

tion in this day of a myriad philanthropies and ethical schemes, this day of sociological study, what instrument of social power there is to compare with the Church, and whether in the hunt for means to promote social unity the Church has not been unduly overlooked. The true Church possesses the spirit and power of a social settlement, with a thousandfold greater opportunity, for men may easily come to think of the Church as a delightful community home, where they love to go to meet one another and to promote mutual acquaintance and fellowship and friendliness.

With these principles in mind, the worth of such a church as a factor in evangelization may be easily drawn. Finding a multitude of children about its doors, it is not satisfied with having them for an hour in Sunday-school. It gathers some of them into a daily kindergarten, inspiring them with such thoughts as tend to emancipate them from unfavorable environment. It brings hundreds of girls into its sewing-school and its kitchen-garden, fitting them to care for the home and family. It has for the boys an attractive room, with games, a gymnasium, a boys' brigade, to draw them from the street corners; for young men and young women a fine reading-room, a library, educational classes, frequent socials full of real hospitality, to which they may come with no payment at the door. It has musicales and readings and lectures and concerts, at merely nominal prices. It keeps open always an office, where the perplexities of life may be brought to one wise in counsel and ever ready to serve those who come. What is there in the picture which is not the natural expression of Christian ministration? It does not make the Church a machine or a mere ethical club. But it ethicizes religious teaching, it makes the Gospel speak in the daily life as well as on Sunday, it wins men to listen to the preaching of God's Word, and at the same time it gives in all its week-day

labors that which is well worth having, and which needs no apology.

Churches which have adopted these principles have already found their hopes justified. Some, situated in a down-town environment, have found the new spirit and methods imparting vigor and enthusiasm where there had been weakness and discouragement. The resident membership of one such church has increased in nine years from 337 to 777; another in ten years has increased from 260 to 634; another in eight years from 305 to 897. Another church, in a residence district gaining only slowly in population, has in a little less than five years received 535 new members, and made a net gain of 418, as compared with 140 received in the previous five years, a number scarcely more than sufficient to make good the losses of the period.

At the best, however, figures are utterly inadequate to express the increased influence in the community. To the church the whole population seem to look with great tenderness and joy. The people throng its temple to overflowing. The work calls out the interest of those formerly indifferent, and makes the Gospel more attractive in its practical application to daily needs. It arouses an intense *esprit de corps*, a loving loyalty, an enthusiastic service, an unspeakably tender fellowship.

If the thoughtful student of city life will read between the lines, will look at such work in the large, he will surely rejoice in it as a prophecy of mighty usefulness as a factor in city evangelization, and he can only hope and pray that many churches will adopt these principles and find through them an open door to a larger life and ministry.

[Our readers who are interested in this most important subject will take pleasure in reading Dr. Stuckenberg's note on "The Open and Institutional Church League," on p. 276 of this number of THE HOMILETIC REVIEW. The questions of which *The Open Church* is the organ are becoming questions in the church at large.—EDITORS.]