

Assuredly an affirmative answer cannot be given. It is in the world, in his conduct there, that the churchman or professing sectarian manifests the religion that is in him. It is also in the world and his conduct of material concerns that the worldling shows what spirit he is of; and inasmuch as it is "by their fruits ye shall know them," it is alike easy and possible to discern whether within either or both of the classes referred to, there does exist that "church" which forms true manhood or womanhood. It is not needful to ascertain what a man believes, but rather how he lives. Judged 'by that standard it is impossible to deny that there is a "church" in the (so-called) "world." There are not many in this age who will venture deliberately to assert that the fruit of holiness, righteousness, honest dealing, kindly help and charity one toward another is conspicuous only in professing sectarians.

It would be indeed but poor comfort for the worldling to lay claim to the exclusive possession of a true Church within him on the plea that he is quite as good in his life as those who profess to be a part of the true Church. It is enough for him to know in his heart that he is striving to do good and honest work in the world—to spell out the puzzle of existence by the light of experience. He can only judge the doctrinal theology poured into his ears, not by its acknowledged soundness or antiquity, but by the practical effect it would have on his own life, or on the life of others, if practically carried out. If he finds it wanting he must condemn it, but not necessarily its mere professors. With them he may unite in work in the world, into which probably that theology is not by them allowed to enter at all, though he may himself be too honest or too simple, to profess a doctrine which he could not have the heart to carry out into daily practice any more than they do.

That there are many such persons, the statistics already quoted amply testify. Some of them may, no doubt, be further classified as living examples of the truth of Foster's essay "on the aversion of men of taste to Evangelical religion," but by far the most of these non-professors do not assume their position from merely surface reasons—flimsy objections to clumsy or inapt forms of worship—but from deep-seated inability to appreciate the doctrines they hear taught.

Few will deny that the actual work of the world is done by men who are not religious in any sectarian sense—that the bone and sinew of the land, which tills its soil, handles the tools of industry, conducts its trade, manufactures or higher professions, are a class who if asked to express their religious belief, would do so in thoughts and words differing vastly from the accepted creeds of the various sects of which they are not members. Active and aggressive denial of the various forms of orthodoxy expressed by the not very dissimilar creeds of the different sects, is not so prevalent as some suppose; yet it is prevalent, and cannot readily be lulled into silence. What is more prevalent and more real is an utter indifference to orthodox religion—an impression that "it doesn't amount to much," accompanied by an entire inability to perceive any common-sense whatever in the principles it still endeavours to instil.

Yet is it possible, by any sketch by the imagination, or any conceivable exercise of that "faith" so much lauded by the various sects, to conceive that this vast body of non-professors who do succeed in performing a very large and increasing share of the really useful practical work of the world, have within them no animating principle of real life—no church of the Lord—to infill them with a love of usefulness? Our Lord leaves none of His children without some remains of His goodness and truth implanted deep in the nature He has given them. These constitute conscience. By that light such men walk. By love of others—relatives, friends, a clique or a class—He keeps alive within them the spirit of self sacrifice, the love of usefulness, controlled and guided into useful activity by the material laws which meet it in the several positions in which each man is placed. The result is "work" and "progress" for the whole human race. Were it not that fact and experience have a tendency to convince the student of sociology that such is the case, it might be hazardous to assert that there is more real work, more genuine progress, amid those thus influenced and led of the Lord by His Divine word, or such portions of it as they are able to perceive either in direct personal reading or as emanating through the various words and deeds of men with whom they come in contact, than among those who are guided by a set of received, orthodox (?), but at least partially erroneous theories, ostensibly set forth as true teaching. Nor need this state of the religious life in this as other nations cause any feeling of depression or despair. On the contrary, it is an added proof, were any need, if the Infinite care with which Infinite wisdom watches over and preserves the highest good of all His creatures. They are thus preserved from upholding and perpetuating error till they are led into natural good and are thus rendered, as a race, capable of receiving into their whole being the fuller revelation of truth which is slowly but surely entering into the world to displace an "orthodoxy" grown into the likeness of an aged man worn out and decrepit, preserving the form but devoid of energy or active life.

It is precisely when men generally have reached the state or condition of those 200,000 adult adherents which the statistics of the Presbyterian church classify as non-members, that they will readily perceive and formulate into life

new aspects of Divine truth, because the channels of their being have been opened by some degree of actual usefulness for the influx and efflux of a greater and purer goodness and truth into new and even extending forms of higher and even higher usefulness. Those who bring the greater influx of life from above into their daily work and experience have attained a state in which they see and know practically the errors contained in the truths of orthodoxy, and are the first to perceive the truths of which these are but perversions; while those who have felt themselves incapable of solving these mysteries and have applied themselves energetically to the uses they did undertake and could grasp, are like the Gentiles who "having not the law are a law unto themselves, which show the works of the law written in their hearts" and from thence transcribed upon their lives. These will hear the "word," when it is the "word" that is taught and not a creed-extract from it; for the Divine word bears even practically upon "doing the will" and thus "learning of the doctrine," and the first step towards the religious life is "to shun evils" which are seen to inflict injury on others that so the Lord may find entrance to the heart for His Divine love and wisdom, His restoring life and light, both to teach and to enable them "to do well."

From present appearances, from the wondrous care and thought bestowed by the various sects upon the mere external organization and outward forms and ceremonies—from the absence of thought or time bestowed upon the actual living truth which seeks outlet into life, and finds its correspondence and its confirmation there—from the furtherance of sectarian "schemes," and the invention of checks upon their efficient working, so that the power, control, number, and wealth of its members, may be brought to bear upon the maintenance and increase of the varied "systems" of church government—it would really seem as though the 200,000 representative non-members were more likely to convert the church than the "church" to convert the so-called "world."

Would that it were not so. Would that the outward and visible church sought Truth and pursued it. Would that I might realize that its light is darkness indeed if it be in any sense self-derived or self-supporting—if it elevate *self* in place of truth. It is in the practical problems of life in this world that the church must find its true field. There its own increasing Truth must seek new fields for exercise or—become error. It need not merely follow afar off the men who take the life God gives them and live it out in usefulness to their fellows, thus making of themselves channels of progress and blessing to mankind. The church might lead and occupy its true place by ever seeking new light of Truth from that Divine Word which is truth itself, which can never be fully formulated by man, but has been once, and once only, formulated and lived out in the Divine-Humanity of our Lord God and Saviour, who is Eternal and inexhaustible, because He was and is the very God whom we worship.

To make and uphold a settled creed is no part of the church's work. To unfold Truth into ever developing forms of usefulness, and so to attain unto ever higher Truth, is its special field of usefulness. Let not the creeds of a bygone age, however useful then, now impair and fetter a present usefulness. There is even new Light and Life in the present, as there was in the past, if the church will seek it. "They who seek shall find."

MODERN FEMALE COSTUME.

The hygeist has certainly an important cause to advocate in connection with the dress of women, and he will do well to treat the question from recorded results of observation and the principles, however rudimentary, of moral and physiological science. His views are both Christian and social, and these will subserve them.

The hope of some sanguine people of taste, when the present style of female dress came into vogue, was that the clever and attractive sex would begin to learn to develop the forms the Creator had bestowed upon them, rather than continue to realize a figment of diseased imaginations.

In an advertisement in the *Witness*, the question was lately asked: "Who lives the longest?" To which it may be replied: "Certainly not the women of tight corsets and bandages around the waist," remembering always that there remains the question of vigorous, as well as of long life, and that human happiness is chiefly wrapped up with the former.

If the thoughtful and educated girls who lead their sex had more opportunities for the careful study of Nature, partly by good drawings and photographs, as well as of the antique models of excellence in form, and would have the patience to supplement these by taking up earnestly Mrs. Haweis's admirable chapters in the *Art Journal* on "Dress," they would begin to see that that which has been followed amongst them for supposed beauty in the form has in truth no beauty related to it. External beauty is a subject worth studying, if only because it is an almost constant adjunct of healthy constitutions in the races developing it. Looking at it from an artist's point of view, it may be said to depend upon the presence of certain general proportions and normal curves in the outline, with a native flexibility and elegance of carriage—qualities the fruits of a vigorous health, as the root and tree of the physical life. But that which our modern Misses have been sedulously and most foolishly trying to establish in their unfortunate frames is an ugly angle at the