

# BUCHMANITES' "ATTACK" IN LONDON OPENS

## Many Oxford Undergraduates and Dons Give Testimony to Audience of 5,000

### THREE OVERFLOW MEETINGS

(From Our Own Correspondent)  
LONDON, Monday Night.

**HERALDED** with a maximum of publicity, the Oxford Group Movement opened its campaign for the regeneration of London to-night with a minimum of sensation.

Frank Buchman, founder of the movement, sat in the front row of the Central Hall platform and cast his eye over an audience of nearly 5,000 people.

He heard nearly a dozen speakers—undergraduates and university dons—testify to their personal experiences of the Group Movement. He laughed at the jokes and hastily read notes which were passed to him. He did not address the audience.

Although the eyes of thousands were upon him—he has been described as the "high priest" of the group—he resolutely kept out of the limelight.

The Bishop of Calcutta, who is the Metropolitan of India, presided at the opening. As he rose to speak a complete silence came over the hall. In clear tones he emphasised the fact that team work is the essence of the Group Movement.

#### OBVIOUS SINCERITY OF SPEAKERS

The audience was so still that the chimes of Big Ben on the other side of Parliament-square could be heard distinctly. Very briefly the Bishop spoke of the London campaign, which has prompted him to stay two extra months in England before returning to India.

Then, undramatically but with striking



C. J. S. Sergel.

effect, he handed over the charge of the meeting to a junior curate, the Rev. Cuthbert Bardsley, who is on the staff of a London church.

Mr. Bardsley was followed by a procession of Oxford and Cambridge undergraduates, who spoke with obvious sincerity, but lacked the polish of experienced public speakers.

They told the same story in different words. They described how the Group Movement had attracted them and how it showed them a new realisation of life and proved the validity of Christian experience.

The unconventional manner of speech which has become associated with these "life-changers" marked all their utterances. It compelled attention.



Mr. Frank Buchman

personality is released to create a new world order.

Most of these undergraduates had learned their speeches off by heart.

#### NOT SO CROSS NOW

One of them had his "vision" written down on two sheets of crumpled notepaper, from which he read.

It was a change to hear more experienced speakers give expression to deep personal convictions with a greater oratorical freedom.

**The Dean of Caius College** (Mr. H. C. L. Heywood): God has reached out and taken me, and now I know there has come to me a new courage, a new hope and a new power. That was only three weeks ago, but those three weeks have been different from any three weeks I know. In the smaller things of life I found myself getting not so cross as I used to. In the bigger things order and harmony comes into my work.

Prof. L. W. Grensted, D.D., Oriel Professor of Philosophy of the Christian Religion at Oxford, was another speaker, followed by Dr. Jan de Bordes, of the Finance Section of the League of Nations Permanent Secretariat, who flew from Geneva in order to attend the meeting.

#### OXFORD CONTINGENT

Half-way through the meeting 250 Dons and undergraduates from Oxford and 150 from Cambridge left the hall, as they had to catch the special trains which had brought them to London. They were applauded as they left. Among them, as the stewards were careful to inform the Press, were double honours men and Rugged Blues.

After the speakers addressed the Central Hall audience they left to address three overflow meetings in nearby halls. All the meetings ended with prayers.

Then there was a rush for the exits. One noticed bishops and clergy mingling with smartly-dressed women in evening dress. It was a cosmopolitan crowd which stood about outside the halls discussing the meeting.

For many it was their first experience of the Group Movement. Other meetings are being held every evening this week. To-morrow the testimony of the Empire will be given and on Wednesday the speakers will be "international," including, as one speaker announced with a significant suggestion in his voice, "some young men, from Paris."

#### CHARACTERISTIC PASSAGES

Yet it is unlikely that any one member of the audience accepted the Group Movement on their testimonies alone. Perhaps they were not preaching to convert. More likely it was their object to put forward their personal religious experiences as concrete evidence that the Group Movement is something which deserves attention. The rest will doubtless follow.

Here are characteristic passages from some of the speakers. The first speeches came from young men, the university professors followed, and before the end of the meeting Miss Janet Woods, the daughter of the Bishop of Croydon, stepped to the microphone and added her testimony.

**The Rev. Cuthbert Bardsley**, formerly of Eton and New College, Oxford: We have not come to London to give you a sort of emotional thrill for the winter. Our vision is another fire of London, the fire of the Holy Spirit burning and cleansing this London of ours. There is nothing emotional about it; it is a plain, matter-of-fact religion.

#### SOLUTION TO CLASS WAR

**David Graham**, a scholar of Balliol College, Oxford: The group has taught me to see in Jesus Christ, working through the Church, the one solution to class war and international strife. For me the important political question now is, "When I dine with a social menace will he become different with a difference that is infectious among his associates?"

**Charles Sergel**, Caius College, Cambridge (who captained the Cambridge boat): Had a motor bike which cost £3 10s. I was kicking away at the starter and nothing happened. The petrol tap was not turned on. The groups have taught me that unless the petrol tap of life is turned on, that which gives me real power and joy for life is not going to be 100 per cent. efficient. And it won't be unless I am getting the power coming through. That power I found in Jesus Christ.

**Garth Lean** (Exhibitioner of Worcester College, Oxford): I was changed the day the hunger marchers came to London. I realised that something was desperately needed. I realised, too, that unless I myself were changed first and unless I gained the capacity to work with people, regardless of class and temperament, I could contribute nothing to the satisfying of this need. I asked God to work these miracles in me. He did.

#### PIETY NOT ENOUGH

**Peter Phelps** (Queen's College, Oxford, and Westcott House, Cambridge): An effective Christianity is what I saw in these groups. I learned that piety, like patriotism, is not enough. I learned that God would take me on step by step if I listened to Him. I found in Jesus Christ a faith as well as a row of theological books.

**Freddy Tugwell** (Magdalen and Mansfield, Oxford): Our business is to introduce to men a programme of life which is Christ-centred, in which, as I have proved in my own experience, the accumulation of past moral conflict and repression is eradicated, any further conflict is daily eliminated, and every potentiality of brain and