

vestigation of causes. (3) The practical question is, *What shall be done about it?*

I. *We may let it continue as it is.* But this is hardly a worthy conclusion to reach, in view of the conceded fact that this service as at present conducted is a failure. (1) It gives the casual attendant an impression of general deadness in the church. (2) Nor is this always a wrong impression; for, as a rule (not without exception), the second service is a pretty fair index of the quantity of life and enterprise in the local work. (3) Not only so, the continuance of a service which is confessedly a failure is sure to depress other departments of work in the long run. A man may be obliged to carry about with him a paralyzed limb, but he would scarcely do so from preference. (4) "Whatever is worth doing is worth doing well."

II. *Give it up altogether.* This raises the question whether the second service has a *raison d'être*. If it is useless, by all means let us dispense with it, and the sooner the better. There is nothing more distressing than a lingering death. (1) No doubt there are local conditions under which this service should be given up. There are country fields where the attendants live so far from the house of worship that it would be preposterous to ask a second attendance. There may, moreover, be churches so constituted as that the congregation (consisting chiefly of parents and others whose Sabbath duties are peculiarly exacting) should be exhorted to content themselves with the services of the earlier part of the day. (2) As a rule, however, the second service is most valuable in just those localities where it seems most difficult to sustain it. It is so, for example, in the "down-town churches." Here it is, in many points, the most important service of the sacred day. At the morning service the families of the church expect to be present, and their pews are generally reserved for them. Strangers understand this, and, unfortunately, remain away. In the evening, however, the pews and sittings are practically free, and (to use the stock phrase) "a welcome is extended to the stranger within our gates." The evening service in the central churches of New York and other large cities is almost exclusively for strangers. What an opportunity! Surely its abandonment would be a confession of extreme weakness. In the great hotels on Manhattan Island there are tens of thousands of wayfarers, most of them probably of church-going antecedents, who ought to be inclined to some house of worship on the Lord's day. If our churches are not drawing them, the fault is probably on both sides, nor should we evade our share of it.

III. *Make it a success. But how?*

(1) Not by using adventitious helps. The hurdy-gurdy plan may attract a crowd for a while, but it presently wears itself out, and nothing is gained by it. A free concert or stereopticon exhibition on Sunday night, however well attended, is generally and justly interpreted as a confession of failure. In all quarters quackery is the last