

## OXFORD GROUP MOVEMENT.

### London Campaign.

#### 7,000 AT CATHEDRAL SERVICE.

(From our London Staff.)

##### FLEET STREET, SATURDAY.

If there were any doubt that the campaign which the Oxford Group Movement is launching on London this autumn is welcomed by an important section of the Church of England the service of commissioning held this evening in St. Paul's Cathedral by the Bishop of London, and attended by the Bishops of Willesden and Kensington, has silenced that doubt. Before the service began every seat, with the exception of 500 at the front reserved for the members of the team of evangelists, was occupied, and later-comers had to seek room in the side chapels or in the gallery.

Among the visitors were several German adherents of the movement, four of whom, prominent in the German Protestant or Evangelical Churches, had flown over from Germany to meet the team, and colleagues from other foreign countries were there. Members of all the British universities were present, including three hundred who had come from Oxford for the service. A Lancashire group, unable to afford to visit London, had sent a small sum to pay the fares of two other travellers.

##### The Bishop's Welcome

As the congregation sang the opening hymn, "Glorious things of Thee are spoken," the choir and clergy came down the aisle, followed by the members of the team, who entered from the north and south doors. More than a hundred clergy walked in the procession. The team remained standing while the Bishop, speaking from the chancel steps, extended the welcome of the diocese and of the cathedral church, and expressed his hope that "as this church was built that men may see and know that there is a God, so may the fellowship stand for a witness to men in their need and loneliness, that they may see and find the God of their salvation." He then prayed for them in words addressed by St. Paul to the Colossians.

Dean Inge read the lesson, the passage from the First Epistle to the Corinthians on the theme that "the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."

The Bishop of Calcutta, who is also Metropolitan of India, Burma, and Ceylon, in his address spoke of Christ as

the corner-stone that must form part of every building that is built to stand. "This is the challenge of the groups to the great City of London," he said. "You must put Christ into the centre of your individual and family life, your social, industrial, and political organisations. We claim no unique position as messengers of the Gospel of God. We rejoice in that great band of men and women, devoted to His service, serving Him, day in and day out, through the serious troubles, pains, and difficulties of countless hosts in this great City of London. We know we are not fit to bow down and loose the shoes from off their feet, but we hope that God will enable us to bring some measure of help to them and to leave behind us a team and a fellowship where now there may be a lonely worker. We bear witness of that which we have seen with our eyes and heard with our ears."

##### Dr. Buchman

When the time came for the Bishop to commission the band of workers who were standing, Dr. Buchman, leader of the movement, stepped forward from his place among the team towards the Bishop on the chancel step. One heard his clear voice asking the Reverend Father in God to "bid a blessing upon those who go forth in the name of Christ, that they may rejoice in the power of the Holy Spirit," and, less clearly, the solemn words of the Bishop's charge and of his blessing.

Finally the congregation sang the hymn "Now thank we all our God," and the organist, as the team filed out, gave it his charge by playing "Jerusalem," the hymn of inspiration to all who seek to make England the country of God.

"An amazing service" was the comment of one observer. It was certainly an exceptionally interesting service, distinguished by beauty, dignity, and simplicity. As for the congregation, numbering six or seven thousand, one's outstanding impression was of its youthfulness. There were men and women of all ages as of many types in the team, but the majority, one guessed, were in their twenties. Quiet in manner, they seemed entirely to lack self-consciousness, and if they were deeply stirred by the service the fact was only shown by the earnestness with which they sang the hymns. One had never heard finer congregational singing in St. Paul's Cathedral.