

Society has its quagmire, its slums of vice and crime and ghastly, hopeless want and misery. It may be easier to build up around this bog than to redeem it and transform it; but there it lies, right in the way of every sane scheme of social development.

Society is an essential unit. The borders of Piccadilly and of White-chapel morally, if not literally, overlap each other, and Fifth Avenue is sought by every gust from Cherry Hill. The "upper ten" may seem to be a long way removed from the "submerged tenth," but the one is, in more senses than one, the key to the destruction of the other.

In spite of the Malthusian doctrine, the proposition is so plain that it is absolutely axiomatic that society can really advance only in such degree as it is possible for those in a lower social scale to come up higher. And the law of God runs the whole length of the social scale, from "uttermost" to "uttermost." It does not stop at "fit-test," but compasses "filthiest."

Advancement among those classes in society who are more favorably endowed has been found to be slow and difficult yet practicable, while among the lowest improvement has virtually been accounted hopeless, not impossible. It is to the problem of this lowest class, "the submerged tenth," that social philosophy must successfully apply itself, or meet and merit ignominious failure.

A most significant phenomenon, which is open to every one, is the continual crossing and recrossing of the borders of slumdom. Many who were born in the midst of wealth, culture, religious influence, and every helpful surrounding go down into this quagmire of vice and crime and misery, and disappear. Others—few, alas! as compared with the whole number of the socially wretched and lost—come up out of this region of death to fill positions of highest usefulness. The Jerry McAuleys, the Hadleys, the Buntings, and the great multitude which comprise the staff of the Salvation Army

throughout the world are unimpeachable witnesses to the fact that there is a power that can save a man to the uttermost, even from the lowest depths.

A closer study of this phenomenon of the border reveals the fact that, in every case without exception, those who sink into the depths are characterized by the lack of that one thing which those who cross from despair to hope and a new life invariably possess, namely, an adequate moral purpose. We may, therefore, be certain that, in the great work of redeeming the slums, the first and absolute essential is the introduction into their depths of misery of an adequate moral core.

Such a force is supplied by Christianity, and by nothing else in the world. Morality without God is impossible. But God as an abstraction is not God at all. He must be a reality in every-day life. Lost men and women must feel the presence, the sympathy, and the helping hand of a living Christ, who is always working the works of God.

The fear is not altogether groundless that the Church needs a revival of Christ. Retreat from the slums is in most painful contrast to the life of Him whose name we bear. Let us face the work of redeeming society's quagmire and turning it into a "garden of the Lord."

Nowhere do we need the spirit and the wisdom of Christ more than here. He was interested in the people, and He spoke to them in language which they could understand. He helped them to become acquainted with God through the works which He wrought among them. He never for a moment lost sight of the ultimate goal, "eternal life"; but He saw that a leprous or a famishing body is not the ideal temple for the Spirit of God.

Old rookeries, or damp cellars, or dingy attics, or crowded tenements, the natural paradise of vermin, where most of the wretched poor herd together, do not furnish very good soil or atmosphere for the cultivation of morality