwin Orr Campaigns of 1953. When Orr had preached in Pretoria in 1936, young Desmond Adendorff was urged by a teenage friend to attend and was soundly converted there, the call being seed that fell into ground already prepared by his father who used to pray with his son each night and read and explain New Testament stories.

> After a while, I was aware that something of the fire had gone out of my experience. I prayed God to send someone "to convert me again". God did. I made a fresh surrender at a meeting conducted by the Cooper-McCrossan Team and

also claimed healing from a nasal trouble that a specialist had thought incurable. I never had a recurrence of the trouble.

Adendorff began Sunday School teaching, and later local preaching in Capetown. In 1939, he was deeply disturbed by the failures in his life such as "an almost pathological temper". For a while he disbelieved, then sought to be filled by the Spirit of God, received and was free.

Adendorff had charge of the Methodist Indian Mission in Durban and environs for eight years during which God used him and Indian colleagues "to turn it away from being an organization whose chief aim was to care for hereditary Christians and restore some sense of mission." He then had five years in European ministry in East London, from which he carried a hundred or more names as part of his prayer list representing some of those who accepted Christ through his counsel.

C. Murray Albertyn, converted under Orr in 1953 in a Methodist Church in Durban, studied for the ministry in colleges of Wesleyan foundation—in Cliff College, Pasadena College, and Boston University—but entered the Presbyterian ministry.

A young dance band leader in Johannesburg, Denis Clark—not to be confused with Dennis Clark of New Delhi—became an ardent youth evangelist, developed his talents as a speaker, organizer, soloist, organist and choir director, and was soon appointed South African Director of Youth for Christ. He left that work in other capable hands and emigrated to Europe, where he became the European Director for Youth for Christ. He was a key leader in the Copenhagen Youth for Christ World Congress. His ministry became popular in Scandinavia but he made his base in Britain, continuing in independent but co-operative missions with an unusual mixture of biblical clarity which he owed to the Brethren movement and emotional warmth which he owed to the Pentecostal.

> My conversion to the Lord Jesus Christ was finally consummated on September 6, 1936. I had been threatened with expulsion from school four years before for swearing, which had as strong a grip upon me as drink has upon an alcoholic. In the Edwin Orr series of meetings, my interest was greatly awakened through his stories of faith. Here at last was evidence that God was alive.

On the final Sunday of the 1936 Campaign, door stewards and ushers were needed and I was asked to assist. The doors opened and the crowds crushed in until even the aisles were jammed with people. To take up the collection was a most difficult task. I do not remember the message at all but at the end of the service there I stood, knowing that I was an unsaved door steward, my hand still grasping a few song sheets. Dare I go forward? That would have been a great shame, for door stewards are supposed to be saved already. There and then I trusted Christ, and went home changed but hardly knowing it. The opportunity soon came to separate myself from the usual sins and confess why. With this confession came the assurance of salvation. I noticed that my mouth was clean, no more swearing!

In 1952, Denis Clark resigned his directorship in business and his career in accountancy. As he preached more and more, he found that it took a great battle of soul to preach the whole counsel of God. He and his colleague, Campbell McAlpine, adopted "living by faith" without solicitation and attributed this decision to the example of Edwin Orr in that respect.

One of the least fruitful of all Orr's campaigns was conducted in Hong Kong for European people, in 1938. In it was converted Willard Grant who became a children's evangelist for the Mission Covenant denomination (to which Dr. Paul Rees belongs). In another meeting which appeared to be fruitless, a rally for the Birmingham Youth for Christ in 1946, a young lady became converted and entered nursing work, Barbara Greig.

A brief visit to the Philippines in 1938 resulted in the conversion of Antonio Lacanilao, who later became an evangelist in that country. Edwin Orr did not recall meeting this man, but as soon as he heard of him, he placed him on his daily prayer list. This was the case with quite a number of Christian workers in Brazil who traced their own spiritual life back to the stirring days of Revival there in 1952. Orr met some of them in 1960.

Orr counted it a duty to pray for his children, his brother and sister, his brothers and sisters-in-law, his nephews and nieces, uncles and aunts and cousins in Britain, Canada, the States, New Zealand, South Africa and Scandinavia. But he counted it a privilege to pray daily for those who had put their trust in Christ

through his ministry and who had heard the call of God to Christian service. He felt that when he prayed for Simpson in the Andes or Waine in the Sahara, he was alongside in serving God. He felt the same way about those for whom he prayed weekly instead of daily, and made it a point to write and encourage them regularly. He was baffled at times by those who seemed to be indifferent to his prayers, and encouraged at other times by those who told him that they valued his prayers beyond words. Oft-times Orr was tempted to delete a name from his prayer list as unworthy or unfruitful, but he found it practically impossible to stop remembering the person, worthy or not; he just prayed with a different urgency.

From Coimbatore, Orr wrote an erstwhile associate in the ministry who had suffered such a deep personal loss that he had become embittered and indifferent to God. Orr told his friend that he had been tempted to give up praying for him to spend the time in intercession for others engaged in useful service for God, but could not discard his interest lightly, rather redoubling his prayers for him. To his surprise, his friend of former days wrote urgently asking for prayer for his future plans, which took him once again into the orbit of friendship and understanding.

Friends often asked Edwin Orr how he found the time for praying for his friends. He used to explain that he did not set any certain time aside each day, because of his very uncertain schedule. Instead, he used whatever hour presented itself—in an aeroplane, in a barber shop, in a waiting room, but more often than otherwise during a brisk walk early in the day. Sometimes a day became too crowded for intercession until evening, or on occasion it was postponed until another day.

Edwin Orr would not allow his friends to call him a "man of prayer" lest they get the impression that he spent long hours in spiritual wrestling. In fact, he was very matter of-fact about petitions, presenting them to God as telephone calls rather than "laying siege to the ramparts of heaven". Only when he was disturbed by his own unfaithfulness or that of close associates did he carry a burden.

CHAPTER 21

SPIRITUAL SONGS

During Orr's Campaign in Coimbatore folk loved to sing a Tamil lyric set to a simple tune:

Than yinimayilum
Yesuvin namam
Thivya mathuramame!

Not very many Westerners show sympathetic interest in Indian poetry and music but Orr was intrigued by both words and music of this song of praise and did not rest until he had persuaded one of our missionaries to give him the meaning of the verses word by word. Judge his surprise when he heard his version sung over the radio!

Sweet is the honeycomb,
Sweeter is Jesus,
Sweetest by far that I know.
Come now everyone to worship Him,
Magnify and honour Him,
Bless His name wherever you may go.

He took away my sin,
Conquering evil,
Bringing my soul hope renewed.
O my heart and mind rejoice in Him,
Magnify and worship Him,
Bless His name in humble gratitude.

His very life He gave
For men a ransom,
Taking their guilt all away.
Therefore sinners find forgiveness,
Certain peace and saving grace,
Full salvation at the perfect day.

As falls the morning dew
On thirsty pastures,
Jesus refreshes all in need.
He will lighten every heavy load,
Brighten every dark abode,
Turn each sorrow into joy indeed.

He is our happiness,
Comfort in sorrow,
Faithful and trustworthy friend.
So whenever we are worn and sad,
Let the Saviour make us glad,
On His care we know we can depend.

All who in heaven dwell
Join in our singing,
Jesus is worthy of praise.
Let us all together worship Him,
Magnify and honour Him,
Praise His name in all our works and ways.
(Refrain)
Sweet is the honeycomb,
Sweeter is Jesus,
Sweetest by far that I know.

The late Lincoln Watts, an Englishman whose knowledge of Tamil was recognized as first-rate, was so delighted with Orr's translation of that Tamil lyric into English verse that he sang and played it around England in deputation work.

Many years before, in New Zealand, Edwin Orr heard four Maori girls singing a song of farewell in their native tongue:[1]

Po ata rau
I moe a i ho nei:
E haere ana
Koe ki pa ma mao;
Haere ra
Ma hara mai ano:
Ki-ite tau i
Tangi atu nei.

Edwin Orr had great respect for the Maori people, regarding them as 'talented, musical, heroic and chivalrous'. Interested in all races, he was particularly attracted by the Maori, for he felt that they were much like the Irish in their 'love of nature, love of poetry, love of music and love of fighting". The Maori language, a typically Polynesian tongue, sounded most harmonious to him and he was sorry that so few New Zealanders took the trouble to learn it. In a large audience of 1,000 New Zealanders, Orr asked how many of them knew the Maori language and only one of them raised his hand. So, to put them to shame, Orr took the trouble to learn to sing in Maori.

Even in his teens, Edwin Orr was impressed with the idea of an all-seeing God. In a Christian Endeavour service, Mr. T. W. Wynne of Belfast was giving an address on prayer and said:

"Make sure that you feel conscious of the presence of the Lord before you begin to pray."

Young Orr sought to carry out this advice but found it "not so simple as it appeared to be". He realized that unconfessed sin was a hindrance to the practice of the presence of God. As said the Psalmist:

> Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit?
> Or whither shall I flee from Thy presence?
> If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there;
> If I make my bed in hell, Thou art there . . .
> Search me, O God, and know my heart;
> Try me, and know my thoughts;
> And see if there be any wicked way in me;
> And lead me in the way everlasting.

Hence Orr wrote a song of prayer at the height of the 1936 local Revival at Ngaruawahia, striking off the verses in the white heat of inspiration in five minutes, borrowing words and setting them to the plaintive Maori melody. New Zealanders began to sing the spiritual song, then Australians, then South Africans in both English and Afrikaans, then British people and Canadians and Americans. The verses were translated into Norwegian and Swedish, into Spanish and Portuguese. The words were biblical and simple:

Search me, O God, and know my heart today;
Try me, O Saviour, know my thoughts, I pray:
See if there be some wicked way in me;
Cleanse me from every sin and set me free.

I pray Thee, Lord, to cleanse me now from sin;
Fulfil Thy promise, make me pure within:
Fill me with fire where once I burned with shame;
Grant my desire to magnify Thy name.

Lord, take my life and make it wholly Thine;
Fill my poor heart with Thy great love divine:
Take all my will, my passion, self and pride;
I now surrender, Lord, in me abide.

O Holy Ghost, revival comes from Thee;
Send a revival, start the work in me:
Thy word declares Thou wilt supply our need;
For blessing now, O Lord, I humbly plead.

Edwin Orr's hymn has had great influence in all parts of the Christian world, finding its way into many hymn-books. It was sung by 25,000 voices at the World Convention of the Christian Endeavour movement in Melbourne.[2]

The Welsh evangelist Brinley Evans reported[3] that a Salvation Army officer in Adelaide heard the prayer song sung in a ministers' meeting and was deeply convicted of his spiritual need but was too shy to express it. He returned to his Salvation Army Corps and attempted to teach the hymn to his comrades. As he sang it, he was so filled with shame and sorrow that he broke down and could not finish. Another officer, to redeem the situation, took up the song as she had learned it; again, she was so convicted that she melted into tears. The impact of the message of the song was so great that a revival was felt, fifty decisions for Christ were made, and the movement continued long.

When engaged in the invasion of Palawan, Orr and an Air Force security officer were riding in a jeep in the no man's land between the American perimeter and the Japanese forces. Orr was at the wheel, and was tensely watching for signs of the enemy.

Suddenly an armed soldier in enemy-style uniform jumped to the middle of the road. The security officer reached for his pistol and Orr swerved the jeep towards the soldier. Then they saw that he was a Filipino guerrilla and not a Japanese. He asked for their passes. Neither Orr nor his companion carried passes, for their trip into no man's land was unofficial. Suddenly the Filipino stood back and exclaimed:[4]

"You are Mr. Orr! I heard you preach in Manila. I can sing your song."

He sang the words of "Search me, O God!" with genuine feeling; then he hastened with the officers to the next village where members of an evangelical congregation had taken refuge from the bombardment. The Palawan churches all knew the song.

During the Second World War, the singer Gracie Fields popularized the English version of the song of farewell and spread it around the world:

Now is the hour
  When we must say goodbye:
Soon you'll be sailing
  Far across the sea;
When you're away,
  Remember me, I pray,
I'll be awaiting
  Your return to me.

There were some Christians who thought (but quite wrongly) that some worldlings had parodied a spiritual hymn. Others felt that the world-wide popularity of the secular song would put an end to the ministry of the spiritual verses. Quite the contrary was the case. Christians began singing the hymn with renewed fervour. The words, though directed to believers, were used to win sinners.

In Glasgow, a young Scotsman who had lost his faith in the vicissitudes of war was on his way to a Saturday night dance. As he reached the door, the orchestra struck up the melody that suggested nothing but "Search me, O God!" to the man. He stood there for a moment, slippers in hand, and then he slipped away, like Peter, to weep bitterly.[5]

Newman Watts thought that it was possible that this hymn of Orr's would live in hymn-books and in sacred worship long after its author's life and ministry were forgotten.

In Canada, whilst traversing the prairies, Orr revealed the burden of his heart and wrote another prayer for revival, beginning with individual need, with the words set to the classical tune of the old Dolomite chant:[6]

Lord God, the heavens rend,
Come down and set us free:
A great revival send—
Begin the work in me.

Remove the veil of sin
That separates from Thee:
Lord, search our hearts within—
Begin the work in me.

The cleansing blood we plead;
We claim the victory:
Thou canst supply our need—
Begin the work in me.

Our humble prayer attend,
Revival comes from Thee,
Oh Holy Ghost descend—
Begin the work in me.

At the conclusion of his first world tour, when he was searching for guidance for the future, Orr penned yet another hymn of heart-searching and published it in a book:[7]

Father, I know I need Thee more and more:
Add now some blessing, further grace outpour;
Teach me obedience to Thy Blessed will
That all Thy blest commands I may fulfill.

Too often have I wanted my own way;
Break my resistance—teach me to obey:
Engrave Thy will more deeply on my heart,
That I may surely know and do my part.

I know the cure for all depressing doubt:
I know I must needs yield and turn about
To follow all the leadings of my Lord,
Obeying His known will and written word.

So, Lord, again I gladly yield to Thee.
Fully presenting every faculty:
Purge me, O Lord—Thy servant sanctify,
Use even me Thy Christ to glorify.

This Is My Story: Sixteen Twentieth Century Evangelists and Their Thrilling Work gives an account of the Brazilian Movement of 1952 and notes that two new songs, "*Sonda me, O Deus*" and "*Jesus Me Ama*" had swept the Brazilian churches.[8] The first was written by Edwin Orr and the other was popularized through his nation-wide meetings.

According to William Dunlap, a crowded taxi containing himself, Orr and Brazilian associates was making its way from extraordinary meetings in Bras, a suburb of São Paulo, to a city hotel when some of the young people began to sing a sweet little song to the tune of a German hymn for children. Edwin Orr, though but two weeks in the country, delighted his hosts by learning the words before the journey ended. They contained the gospel in verses of very simple Portuguese.

Within a short space of time, "*Jesus Me Ama*" was sweeping the Brazilian churches everywhere. Orr realized that he was not a great singer, but he sang the hymn as a duet with his interpreter and then invited his audiences to learn the words. They did so with enthusiasm. The song was soon recorded and became a radio favourite.

The simple song of salvation had been written by a Brazilian Indian. When the wave of revival reached the mountain town of Presidente Soares, the daughter of this Indian was attending college there and made profession of faith in Christ as a result of hearing the song written by her father.

Orr and Dunlap brought back another melodious Brazilian hymn, a paraphrase of Psalm cxxi as sung by Brazilian choirs. The Portuguese words were so beautiful that Orr despaired of translating them into English. Finally, he succeeded in putting

the thoughts of the Psalm into English verse. Tim Spencer of Manna Music liked these verses so well that he published the words and music and recorded them with the basso profundo, Bill Carle, assisted by a negro choir, published by RCA Victor.

To the hills I lift my eyes—
Whither shall I look for aid?
My help cometh from the Lord
Who both heaven and earth hath made.
For the Lord in watchful keeping
Guides thy steps along the way,
In the night protects thee sleeping
Shelters thee throughout the day.

Day by day and hour by hour
God will keep thee from all ill;
Overshadowed by His power
Thou art well protected still.
He will not let evil harm thee,
Near at home or far afield:
Why should any fear alarm thee
While the Lord God is thy shield!

These songs and hymns present another clear insight into the heart of the man who wrote them. Whether in introducing "How Great Thou Art!" in California or "*Jesus Me Ama*" in Brazil, or in writing his own verses, Edwin Orr showed good taste and deep feeling. He showed a deep dislike of "corn and jazz" but did not resent western or negro spirituals so long as they carried a message as well as melody and rhythm. His hymnbook in New Zealand and Australia showed a decided preference for the great old hymns, such as Wesley's and Watts'.

CHAPTER 22

THE BURDEN OF REVIVAL

In ecumenical circles today there seems to be a distaste for the word "revival" and a preference for its synonym "renewal". Why is this?

In the English-speaking countries, there is a distinctly marked frontier between the Christian communities which still hold the word "revival" in high regard and those who treat it with disdain. To many thinking people in the United States of America, the word "revival" means an evangelistic effort (often of hot-gospel type). The second definition listed in Webster's Dictionary suggests this, but it seems to be the first in the minds of Americans. To people in the Commonwealth—including India but excluding Canada—the word "revival" denotes a "renewed interest in religion after indifference or decline, a period of religious awakening", which is Webster's first definition.

To the American, the word "revival" suggests a series of meetings, an evangelistic mission; to other English-speaking people, the word "revival" recalls the stirring days of the Whitefield-Wesley movement, or the Second Evangelical Awakening of 1859, or the Welsh Revival of 1904. To Americans, "revival" primarily means human promotion; but to other English-speaking Christians, it primarily means Divine visitation.

Edwin Orr stressed this point in his lectures upon the Progress of Revivals of New Testament Christianity given at Oxford and Cambridge—and at Coonoor and Coimbatore. He faced a difficult dilemma—whether to give up the word "revival" because of its American connotations or to use it because of its British significance. He decided upon the latter course for several good reasons: firstly, the word "revival" actually means "return to consciousness or life"; secondly, its equivalent in French, German and other languages conveys the same meaning; thirdly, the American misuse of the word "revival" is a prime hindrance to the realization of an awakening in the historic sense. I may

add that my own preference is for the use of the word in its historical and logical sense.

Such "Revival" may be described as Orr's magnificent obsession. His first recorded talks were on the subject; his sermons largely deal with aspects of Revival; and a dozen of his books treat the topic in one way or another.

The concluding chapters of Orr's first seven books (which reached a total of 350,000 copies) dealt with the doctrines of Revival. He published a volume of challenging talks on Revival in 1937, entitled *The Church Must First Repent*. His two theses written for doctorates contributed to the knowledge of Revival historically. His devotional essays on Full Surrender may be considered as chapters on personal Revival.

Orr wrote in *The Church Must First Repent*:[1]

> The word Revival, in its ordinary sense, means the coming of life and renewal to something that has already possessed life.
>
> Let us take an example in nature. We walk into the garden during the winter season, and there we see the old oak tree, leafless. It has stood for several months a sorry sight, a few withered leaves hanging on empty branches as if in self-pity. To all outward appearances, it is dead. But come back again with me next month and I will show you a wondrous thing —little buds of beautiful, delicate green pushing their way upwards towards the light of the springtime sun, breaking through the relics of their winter prison. Soon the tree is in the glory of its leafy splendour. It is a seasonal marvel, this renewal of spring, when all that seemed dead becomes alive before our wondering eyes. What has happened? There has come about a revival of the old tree.
>
> It is the same in the spiritual realm. Revival primarily is the renewal of life in something that has already possessed life. It is impossible to revive something that has never been alive. But there is one important difference—the dying of the summer life of the tree is due to natural causes, and the same causes bring about the springtime awakening. Spiritual death, on the other hand, is due to the disease of sin.

These are Edwin Orr's sentiments, choicely stated. I have given thought to the subject also. No illustration can be complete

Orr's picture of Revival does not bring out the spiritual pain that often accompanies Revival. Sinners convicted by the Holy Spirit often suffer agony. Such suffering seems absolutely necessary for the restoration of sinners to a life of holiness, just as a surgical operation is often necessary to relieve a patient of acute pain. Again, Orr's illustration does not bring out the fact that the intervals between one revival and the next are quite irregular. No one can say when the next revival will take place, although we can say with some certainty when the spring will come and the trees will burst into a glory of new life.

But Orr's illustration does bring out certain very important truths connected with revivals.

(1) The leaves must be shed. There can be no new leaves and fruits unless the old leaves fall. This is the work of God. Man does not take the leaves down. In any revival, past sins must be confessed and God's forgiveness sought. Forgiveness can only be given by God and not by man.

(2) The bursting into new leaves is also the work of God. Man cannot make even a single tree to break into blossom and fruit; only God can. In revivals, God gives new life to men. This new life can only be given by God and by no one else, not even the most powerful evangelist.

(3) This shedding of old leaves and the bursting into new leaves can only take place in a living tree. Though the leaves are all fallen and the tree stands bare and bleak, we know that it still has life and that beauty of bud and fruit will appear again. Revivals can only take place among believers. A man who has not submitted himself to Christ can not be revived. The change from the life of sin into a life of love for God and man will only occur when a man believes.

(4) In autumn, all the leaves of the tree fall. In fact, all the leaves of all the trees fall. This is a collective happening. In decline, all kinds of churches are affected adversely, and in revivals this occurs also. Not just a man here or a man there but hundreds of people, thousands of people are affected. Whole communities are changed. This is a marvel to behold. Our hearts are so amazed to recognize that this wonderful work on a vast scale, surpassing the wildest dreams of men, has been wrought by God with His infinite resources of power, and love, and wisdom.

(5) Revivals are an essential part of the true natural life and growth of the Christian Church, just as trees shed old leaves every autumn and break into new leaves every spring.

This is not a complete picture of Revival but it sets out the central ideas which Edwin Orr has emphasized again and again in his preaching and has constantly reiterated in his books.

Orr regarded the evangelist Bakht Singh as India's most powerful gospel preacher, yet one who lacked a vision of the Church and Revival. In India in recent years, Bakht Singh has been starting new churches. He has found a great deal that is wrong in our Indian denominations. Our churches in India have been administered by the missionaries from other countries who bring with them their own ideas of what churches should be. Very often an Anglican will establish in India a church exactly similar to the Anglican churches in his homeland. The churches have looked abroad for money. Methods of worship have been exactly what are followed in Western countries. Church government has been closely modelled on church government in Europe or America. Bakht Singh therefore declared that he would establish new churches entirely true to the pattern that is set forth in the Bible. He did not believe in the Revival principle, because revivals are temporary. Therefore he has founded new churches upon a scriptural pattern, by 1959 200 such in all parts of India and Pakistan. But the question arises: When these churches lose their original faith and fervour, what happens? I am sure that the Bible as well as Church History demonstrates clearly that from time to time Revivals are very necessary for the life and growth of every church.

In this respect, the work of Bakht Singh seen in India has differed so much from that of Graham and Haqq, as evangelists, or Nagenda and Orr, as revivalists. It is true that in the parables of our Lord there is the case of the barren fig tree that bore no fruit, year by year, and afterwards was cut down; but even that tree was given a chance and was dug around and fertilized.

Graham and Orr fertilized or pruned old trees whereas Bakht Singh plucked their fruit openly, and planted new trees. One day, if time goes on, the churches of Bakht Singh's planting will need revival just as do those of Carey and Duff. God may then raise up a tree-surgeon and gardener to prune and cultivate the

older trees just as Orr is devoting his labours to strengthening the things that remain in the ancient Mar Thoma Church as well as my own Church.

These general paragraphs are a necessary introduction to the subject of this chapter, which is the burden of revival carried by Edwin Orr for thirty years or more. In analysing all the messages and reports of the ministry of this servant of God, I have come to the conclusion that Orr's burden of revival was threefold—a concern for an evangelical revival on a national or international scale; a plan for an evangelical revival on a congregational or community scale; and a plea for an evangelical revival on a personal or individual scale. These three burdens I propose to consider on the ground of work accomplished as well as of truth proclaimed.

In the Berkeley Version of the English Bible, the 78th Psalm is entitled: "God in the Nation's History". The verses which follow explain the burden of the Lord given to Edwin Orr:

> My people ... listen to the words of my mouth ... as I utter lessons from ancient times, which we have heard and known, for our fathers related them to us ...
>
> ... in order that the succeeding generation might know, that the children still to be born might arise and recount it to their sons, so as to put their confidence in God and not forget God's works, but to keep His commandments.

Undoubtedly, the God of Nations raises up men to remind His careless and forgetful people of the past. This was so in the days of the Kings of Judah; it has been so in the history of the church of God in many a nation.

I have already quoted a report given by the principal of the school in Belfast where Edwin Orr spent ten years of his boyhood. Principal Logan added to his comment on Orr's schooling one on his calling:[2]

> When one remembers that his parents originated in mid-Antrim, where began the great revival of 1859, it is indeed noteworthy to find this young man filled with a desire to bring about, under God, another such spiritual awakening.

Principal Logan wrote this in the year 1934. Twenty-five years later, the United Committee of Irish Churches officially appointed by the Irish denominational bodies invited Edwin Orr to help

them commemorate the centenary of that great Awakening of 1859. His ministry of "calling to remembrance" was truly recognized at home.

Sidney W. Murray, commenting upon Orr's influence in Christian life in neighbouring Great Britain, wrote to me recently:[3]

> Edwin Orr always had a strong emphasis on the need for Revival, and for the possibility of it when others in the 1930s seemed to have given up any expectation as to a future revival.
>
> I think it is true to say that church leaders in Britain today appreciate Edwin Orr's ministry, particularly his books and lectures on the subject of Revival. Earlier, a number were inclined to be somewhat suspicious, perhaps on account of his comparative youth.

Both the subject and the writer of this book spent many happy years of study in England and came to love that "sceptred isle", the land of John Wycliffe and John Wesley, of Protestant martyrs and Puritan sages, of catholic continuity and nonconformist conscience. I could understand therefore what Edwin Orr told me in Coimbatore, that one of the greatest heartbreaks of his life had been the postponing of revival in Great Britain. "I prayed over that country, county by county," he said. "In fact, I prayed for Britain yard by yard, on cycle." The prayer is still unanswered.

Some people thought that real Revival was at hand in the Harringay Crusade, when Dr. Graham captured the ear of Britain. It is still debated in evangelical circles whether Revival would have followed had Billy Graham stayed longer. We cannot answer the question why Revival tarried but we can notice among other factors in bringing about the expectancy of an Awakening one named by the Principal of a Methodist Theological College writing later in 1954:[4]

> It is my judgement that Dr. Orr's great book on the 1859 Revival helped in a very considerable way the coming of Dr. Graham last March and the success of his campaign.

Albertyn, who unearthed these facts, quoted also the correspondence between the Secretary of the Evangelical Alliance of Great Britain and Edwin Orr prior to the Harringay Campaign.[5] It is clear that leaders of the Evangelical Alliance wanted Edwin

Orr to minister in Britain prior to the Graham Crusade, especially regarding the enlisting of the interest of clergy and ministers. It seems from an exchange of letters between Orr and Graham that the latter too was enthusiastic. But the plan came to nothing and Orr's valuable contribution was lost. In Albertyn's thesis there is a hint of an intermediary between the parties concerned having torpedoed the idea without Dr. Graham's knowledge. An Evangelical Alliance executive confirmed this five years later.

An Australian leader (who visited India lately) intimated that an intermediary endeavoured to block Orr's ministry in preparation for the Billy Graham Crusades in Australia in 1959. Orr was already in the South-west Pacific, and conducted his Team ministry without any official link at all with the Graham Association or their Australian sponsors. But Billy Graham enlisted prayer for Orr's Australian series over his "Hour of Decision"[6] world-wide broadcast, and afterwards thanked Orr for "stirring the hearts of the ministers toward revival and evangelism."[7] The hidden interference and whispering campaign cost the Orr Team the support of several evangelical societies in 1957.

I can speak with some personal authority on Orr's influence upon the movements of revival in India since the end of the Second World War. I have already mentioned the impact of his Oxford thesis upon the hearts of the overseers of God's flock, like myself, and I have described the effect of Orr's preaching ministry in our own Diocese. It is not difficult to extend this to the Christian community in India. It is interesting to read a quotation in Albertyn from Dr. Graham:[8]

> We had a glorious time in India and met many of our friends, and I am sure that it would have been quite impossible to have had such a vast amount of interest had it not been for your own meetings and especially the vision you were able to give the pastors.

The story of Edwin Orr's revival ministry in Brazil has already been told. The Presbyterian Board (which recorded officially its gratitude to God for the widespread revival in the Brazilian churches and thousands of conversions in 1952)[9] issued its original invitation to Brazil to Orr on the basis of the blessing already brought about there by Orr's ministry in 1951 proclaiming the need and possibility of a nation-wide revival.

Leaders of several church councils in Latin America suggested to Edwin Orr that he should spend a year following up the Graham Crusades of 1962. Billy Graham endorsed the project, so Orr and his family rented their California home in anticipation of the venture. The project fell through, but no one has blamed it on an intermediary and Orr has not explained his change of plans, so far as one can discover.

An earlier chapter has recounted something of the ministry of Edwin Orr in the mid-century Awakening in the United States. Graham considered this as "one of the greatest and most unique ministries anywhere in the nation".[10] Gesswein[11] (an authority on Revival) summed up Orr's work by printed page in saying that, more than any man, Orr had kept alive the memory of America's great visitation. Two of the few books published which cover American Awakenings until 1950—those by Gingrich and Hoffman—cite both Orr and Gesswein as instruments of God therein.

Does Edwin Orr have a historical philosophy of Revival? Indeed he does. He taught that the first of a series of evangelical awakenings began with John Wycliffe and the Lollards and gave us the Scriptures in the language of the people and stressed their authority. This made inevitable the revival that resulted in the Reformation of the Church, which gave us congregations organized after a scriptural pattern and based upon the priesthood of all believers. With the Scriptures available, the Reformed Church restated theology, which was the great contribution of the Puritan Revival. The Evangelical Revival of the Eighteenth Century gave us an emphasis upon the possibility of personal experience with God. The Evangelical Awakening of the nineteenth century translated this warmth of heart into a concern for the world, both social and missionary. The Awakening of the twentieth century is related to the gathering of the saints in evangelical co-operation before the coming of Christ to this "one world". And is the Second Vatican Council reversing the Council of Trent regarding these recoveries of doctrine?

This has been Edwin Orr's burden for revival in its broadest scope; to be considered further are the foundations of his theology which decided his preaching in churches, his emphasis upon the neglected doctrines and his message of surrender.

CHAPTER 23

THE GROUNDWORK OF DOCTRINE

In Edwin Orr's doctorate theses mention is made of the basis of faith stated by the World's Evangelical Alliance in 1846, an association of Christians which foreshadowed the ecumenical developments taking shape a century later.

From this statement of faith, one might well summarize Orr's own convictions:

I The Divine Inspiration, the Authority and Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures, and the right and duty of private judgement in their interpretation.

II The Unity of the Godhead and the Trinity of Persons therein.

III The Utter Depravity of Human Nature in consequence of the Fall.

IV The Incarnation of the Son of God, and His Work of Atonement for sinners of mankind. and His mediatorial Intercession and Reign.

V The Justification of the Sinner by Faith alone.

VI The Work of the Holy Spirit in the Conversion and the Sanctification of the sinner.

VII The Resurrection of the Body, the Judgement of the world by the Lord Jesus Christ, the Eternal Blessedness of the Righteous, and the Eternal Punishment of the Wicked.

These seven points taken from the Evangelical Alliance, supplementing the Apostles' Creed, best summarize the evangelical theology held by Orr.[1]

One who has known Orr for more than thirty years—and one who has a keen sense of theology—Sidney W. Murray, a civil servant in Northern Ireland's Government, wrote to me thus:[2]

Orr's theological position is that of a conservative evangelical. His fellowships are wider than his theology and he is generous in his estimates of others in the field of Christian work. Shaun

Herron, Editor of the *British Weekly*,[3] stressed that Orr was an intellectual in the evangelical field, and this may suggest why others may enjoy a more popular ministry.

Edwin Orr so abhorred the extremes of ultrafundamentalism that he personally qualified the term "conservative evangelical", describing himself as a "progressive conservative evangelical". One could add that, while he was uncompromising in evangelicalism, he repudiated party spirit as one of the works of the flesh condemned in the Galatian Letter. His was a deep conviction both historical and scriptural.

The Evangelical Alliance basis of faith had begun with the Doctrine of Inspiration and moved to the Doctrine of God. Orr's book of Apologetics began with the Doctrine of God, stressed the Deity of Christ, and used the Doctrine of Scripture to substantiate all other doctrines.

In Coimbatore, Orr preached to us upon the doctrines of Theology, Cosmology, Christology, Anthropology and Soteriology to student classes; and in his mass meetings for ordinary people he spoke on Sin, Conviction, Repentance, Decision, Forgiveness, Salvation, Regeneration, Assurance, Profession, Backsliding and Judgement. I heard nearly all of these messages and of course I read all of his published works.

Some experts may find it disappointing that Orr proved to be so ordinary in his theological convictions. He startled nobody with novel or strange views of Reincarnation or Universalism; he simply did not entertain non-evangelical ideas. At the same time, he refused to let any school of evangelicals do his thinking for him. Orr fought the kind of dispensationalism which denied a hope of Revival in our time. He preached upon the irrevocable judgement of God upon impenitent men but veered away from imaginative speculations on the nature of that judgement.

Whence came Orr's theology? He studied in Anglican, Baptist, Brethren, Lutheran, Methodist and Presbyterian Graduate Schools of Theology; he even completed courses in a Jesuit University. But in his teens in Ireland he had belonged to an Anglican Scout Crew, a Brethren Sunday School, a Baptist Church, a Methodist Christian Endeavour Society, and a Presbyterian Bible Class, so his interdenominationalism was nothing new.

At the same time, Edwin Orr was a convinced Baptist. He was most at ease with Baptist points of doctrine and practice and he never hid Baptist convictions. He did not favour Baptist union with other denominations unless Baptist convictions were recognized and adopted.

Orr's writings and utterances both expose his attitude to a great preoccupation of the Twentieth Century, Ecumenism. Edwin Orr was clearly an ecumenical evangelical or evangelical ecumenist.[4] His two guiding lights were the doctrines of the Authority of Scripture and the Unity of the Body of Christ. He told us in Coimbatore:

"I want to have fellowship on earth with all those with whom I will have fellowship in heaven. I try to recognize as brethren all those whom the Holy Spirit acknowledges as children. I try to dissociate myself from heresy or scandal."

Edwin Orr was a member of the United States Military Chaplains' Association, which included Christian Scientists, Hebrew Rabbis, Mormon Elders and Roman Priests as well as Protestant Ministers of evangelical and non-evangelical points of view. Membership in this association Orr regarded as professional, not ministerial. He often lectured as a team member with Roman Catholic priests and Jewish rabbis in university halls and military camps.[5]

Orr preached for Ministerial Associations that included clergy whose preaching he in turn would not have supported in preaching. His inner circle of fellowship—those for whom he preached and whose preaching he supported—was wholly evangelical. His motto truly was an ancient one: "In all essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in everything, charity."

Orr's theory and practice affected his friends in their thinking. Sidney W. Murray wrote me:[6]

> There is little doubt that his friendship with Dr. Billy Graham in the earlier years helped to influence the latter's work in a more ecumenical direction with a strong insistence on the widest possible measure of co-operation in evangelism.

One of my correspondents was requested by an organization whose fellowship was somewhat narrower than that of Graham or Orr to inform the latter that some of their number deplored his influence in this respect on Billy Graham. The passage of

years later brought this outstanding theologian closer to the same position.

A fundamentalist of the extreme right took eight inches of newspaper space in 1950 to announce a sermonic blast against Orr when he made preliminary arrangements for a city-wide Crusade for the Graham Team whose sponsoring committee (which included the Governor of the State and the Mayor of the City) was announced in Orr's final meeting in that metropolis.[7] And in Brazil, Orr was accused of being a Jesuit![8]

Edwin Orr attended the Evanston Assembly of the World Council of Churches as an accredited visitor. He encountered many evangelicals there.[9]

The width of Orr's interdenominational support may be gauged by the inclusion in his Council of Reference for his world tour of 1956–8 of Dr. (Archbishop) H. W. F. Mowll, Dr. F. Townley Lord, Dr. Nathaniel Micklem, Dr. Erik Sundgren, Dr. W. E. Sangster, Dr. David DuPlessis, Dr. Benjamin Moraes, Metropolitan Juhanon Mar Thoma, Major Allister Smith, and Dr. Billy Graham. All these were personal friends, and supported Orr as such; but respectively they had held office as Anglican Primate of Australia, President of the Baptist World Alliance, President of the British Congregational Union, Bishop of the (Lutheran) Church of Sweden, President of the Methodist Conference of Britain, Secretary of the World Pentecostal Fellowship, Vice-President of the Presbyterian World Alliance and a President of the World Council of Churches, and the last but one an evangelist of the Salvation Army.[10]

Orr's ministry in Brazil and New Zealand was endorsed by their national Councils of Churches; his work in South Africa and Australia supported by Anglican Archbishops, Moderators of Reformed and Presbyterian Assemblies, Presidents of the Baptist, Congregational, Disciples, and Methodist denominations. He generally enjoyed Brethren and Pentecostal support.

Orr did not pretend that all his sponsors and referees agreed with all his points of view or he with theirs, but he regarded them as brethren in Christ and welcomed their support.

Previous chapters have recorded the impact of Edwin Orr's preaching and teaching in churches and colleges, resulting in local revival of unusual power. In these instances, it seemed to

be Orr's stress upon neglected doctrines that produced the upheaval. One might call it a recovery of doctrine.

Some years ago, when an archbishop criticized an evangelist's emphasis upon Decision, Orr was moved to search the Scriptures for the word and its synonyms. He found very little on the actual notion of decision, but a vast amount of reference to the idea of repentance, *metanoia* in the Greek, with its implication of a change of thinking, of behaving and of feeling. Orr began to preach the message of Repentance often, from the words of John the Baptist, of our Lord Jesus, the Twelve Disciples, the Apostle Peter and Apostle Paul, to the Jew, the Gentile and the Church. He soon found that some were violently opposed to the message, but on such mistaken grounds. More and more he preached Repentance and more and more he saw results.

This was typical of Orr's preaching in the churches. Instead of taking a passage of Holy Scripture and expounding it verse by verse, he took a topic and followed it through Scripture.

Orr usually preached toward a definite end. If he found himself ministering to unconverted people, he marshalled all his forces and moved towards the crisis of conversion. If he found an audience of professing Christians, he preached for nothing less than reviving the congregation.

With the Archbishops' Commission, he held that Evangelism was so to present Jesus Christ in the power of the Spirit that men may come to put their trust in God as Saviour and to follow Him as Lord in the fellowship of His Church and in the vocations of the common life. But he knew the weaknesses of popular evangelism.

An evangelist came from far away, conducted a campaign, won a number of converts, and then took his departure. On the credit side, there had been good attendances: the collections covered the expenses: some of the converts seemed to be making a good confession: the younger Christians had been stirred into activity. On the debit side, the minister, who preached two hundred times a year to the same folk, found that his preaching was being compared unfavourably with that of a score of well-proved, stock sermons; some who lived for excitement had gone to look for it somewhere else: some converts appeared to be very superficial: and some stirred-up Christians had lapsed into

apathy again. The local minister was provoked to ask the question: Was it all worth while? Are special efforts profitable?[11]

But, said Orr, this is discussing an evangelistic campaign, not a revival. And unless the Lord sends revival with the evangelistic campaign, it is at best only man's endeavour to do God's work. Consider, by way of contrast, the known results of real revival. There are crowded churches without advertisement; abundant offerings to God's work; sustained prayer meetings; perfect unity and love among Christians; church membership stirred and lifted to a higher plane: sinners being converted day after day. Who has any objection to that? That is a revival.

Again, Orr affirmed, Revival is not convention ministry or preaching in conferences.[12] One of the weaknesses of convention ministry is a temptation to sow good seed among thorns. The thorns keep springing up, and the good seed is choked thereby, despite the sower' good intention. The seed in a prepared ground requires only the action of the elements to produce its fruit in season. Seed sown by the wayside, or in stony places, or among the thorns, will have its prospects of life destroyed.

Orr knew of a church which had the "cream of doctrine" given within its walls, week in, week out. Judging from the quality of constructive ministry there, the church members should have lived on the highest heavenly plane. But they had had a church quarrel in which the bread and wine were spilled in a scuffle. They obviously needed more than "cream". Medicine was wanted badly.

Describing his experiences in the year 1937, Orr compared message and results in two places:

> It was my happy experience once to speak at a great convention well known in England. It was arranged with the council members that if blessing came in the degree hoped for, I would be at liberty to continue for double the time.

Orr began with a ministry of rebuke which the Lord used to create deep conviction of heart. The place was thronged. Christians were stirred to confession and repentance, and many souls were saved. The meetings continued in a larger hall.[13]

> By contrast, I felt led to speak at another convention not far away on the shortcomings of believers and the need of getting right before enjoying the good things of the feast.

The other speakers seemed to doubt the worth of such a method, and their message seemed to be: "You are complete in Christ, so don't worry about these trifles. God accepts you in the Beloved." For days, there was a cross-current of message. I believed with all my heart in the truth of their message but thought that the time was unripe for its application.

Another speaker preached on the glorious and blessed promises of God meant for His obedient children, so Orr gave his final word:

"Having therefore these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

There was no revival at Llandrindod Wells to compare with the movement in Liverpool in 1937. This lesson was noted as underlining Orr's idea that it is not sufficient to preach good doctrine in the hope of genuine revival or successful soul-winning. The spokesman of God must preach the doctrines that are needed, and in the order they are needed. And how is one to know in what order to preach the great truths? Only the Holy Spirit of God can tell, and the answer is reliance upon His guidance. Surely it is this that transforms sermons and lectures into prophetical utterance.

Many a time Orr's experience was limited to ordinary meetings, ordinary preaching, ordinary teaching, ordinary endeavour, but there were the other occasions when the Spirit of God seemed to fall upon the hearers of His word. At such times, he recalled, the ministry was both doctrinal and hortatory, both didache and kerygma.

This brings our consideration to another phase, the message of total commitment to Christ, of full surrender to the will of God and the enduement of power for believers.

CHAPTER 24

THE MESSAGE OF SURRENDER

I have already mentioned that in Coimbatore Edwin Orr used a blackboard to teach the huge classes which sat under his ministry. Listening and watching gave us a vivid insight into Orr's systematic development of the doctrine of Full Surrender, an experience of the individual which Orr equated to Revival in the believer's heart.

As I remember it, Orr showed his audience on what basis their sins had been forgiven and what conditions pertained to receiving forgiveness—repentance expressed in conversion. Then he showed the parallel truth affecting believers already converted, that they are forgiven on the same basis of the Cross, but that the conditions attached are somewhat different—repentance expressed in confession.

Earlier chapters of this study have reported the recurring demonstrations of confession of sin among Christians. Orr's lecture gave us a systematic exposition of the doctrine behind the experience. Unlike the Oxford Group of the last generation, Orr was opposed to indiscriminate confession of sins, teaching that secret sins be secretly confessed, that private sins be privately confessed and that public sins be publicly confessed. This he reiterated.

In this respect, Orr differed somewhat from other overseas evangelists who visited our area, for there were some who were preoccupied with confession of sins, well-intentioned people who thought of the experience of 1 John i. 9 as a plane of Christian living rather than as a ladder to a higher plane, as taught by Edwin Orr.[1]

Why all this concern about confession? Orr regarded confession of sins as a neglected doctrine and was able to show that it is clearly but carefully taught in Scripture and that it has often occurred in times of revival in the history of the Church. He was convinced that unconfessed sin was a stumbling block to Revival.

At the same time, Orr was much opposed to the idea used by over-zealous advocates of "priming the pump" or of acting as a private detective in others' lives. Albertyn reported that Paul Rees and Edwin Orr had corresponded about these indiscretions and had agreed together in deploring them.

The main difference between Orr's theology of Revival and that of other groups described lay in Orr's teaching of a victorious Christian life. Again, in Coimbatore, he used a method of recapitulation in teaching the doctrine. One must remember that in the huge class were advocates of conflicting points of view regarding holiness. It was amazing how well their contributions were brought together and their weaknesses avoided. Orr simply stressed the positive truths.

Orr's blackboard recapitulation was so very simple. He showed his audience that the first great problem presented in the Epistle to the Romans is that of Sin, the guilt of sin. There could be little objection to that statement or to the next, that the answer to the problem of Sin is Justification by faith. Then he showed that the second great problem presented is that of Carnality, the power of sin. He went on to show that the answer to the problem of Carnality is Sanctification, also by faith.

But do Christians agree upon the nature of Sanctification? Obviously not. Dr. W. E. Sangster discussed the matter with Orr in California in 1954 at the time that the great Methodist saint had published his book, *The Pure in Heart*.[2] He mentioned to Orr that he had discovered that the opinions of evangelical Christendom classified themselves under three headings with reference to Sanctification, and then Sangster found that Orr had already published the same conclusions in his book, *Full Surrender*, three years earlier—Sanctification threefold—positional, critical and progressive, or, as Major Allister Smith adopted the idea from Sangster, Sanctification imputed, imparted and implemented.

Orr proved conclusively that the Greek aorist is used in the exhortation "present your body a living sacrifice" in Romans xii. 1, a tense which signifies an immediate experience. He showed that the verse following used a "continuing" tense. Therefore, he taught a crisis with a view to a process. It was an interesting synthesis.

Orr taught that the experience of full surrender or total commitment was the prerequisite for the experience of the filling of the Holy Spirit. He did not use the method of recapitulation to teach the doctrine of the Filling of the Holy Spirit. He held that the term "baptism of the Spirit" referred to two distinct experiences of the believer, first to his baptism into the Body of Christ which happens to every believer upon regeneration, and second to the enduement of power for service, which may or may not be the subsequent experience of a true believer, depending upon his obedience.

It will be remembered that these lectures were the same that had stirred the Forest Home College Briefing Conference of 1949, according to the best-known visitor there, Dr. Billy Graham, who told of "tremendous blessing" thereby.[3] These lectures at Forest Home were the basis of Orr's devotional book, *Full Surrender*, which we circulated to our people in English and Tamil.

The Forest Home Conference had made Edwin Orr realize anew the importance of being filled with the Spirit. He now began to urge others, in particular young evangelists, to long and pray for the power of the Holy Spirit. He found that they were ready to receive this message. They were so concerned that sometimes they spent hours of the night with him sharing with him their problems and aspirations. One such evangelist was a young layman, William R. Bright, who founded a Campus Crusade for Christ, with hundreds of evangelists working in the universities.[4] Bill Bright declared often that he owed most of his understanding of the dynamic of Revival and Evangelism, the power of the Holy Spirit, to the clear teaching of Edwin Orr. Orr occasionally worked with Bill Bright, though they differed on certain details.

Orr was equally concerned with pastors and students. After talking with seekers, he devoted time each week in prayer for them that each one might receive the anointing of the Holy Spirit. In fact, this anxiety that preachers should expound clearly and emphatically the need for the power of the Holy Spirit was so insistent that he came to the conclusion that if he had only one month to live he would spend that precious time writing down his teaching on that subject. This resulted in his writing

the book, *Full Surrender*. Within the decade, it had appeared in fifteen languages.

In his emphasis on the Holy Spirit, Edwin Orr was following one of the main trends of religious direction his generation. Mr. Arthur Wallis, for example, made a profound study of Revival movements in the Christian Church. His book *In the Day of His Power* has been read widely. Wallis and Orr were friends and correspondents united in their burden while differing in details.

Is there any outstanding characteristic of the religious life of the Church during the twentieth century? Wallis answers that the Welsh Revival in 1904 was followed by the Pentecostal movement with its emphasis on the Holy Spirit, an aggressively evangelistic movement. It is now recognized that though there may be faults and failures in the Pentecostal Churches, they have a real contribution to make towards the life of the Church at large. In the twentieth century, great importance is being attached to our experience of the Holy Spirit, not only in the Pentecostal churches but in the other denominations as well. Arthur Wallis claims:[5]

> Many today are coming into a new experience of the Holy Spirit who have known His gracious work in their hearts for years. It has come through a state of dissatisfaction, a longing for the fullness of God. Is this not part of the great plan of the centuries—the church brought back to its primitive purity and power? He wants us to be open to all that is in the Book, and to enjoy all that He has for us.

During the Coimbatore Revival, 1950 to 1959, we had much evidence of the power of the Spirit. Many remarkable conversions took place—true conversion from a life of sin to a life of love and service for Christ. Many groups came together to pray for the sick and several cases of healing were reported. Those who were filled with the joy of salvation were anxious to share it with others and there was much earnest evangelistic work. We realized clearly that in this day and generation the Holy Spirit works in the minds and bodies of men with signs and wonders as in the days of the Apostles.

Orr's teaching about the Holy Spirit brought him into favour with the Pentecostal churches. They willingly co-operated with

him and he in his turn welcomed them to his meetings. At the same time he stated clearly the weakness of some of their teaching.[6]

Rejected by the churches generally, these Pentecostals were driven in upon themselves, and extreme fanaticism developed among some who brought discredit on the others. Pentecostalism thrived among the less-educated classes, as happened a century earlier in Methodism; but, while many choice men of God identified themselves with the leadership of Pentecostalism, there was no great scholar like John Wesley to save the movement from its friends by his insight and scholarship.

Now, with the turning of the tide, it seems that the Pentecostal denominations are more and more being guided by men of moderation, and the barriers between the Pentecostal minority and the non-Pentecostal majority are being lowered, thanks not only to the decline of fanaticism among those who call themselves Pentecostalists, but also to the rising interest in the Filling of the Holy Spirit for power and gifts and fruits for service being brought about by the current evangelical awakening in America and elsewhere in all the historic Protestant denominations.

Edwin Orr has always been clear in his teaching concerning glossolalia or speaking in tongues. He found no reasons to reject any one of the nine gifts of the Spirit listed by the Apostle Paul in the First Letter to the Corinthians. But he believed that the gift of wisdom was just as important as that of tongues, and he did not accept the idea that in every case, the believer being filled with the Holy Spirit must speak in Tongues.[7]

Orr stressed the fruit of the Spirit, as given in the Galatian Letter, as the continuing evidence of being filled with the Spirit. Gifts and callings of God are without repentance, and it is possible (Orr taught with regret) for a believer to have been given a gift of the Spirit, afterwards backsliding but still exercising the gift. Orr told of apparently successful preachers having been discovered in sin even though they were winning people to Christ by exercise of a gift.

In the last chapter of his book, *Full Surrender* (1951), Edwin Orr gives his personal testimony, a chapter particularly valuable

to a biographer. In it, I have gained a total impression of the slow maturing of a humble but effective personality, an instrument being made ready for the Master's use.

The priceless treasure of the Gospel (quoting J. B. Phillips) we hold in a common earthenware jar to show that its splendid power belongs to God and not to us. How true this is in the case of Edwin Orr. People describing him naturally utilize adjectives such as "slight", "insignificant", "unimpressive" and "unimportant".

And yet Orr's life and ministry exemplified variety and versatility. He travelled in a hundred countries and he published a score of books. He influenced individuals in personal encounter and he addressed huge throngs of tens of thousands. He commenced his undergraduate studies about ten years later than usual, but he earned his five graduate degrees in five years of intensive study. He became a fellow of several learned societies. He knew and influenced a surprising number of men who were pastors, teachers and evangelists. He ministered happily to little children and the poor and humbly to international leaders and the intellectuals. He became a chaplain to colourful celebrities in cinema as well as a comrade to devil-may-care men in combat.

There were hidden springs of prayer affecting his early life and many contributory streams of friendship to help him through his difficult days. But the direction of his career and deepening of his life occurred on 14th August 1933 when he fully surrendered his life to his Master; and that gave him his message of surrender.[8]

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