

NEW STRENGTH SEEN IN RELIGION

Members of 'The Groups' at Dinner Hail Movement.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE TOLD

Individual Conversions Become Part of Revived Faith.

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The injecting of a note of personal evangelism into modern religion is seen not only as a release from the boredom and perplexities of the present age, but a force for the revitalization of the church, according to speakers at the dinner meeting of "The Groups," held last night at the Plaza. "The Groups" is a new religious movement described as a "First-Century Christian Fellowship." Men and women from several States and from Scotland and England testified to the efficacy of the noninstitutional, interdenominational experiment in bringing religion closer to the individual.

More than 1,000 persons heard the testimonials to the power of personal religious experience through conversions. Bishop Charles E. Woodcock of Kentucky and Bishop William T. Manning, unable to attend the dinner, sent telegrams of praise and indorsement. Bishop Manning was on the dinner committee.

Most of the talks at the dinner took the form of "confessions" or personal reports of conversion, but several speakers said they saw in the spirit of the new movement a force for an escape from increasing spiritual lethargy and paganism and a solution for the "apparently insoluble" problems of international affairs.

Sees Spirituality Roused Here.

The Rev. Ray Foote Purdy, chairman of the meeting, predicted that a spiritual reawakening of New York would result from the movement. "The experience which is felt by those who are influenced by the movement holds the solution of the problems of the day," he said.

"Thirteen years ago," he went on, "we were mobilized against a foreign foe. Today we are demobilized and the foe with which we contend is insidious and not easy to find. Theologically it is called sin, but by whatever name it is called it is within us and must be fought."

Frank Bygott of Oxford, England, told of his experience in faith with the new movement, and Mrs. A. Cameron Wilson of Aberdeen, Scotland, explained that since her conversion to the new movement she had "attained a peace that material things, even the loss of money, cannot influence."

Clergymen Are Speakers.

Among others who spoke were the Rev. Samuel M. Shoemaker, Jr., of the Calvary Episcopal Church, who paid tribute to the Rev. Frank N. D. Buchman, founder of the movement, who is in England; the Rev. G. Floyd Rogers of Asheville, N. C.; Miss Jean Barker, president of the Junior League of Louisville; Peyton H. Hoge, Jr., of Louisville; Major George M. Chescheir, polo player and officer in the Kentucky National Guard; H. Alexander Smith, formerly of the faculty of Princeton University; G. W. Hall Smith, of Providence, R. I.; Miss Margery Speakman, of Wilmington, Del., and the Rev. C. Scoville Wishard, of Summit, N. J.

The invocation was delivered by the Right Rev. Arthur Selden Lloyd and the Rev. Dubois S. Morris of Central Presbyterian Church gave the benediction.

Among those at the dinner were District Attorney Crain, Curtis B. Dall, Mr. and Mrs. Percy J. Ebbott, Mr. and Mrs. William Fellowes Morgan, the Right Rev. Charles K. Gilbert, Mr. and Mrs. Herbert L. Satterlee, William J. Schieffelin, the Rev. Ralph W. Sockman, Bishop Ernest M. Stires and Dr. and Mrs. Edward D. Truesdell.