

# Over 2,000 Attend Evening Meetings Of Oxford Group

## Ever Growing Interest in Message Visitors Bring Is Shown By Steadily In- creasing Attendance.

Once again the great spiritual interest aroused in Ottawa by the Oxford Group was manifest when well over 2,000 persons attended two full meetings in the Chateau Laurier last night. In the large ballroom the discussion was led by Rev. Samuel M. Shoemaker, Jr., of New York and Dr. Frank N. D. Buchman, while in the adjacent dining room the Very Rev. Dr. Ebenezer Macmillan, former Presbyterian moderator of South Africa, and H. Kenaston Twitchell, Princeton University and Oxford University, presided.

Rev. Mr. Shoemaker took it for granted last night that the majority of the audience was not hearing the Group for the first time and his talk, and the words of the other members who spoke, were on a little more advanced lines than the talks of the previous meetings. Rev. Mr. Shoemaker explained, too, that the real work of the Group cannot be done in large general meetings, where only the basic principles of the movement can be explained, but that the willingness to obtain a clearer concept of the real value and meaning of Christianity must come through honest individual thinking and practice.

### House Parties Suggested

The hope was expressed last night by Dr. Buchman that it will be possible for the Group to arrange one of its house parties over the long week-end for the benefit of Montreal and Ottawa people who feel that they wish to accept the teachings of the Group. "It is perfectly easy to come to meetings like this night after night, and enthuse over them, but still not get close enough to the real thing to fully benefit," Rev. Mr. Shoemaker declared.

One of the speakers last night was Reginald A. E. Holme, Oxford, who explained that his life had

been lived at the same pace as the automobile racing club to which he belonged. Contact with the Group, however, brought him the thought, "Why not repair men's lives and leave machinery alone?" For the first time in his life, he said, he found real satisfaction in life because he felt that there was real need for the work he was doing with the Group.

Eleanor Forde, formerly of McGill University, and who, Dr. Buchman declared, has been responsible for the organization of the women's part of the Oxford Group, explained that she had a truer idea of a missionary's work when she was nine years old than she had when she was 16. She had believed that a missionary's life was lived in the spirit of a David Livingstone who took his life in his hands to spread the teachings of Jesus Christ. In the Oxford Group she found people who were living far more exciting lives than the one she decided to forsake; that her new life with God had no limitations, with eternal life beginning then, and not some time after death.

Dr. Buchman chose "Sin" as his topic for the evening. "Sin," he explained, "is anything that keeps you from God or another person. It is not a lot of 'don'ts'; the Group lets you do anything God lets you do." Sin, he said, has five powers: binding, blinding, multiplying, deafening, and deadening. Criticism may be a sin, he said, and people often reveal themselves in criticism or by their prejudices.

The way to deal with sin, he advised, is to hate, forsake, confess, and restore. He advised those who desire a closer communion with God to devote about 15 minutes time every morning to quiet contemplation or silent prayer in order to listen for God's messages and guidance. "The gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is the only adequate answer to modern problems that must be handled in a modern way," he said.

James Watt, of Edinburgh, former Communist and general strike leader in Great Britain, declared that the most elementary step in facing the challenge imposed by the Oxford Group is to say "I will" to God. "Surrender, however, is not a case of giving up but of accepting a positive thing instead of a negative," he said.

The guidance that comes from the morning quiet contemplation that is an important part of the Oxford program was stressed by Ruth Bennett, of London.

Other speakers were Jean Morton, of Edinburgh, who pointed out that surrender to God means the facing of personal issues, while Basil Yates, also of Edinburgh, stressed the value of listening for the guidance of God. The meeting was brought to a close by Mrs. Jessie Sheffield, of South Africa, who declared that when men and women are willing to face the cross of Jesus Christ and give their lives to God then miracles will be the logical result in the everyday lives of Christians.