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## CHRISTIAN CO-OPERATION AND THE SOCIAL MISSION OF THE CHURCH.

BY THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF.

(The substance of an address before \* Evangelical Alliance Conference, Chicago, October, 10th, 1893, in connection with the Columbian Exposition.)

The Church differs from the individual in being a society, an aggregation or association of individuals, organized upon social principles, governed by social laws, subject to social obligations. To demonstrate that the Church has a "social mission" would therefore be proving an axiom. Its social mission constitutes its *raison d'être*, its *quo warrant* writ, the justification for its existence.

Sin's revolt against God was also a revolt of man against man—a social revolution inverting the whole social order, so that the natural sovereigns became slaves, and slaves, masters. God organized the primitive Church as an essentially heavenly society, *civitas dei*, a model State, let down from above to exhibit and exemplify the principles and practices of a celestial kingdom, and to extend their sway until all worldly society shall be re-organized on the heavenly pattern. The tabernacle of God is set up among men as a type, until, built upon this model, the race of man itself becomes the temple of God.

So vital to the Church is this social mission that, so far as it is denied in theory or neglected in practice, the Church forfeits its right to be, and, like a lampstand without a light, risks removal out of its place. In a service so essential even lukewarmness is threatened with a Laodicean fate.

It is, therefore, of the first consequence to form a true conception of the Church and its mission. For this no other guide is needed than the New Testament, where the Church is presented in a fourfold aspect—as a worshipping assembly, a working centre, a school, and a home.

1. Worship is worth-ship—describing God's infinite worth, ascribing to Him the glory due to such worth, inscribing homage on the walls of His temple, the door-posts of our houses, the very palms of our hands, and