

please, making Sunday a day for outdoor sports or other amusements. And of those boys who are sent to Sunday-school when small, many as they grow older are drawn away by the outside associations and attractions, and through parental carelessness are permitted to cease their attendance entirely. Then, as they have not formed the habit of church-going, they quickly drift away from every positive religious influence, and for the rest of their lives are as completely beyond the reach of the ordinary means of grace as if they lived in a heathen land. In view of these facts, considering the neglect in which the majority of boys grow up, the slight impression made upon their spiritual natures, and the uncontrolled liberty, or rather license, accorded to them, the result is precisely that which should be expected.

2. To this primary cause of the comparative irreligiousness of the masculine sex, we must add as the second the wide difference in the circumstances which bear upon the two sexes through life. The influences which shape the lives of the great majority of the gentler sex are those of the home, the respectable social circle, and, as coming into close relation with these, the Christian Church. The influences which bear continuously upon the development of masculine character are the activities, difficulties, competitions, temptations, and associations of the outside world. Woman's work is chiefly in the home, and there most of her time is passed. Man's work carries him out into the world, bringing him into contact with various forms of evil. Woman, in her home-work, especially as mother having the care of little children, and in her social life also, is almost necessarily brought into personal contact and sympathy with the church. Man in his outside work and business associations breathes an intensely secular atmosphere, too often sin-polluted, and in no way fitted to inspire in him religious feeling or to remind him of his spiritual needs.

In the demands made upon men by the cares of business or professional life, the preoccupation of their minds with these worldly affairs becomes unfavorable to the development of an interest in spiritual concerns. In our time the desire for riches and the means of luxurious living has become a widespread passion. Thus the mercantile spirit so prevalent tends readily to become a mercenary spirit. Never has so much energy been demanded, never has competition been so fierce, never have the conditions of success been so exacting nor its rewards so alluring. Young men entering active life with no positive religious principles to control them are quickly swept into the vortex of intense worldliness. They become so absorbed in their earthly interests, that they have little time and less inclination to consider the interests of the soul and the claims of the Gospel. Worldly ambitions fill their minds, to the exclusion of divine claims and spiritual duties.

Of course it is not implied that there is any necessary antagonism between business and religion. Many of the most successful men in business and professional life are earnest Christians. But it is the fact that nearly all such men became Christians in early youth, and entered active life with religious characters already fixed. No harm will result as a rule from worldly influences to the young man who goes into the contest panoplied with the Gospel armor, who enters an active career with the character firmly grounded in Christian faith. But, going out, as so many do, with no spiritual preparation, with no religious aims, and no sense of obligation to God, it is but the inevitable result that many are hurried into moral ruin, and many more are hardened into confirmed worldlings, absorbed in selfish pursuits and oblivious to eternal interests.

3. In this connection the fact must be accounted as a large factor in the result, that many of the occupations of men remove those engaged in them al-