

night a respectable workman, with a German accent, said that, by attending the services there, he had been led to an entire change of life, so that, whereas a year or two ago he had been a terror to his wife and family, he had now a thoroughly happy Christian home. The man had come in one evening when prayers were asked for his unhappy wife, who had borne her lot patiently and uncomplainingly, and was now almost despairing. The wife's patience, the testimony of the meeting, the prayers of the people, bore their fruit. The man was utterly changed.

Another time the reading had been on death as the wages of sin. A man stood up and said that he had been delivered by the work of the Mission, and he had tried to bring a fellow-workman to the services. One day he had told him he was going. "What was the use of that kind of stuff?" was the reply. The man was drinking. That night, in a fit of drunkenness, he had gone and hanged himself; and he, the speaker, had brought to the meeting that night the brother of this drunken suicide, and asked those present to pray for him. The effect produced by this testimony was deepened still further, when a woman got up and told how her own brother had gone down to a drunkard's grave. "I sometimes wish I were a Catholic," she said, "that I might pray for him; but we can pray for this man here to-night."

The spirit of the workers was excellent. There was no elation, no boasting, no sanguine forecasting of results. Sometimes, they said, they were tempted to despond; and then they would hear of people getting good, whom they never remembered to have seen, who had not come back to tell them of it.

If any one should doubt the need of some special agency to reach the people in that district, he should take a walk round the streets on a Sunday afternoon. The houses are large and good. They bear nothing of the appearance of Seven Dials, as it was some years ago. They are comparatively new, well built, and apparently "respectable." But the inhabitants! The passers-by need not remain in doubt. The young men of that quarter are of a cheerful and familiar affability. They address strangers without the slightest pride or bashfulness. They are, many of them, as near barbarians as could well be in a great and civilized city like New York.

Even if one could point out mistakes or disadvantages in connection with such a work, he might well have his mouth shut by the remembrance of the sore need. If you know a better way than this, try it. If not, at least, bid God-speed to those who are doing their best, according to their lights.

But the writer saw nothing to find fault with, much to be thankful for, much to admire. Doubtless the work will need vigilant supervision; but without this no work can be successful.

One possible evil should be mentioned as having a tendency to connect itself with such a work—especially where the clergyman is single-handed. It might be supposed by an

enthusiastic and ill-taught evangelist, that the type of work which is adapted for such purposes might equally be employed in the public services of the Church. There is no great danger of this error in a place where there are so many clergymen and laymen at work. Each one has his own gift, and his own work. But there might be such a danger where a clergyman was alone, or had only laymen to assist him. The more useful he found these Christy Minstrel-like melodies, the more he accustomed himself to use them, the more he might come to suppose that they should supplant the historical hymnody of the Church. It would be a miserable degradation of Christian music "Safe in the Arms of Jesus" is a pretty thing enough, and useful in its way. But compare it with "How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds," or "Jesus, Lover of My Soul;" or compare the music of the one with the other.

So there may be a like danger in regard to Christian teaching. A mere hortatory, experimental, and practical kind of preaching, consisting largely in appeals based upon personal experience, has its uses. If it were to supplant the solid didactic method in the ordinary congregation, it would be most mischievous. The ordinary worshippers in church do not need it. It is not adapted for them. Except as a special thing, it would do them no good. But this is the only danger that seems likely to be connected with these methods of work, and it ought not to be difficult to guard against it. With educated and cultivated clergymen it will be possible to do the one work without neglecting the other.—C in *The Week*.

#### THOROUGHNESS.

I WOULD now ask you to listen to a few words I have to say on another subject, yet one connected with what has gone before. I have lately suggested that there are cases in which it may be better for those who are not prepared to walk humbly in the ancient ways of the Catholic Church, to refrain from joining themselves to our communion. Why so? Partly for the sake of the very persons to whom I allude, and partly for the sake of the Church at large.

That any individual, without a real change of conviction, should assume the name of Episcopalian, of Churchman, or of Catholic, is surely no cause for congratulation. What blessing can be looked for from submission to the Rite of Confirmation as a mere form of entrance into a new Religious Organisation? What benefit can follow from a heartless reception of the Blessed Sacrament, still regarded as mere Bread and Wine—the figures of an absent Saviour? What gain is there in professing a belief in Episcopacy as the best and most primitive form of Church order, if the sacramental realities, for the due administration of which, Apostolic authority is necessary, are ignored, or possibly even denied.

Mere Episcopacy! What is it worth? If it be only a better form of Church government, I would as soon contend for a better style of church architecture. I care little or nothing for the Apostolic succession, unless it means

a real bond of connexion with the chosen Twelve, and with the Lord Jesus himself.

If I could know that the Blessed Sacrament of His Body and Blood is to be had through the exercise of any other ministry than that which depends on the transmission of Apostolic authority, I would say, let us now and for ever have done with our attempts at opposition to the form of religion at present established by the law of this land. It is only for the sake of Jesus Christ in His Blessed Sacrament, that it is really worth keeping up our present divisions. If there be no essential difference between us and those near and dear to us, who regard "Episcopacy" as a thing indifferent, as a mere form of Church government; let us make an end of those cruel separations, which divide us one from another.

Surely there has been, and still is, enough half-hearted Churchmanship. Surely we need not compass sea and land, we need not lower teaching and relax discipline, in order to have an increased number of mere proselytes to a form of Church government, in order to gain converts, whose attachment is a matter of outward form, not of real conviction, or who at any rate seek to unite themselves with us through fancy or inclination, rather than from a solemn sense of duty. Such converts can hardly gain much advantage to their own souls by their change of religious profession, and I fear they must often be a source of weakness to the Church at large. Let us then aim, rather at greater devotion and thoroughness of belief, than at a mere increase of numbers.

There is a danger in depending too much upon numerical statistics. I always rejoice to hear that large numbers of infants have been brought to Christ in Baptism, that Church schools are well attended, and that multitudes come to hear the Word of God preached. But I am not always so happy about the Confirmation of large numbers of new adherents. A few candidates whose attachment to the Church has been proved, and who have had thorough preparation, are more to be desired than great numbers, easily gained, hastily admitted, and destined most probably to fall away from the communion of the Church, as lightly as they have been allowed to enter it.

I think there are few who would deny, that in past times, the Church has suffered grievously through the ordination of so many untried men to the sacred ministry. History and experience combine to show what havoc has been made of the flock by pastors who have received holy orders, and yet who have never known the love of Christ in their hearts, or a real devotion to His service. But is there not a somewhat similar danger with regard to the laity? May not grave spiritual evils arise from a too easy admission of untried "converts" (if such they may be called) to the sacred ordinances of Confirmation and Communion?

If we are to grow and increase as a Church, if we are to make real progress, the work must begin within—within our own hearts, subjected to the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit; and within our own communion, cleansed and guided by the same Divine Illum-