

# THE OXFORD GROUP

## ASSEMBLY HALL PACKED

### FORMIDABLE ARRAY OF SPEAKERS

### ULSTER-BORN BISHOP'S VIEW

### YORKS EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYED

A very large audience thronged the Assembly Hall last evening, when the Oxford Group gave their "blue print" for a new world order. Starting with the fact that lives can be changed, speakers were mainly concerned with its implications in unemployment, industry and education. The atmosphere of the meeting was very happy, remarkably combining sincerity with geniality. The main gathering only broke up for smaller parties to be formed, which in cafe, hotel, and home promised to continue far into the night. The hall itself had to be cleared an hour after the usual closing time. The International Team will be in Ulster until the 16th, when it is expected that the movement will develop spontaneously under Ulster leadership.

Mr. Edward Hill, Magdalen College, Oxford, presided, and the opening prayers were said by the Rt. Rev. Dr. Kennedy, Bishop of Chota Nagpur.

Mr. Hill, who is a director of the well-known Bristol City Line, said that the previous night they had had a picture of what it meant to give one's life to God. They were going to begin on that background and to see what life given to Jesus Christ could and must do if this modern world was going to be saved from the chaos that overcame other civilisations that deserted God.

Mr. Edward Evans, Corpus Christi College, Oxford, showed what he believed to be the place of the movement in current affairs. Before he was "changed" his interests had been hunting, shooting, fishing, "rigger," and his duty towards God, in that order. Now he saw that in face of a world situation, the urgency of which every thinking man must admit, every person was needed for reconstructing civilisation on a wholly Christian basis. Here was a whole team in training. But people wanted to know what they were in training for. They were out to raise up in the world to-day a belief in this new world order which must come. They were out, if possible, to avert the impending crash, and if too late, to form the basis of the new world.

Mr. George Wood, Aberdeen, said he used to be one of those individuals who never did any thinking about world problems. He then came under the influence of the movement, and the result was a change in the life of their family. He had to be honest with his parents, and they were equally honest with him. If they were going to have a nation with a sound foundation, they would have to have a sound family life.

#### WIFE OF ACADEMY PRESIDENT.

Mrs. Mackail, wife of Professor Mackail, President of the British Academy, said she came under the influence of the Oxford Group last December. She had found in it the effective religion which she had so long sought, and had learned to ask God for guidance, living a life of honesty, unselfishness, love and purity—all without compromise.

The Bishop of Chota-Nagpur spoke as an Ulsterman long resident in India. He was simply jealous that the qualities of his fellow-countrymen, which have brought them to the front in every region of the world, might be consecrated to God's service. Ulster had always taken a glorious part in the Government of India, and he believed that regeneration at home would lead to regeneration in India, where the Englishman is faced by such seemingly unsurmountable difficulties. When he met the Oxford Group, the Bishop continued, he realised that his own work had been spoiled by resentments. Such resentments between individuals and races were the basis of many of these difficulties, and because God had freed him, He could also break down such barriers in India and elsewhere.

Unemployment was the next motif of the meeting. Miss Eileen Lawther, of Belfast, told how the aimless drifter could be fully employed for God, and find a direction which unified all life. Hers had been a voluntary unemployment.

Mr. George Light, former chairman of

the Warwick Unemployed Association, spoke from experience about the enforced idleness, having been himself long without work. He described the tragic and devastating effect of unemployment, which destroyed ambition and aspiration, and produced a sense of hopelessness and frustration. That wastage would have to stop, and the moment men and women accepted the teaching and spirit of Jesus Christ this would be accomplished. Had the Oxford Group a message for the unemployed? The introduction of the Spirit of Jesus Christ into their social and economic problems was the only hope that the unemployed man had; while he had found that a surrender to Christ solved the personal problem of frustration.

#### FROM WADHAM COLLEGE, OXFORD.

Mr. Frank Bygott, Wadham College, Oxford, described his experiences while working with the Oxford Group in the East End of London. He said that they had to offer revolutionaries—and there were plenty in London—was something more revolutionary, and that was the aims and objects of the Oxford Group, the simple principles of the New Testament.

Industrial relationships were dealt with by Mrs. Nell Glover and Mr. W. Farrer Vickers, both employers in Leeds, and by Miss Marian Clarkson, who works in a woollen mill in Yorkshire.

Mrs. Nell Glover, who represented the employers on the first Trade Board formed in Britain after the war, said that after her experiences there she decided there was no solution for disputes. She attended an Oxford Group House Party and made her decision for God. She now had "quiet times" with her secretary and employes on her business premises. Under guidance, she reduced no wages during the depression and she and her employees simply worked together.

Mr. W. Farrer Vickers endorsed these statements and said that not only profits were shared in his business. The new relationship he had found was such that he shared himself in a spiritual co-partnership.

Miss Marian Clarkson and Mr. Hallen Viney also spoke.

Miss Christine Morrison, an Oxford "don," said that much of her teaching in the past had been unrelated to life—fiddling while Rome was burning. Now she had seen that the greatest educational benefit which could be conferred on a pupil was to put her in touch with God, the source of all knowledge. Her job had now become for her a salient in the united spiritual advance.

#### ARCHDEACON OF DROMORE.

The last speaker was Archdeacon Hannon, of Dromore. Describing how he had seen Canada beginning to become as distinctively Christian as Russia is Communist, he challenged Ulster to an even more radical Christian revolution. Fourteen hundred years ago she had poured forth missionaries into England and Western Europe who had altered the course of world history. He believed that this would happen again on an even larger scale. The silence, as the Archdeacon stopped speaking, was intense and unbroken—a living silence in which one felt God could speak.