

AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF
CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY

CHRIST AND THE CHURCH

ESSAYS CONCERNING THE CHURCH AND
THE UNIFICATION OF CHRISTENDOM

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY THE
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VII

THE CHURCH AND THE CITY PROBLEM

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"THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH" and "THE CHURCH AND PROBLEMS OF SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY" have been presented before the American Institute of Christian Philosophy by masters whom all delight to honor. Another eminent teacher was announced for this afternoon, to whom we should all have listened reverently and with great profit; for from his rich experience as a pastor of an institutional church in Hartford, Conn., and as the professor of sociology in the Chicago Theological Seminary, Dr. Graham Taylor would have spread before us a royal feast on "THE CHURCH AND THE PROBLEMS OF MODERN SOCIETY." No one regrets his absence more than the speaker. When President Bradford wrote that Professor Taylor could not be here to-day, and added that he wished me to speak on the special features of the social problem, in which I am interested as a mission-worker in New York, my first impulse was to decline the invitation; but, on reflection, it seemed wrong to refuse to say a word in behalf of those to whom we are giving our lives; and with the hope that the facts which I shall give may arouse interest and stimulate inquiry, I have prepared this paper.

- (1) What are the problems of the city that confront the church in its work among the so-called "Other Half"?
- (2) What is the church doing to solve these problems?

(3) What may the church do to hasten their solution that she is not doing to-day?

Will you pardon a personal word as we begin this study together? I come to you merely as a student of the city problem. For nearly twenty years I have given it my daily attention, first as a college student in the New York University, then as a theological student in the Union Seminary, and later in connection with one of the leading daily papers. For several years I went among the working classes every summer for the Fresh-air Fund of the New York *Tribune*, and learned many things about the people and their surroundings. But it was not until, with my wife and family, I moved into the chapel building whose people I serve, a mile east of the Bowery and half a mile below Fourteenth Street, that I really began to know anything about the problem of the poor. After more than six years of daily contact with the people as pastor, friend, and neighbor, I am still a student, and shall repeat to you simply a few of the lessons which I have learned so far, and mention others in the solution of which many men and women are now engaged.

You may have seen recently, in an illustrated paper, a picture entitled "Satisfaction." A pretty society girl sits in an easy arm-chair, wearing a far-away look. On one of the arms of her chair reclines a girl friend, equally pretty, but not so angelic in appearance; and this is the burden of their very interesting conversation:

ARABELLA: Yes, I feel quite saintly these days.

MURILLA: What is the reason?

ARABELLA: Oh, I haven't gotten over the feeling yet that I had when I went to the Charity Ball and enjoyed myself so much for the benefit of the poor.

There are thousands of people who are studying the problem of the city to-day with something of Arabella's

spirit—"enjoying themselves so much for the benefit of the poor." Some of them tell us, in magazine articles and in platform speeches, how to "reach the masses." They know to a certainty. But too many of them, in outlining their plans, beautiful to the eye, lose sight altogether of the human nature of the people with whom they would have to deal if they attempted to carry out their plans. Leave that out of the problem and the solution is not so difficult. But—believe one who speaks from observation and experience—the church cannot ignore the human nature which it finds here.

I. THE PROBLEM OF THE CITY.

Walter Besant, in his "Children of Gibeon," gives us one class of people that the city missionary meets daily. But no writer, no speaker, no camera, can portray the several classes of people as they really are. You cannot present the tenement-house problem on paper: you cannot draw a picture sufficiently vivid to be lifelike. The camera fails here also: you cannot photograph an odor. The stereopticon tells only half the truth: you cannot flash a dwarfed intellect or a stunted soul upon canvas. To understand very much about the homes of the poor you must live with the people and live as they live; you must sleep where they sleep and sleep as they sleep in their poorly ventilated rooms; you must eat what they eat, with quality frequently sacrificed to quantity; you must breathe the foul air which they are obliged to inhale, often through no fault of their own; you must walk through the filthy streets in which they are compelled to spend much of their time, because some one withholds the small parks to which they are entitled; you must read the cheap literature which they read, quality again being a secondary matter; you must climb the steps

of the dark and often ill-smelling stairs which lead to their "room," or "room and bedroom," where frequently five or six persons live, eat, sleep, and die; you must undergo privation as they do—unjustly, it seems to them sometimes, and to others also; you must go to bed hungry and fall asleep from exhaustion after walking for hours looking for work; you must hear the landlord or, worse, his agent, insisting on the rent already overdue, when you have not a dime in the house; you must meet the insurance agent, whose weekly visits alone seem to stand between you and the Potter's Field; you must listen to your children crying for bread, when there is not a crust in the cupboard nor a penny in the purse to supply it; you must watch your wife or child suffer and waste and die, when the prescription lies on the table, and you cannot get the medicine for lack of money: you must know something of these every-day experiences of hundreds of families before you can understand very much about the tenement-house problem and its relation to the municipal government.

When those who influence public opinion realize what a terrible danger to the city the tenement-house as an institution is, a wonderful change will take place. Much is expected from the Tenement-house Committee appointed by Governor Flower, which is to report to the legislature next winter. Efforts to purify politics or to raise the moral standard of the city will be of little avail while the source of the trouble remains untouched. Superintendent Byrnes, of the New York Police Department, is quoted as saying, recently:

"The tenements are one of the biggest cogs in the machine which makes criminals, male and female. The associations of the tenement districts are dangerous—no one knows it better than I—both to the purity of women and the honesty of men. That the overcrowding of the

tenements must fill childish minds with vicious and wicked knowledge is certain. That a large proportion of our population lives in such environment cannot but be a serious menace to society."

The questions that perplex the poor man are as varied as those which concern his more fortunate brother. The daily struggle for bread and clothing and a home for himself and family; the education of his children, that they may have a better start in life than he had; the religious life, especially the Sunday question, which presents itself to the car-driver from a different point of view than to the stock-holder; the true relation of capital and labor, with their strikes and their lockouts; the tenement-house, with all its evils; the corner groggery, often more inviting than the church building that stands near it; the daily temptations, of which you and your children have never so much as dreamed, which meet the sons and especially the daughters of the laboring man, as they leave home, at an age when they should be in school, to earn the two or three dollars a week needed to eke out the monthly rent—these are a few of the pressing features of the problem which daily confronts the laboring man and those who are working among the poor.

American cities are too near home for us to grasp the problems bound up in them as we should if we were dealing with Tokio or Peking or even London. It is not good form to have a pessimistic spirit regarding our great country. Our national pride is touched when the spiritual needs of our own cities are faithfully presented. "Darkest England" moved America to tears, and yet London has a very small percent. of foreign population and New York has more than forty percent. When the true "Bitter Cry of Outcast New York" is heard, the Christian world will be stirred to its depths. Let us glance at a few facts appa-

rent to the most casual observer of the problems confronting the church in the gateway of the nation.

Between the dawn of two days one hundred and sometimes two hundred people die in New York City; one body in every ten fills an unknown grave in the Potter's Field. One and sometimes more of these unknown, uncared-for people are girls and young women from the streets, many of them born in the quiet country towns and picturesque villages in which some of you may live. Two thousand people, it is said, live in the canal-boats which lie in the docks around the city during the winter, responsible to no church in particular, and no denomination caring especially for them. The sailors on the high seas fare far better than these poor boatmen and their families. A great French colony on the West Side is almost wholly destitute of religious instruction or religious care. We send generous contributions to the McAll Mission in France, and we do well; but this colony is so near us that we overlook its needs. The colored people living in New York are far less romantic to us than are their brethren, the freedmen, living in the South. I have never heard of a freedmen's board carrying the gospel to the negroes in our city. The Presbyterians have one small church for the colored people; they have a single Bohemian church and two or three missions for the immense Bohemian population eager to hear the gospel of Christ. Within five miles of the heathen temple in Mott Street—an abomination in a Christian land—are three or four thousand Chinamen who will rise up in the judgment-day against some of us, I fear. And the sad fact must be added that many American women associated with these Celestials are heathen practically quite as much as are the followers of Confucius.

More people live in the lodging-houses of New York than the entire population of many of the most important

cities of the nation. Do you know what a cheap lodging-house is? Did you ever see one in operation? One midnight visit will keep you from ever saying again, "We are of all men most miserable." Come with me to one of the Mulberry Street dives after midnight. Your heart will be moved to pity as you see the miserable men and women herded together, drinking stale beer, singing vile songs, and cursing their ill luck. Let us visit together the five-cent and the two-cent lodging-houses. The farmer who did not provide for his cattle better than these people are cared for would be arrested for cruelty to animals; and yet these rough bodies that we see cover souls whose destiny is eternal. Do we care where they spend their eternity? Are they mere cattle to us? With a policeman and a health officer I entered one of these dismal dens, not long ago, in a James Street basement. There was at least a foot of water on the floor, and the considerate proprietor had placed boards on little piles of brick, and thrown straw over the boards; and there, like so many swine, lay men and women and children, the water within a few inches of their bodies, but not near enough to do the good for which water was intended. When the tide in the East River was high the water rose, and another brick was added to the pile.

In one house in Bone Alley, not far from Hope Chapel, eighty families live to-day. I tried to hire two vacant rooms in this tenement-house a few years ago, that we might start a mission-school there for the scores of apparently neglected children in the alley. The housekeeper refused to rent them, and when I pressed her for a reason she told me that every one of the eighty families in the building earned its living by picking bones and rags from the street barrels. She added that she had positive orders from the owner of the house not to rent the rooms to any one but a rag-picker or a bone-picker. She did not know

my errand, and as she stood in a room in which there was a large pile of rags—not new ones either—I had no reason to doubt her statement. Imagine a village of four hundred people in one part of these Chautauqua grounds, if you please, supported by ash-barrel refuse. I will not say that I wish them here, but I would be glad to have them out of New York. I can take you to an alley on the East Side where only blind people live; but their very affliction is their capital.

Think of the Italians in the city—an army of them—for whom very little is done by the Protestant Church. Angelini touches our hearts and our pockets with his earnest plea for sunny Italy; but the rag-picker who soils our sidewalk, or the seller of fruit on the next corner, is too near us to excite our interest or our sympathy. More Italians landed at New York two years ago than the entire population of Camden, N. J., or of Reading, Pa. Russia, without Poland, sent a city in that single year larger than Paterson, N. J. If the immigrants landing at New York two years ago had all settled on the shores of Chautauqua Lake—and I devoutly wish they had—they would have formed the fifth largest city in the United States. More immigrants came in 1891-92 than the population of any city in the Union except New York. Every seventh person, perhaps every sixth, in the metropolis is a follower of Abraham, with only here and there a follower of Jesus among them. There are nearly as many Jews in New York at this moment as there are people in Cincinnati or Pittsburg. The Protestant Church sends missionaries to Brazil, Belgium, and Italy, but lets severely alone the great body of Catholics in our own country.

A down-town clergyman—not a Presbyterian—says of his parish: “On one side of me is a block in which, the police say, thirty-nine languages and dialects are spoken.

Within four blocks is a city more foreign than any city in Europe this side of Constantinople. I have found nothing in Whitechapel so squalid." Of a thousand men employed in one branch of relief work last winter, twenty-seven nationalities were represented, counting all who call themselves Americans as one nation. For years I had intended to be a foreign missionary, and had that field in view; but Providence directed my steps otherwise, and I find that after all I am a foreign missionary: the people have come to me instead of my going to them.

"I said, 'Let me walk in the fields.'

He said, 'No, walk in the town.'

I said, 'There are no flowers there.'

He said, 'No flowers but a crown.'

"I said, 'But the skies are black;

There is nothing but noise and din.'

And he wept as he sent me back;

'There is more,' he said—'there is sin.'

"I said, 'But the air is thick,

And fogs are veiling the sun.

He answered, 'Yet souls are sick,

And souls in the darkness undone.'

"I said, 'I shall miss the light,

And friends will miss me, they say.'

He answered, 'Choose to-night,

If I am to miss you, or they.'

"I pleaded for time to be given.

He said, 'Is it hard to decide?

It will not seem hard in heaven

To have followed the steps of your Guide.'"

You will not understand me, when I emphasize so strongly the needs of the poor, to hold that all the saints

in New York are among the "Other Half," and that all the sinners are among those who live up-town. Sainthood is not altogether a question of locality; but one cannot help feeling that those who have less of this world's goods than their fellows have more cause for our sympathy and our efforts. Mrs. Lofty has ridden behind her prancing team in Central Park or on the boulevard at Newport today, enjoying the invigorating air and also the attention attracted by her beautiful turnout. Mrs. Lowly has carried her little one down the side street, on the shady side, to the East River; and there, sitting on the deserted pier, she has thanked God for a chance to breathe even the air poisoned by the sewer filth emptying into the stream beneath her feet. The Lord will hold some one responsible some day for denying to the poor of New York the small parks already granted to them by the State. All honor to the noble men and women who have been working for years to secure parks and playgrounds for the working-man and his family.

The children of the poor. "Have ye no pity for the poor, miserable children?" says Canon Farrar. "Is there no voice strong enough to plead 'like angels, trumpet-tongued, against the deep damnation of their taking off'—these children who, in the language of Southey, are not so much born into the world as damned into the world; predestined, as it were, to live lives of disease and degradation, because of the drink in the midst of which they are brought up, and of which they have the hereditary taint in their very veins." Thank God for the St. John's Guild, the *Tribune* Fresh-air Fund, the *Herald* Ice Fund, the *World* Sick Babies' Fund, the *Christian Herald* Fresh-air Fund, and a host of other public and private charities that care for the children of the poor!

Does some one ask why there is so much poverty in the

city? Many people are poor always because they were born poor. They have never had a fair chance in the race, in this world at least. They were handicapped at the outset. Their ancestry, for several generations, were shiftless, and the probabilities are that their descendants will be equally shiftless. New blood must be infused, new surroundings made, new ambitions aroused, before a change for the better will be seen. You remember "Margaret, the Mother of Criminals," a pauper child born in this State a century ago. Mr. E. V. Smalley says of her descendants: "In one generation of her unhappy line there were twenty children, of whom seventeen lived to maturity. Nine served terms, aggregating fifty years, in the State prison, for high crimes, and all the others were frequent inmates of jails and almshouses. It is said that of the six hundred and twenty-three descendants of this outcast girl, two hundred committed crimes which brought them upon the court records, and most of them were idiots, drunkards, lunatics, paupers, or prostitutes." So much may depend upon a single individual. One child's life started wrong set in motion this fearful criminal train. What if one of us may start on the right line a girl who otherwise would be a second Margaret? Would it not be worth the work of a lifetime?

Many men are pure and upright through no effort of their own; it is natural for them to be so. Many men are poor and dependent, some are degraded, and others are vicious, who would not have been so with different ancestry. Dr. Holmes is right: you must begin to train the child of 2094 to-day.

Misfortune is another cause of poverty that must excite our pity. The illness or death of a parent or a child has thrown many a self-reliant family upon the charity of the world. Its little income ceases, the small bank-account is exhausted, and poverty takes the place of inde-

pendence. Well-to-do families have suddenly become dependent through investments that did not prosper, through faithless friends, or through the rascality of some one of their own members.

Much of the poverty is due to circumstances beyond the control of those who suffer. Competition is the curse of the poor. We demand that we shall have cheap living, cheap clothing, cheap furniture, cheap hats—everything must be as cheap as possible. The merchant, to secure our trade, buys of a manufacturer who will sell for a penny less than the one from whom he had purchased before. That penny must be saved, and the man who makes the garment gets a penny less and sometimes two; for “business is business.” A cent on one article, or five cents on one article, for that matter, does not make much difference to you or me; but a single cent on every one of a hundred articles made by the poor man in the tenement-house or in the crowded shop means a great deal to him, especially when work is slack and there are thousands of competitors. A single element in this race for greed is that, while the consumer pays less for his clothing and the workman has received less for his labor, no one has thought of reducing the rent of tenement-houses. Recent investigation has shown conclusively that in a district containing the most congested portion of the world’s population the poorest tenement rooms are more expensive, when space is considered, than the costly apartments in the large houses in the upper part of the city.

The homes of the poor. To walk through some of the tenement streets one longs to do one of two things: tear down the buildings or compel their owners to live in them at least one day in the year. With bad plumbing, filthy yards, and barrels of refuse in the cellars, it would be pretty difficult for you and me to attain a very high degree of spirituality. Can we expect it from those doomed to this

environment? One evening, in a pastoral call, less than three hundred feet from our chapel, as I knocked, the mother opened the door and said through the darkness, "Are you the plumber?" As I was only a minister my visit was not so much appreciated as it would have been if I had been a minister and a plumber. The mother showed me a sink filled with refuse, due to a broken pipe. Three or four times within as many days she had gone to the agent of the house and urged him to have the pipes mended. I did not leave any tract there, nor did I offer a prayer aloud. I did not quite dare to do so, for while talking to the mother a full pail of slops from the upper floors came into the sink. With her little children clinging to her dress or playing on the floor, the patient woman dipped out the dirty water without a word. I have in mind another house where, a few weeks ago, through a similar cause, one child died from diphtheria, and the family moved carrying a second child suffering from the same disease, into a better tenement-house, thereby exposing the new household to diphtheria. I would not be surprised if in some of these families the clothing displayed so beautifully in Broadway stores was being made at that time. Suppose the landlord's son should buy a suit, and the disease should be carried from the tenement to the mansion, who would be guilty of murder?

II. HOW THE CHURCH TREATS THE CITY PROBLEM.

What is the church doing with the problem of the city? Studying it as never before; trying honestly, in the fear of her Master, to better the conditions of the laboring people; sending many of her noblest sons and most consecrated daughters into the neglected field as volunteer workers; pouring out her treasures in funds of various kinds

for alleviating the distress found in the tenement districts ; starting free kindergartens, in order to shape the twig while it is yet tender ; providing for the safety of young men and young women by clubs under the care of the church ; and in various ways showing practical sympathy for those who need friends more than they need alms. In rescue missions, in mission-schools, and in chapels and churches once prosperous, you will find every week hundreds of earnest Christians working, on Sunday and week-day alike, for those who are not always so grateful as one could wish. Ladies whom you would expect to meet at a reception in an uptown parlor, you will find in a humble home planning a vacation trip for the mother and babe ; one may be carrying the information that she has secured a position for the eldest boy in the store where she does her purchasing.

“The superintendent would not see John or his mother,” she tells you, “but he seemed pleased to grant my request.” Her wish was that this poor boy should get work. God bless those who “consider the poor” ! It is easier to feed them, but the blessing goes with the “considering.”

The church is supporting many chapels and missions among the poor in addition to the voluntary work of which I have spoken, and in addition, also, to the large amount spent for charity—between nine and ten millions of dollars annually—much of which comes from Christian people. One church of which I know gives \$6000 a year to support its two chapels. Another contributes \$8000 to a single chapel. The pastor of a third church asks his people on Sabbath morning for \$13,000 for the three chapels for which they are directly responsible, and that amount is found upon the plates. Should he ask for \$50,000 for the same purpose it would be given as freely. A society with nine missions and churches under its care spent last year about \$60,000 for city mission work, employing, besides its pastors, sev-

eral workers among the Germans, Italians, and Jews, and more than forty experienced trained nurses and missionaries. The Protestant Episcopal Church has several modern buildings in which the life that now is is not forgotten while providing for the life to come. The Collegiate Church and the Presbyterian Church, the Methodist Church and the Baptist Church, and the Congregational churches and other religious bodies, are working along institutional lines to some extent.

Nor must the Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations be omitted. The value of the distinctively religious work in the main building and the branches is scarcely greater than that afforded in their class-rooms, libraries, gymnasiums, labor bureaus, lecture courses, etc. For many thousands of young people they take the place of church, club, and home. The Hebrew Institute in East Broadway reaches weekly twenty-five thousand people, who go there for instruction and enjoyment. The rescue mission work, like the McAuley Mission, the Florence Mission, the Door of Hope, the Industrial Christian Alliance, the Cremorne Mission, the Slum Brigade of the Salvation Army, St. Bartholomew's Mission, the Metropolitan Meetings conducted by Mr. Yatman—this class of work deserves a lecture by itself, for to my mind it is the most difficult and discouraging form of religious work in the world. So many of the "rescued" men and women have to be saved so often, that it requires a faith that can actually remove mountains to stand the frequent shocks that come to the workers.

A member of my church was for many years a drinking man, and even now, though I believe him to be an earnest Christian, he sometimes falls under the temptation of drink, and then he is a devil incarnate. At such times he cares, apparently, for no one except his pastor. An indulgent

father naturally, wife, children, and friends are made the special subjects of his insane temper when he is drinking. They may starve, and they often are in a starving condition when I find them. Then comes the talk with the father and comfort for the family, and a prayer, and penitence and reconciliation, and, for six months or a year, reformation. Generally the sad times end, as one did last winter, by the weak Christian brother saying, "Mr. Devins, you hold on to me and I will hold on to you, and we will stand together." Besides the arm of Omnipotence, on which he leans by faith, he needs a human arm which he can feel about him constantly.

What is the church doing to solve the problem of the poor? Did your little daughter ever meet you at night and say, with a shout of exultation, "Papa, I went bathing in the surf to-day"? You congratulate her upon her splendid daring, and she receives it with as much complacency as if you did not know that all she means is this: She had her little dress pinned about her waist, and with bare feet she pattered down toward the surf as brave as a man, till she saw a long breaker just beginning to dash into foam far out beyond the life-lines. Then her bravery oozed out rapidly, and she started up the hill faster than she started down. As the wave receded her courage rose, and so she played with the mighty ocean stretching out before her. Now and then, in spite of her agility, a spent wave flowed over her tiny feet, and she tells you, with something of truthfulness, that she has been surf-bathing.

The church is solving the problem of the city in about the same manner that your little daughter battled with the surf. Without taking back a word of all that has been said regarding the men and the money engaged in city missionary work, we are reaching the masses only on paper. Individuals in many churches are doing yeoman service,

but individuals are units. A half-million people live below Fourteenth Street and east of Broadway. The Congregationalists have one small Welsh congregation and one mission-chapel in that district, and not another church within a mile of it. The Baptists let one of their noble men die at the foot of the Bowery. Pleading for money, pleading for helpers, the brave worker went to his grave. But his death was not in vain. A splendid work has sprung up where he labored so faithfully amid great discouragements. The Methodist Church has supported liberally the great meetings in the Academy of Music and in Metropolitan Hall; but the denomination which pours out its wealth so lavishly in this way is not equally generous in the support of its churches among the poor. I know a Methodist pastor in New York who received last year the munificent salary of \$750; and out of that he paid a missionary to assist him in relieving the poor and the distressed that crowded about his doors. God pity those who let this heroic, uncomplaining servant stand in the breach with such support!

And as for the Presbyterian Church—here you have the child at her surf-bathing. Two years ago a committee of the Presbytery of New York, appointed to investigate the spiritual needs of the city, made this report regarding the down-town districts: "The region, with its third of a million of mostly foreign population, is genuinely foreign missionary ground, where methods well adapted to or even moderately successful in other localities are likely to prove of little service. Just as soon as the Presbyterian Church finds itself in honest shape once more, occupying buildings that are paid for, its duty toward this district will be imperative. This will be its first duty in the direction of missionary work." Within two months after the reading of that report two leading Presbyterian churches—one of them almost the strongest, financially, in the denomination—gave notice that they

would soon move up-town. One is now three miles and the other four miles farther away from this missionary region than they were when the report was read ; and since that time the Presbyterians have decided to sell another church building. Before the incoming tide of immigration our church is receding rapidly, leaving chapels and missions to take the place of the churches which have followed and sometimes led the up-town movement ; for people move up-town to be near their church quite as often as the church goes to be near its people.

III. WHAT SHOULD THE CHURCH DO WITH THE PROBLEM?

Let her first read again what Professor Drummond has so happily termed "the program of Christianity." In the Nazareth synagogue the Master said : "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor ; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

Having studied anew this program, the church must "follow Christ." He might have sat in his cheerful home, or in the Nazareth synagogue even, and invited all who desired his help or his teaching to come where he was ; or he might have erected a church—the Church of the Messiah, if you please—on the leading avenue of Jerusalem, announcing in the morning papers the hours of service, and had a sufficient number of ushers present on Sabbath morning to see that the pewholders were seated before he began his sermon on "Love"—love to God and love to fellow-men. But this was not his way. It would not seem as though the representatives of the Christ would find the Master by walking in that direction.

The church has many representatives at work among the people, so called. This number must be vastly increased before the problem can be solved. A regiment from the Bay State marched proudly down Broadway thirty-two years ago. Every soldier bore evidence of an ancestry that knew no defeat. Puritan principle and Puritan pluck were seen on every countenance.

"How often can your State send out such a regiment?" asked a New-Yorker.

"Once a week for months to come," was the proud answer, "and," the officer added, "if we cannot put down the rebellion, Massachusetts herself will step to the front." We have many soldiers of the cross in the field to-day, but the church as an institution is marching to Canaan's happy land too frequently through Harlem, Brooklyn, and New Jersey. American independence dates from 1776; but between the signing of the Declaration, on July 4th of that year, and the evacuation of New York by the British, on November 25, 1783, there was a great deal of practical coöperation, and you will recall that the severest battles were fought at the front. The church of Christ must do all that she is doing now, and as much more as possible, and still remember that

"It is not the things we have done here,
But the things we have left undone,
That will give us the bitter heartache
At the setting of the sun."

The church must study the changed conditions of the city. Across the street from our chapel stands a double tenement-house where three private houses were four years ago. Forty-four families live to-day where there were three or four then. A saloon has been opened in the same block where there was a grocery three years ago. Next to

the saloon there is a large garment factory with a stable or two on the lower floors. The street has changed in character quite as much as in appearance during that time.

The church must study the various questions that interest the poor, not so much from the church's point of view as from the people's point of view. Take the temperance question. The other night I distributed invitations to a temperance meeting in our chapel to the customers in twenty-five of the one hundred and seventy saloons within twelve hundred feet of our home. Many of my people see more harm in the coffee which their pastor drinks at the midday meal than in the beer which they drink at the same time. He does not consider it a sin to drink the coffee, nor do they to drink the beer. They think that I waste money in buying a quart of ice-cream. Their pail of beer is to them not a luxury, not even a stimulant, but, from their point of view, an article of food—a necessity. When the church has studied the temperance question from its several points of view, then her representatives must unite in some practical method of fighting the evil. It may not be your method nor mine which will be adopted. Theories, resolutions, platforms, will not kill the saloon. After the study of the question there must be coöperation.

Or take the labor problem. The church of the Galilean carpenter is the working-man's best friend. She should be, and he should know it. Too often I fear that he looks upon the church as a club, where one negative vote black-balls; and he is afraid that his rough hands and his plain clothing and his untaught manners will lead some one to cast the negative vote, and he hates to run the risk: so would you and so would I. Or he looks upon the church as a vestibuled train of sleeping-cars upon which only the "classes" may travel.

"Out of work, is that all?" said a friend the other day,

in speaking of a neighbor of ours. Is that all? What worse evil could one wish for his bitterest foe? Out of work! The father comes home at night weary, hungry, foot-sore, discouraged. The little money laid aside for rent goes for food. Work is promised soon. The month closes—nothing yet. But hope is not gone. The agent demands the rent. "Pay up or move out," says he, in answer to the prayer of the wife for a few days' delay; and the little bank-account is soon exhausted, and still no work. And finally, when evening shades will partly conceal her movements, the mother steals away to a pawnshop and exchanges some jewel dearly prized for a few cents with which to buy bread for her crying children. The clock follows the jewelry, and the clothing the timepiece, and frequently the clothing from the bed on which the parents sleep. The children's bed is the last to go—and yet no work. Were you ever hungry? Were you ever out of work? Did you ever walk the streets looking for it, willing to do anything? I know something of the experience which I am suggesting: the sense of loneliness; the feeling that with so much to do in the city there must be a place for you; the feeling of inequality, of injustice. God pity those who are willing to work, but cannot find one willing to hire them!

One of the bright little German girls in our chapel, ten years old, said to Mrs. Devins the other day: "My papa walks all day every day looking for work. Yesterday he walked clear up to One Hundred and Fiftieth Street and back [fifteen miles], and after all there was no work. He has been in every coal-yard and stone-yard and every factory that he can hear of in all the city. Sometimes I go with him and talk for him; and last week he and I walked forty-six blocks up and forty-six blocks back, and I was that tired before I got back that I had to sit down on every

curbstone to get strength to walk to the next. Oh, my feet ached! and I cried when I got home, I was so tired. This morning mama had only six cents in the house, and papa heard that perhaps he could get work over the ferry; so she gave him that six cents to ride over the ferry, and then there was no work after all, and mama cried. I wish my papa could get some work. He tries so hard all the time, Mrs. Devins." The first thing we did with little Hannah and her brother Bethel was to send them through the *Tribune* Fund to the ideal summer home for city children, at Curtisville, Mass., supported so generously by Mr. John E. Parsons, of New York. When more men of wealth realize that they are trustees rather than owners of the property which they hold, the question of capital and labor will not be raised so frequently as it is now. Having secured an outing for the children, we tried to get work for the father. It is work, and not money, that this family and thousands of other families need.

When it was found, last winter, by the police census that there were seventy thousand unemployed men in New York, a committee, representing various churches and benevolent societies, was organized to help a few of them by giving them work. A dollar a day was paid to those sweeping the streets and renovating the tenement-houses, and seventy-five cents a day was given to the tailors. The efficient chairman of the East Side Relief Work Committee was Mrs. Charles Russell Lowell, of the Charity Organization Society, a woman of rare judgment, and indefatigable in her work among the poor. The College Settlement, the University Settlement, the Roman Catholic Church, the Hebrew Institute, the Society for Ethical Culture, the City Mission Society (undenominational), the Brotherhood of St. Andrew, a Presbyterian chapel, and, later, a Unitarian church and a Congregational church were represented on the committee. Tickets were sent to all the churches,

societies, and labor organizations in the neighborhood. In five months \$125,000 was spent in the relief of the unemployed. Not a dollar was given in direct relief—every penny was earned. We employed five thousand heads of families. Hundreds of the vilest tenement-house cellars were cleaned, and nearly four thousand barrels of refuse were carted away. Three thousand halls, cellars, and rooms were whitewashed and scrubbed. Almost the entire East Side of the city from the Bridge to the Harlem River was swept daily. Quantities of clothing were made and distributed among the cyclone sufferers of South Carolina and the destitute of New York. The central work of the committee was carried on at the rooms of the College Settlement in Rivington Street.

Hope Chapel was made the center of the sanitation work, and branches of the street-sweeping and sewing departments were established there, \$40,000 of the relief fund passed through our hands. Seventeen hours a day were given to this work for five months. The tales of suffering which were poured into my ears—many of which I investigated and found to be true—I would not dare to tell you. More than one of the men whom we employed said that he thanked God for the hard times, for, while he had suffered severely, he had found that the church really loved him and cared for his family. Cain's question, "Am I my brother's keeper?" is not heard much now. It should never rise to the lips of those who say "Our Father."

" Say not, ' It matters not to me,
My brother's weal is *his* behoof ;'
For in this wondrous human web,
If your life's warp, his life is woof.

" Woven together are the threads,
And you and he are in one loom ;
For good or ill, for glad or sad,
Your lives must share one common doom."

When the relief fund was exhausted the need was by no means at an end, and some of the workers formed a permanent organization, which has been incorporated as the New York Employment Society, and is virtually an employment agency, free to employer and employee. Among the directors are Presbyterians, Baptists, Episcopalians, a Congregationalist, a Unitarian, a Roman Catholic, and a Hebrew. This, Mr. President, we believe to be a long step toward Christian unity. It is not unity on paper—it is practical unity backed by bank-checks. Besides investigating the references and the moral character of some fifteen hundred men who have applied for positions in six weeks, we have secured positions for about two hundred men. We have sent some men out of town, and as rapidly as possible we shall extend this branch of our work; and we invite the coöperation of all those who can help us. The church must do more than feel sorry for the laboring man; she must help him. Mrs. Browning says somewhere, "Most people are kind, if they only think of it." "To sympathize with distress," said Horace Mann, "is human; to relieve distress is godlike."

Another phase of practical coöperation is the plan adopted by the Federation of East Side Workers. Here again Protestants, Catholics, and Hebrews are found willing to forget their "ism" for the time and unite upon what they can agree upon. We learned last winter, in working for the poor, that there were many phases of work where coöperation was possible. The Protestant learned, also, that his Roman Catholic brother had a heart for the suffering poor in New York, whatever he might think of the papal authority of Rome. The Roman Catholic found that his Protestant brother, like the Master of them both, goes about doing good, whether Luther's theses were right or wrong. The Jew saw that the Christian considers the

poor as well as he. The Christian discovered that no race on earth exceeds that of the Hebrew in giving aid to the destitute. Catholic and Jew, Christian and agnostic, found that none of the others had divided hoofs.

The object of the new Federation is to increase the efficiency of benevolent work among the half-million of people living below Fourteenth Street and east of Broadway. No new relief-giving society was needed, but brotherly feeling, practical federation, a united front—this is what the world has a right to expect from those who are laboring there, especially in the humane work in which the churches and philanthropic societies are alike engaged. Every phase of life will be carefully studied, and the evils found will be corrected so far as possible. Lectures will be given on practical topics, such as the care of the home, the training of children, the rights and duties of citizens, the relation of capital and labor, the question of wages, rent, improved dwellings, temperance, etc. The tenement-house problem, existing sanitation laws, public baths, small parks, etc., will receive the attention of the committee. While the immediate needs of the people in distress will not be overlooked, self-help rather than direct relief will be the goal.

What may the church do to solve the problems of modern society? First, study the problems on the ground, recognizing the changed conditions of the people; and then carry help, temporal and spiritual, where it is needed. Professor Graham Taylor said recently that Chicago needed a hundred missionaries. "New York," said that prince of men, Howard Crosby, a few weeks before his death—"New York will be evangelized when every Christian becomes an evangelist." The church will solve her knotty problems when her representatives, regardless of ecclesiastical connections, set themselves to the task, willing to learn, willing to coöperate.

When Napoleon asked for one hundred men to lead a forlorn hope he explained that every man would probably be killed the moment the enemy opened fire. Now who would die for the emperor? "A hundred men forward! Step out of the ranks!" And not a hundred men, but the whole regiment, we are told, as one man, sprang forward in solid line and rang their muskets at the feet of the emperor.

You will pardon me, Mr. President, for referring to your family; but I believe that the noble, consecrated life which Miss Bradford, the cultured sister of our honored president, is giving to the poor in Jersey City is worth more to the people who come under her refining influences than bags of gold would be to them. The uplifting power of the Whittier Home, instituted and sustained, in part, if not wholly, by this earnest Christian woman, is one of the strongest arguments for the religion of Jesus Christ to be found in that city. Miss Bradford is good, she does good, she goes about doing good. A hundred equally consecrated women should offer her their services. And what Miss Bradford is doing in Jersey City the College Settlement women in Rivington Street, and the Tenement-house Chapter of King's Daughters in Madison Street, and the University Settlement men in Delancey Street, and many other circles and bands and societies and individuals are doing in New York. Their aim is to share their lives with the people, to follow the Christ as they come in contact with human men and women and children longing not for alms, but for unselfish friendship.

But there are those who think that the church of Christ, as a church, and individual members representing the church, as an institution, should do this very work. In something of this spirit is Dr. Judson's splendid enterprise in Washington Square, which has been called "a college set-

tlement plus religion." Dr. Judson says: "God wants his church to be the center of spiritual and intellectual activity, the seat of aggressive and philanthropic enterprise, the ideals and teachings of Christ translated into a definite social organ." There is a danger lest these outside agencies, unless bound to the church in some way, will become formidable rivals and not helpful allies. But, at any rate, they have already served a grand purpose in calling our attention to the need of personal work and in showing its beneficent results.

Finally, the church must solve her problems by reaching the people as individuals. This was the Master's method. Andrew hears John's words about the Christ; he follows Jesus and brings Peter to the Saviour. Philip, imbibing the spirit of the Master, brings Nathanael under the same blessed influence. Every church, every chapel, every mission, every humane agency, needs its Andrews and its Philips to-day. The prayer of Holmes may well be ours to-day:

"God give us men. A time like this demands
Great hearts, strong minds, true faith, and willing hands."

What an opportunity for personal service every Christian has in helping to solve the problems before the church! An individual is only a unit; but one man may do so much, and one woman may do so much, when the Christ life rules and the Christ spirit is manifested among the lowly!

During those memorable days in 1863 when New York was in the hands of the draft-rioters it is said that a mob of lawless men and boys was headed by one of the most daring and godless of the six or eight thousand that had gathered by the time Madison Square was reached. The yelling, hooting crowd had for its objective point the house of a prominent man on Murray Hill. As the mob reached

the house the leader rushed up to the door. Hardly had he reached the steps when the door swung open, and a lady greeted him with a smile and asked how she could serve him. For an instant they faced each other—the desperate man with murder in his heart, the woman as gentle as an angel, her beautiful face an index of the Christlike spirit within.

For an instant only they faced each other. Not a word was exchanged. The leader turned to his followers, drew his revolver, and said deliberately, "The first man whose foot touches these steps dies. I will lay down my life for this lady and her home. Wheel, forward, march!" When the astonished crowd deemed it wise they asked their leader what had changed his plans. This was his reply:

"When the door opened I recognized in that lady whom you saw one who had visited my home when I was out of work last winter. My wife was ill and the children were nearly naked. She brought food and clothing for my children; she brought dainties for my sick wife, prepared by her own hand. She was kind to me when I was in trouble, and secured work for me."

Here, to my mind, is the key that is going to unlock the Problem of the City, and that is going to answer the questions how to reach the masses and how to fill the churches at the second service. When the rich know how the poor live by personal observation, and the poor know how the rich work, the chasm between the "masses" and the "classes" will be bridged; and in this manifestation of personal Christianity we shall be exhibiting the spirit of our Master, "who went about doing good." Shall we follow the Christ?