

severed from the demoralizing influence of the low concert halls.

But the especial work of these associations is of a distinctly religious character, to foster personal piety, and to lead the unconverted to Christ. For this purpose frequent religious services, prayer-meetings, and Bible-classes are held, and the young men engage in works of active Christian beneficence, tract distributing, jail and hospital visitation, and such like imitation of Him who went about doing good. In the larger cities of the American Union, and measurably in Toronto, so far as opportunity has permitted, the members of the association, not content with merely skirmishing on the enemy's outskirts, have carried war into Africa, and gone to the drinking and gambling saloons, where Satan's seat is, speaking, singing, and praying for Jesus, and seeking to pluck souls from the very mouth of hell, and frequently with signal success.

One question discussed at a recent convention was concerning the admission of young women as members of the Associations. This plan has been adopted by the Brooklyn Association, with the result of making it the largest in America, or we believe in the world. But the opponents of the movement allege that it is also with the result of impairing its religious efficiency. Such a result does not seem to us a necessary consequence; and there appear to be manifest advantages in the plan, which, in our judgment, it seems highly desirable to attain. The object of the Associations is not merely to make men Christians, but also, and frequently as a means thereto, to counteract the social temptations to which they are exposed, to exercise a restraining influence upon the thoughtless and frivolous; those

without fixed principles and liable to be led away, and to throw around them the arms of brotherly, may we say sisterly, kindness and sympathy. If the presence of Christian womanhood exercise a spell of power over the hearts of young men, weaning them from base and degrading companionship, attracting them to refined and elevating intellectual and social enjoyment, and cultivating in them a personal dignity and self-respect, who shall say that she is not fulfilling her God-given mission in society? And even if this association should inspire thoughts of greater tenderness and lead to more intimate relationships, we, for our part, fail to see that any very great harm is done. The unions resulting from such association, would, it appears to us, be not less likely to be happy than those resulting from a chance acquaintance at a pic-nic or croquet party. We believe that the Author of our being designed that the different sexes should exercise a beneficial influence upon each other which is often prevented by the artificial conditions of city life, condemning large numbers of young men and young women to live and labour almost exclusively in the companionship of their own sex. Anything, therefore, which preserves, or reintroduces that element of family life, or of normal social relationship which we believe the Creator designed, we would regard as a great moral advantage to the community. If it be found that results justify the experiment of throwing open these institutions for the association of both sexes, under proper guarantees and Christian auspices, we would hail it as contributing to the solution of one of not the least perplexing of the social problems of the times.

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