

THE OXFORD GROUP MOVEMENT

"VITAL CHRISTIANITY"

The work of the Oxford Group movement was explained at a luncheon yesterday at St. Ermin's Restaurant, Westminster. A large gathering included members of both Houses of Parliament and representatives of social institutions and business organizations. SIR LYNDEN MACASSEY presided, and he was supported by Dr. Frank N. D. Buchman, the originator of the movement, Mrs. Baldwin, the Duchess of Atholl, M.P., the Dean of Windsor, Lady Snowden, and Lord Noel-Buxton.

The CHAIRMAN said the object of the meeting was to bring a number of persons in contact with members of the Oxford Group and enable them to learn something of its activities. It had at its command a power which was achieving a marvellous work.

Mr. A. S. LOUDON HAMILTON said the movement sought to bring vital Christianity to bear on individual, industrial, national, and international problems. So far as England was concerned, it first started at Cambridge in 1920 at the instance of two Anglican Bishops in China. Its influence was profoundly felt, and in the following year three undergraduates carried the message to Oxford. The result was that the lives of men, even of those who had not hitherto been associated with religious activities, were changed. Since that time the movement, which had a place in the life of all the Churches, had spread not only in the British Isles but in many other countries.

Short addresses were given by members of the group on its work; and PROFESSOR L. W. GRENSTED (Oxford) said the movement was something that the world needed. It was bringing a new spirit into every department of life, and was working directly through those who had to solve world problems.

It was announced that it had been arranged to hold a luncheon in connexion with the movement shortly at Geneva, and later to have a similar meeting in Paris.

There was a good gathering in the evening for the annual Jewish, Continental and Colonial evening, in spite of the strong counter-attraction of the Moderator's first reception, which drew many members. A number of interesting speeches were made, one of the most striking being by Dr. Ebenezer Macmillan, Pretoria. Dr. Macmillan's address showed the influence of the Oxford Group movement, of which he has been a leading advocate. He told of a private conversation with General Smuts, and how this great South African statesman saw the only solution of the coloured problem in a new revival of religion. The notes of the new spiritual movement were, Dr. Macmillan said, "givenness" and "thoroughness."

The other speakers were Rev. Josef Soucek, D.D., Prague; Rev. Frank J. Exley, London; Rev. George E. Ross, D.D., Ottawa; the Rev. Signor V. Alberto Costabel, Rome, who received a specially warm welcome; and Rev. Richard K. Somerville, Lochmaben.