

women which brought this heterogeneous company to a social level and united them in a common work. It was a common religious experience and a common religious purpose. These are capable of creating a brotherhood, where race antipathies and class prejudices are dissolved in the alembic of Christian love.

Differences of language and of blood count for much when there is also a difference of religion; and community of language and of blood count for much where there is identity of faith. But a strange speech and an alien blood do not prevent the rapid assimilation of our Protestant immigrants, especially if their Christianity is vital and not merely nominal.

The public school is absolutely indispensable in the work of making good American citizens out of the children of foreigners, and must therefore be preserved in its integrity; but of course the public school does not reach adult immigrants, except as it indirectly influences some through their children. The principal element, therefore, in the problem of assimilation is the religious factor; so that to win to an experimental knowledge of Christ an immigrant who has no vital conviction of Him is to render as great a service to the state as to the church.

There are those who seem to think it is an impertinence to preach the Gospel to Jews and Roman Catholics. But many of the latter who come to us are as ignorant of Christ and of His salvation as were the multitude in the days of Luther; and tho the Jews are generally good citizens, as men they need Christ in the nineteenth century quite as much as they needed Him in the first, and as foreigners they need to be Americanized; but they can never be perfectly assimilated so long as they refuse to intermarry with us and remain a "peculiar people."

How then shall our immigrant population be brought to a knowledge of vital Christianity? Obviously, the first condition of our bringing them to such knowledge is that our Christianity be vital. Only a live Christianity can be life-giving; and such a Christianity is outgoing, aggressive. It is the exact opposite of the Judaic spirit of separation which culminated in Pharisaism. To Mosaic goodness, which was negative, contact meant contamination; but to Christian goodness, which is positive, contact means opportunity. Contact with the immigrant is our opportunity for usefulness and his opportunity for assimilation, for there can be no assimilation without contact. The immigrant is separated from us by his antecedents, his training, his habits, his ideas of life, and often by his language. There is a chasm between him and us which he can close or bridge only very, very slowly. He is not in a position to take the initiative; we are. We can make friendly advances as he can not.

He comes into personal contact with the boss, the bargainer, and perhaps with the sharper. He comes into touch with men who are trying to get as much as possible out of him. Such contact is not very