

condition he seeks in vain for any other. And whatever other instrument a man has, it must be fitted into that possession of self as a handle and if that handle fails through weakness, all hope is gone. The man who tries to correct a sin in others to which he is not averse himself injures his cause by bad example, vitiates the whole power of his action, and perhaps hinders, by the scandal which he causes and the suspicion which he excites, the good work of others who come after him, who are still stronger than he is himself. And even where the beam in one's own eye is unseen by others, its very existence injures or destroys the chance of success in dealing with the mote in another's eye. The man does not see clearly, there is where Christ places the difficulty. He knows not what course of reform to recommend for he himself has followed none; his consciousness of evil within himself distracts him and makes him timid; his sense of proportion is impaired, he strikes at the wrong place, recommends the wrong remedies, aims at the wrong result. Who knows how many are the sad blunders of reformers, and the failures of workers for their fellow men, because they have not cared first for the great instrument of self and made it bright and strong and keen. The world recognizes the value of that instrument. Before it many an evil often retires, defeated, without striking a blow, and many a contest is prolonged because the evil combatant hopes or suspects that sooner or later some personal weakness will be found in its opponent. He who is going to do any good in the world must be good himself; character is a universal coin good in every circumstance and land; it is a language which all men can understand. It is a sentiment to which every heart can respond. There are societies for every imaginable object to day: Reform, Temperance, Purity, Prevention of Cruelty of all kind, Charity, Education. We have every reason to be proud and glad of the way in which our modern power of combination leaps to each emergency. But we do need to remember that after all the value of the sum depends upon the greatness of the units. Men whose lives are impure, uncharitable, narrow, selfish and ignorant cannot form effective societies, and our reform movements to day depend upon what we are. More than ever this power of combination renders a motive for self cultivation accessible to every man. Now by that power of combination whatever a man has in himself can be brought to bear upon the world. But if he has nothing in himself he can contribute nothing to a movement. Are there not moral companies