

deeming men through 'the blood of the Lamb' and (2) in enlightening them by His revealing Word. Then, when each member has begun to be fully equipped, we venture to suggest that occasions for his enterprise will lie everywhere to hand. Present students need patient and clear-sighted advice; young converts everywhere need Christian instruction; hungry souls in the churches need the way to be 'explained more perfectly' and sin-weary men and women are everywhere awaiting deliverance. Then the Bible must be reinstated as soon as possible in the seat of authority in our academic centres and professional life. That battle will not easily be won. Hostile intellectual activity designed to overthrow the faith must be critically encountered. 'Other gospels' demand repeated answer. In the field of direct action, the fight will be even tougher. For both personal and corporate conduct, the norm of action must always remain neither 'happiness', nor mere 'duty', but the will of God and that *only*. The Christian has the right and the duty to summon the non-Christian to heed that sovereign will in spite of man's dislike of it, rebellion against it and failure to accomplish it. In the realm of inter-church relationships, subservience to expediency and compromise must give place to wise but courageous obedience to the biblical directive. Granted that there is the desire and the determination, by God's help, to carry the Lordship of Christ *into the whole of life*, the precise individual and local applications will look after themselves.

## *This is the Lord's Doing*

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ARNOLD ALDIS

*'Who hath despised the day of small things?' — Zechariah 4: 10*

**T**HE prophet Zechariah throws out this rhetorical question in the course of a prophetic message delivered to encourage Zerubbabel in the formidable and often discouraging task of rebuilding the temple. The question must be seen in the context of the whole chapter which is summarized in verse 6: 'Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.' It is not that small things carry an inherent guarantee of growth, for this is palpably untrue, but rather that when the Spirit of God is in the day of small things then the potential of the 'small things' becomes infinite, and the future full of promise.

So it has been with the Inter-Varsity Fellowship, for when the writer first came to know it as a science student at University College London, it was certainly a day of small things, and its splendid and steady growth through the years is surely good evidence that the Spirit of God has been active in this work from those early days down to the present time. How small were the small things of those early days it is difficult to appreciate now, but there was no office, no salaried staff, no publications and only occasional part-time travelling secretaries. Almost the only activity was

the annual conference which was attended by students mainly from Oxford, Cambridge and London and indeed from its inception in 1919 until 1928 the movement was called the Inter-Varsity Conference. The first part-time secretary, appointed in 1932, was Dr Douglas Johnson, himself then a medical student at King's College, working at his studies during the day and carrying on the whole correspondence and work of the Inter-Varsity Conference in the evenings from his room at the Medical Missionary Association in Highbury. As a student I sometimes used to take a late-night walk before turning in after an evening at my books in my room in Newington Green. I still have a vivid memory of meeting Douglas Johnson from time to time on these walks, carrying a large bundle of IVF letters written and addressed and stamped by himself, to post them in a pillar-box not far from the MMA.

The real growth of the work began in 1928, for that year two important events took place at the annual conference at High Leigh. The first of these was the adoption by the committee, after much prayer and thought, of the name of the Inter-Varsity Fellowship of Evangelical Unions; so that this year really marks the birth of the IVF. The second important event was the attendance of Mr Norman Grubb at this particular conference. Mr Grubb had just returned from a visit to Canada, where he had been greatly impressed with the need of the universities there for a work on the lines of the Inter-Varsity Conference, and he paid a special visit to High Leigh to lay before the general and executive committees the need of the universities of the Commonwealth, and to make an urgent plea that the IVF should send a representative to visit the universities in Canada with a view to launching the work there. The committee accepted the challenge and the invitation was sent to Dr Howard Guinness, then a medical student on the eve of qualification at St Bartholomew's Hospital, to be that representative.

So it was that in the autumn of that year Dr Guinness set out with his return fare and a few pounds in his pocket and the names and addresses of a few contacts in Canada, and in September 1929, as a result of that journey, the Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship of Canada was launched in Kingston, Ontario. On his return to England Dr Guinness found an urgent invitation waiting for him to visit Australia and New Zealand on a similar mission. This was successfully undertaken leaving behind evangelical movements in the universities there, and this was followed by equally successful missions to South Africa and India, so that within a very few years the movement had grown from tiny beginnings to a Commonwealth-wide work.

But the Spirit of God is not limited to one nation, or even to one Commonwealth of nations, and during the same years in which the IVF was taking shape within the Commonwealth the same Spirit was at work in Europe and the United States, bringing into being similar evangelical movements in the student world. How well the writer remembers an annual meeting of the IVF at Church House, Westminster when an item was introduced which was not on the official programme. A Norwegian student had recently come to this country and was staying at the Medical Missionary Association. There he met Dr Johnson and told him of the great work among students in Norway which resulted very largely from the work and witness of Professor Hallesby. Dr Johnson immediately invited him to

come to the annual meeting of the IVF which was just due and to tell the audience about this work, and while the meeting was actually in progress Dr Johnson was at the back of the hall hastily putting into good English the talk which the young Norwegian was to give later in the meeting.

This contact was followed by student delegations from the IVF to the Scandinavian countries and to Switzerland, to widen and strengthen these European ties, and these efforts culminated in the first International Conference of Evangelical Movements which took place in Cambridge in 1939. It was the writer's inestimable privilege to be a member of the student delegations to Norway, Sweden, Finland and Switzerland, and the memories of those thrilling days are still vivid. The first conference of leaders in Oslo and the meeting with that great man of God Professor Hallesby still stand out in the memory. And who could forget climbing one Sunday morning with some Norwegian Christian students up the hills overlooking Oslo? After a couple of hours' climb through the pine forest we heard the sound of a church bell, and suddenly came upon a clearing in the trees where the students had built a log chapel: hot coffee was served and the gospel preached Sunday by Sunday to crowded congregations of Norwegians bent on recreation in those lovely hills. Then there is the memory of thrilling days of witness in the University Hall in Helsinki to crowded student audiences, and the wonderful experience of seeing the Finnish Christian students at great cost to themselves finally overcoming their natural reserve and shyness and witnessing personally to their student friends. Who could forget the joy on the face, and in the voice, of a Finnish girl who burst into the prayer meeting to tell of how she had at last plucked up courage the night before to speak to her room-mate with whom she had shared a room for three years, of how her knees had been knocking together as she spoke to her of Christ, and of her shame and yet unspeakable joy when her room-mate said 'I have been waiting for three years for you to say this' — and of how easy and natural it had been to lead her friend to the Lord that very night.

Then there is a very different and not so pleasant memory of being held for about an hour in the inner office of the customs at Turku harbour in Finland, with armed sentries set to guard the door. The cause of the trouble was the IVF literature. The writer had charge of the suitcase carrying the very meagre stock of literature then available. The latest publication was a book called *Effective Witness* in which the name was printed on the dust cover across a wide red stripe. As soon as the customs official opened the case and saw this book he hustled both the suitcase and its bearer into the inner office. There an uncomfortable and seemingly interminable time passed before an interpreter finally arrived and persuaded the official that I was not trying to smuggle Communist literature into the country.

We discovered then, too, the wonders of a Christian fellowship which transcended the barriers of language and culture, and found that when the basic beliefs in the Person of Christ and the authority of Holy Scripture were shared, a real unity was achieved and 'all one in Christ Jesus' became a simple statement of fact in experience. How natural it seemed to join in prayer meetings where each prayed in his own language, and although one could not understand what was said, yet we were all united in the consciousness of the Lord's presence in the midst and in our intense

desire that His Name should be known and honoured among university students the world over. It was a tremendous strengthening of one's faith to have a share in those student delegations and to see the Spirit of God at work overcoming opposition and triumphing in the lives of students of other nationalities and backgrounds. In the context of such a personal and collective experience of the mighty power of God there could be no despising the day of small things, and I think that most of us were aware that we were involved in a work which was truly of God and which must prosper and grow.

Looking back down the corridors of time and recalling, and in part reliving, those early experiences has been an encouraging and at the same time a challenging exercise. Is our faith as strong today as it was then? Then we had few human resources and little financial support; we were cast back on the Lord for the supply of our needs and every venture was in a real sense a venture of faith. Now, with a large annual income, impressive premises, a large staff and a well-stocked bookroom, it is all too easy to rely on organization and human resources and to forget that it is still true that it is 'Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts'. Is our zeal for the salvation of the student world as urgent and consuming as it was among some of those early pioneers? In those days the IVF was a simple organization with few ramifications and it was easy to keep the main objective always before one's eyes. Now there are many different aspects of the work branching out into many fields, and it is easy to lose sight of the main objective in our preoccupation with the many worth-while but secondary projects which can fill every moment of our time. May God protect the IVF from reliance on organization or from deviating from its original purpose of bearing witness in the student world to the faith once delivered to the saints, and to evangelize to a finish to bring back the King.

## *Missionary Strategy in the Twentieth Century*

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*The findings of one of a number of study groups set up by the IVF  
Missionary Advisory Committee, edited by LESLIE T. LYALL.  
It is hoped to publish the findings of other groups in later issues*

### I INTRODUCTION

**T**HE world is a big place. Its population increases fantastically. By the end of the century there will be as many as six thousand million people living in the five continents, though by far the greatest number will be living in Asia. In forty years' time communications will have been vastly improved and even the most remote areas brought within access. Illiteracy will have been largely conquered. Public health will