

me to say a word against physical recreation; any exercise that contributes to a healthy, vigorous manhood, physically, mentally, morally, is above censure. But this is not the mission of the church. The New Testament makes no provision for trainers in football, baseball, cricket. It has higher aims.

In 1890, the Rev. Thos. Green, Chairman for that year of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, in his address at Swansea on "The Secular in Church Life," said—

"Unless some of us are greatly mistaken, and are quite unable to discern the signs of the times, there is looming upon us a grave danger, that nothing but a quickening of our spiritual faith can avert. The danger of *hiding Jesus Christ*, a danger arising from the excessive degree in which the secular element is insisted on as a part of our church life. We hear much of the changing conditions of society, of the special needs of the present day; of the imperative duty laid upon the Christian church to adapt herself to the altering tastes of mankind." Again, "The insistence upon the introduction of the secular element into our church life, with the contention that the church organization is incomplete without it, has this effect: That actually, though perhaps not logically, it renates place, and often to entire extinction. We are asked to admit that the Christian church has been too dogmatic, too doctrinal, too theologic. It is an admission readily made, but the further assertion that it is in consequence of theological dogma that the church does not retain her hold upon the people, is one that cannot so easily be sustained. All history is against it. The undogmatic churches have gained the scantiest harvest; while the dogmatic churches have hitherto taken the multitudes. If it be true that men cannot now endure the religion of Christ in association with dogma, we have a new phenomenon; and one that the church of Christ should carefully study, but in the meantime, its truth is very far from proved. The Christian ideal of the church will be already, to the minds of the young. The church is coming to be regarded as a friendly club, fulfilling its functions with considerable success, if it occupies plenty of evenings with entertainments; and makes everybody comfortable. The conception that its members form a spiritual body, of which the life is Christ vanishes away. A moderate amount of culture is the point to be attained. The life that is hid with Christ in God becomes a shadow phantom. Repentance and faith and spiritual hope and joy, are foreign sentiments, and the ideas they represent belong to a condition bordering on enthusiasm. They are out of date. They may be alluded to in the pulpit, but they strike of the church. If literature, music, athletics, entertainments are to form part of our recognized church life, so that the apparatus of no Christian society is to be considered adequate without them, other changes must follow. For example, the examination of candidates for the ministry will need considerable modification. The usual questions will perhaps for a few years survive, but we shall soon have the Chairman of our College Committee saying, "Now, my dear young brother, you will tell the Committee whether you have passed the examinations of the St. John's Ambulance Association, and will you let us know what has been your average score at lawn tennis?" And our college professors will be appointed on the

strength of qualifications not hitherto deemed necessary. In addition to requiring clearness on the points of faith, and discovering their ability to teach, we shall have to examine their muscular development, and to see how they handle the cricket bat. Is there then not some danger of the Lord Jesus Christ being dethroned, even amid the abundance of well intentioned benevolence, and the show of a 'Christian Nomenclature'?"

I have read these lengthy extracts because they express, better than I can, my own convictions. These are outside the church's mission.

It is not the church's mission to solve the social problems of the day. These social questions are very important; politics, taxation, capital and labor, poverty and crime, the liquor traffic, all are important, and we should seriously consider them, and do what we can (as citizens), to bring about a better state of things. But my growing conviction is that the Gospel of the grace of God is the only true remedy for social ills. *Sin is at the bottom of all.* Get the rich and poor, the capitalist and employee; get the masses saved from this sin-cursed world. At the International Council, held last summer, valuable papers on these questions were read. The statements made, would in the main be endorsed by all here. But that it is the church's work as an organization to remedy these evils, I very much doubt, and I am not alone in this.

And now having looked at the subject negatively, let us try to answer the question, "What is the church's mission?" For a correct reply we must go to the church's head. What does Christ say? Listen. In His intercessory prayer, as recorded in John xvii: 18, He says, "As Thou hast sent Me into the world, so have I also sent them into the world." After His resurrection these words given to the assembled disciples, John xx: 21, "As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you." For the same reason, to engage in the same work, in the same manner, as the Father had sent Him. And what was Christ's mission? John iii: 17, "For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." In Matt. xviii: 11, "For the Son of Man is come to save that which was lost." In Luke xix: 10, "For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." "As the Father hath sent Me, even so send I you." Save the children, for Matt. xviii. refers to