

THE OXFORD GROUP

THE visit to this city of more than a score of the members of the Oxford group gives Detroit a glimpse of a movement to recapture the spirit of early Christianity that has been proceeding for several years within churches, sects and denominations throughout the World. It is not at all a new faith that is being offered, but rather an interpretation in modern terms of the principles of love, honesty, purity, unselfishness and restitution taught during the First Century of Christianity.

To this end those identified with the Oxford group have substituted new names and new methods for the trappings of old-time revivalism; they have discarded the emotional appeal, the fiery oratory and the mass tactics of the camp meeting. Instead they seek quietly and by individual contact to convince listeners that God has a plan of life and each person may live according to it if he or she will surrender wholeheartedly to the guidance of daily inspiration.

Members of the group call their occupation Life Changing. They say the average man needs, although he may not know it, religious faith to give substance to his doctrines, creeds, philosophies and codes of ethics. Without personal faith, they say, the World is barren and life has no meaning.

Methods of this First Century Christian Fellowship have attracted attention because of their informality. Its members go about the World as the apostles and followers of the Apostles in the First Century did, carrying their message to all they meet. A favorite plan is to hold house parties of several days' duration, to which persons go by invitation or otherwise to share experiences. Confession to each other, members of the group say, is healthful and for some, a necessary preliminary to complete self-revelment in prayer, while telling about individual experiences is their most effective form of teaching. This, too, is a lesson learned from the apostles.

The Oxford movement does not seek to organize as a separate unit of Christianity; its members usually are members of other churches, although they need not be. They look upon themselves as practicing tenets common to all followers of Christ, as presenting primitive Christianity in modern dress.