

REAL THRILL OF RELIGION

Groupers Give Testimony

THEY GET LAUGHS OUT OF IT TOO

"We are not a travelling troupe—our task is to save not to entertain.

"The Oxford Group is not a new 'fancy religion' giving easy and free access to heaven; it is Christianity naked and unashamed.

"I get a bigger thrill out of my religion than I did walking on to the Rugby field in the green and gold colours of the Springboks."

ALMOST five hundred people listened to these statements being made last night by members of the South African Travelling Team of the Oxford Group at the public meeting which was held at the Grand National Hotel.

These seven young men and women stood before them and gave their religious autobiographies in the most conversational style of public speaking. They were all in evening dress, a contrast with the severe black of clerical robes. They joked, and when the jests referred to their wickedness before joining the movement, there were nervous bursts of laughter from the large audience.

Dr. E. D. Moorrees said that the Group was the Church on the march. They wanted to show the world that God was still alive and as such was working miracles every day.

Major Guy Swart, who confessed that in his time he had been very much "the major," told of another exciting conversion. A bold and bad lad who had been a cavalry officer and squandered an allowance of £1,500 a year. The father of this boy was a world-famous surgeon.

"PUB CRAWLS"

"His two pals and himself used to go on a regular 'pub crawl' in Durban, and they were known as the 'Three Must Get Beers,'" said Major Swart. "But recently this young man joined the Group, and his pals have followed."

The women, who included Mrs. Guy Swart, Mrs. Jessie Sheffield, Miss Dora Sprowson and Miss Molly Matthews, spoke with great candour about the incidents in their private lives before they had joined the Group.

They told how they had now found happiness acting on the principles of absolute purity, honesty, unselfishness and love.

Mr. Geo. Daneel, the Springbok Rugby player, visualised Johannesburg as a "spiritual Rugby team." They would all play under the captaincy of God and find the thrill and adventure of their lives by serving Him.

Sport, he said, offered such thrills and excitement to the present day youth, that religion even with its dances and socials could not win them.

"The man who is hero-worshipped by every boy in South Africa gives up much time, money and energy for Rugby and the thrills it gives," he said. "But I get a bigger thrill out of my religion than I did walking on to the Rugby field at Durban wearing the green and gold South African colours for the first time to play against the All Blacks."

There will be no more public meetings of the Group. The seven members of the Travelling Team are, however, to remain in Johannesburg for a month doing propaganda work.