

asceticism of the primitive and mediæval Church, are nothing less than survivals of Manichæism. There is a peculiar subtlety about the idea that has made it current in all ages. Even Plato was not able to get entirely away from the teaching of his master that "the soul reasons best when it comes to be alone with itself, bidding good-by to the body." This notion is even now current, particularly among those of exalted piety. No one would formally endorse the Manichæan heresy that matter is essentially evil, but practically they do so by acting as if the seat of sin were in the flesh. This is doubtless due to a mistaken interpretation of Paul's presentation of the conflict between good and evil, as a battle between the spirit and the flesh. Sin is manifest through the flesh, and from Paul's vivid way of writing it is easy to infer that the flesh is also the seat of evil. But Paul was too good a psychologist to have made so palpable a blunder. He everywhere emphasizes the fact that the essence of sin is selfishness and that its seat is in the will. As for the body, it is an "instrument of righteousness," a "member of Christ" (1 Cor. vi. 15), and if the flesh is corrupt it is not so essentially, but because that which uses it is so.

This conception of the worth of the body may be traced through the whole Bible. The rites of purification in the Old Testament and the emphasis laid on the venality of those sins which defile the body, are prophetic of the completer doctrine of the New Testament. The redemption of Christ saves the whole man, demanding that "the spirit and soul and body be preserved entire" for the day of the coming of the Lord. To this end the miracles of Christ point. The sinfulness of man has warped the order of nature. Miracles are the divine correction of this disorder. Those which Christ performed were especially for the body, and show what store he set upon that which had too often been scorned and neglected. The fact, too, that it was possible for the world to become flesh, shows that evil may proceed only from volition. The Incarnation is conclusive evidence that, since God may identify himself with a human body, it is capable of being put to divine uses. The Ascension is a further confirmation and amplification of this truth, showing that flesh may be glorified and may exist forever in a divine environment and as a divine instrument. The Resurrection is a pledge that the redemption and glorification of human flesh, begun here, shall be finally completed. And as he saves the environment of the soul, the body, so Christ saves the environment of the body, the universe. "Creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption." Thus in a new heaven and a new earth the ideal of humanity, interrupted by the fall, is realized in a redemption which saves the whole man—a being of flesh and spirit.

This view of the worth and nature of the body gives Christianity a unique place and power. It makes it a great force on the side of purity and right living. Proclaiming that the body is the temple of God, Christianity forbids anything that defiles or mars it. It is also a gospel of hope. It shows that the soul is not entangled in a poisonous mesh. It declares that the body, though limited in power and often infirm, is an instrument placed at the soul's disposal. This instrument is made of such noble material, so finely adjusted, that God Himself can use it for His own divine purposes. And furthermore it is an instrument which is not to be cast aside after a time—it is to be glorified so that even in its final estate the soul will rejoice at its noble companion.

If this, then, is the nature of the body, Christianity is on the side of everything needful for its healing or development. Whatever in art or science contributes to its well being is to be hailed with joy. Raiment, food, recreation, and work are not to be neglected or despised. They are means whereby the body may be hastened towards its ideal of redemption. So, too, Christianity is by this view pledged to all social and moral reforms. Crime, poverty, and disease are incompatible with it. When unabated they are denials of its efficiency. And therefore the Church, by her corporate members, is bound to foster anything that may serve to lessen social ills—free baths, coffee houses, hospitals, and what-not of that description. She need not be a visionary, but she must recognize and forward any and every device, however humble or revolutionary, that promises to better the physical condition of the great soul-sick and body-sick masses. The full recognition of this opportunity and privilege will be the dawning of the day when the desert of social ills shall blossom as the rose. The full recognition of Christ's purpose to redeem the body as well as the soul will empower the Church to occupy with efficiency that large sphere of usefulness which she has hitherto neglected.

The Tramp Problem.

The tramp has become one of the most conspicuous and significant blemishes upon the surface of modern civilization. He is a nuisance everywhere. He also is frequently a cause of heavy expense and sometimes of annoyance and even fear. In many country neighborhoods the tramp is fed, lodged and humored

simply because people are afraid of him. The cost of the various wayfarer's lodges, refuges, etc., of which nearly every town now has one for the benefit of the tramps, and of the food and fuel used in them, must amount to many thousands of dollars a year.

A sharp distinction should be made between tramps and honest wayfarers. In current discussions about the unemployed much attention is devoted to tramps. But although all tramps are to be classed among the unemployed many of the unemployed are by no means tramps, even when they go from place to place on foot seeking work. The tramp is one who will not work steadily, if at all, and who begs or steals his way through the country, a dirty shiftless, dangerous loafer, a bully when he cannot otherwise persuade people to feed or shelter him, and often responsible for fires, thefts and assaults. Such vagabonds need resolute treatment, especially as they have become dangerously numerous and reckless.

We believe, however that the tramp problem may be solved easily. If every town were to establish a tramp's house, under the charge of a properly qualified and well armed man or force of men, and were to inflict fines for all aiding of tramps except at this house, and were to insist that every tramp receiving food or lodging there should make ample payment by hard physical labor, and if the tramp's refusal to work—as well as any attempted theft or violence by him within the town limits—were punished promptly and thoroughly at the whipping post under humane but effective regulations, the tramps would disappear in a very few months. This remedy would cost considerable in some localities for the short time during which it would be necessary. But it pay in the end.

The Social Side of Religion.

There may be old fashioned people here and there who are mildly amazed at the enthusiasm with which Christian Endeavorers and others mass themselves in our large cities and at the *esprit du corps* which so largely exists—testified by badges, popular hymns and other things connected specifically with the objects of such orders. These old-fashioned souls have not abandoned the idea of the essential solitariness of religion—that it must be most largely an affair of self-examination and private prayer, and they perhaps suspect that enthusiasm of this kind is not lasting and does not lead to as deep and searching results as does the more quiet and recluse form of devotional exercise. The fact is, however, that the world is every day getting more social; for social contact is essential to progress and progress of a certain kind there must be in religion as in everything else. By this, of course, we do not mean the kind of progress which seeks new definitions, such as are in themselves too often a painful departure from the Bible's clear teachings. It is not to learn some new thing of this kind that these earnest bands come together, but to exchange experience, thought and purpose—to gain the increased spring and elasticity which the rubbing of elbows grants, and to imbibe not new opinions so much as new vigor and new encouragement for the future.

A stranger visiting a home in which visitors rarely enter is apt to be impressed with what we might call the crankiness of the family, and especially is this apt to be the case if there are no young children to disturb the cast iron conventionalities and the cast iron selfishness of such a life. The various household articles must occupy just such a position and woe to him or her who violates any thing. The family opinions are set as the family habits. Whatever is—that is within the scope of their life long regime—is right, and whatever is intended to be in the way of a change outside is apt to be wrong. Thus good people get strangely narrowed simply for want of outside contact and for want of being shown gently, yet pointedly, how far behind the age they are and how much of a shaking up they need.

This condition of extreme narrowness and sequestration, of course, does not apply to the bodies of whom we speak, many of the members of which are still very young, with all that youth means of zeal, adaptability to changing conditions, receptiveness of ideas, etc. They, too, have their constant association, each with the others, in their local fraternities and can discuss methods of Christian work just as truly and in a large sense as effectively as they could do in the heat and crowding and excitement of a great national convention. Still, it is human nature to settle down on the lees, as it were, if bottled up too long. This thing of shifting one's body hundreds of miles into new geographical and sectional conditions, seeing new faces and striking up against new varieties of opinion, thought, manner and style of work, is a grand help. It is powerfully expansive, giving the previously cramped up worker pinions, as it were, and lifting him to higher planes of hope and future endeavor. And "endeavor" is the word which is the keynote of such a gathering. It is not to learn what a great national body of Christian brothers and sisters think so much as to learn what they are going to try to do—what seems to be the