

an eternity bereft of everything contributing to human happiness.

Brethren, my hearts desire and prayer to God is that the words which a celebrated writer used respecting another branch of the church of Christ might be used *truthfully* of the branch with which we of this meeting are identified.

"The Church aims not at making show, but at doing a work. She regards this world and all that is in it as a mere shade, as dust and ashes, compared with the value of one single soul. She holds that unless she can in her own way do good to souls, it is no use her doing anything; she holds that it were better for sun and moon to drop from heaven, for the earth to fail and for the many millions upon it to die of starvation in extremest agony, as far as temporal affliction goes, than that one soul, I will not say should be lost, but should commit one single venial sin, should tell one wilful untruth, though it harmed no one, or steal one poor farthing without excuse."

CHARITIES.

The city of London, England, apart from poor houses, supports from private endowments and voluntary contributions, about one thousand charitable institutions; nor does this include the special work of individual churches and congregations among their suffering and poor. The extent throughout the United Kingdom of these public charities may be roughly estimated by the fact that "charity commissioners," whose duty is simply the general oversight of the varied corporations, form a department of the government at an annual expenditure of £30,000 stg. Institutions whose government inspection costs \$150,000 annually can neither be few nor unimportant. It is estimated that the income of the London charities is \$20,000,000 annually. Many of these charities consist of almshouses, where a certain number of poor people are kept, frequently with a liberal allowance. In some cases officials are as well supported as the friends for whose special benefit these endowments are made. This is a danger not easily avoided in the case of trust funds, consisting chiefly of rents and investments, which require constant attention. Moreover, as all cannot be accommodated, it is not surprising that a limited charity should eventually be for the benefit of a select circle, such as a self-perpetuating corporation very soon becomes. It was because of these abuses that government eventually

brought the numerous charities under the oversight, if not control, of its board of charity commissioners, whose necessary expenses are part of the regular government expenditure.

New York has utilized several islands in its harbour for charitable purposes. Blackwell's island, which contains about one hundred and twenty acres, besides its penitentiary, has its almshouses and hospitals with over two thousand and needy, and its colonies of three thousand prisoners. Randall's island again, is specially set apart for children and for youth. Say five hundred children and a thousand youth reared and trained at public expense. We visited them some years ago, and under the Commissioners of Public Charities and Correction there was then in round numbers, ten thousand human souls, of which three thousand and five hundred were criminals. It is seldom we see so much of the "waste of civilization" congregated together as in these institutions; the charities of London, as of our own city, are scattered throughout the city limits, or around the suburbs; here in adjoining islets is a colony, or rather colonies, of pauperism, misfortune and crime, numbering ten thousand souls. The foundlings and the waifs of city life, the indigents, the ignorant, the suffering and the brutal. From what I then saw I felt that all that public spirit could accomplish was being accomplished there. Yet we saw the sunny side indeed; hospital wards, prison cells, almshouses, infants' cots, bright, airy, scrupulously clean; gravel walks, gardens trimly kept, and all that could be, busy at some kindly employ. The boys on Randall's Island we saw drawn up in military array, the girls in line, about two hundred altogether, for as soon as fit they are drafted off to employment, to begin on their own account the free life of American citizens.

There were bright cherub faces, arch looks, and here and there a vicious cast of countenance. The foundling hospital with its long rows of cots and pale-faced babes was outwardly pleasant to see, also the training ship, where little hands and nimble feet flew over the rigging and furled the sails. These institutions are nobly conceived, nobly executed, ever friendly in their workings, go as far as public charity can go as society is at present constituted, but oh, they are not home! and we could but think a lowly cottage, even a single room with a mother's caress, a father's voice, would be a gain over even these abodes of comfort