

The Oxford Group in Scotland.

LARGE GATHERING AT ST ANDREWS.

The religious movement known as the Oxford Group, though it has no definite organisation—it claims to be an organism rather than an organisation—has drawn a large number of people to the House Party, which is being held in St Andrews this week. The party assembled on Friday evening last week, and are being accommodated in all the residence halls of the University. Friday evening's proceedings consisted of welcomes and introductions. There are no fewer than 550 resident members, and in addition there have been daily visitors from Dundee, Perth, Edinburgh, and from Fife generally. Special interest has been given to the gathering by the presence of Dr F. N. Buchman, the original founder of the movement. The Churches are well represented, for about a hundred ministers are attending. There are also a number of medical practitioners and school teachers, and University students from Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Aberdeen. A number of the members have come from overseas, including a party of students from India.

SOME OF THOSE ATTENDING.

Among those who have been attending the group meetings are:—Admiral and Mrs Drury-Lowe; Sheriff Jameson, Edinburgh; the Very Rev. Provost Margetson of St Mary's Cathedral; Principal Cairns, Aberdeen; Dr Crockett and Mr David Fyfe of Quarrier's Homes; Mr J. O. W. Barrett, Edinburgh; the Rev. John Watt, Edinburgh; the Rev. E. Macmillan, D.D. (Glasgow), a former Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in South Africa; Professor and Mrs Philip Marshall Brown, of Princeton University, U.S.A.; Mr and Mrs Stuart Sanderson, Galashiels; Mr James Watt, who was a member of the National Executive of the Communist party in Great Britain; Professor Candlish Henderson, K.C., Edinburgh; Mr Evershead, Stock Exchange, Edinburgh; Miss Doris Wilson, St Andrews, who has assisted in the organising of the gathering, etc.

THE AIMS OF THE MOVEMENT.

The following quotation from an address given by Dr Dearmer in Westminster Abbey outlines the aims of the movement. He said the Oxford Group Movement had grown up quietly and almost spontaneously; it belonged to other Universities and Centres as much as to Oxford and it owed its inception to an American, Dr Buchman. Already its influence had been great on a younger generation, free from the tendency to cynicism and changeableness in religion which had characterised the post-War decade. So far as one could estimate so new a thing, the Group Movement seemed to a sympathetic observer to be turning to a free and simple religion, which was Christian without laying much stress upon dogma. The practice of seeking for divine guidance in friendly groups seemed to be the way in which the young found it most possible to go forward. Those who had a large experience of University life generally said that there was to-day a great and growing interest in religion and a real hunger for spiritual life. The new Group Movement sought personal religion, and was not concerned with institutionalism. If so, it would be different from the Oxford Movement of a hundred years ago. But it was avoiding the old mistake of founding a new sect. It included men of all Churches and schools of thought, and should, therefore, prove a unifying as well as a reforming and constructive influence.

Mr Loudon Hamilton, one of the leaders of the House Party at St Andrews, asked to state briefly what the objects of the movement were, said that it aimed at making the principles of the New Testament a living force through personal experience of Jesus Christ. The Group emphasised the belief that individual salvation would issue in social and international salvation. They went back to first century Christianity. The aim was to reach the "interesting" sinner and make him a compelling saint. The Group desired to change the bad to the good, and advance the good to the best. It had a message for good church-going folk who wanted to know how to make their religious experiences vital to those in need. Mr Hamilton also emphasised the fact that the Group was inter-denominational, and sought to send people back to their churches with an experience of