

Jacob's well, or the smile that in the house of Simon the Leper beamed upon that woman who was a sinner !

Our churches are mostly wedded to a system of pew rental or pew-ownership, which, however equitable on business principles, is difficult to justify on grounds of Christian courtesy or expediency, and undoubtedly makes a poor man feel that he is not wanted. No doubt there is a "pride of poverty" that keeps him out ; is there not a pride of affluence that matches that, and works the same way ? No doubt every man should be willing to pay a fair equivalent for what he gets. But the meanness that would avoid costs is not confined to any class. We all like to buy things cheap ; and that abominable "sweating system" that is to-day grinding the poor to powder finds its mainstay in the unwillingness even of the rich to pay a fair price for what they buy. Should wealth complain of poverty, that it will not pay for religious care and culture, while affluence is clothed with robes stitched by the hands of the starving ? We invite the poor to our assemblies only to insult them with invidious distinctions when they come. While we write essays and make appeals in behalf of the "evangelization of the masses," we move our churches to aristocratic sites, hire for them costly preachers and singers, encumber them with heavy debts ; then, if we approach the poor at all, we do it through a missionary, a "ragged school," a mission chapel—stretch out to them a hand whose kid glove is a "non-conductor," and make the impression that we regard all our approach to them as a condescension and a patronage ! I know a man who makes thrilling addresses upon city evangelization, and who, after a sermon, being sought by a poor man in deep distress, abruptly answered his soul-hunger for salvation by the reply that he "had no time to spend upon him !"

No indiscriminate, railing accusation is meant against Christianity or Christians in this frank confession of the faults of the Church : just as to criticise or condemn the attitude or action of our government is not an assault upon republicanism or patriots. As O'Connell used to say, "Nothing is ever settled till it is settled right." If there are big breaches in our church walls, it will not do to daub them over with untempered mortar. No doctrine of social relations, no practice of social life, which is inconsistent with the Golden Rule can permanently stand ; and it is but too plain that if our theory be not, our practice is, wrong.

The open life heralds the secret life. What we really are will, sooner or later, come out. As Charles Lamb quaintly hints, "He who eats garlic in secret vainly persuades himself he will not smell of it openly." If greed governs a man of God, common folk will find it out. Every worker among the masses who has been marked as a winner of souls has shown a sublime indifference to money, and the people have been constrained to say of such as the Pope's ambassador, of Luther, "That German beast cares not for gold." He who seeks souls, not salary, who cares more for a fruitful field than a large fee, and whose passion for the truth and for men