

URGES CHURCH AID THE OXFORD GROUP

Shoemaker Declares Value of Spiritual Movement Has Been Clearly Shown.

Rector, Back From Buchmanist
Tour, Asks Congregation to Attend
—Bishop Manning to Speak.

The spiritual movement known as the Oxford Group or Buchmanism, demands recognition by the church because of its growth throughout the world, its ability to contribute a vital new impetus to the life of the church, and its power to uplift and change depressed human spirits, declared the Rev. Samuel Moor Shoemaker Jr., rector of Calvary Episcopal Church, Fourth Avenue and Twenty-first Street, in his sermon yesterday morning.

Mr. Shoemaker returned last week from a three-months' tour with the Oxford Group through Canada. He has been prominently identified with the movement for fifteen years and will continue actively in its work, in a tour of the cities of Western Canada and the United States, until March, when his six-months' leave of absence from Calvary terminates.

"Ten years ago," he said, "it was easy for many to shrug their shoulders and say the Oxford movement was just another mushroom cult for personal religion, and would go down as quickly as it sprung up. But as the years have gone on there is mounting evidence that talk like this is childish.

"One hates to think what Christian history would be if stripped of its special awakenings—it might be a sorry spectacle. Let each time one of them comes along the church goes through much the same uncertain reactions. First they say it is all emotion, then they say it is contrary to the church and the Bible, then they say it is just what all of us have believed all along!

"Do you want this group to get out of this church as we let John Wesley get out 200 years ago to our everlasting detriment and shame?"

"There is only one honest course for the church to take here, as it has taken in Canada, and that is to identify itself with this movement because it is obviously being blessed by God.

"As the church can contribute to the group its own inherited experience and wisdom, its conservation of the basic truths of Christianity, the Sacraments, the organization of the church, so let us not forget that the group has also a contribution to make to the church. This contribution lies along the line of sharpening the sense of personal need and sin, of an emphasis upon personal responsibility for the condition of the world and of a personal way out."