

'respectable'—to mount a little pedestal, from which to survey the vulgar throng, is a spectacle to make angels weep—perhaps even to smile behind their tears! Then there is a good deal of separation along the lines of doctrinal exclusiveness. The Jews thought they monopolised Jehovah's care and no one else had any right to it. Even in these enlightened days you occasionally find members of one church who will hardly admit that the members of another church are Christians at all. Some successors of the apostles are bursting with intolerance. However, charity is growing among us. The best men will not endanger their reputation for intelligence by unchurching everybody who does not think as they do. Creed is an excellent thing in its place, but it cannot be used as a final test of the Christian.

"This is the best possible world for the development of character, for the strengthening of the fibres of manhood. We cannot suspend ourselves in mid-air or become Robinson Crusoes; but because men have sometimes misinterpreted the injunction contained in the text is no reason why it should be regarded as utterly meaningless. There may be a dividing line, just as we are separated in many ways from our fellows by differences in temperament, pursuits, by widely diverse aims and ideals—we cannot be equally en rapport with all. Modern life tends more toward specialisms and consequent separation of individuals, but none put it down to moroseness, for it is unavoidable. Israel was set apart to be the moral educator of the world. The true separation is not to be found in mere changes of dress, it is not a badge for the buttonhole, but a power to rule the inmost heart. It will manifest itself in the inmost springs of action and enthroned in our breast the grand ideal of the coming of the Kingdom. The greater the elevation, the greater the leverage. So by maintaining its position Christianity endeavors to raise man to its level. One of the perils of the time is the belief that the struggle between the flesh and the spirit is less keen than in the olden days. 'Conversion' is out of fashion and a sort of spiritual evolution is believed by some to have taken its place, but we will never reach the millenium without the reform of human souls. We are all more or less under the tyranny of custom and conventionality, and we cannot tell just what we would be like if we were left to ourselves. With some the tribunal of public opinion has more force than the tribunal of God. Surface refinement makes it harder for the grace of God to enter into men's hearts than if they were untutored savages. The world cannot be saved by æstheticism or conventional goodness—we must beware lest our Christianity become a mummified thing. It is still the Christian's duty to come out from the world—from its fraud and deceit and lust—and to show the power of the divine spirit in our daily conduct, raising humanity out of the bondage of evil into the glorious freedom of the children of God. Surely there is nothing morbid or irrational in a separation of this sort. Paul would be the last man to counsel an owl-like stolidity of attitude towards the world. Separation of that sort might do for a mummy—never for a man."

During the offertory Mrs. Macklean sang "I Love to Tell the Story," and the choir sang the anthem, "Let People Praise Thee."