

for earnestness of purpose, an earnestness of which the average man is physically incapable ; for a degree of self-devotion which most men's minds are unable to admire, much less acquire ; for love of which most men cannot conceive, let alone feel. And we are told that he said, "Every one that heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them not, shall be likened to a foolish man who built his house upon the sand . . . and it fell, and great was the fall of it."

Truly, indeed, great is the fall ! When we examine the boasted civilisation of Christendom with the searchlight of the precepts of Jesus Christ, we see only broken walls upon the sands of compromise. If our faith in social evolution is strengthened by the testimony of all history that to-day's civilisation is on the whole better than anything the world has yet seen, we must still admit that it is not Christian, that it is perhaps finding its most startling development in a nation not even nominally Christian. We cannot for one moment suppose that our institutions, or the average life of the nominal Christian, are so planned that our house can be said to be built upon the rock of obedience to the sayings of Christ.

There are three objections urged against the practice of Christ's precepts,—that they are meant only to inculcate an inward temper of heart ; that they are meant only for a certain class ; and that they are for private, not public, exercise. Let us consider these.

Our Lord's ethical teaching presupposes civil, domestic, and commercial life. We have the city, the court, the officer, the judge, the house, the