

TOPICAL TOPICS.

Modern Miracles.

Large and wide as Lord Chesham's experience is, it is doubtful whether he ever presided over a similar luncheon to that at which he officiated at the Town Hall on Wednesday. The invitation read: "To hear stories of Modern Miracles." There sat together men of the university graduate and undergraduate type; ex-army officers; parsons of the Establishment and of Nonconformity, some in clerical attire, others not; medical students; business men; trade unionists, including a strike leader who has been in prison; a Rhodes scholar from Africa; councillors; mostly on the young side; a keen, alert, jolly, well-dressed crowd, which enjoyed a modest luncheon served at short notice by Messrs. Darvell, and washed it down with water and lemonade and coffee. The Chairman confessed himself entirely ignorant of the movement at the behest of which the luncheon was called: he was there to learn. He and others learned. One after another members of the company got up and painted pictures with word and gesture and smile and joke: the university man and ex-army officer who was in at the birth of the movement; when Oxford actually accepted leading from Cambridge; the Rhodes scholar; the strike leader; a business man; an unemployed man; a minister not in clerical attire and one who was. The burden of their story was *Changed Lives: Modern Miracles*. From pleasure-loving, self-seeking drinking, gambling, absorption in sport, they stood as Witnesses, Sharers, Workers. Each spoke of the miracle wrought in himself, not without pungent humour and patches of pathos. Men evidently happy and full of buoyancy. Men standing on Faith. It was a wonderful story they told, in quiet, but impressive language, of the power of Jesus Christ in their lives and their determination to Witness and Share with others. A quieter and more attentive audience never graced the Town Hall. Except when there was a responsive laugh at some sally of wit there was live quietness. The speakers had nothing to complain of in their audience; the audience were absorbed in the speakers. Lord Chesham maintained his neutrality: he had learned, he had been impressed, he would learn more: what he did venture to say was that what this world wanted was some such movement, although he did not commit himself to this movement, as he had yet to learn. In reference to the world-wide need he followed in the wake of speakers: one just back from Geneva, who spoke of the witness of all nationalities, including German and French; one just back from America, who pictured the extraordinary efforts there; and a college chaplain, once a South London curate, who said as he saw it the need of the slum and the college was the same. In about ninety minutes many of those present had a new view of life: an arresting view. Behind this luncheon were an Oxford Group, and of that Oxford Group and their campaign in this area more appears on Page 7.

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A Case.