

WHAT CAN WE DO TO STAY THE EVIL ?

If it is an evil, something should be done to deal with it. No matter how deep seated, or ancient, or widespread sin is, we do not yield dominion to it, because we cannot wholly eradicate it. The world would be a sorry place, if evils were allowed to flourish unmolested simply because we may not yet know how best to overcome them, and may not thoroughly succeed in our effort. In face of the gambling problem we can take certain measures.

1. We can *re-state the moral fundamentals involved* :

(a) The *duty of labour*, as morally superior to idleness, or the pursuit of pleasure as an end in itself, or the pernicious principle of " something for nothing."

(b) The *duty of using talents* of time and money for the wellbeing of all.

2. We can *point out the folly of gambling*. Mr. W. A. Fraser, in an article on " Fool's Money " in the *Saturday Evening Post*, describes gambling as " the acme of human foolishness. There is no known rule or method, crooked or straight, that will prevail against the great percentage of chance, and so men lose and plunge, and lose again in the hopeless pursuit of easy wealth." Someone has bluntly put the case in this way : " Betting with bookmakers is the hall mark of an ignorant greenhorn." The chances are against the gambler, and his knowledge of the real conditions of the game or race is practically *nil*. In this world of alleged sport, the shrewd and experienced man of business will often throw aside all consideration of rational conditions and relevant evidence, and become an easy mark for the smooth-tongued tipster ; he will abandon his reasoning faculties and stake his money on horses he never saw, or if he did see them, whose merits he could not distinguish, and do it all in reliance on some superstitious " run of luck " or on the advice of one of the stable boys, or on " the sure thing " confided to him by a bookmaker's agent. This also is vanity. This also is folly. It is on the folly of those who bet that the bookmaker lives, and lives uncommonly well. A few men make and keep money won in this way ; but the many lose and lose again. To come out even is almost the best that can be hoped for. Perhaps the real esteem in which the sober-minded community holds the practice of gambling is evidenced when a man loses. Banks and friends are not forward to advance money to help him over his difficulty. He is usually pronounced a fool, and gets little practical sympathy. " To fancy," writes Dr. Marcus Dods, " that we shall be exceptions