

arm, as if to detain her. A brief struggle ensued, the woman trying to free herself, and the man half coaxing, half scolding. The spectators could now see that he was drunk; but before they could decide whether it was a case for their interference or not, the woman suddenly set both hands against the man's breast and gave him a quick push. He lost his footing and tumbled into a heap in the gutter. The woman faltered an instant, as if

to see whether he was seriously hurt, and then turned and ran.

When Corey and the book-keeper reëntered the office, Miss Dewey had finished her lunch, and was putting a sheet of paper into her type-writer. She looked up at them with her eyes of turquoise blue, under her low white forehead, with the hair neatly rippled over it, and then began to beat the keys of her machine.

(To be continued.)

CHRISTIANITY AND POPULAR AMUSEMENTS.

THE historical relation of Christianity to popular amusements is one of antagonism. The philosophy of the church respecting the whole subject may be summed up in the cynical counsel of Douglas Jerrold to persons about to marry, "Don't!" There have been contrary voices, and not a little practical dissent has found expression; but the tenor of the ecclesiastical utterances respecting amusements has been prohibitory, not to say objuratory. In some of the sects a less stringent doctrine has been taught; but it is not very long since the average Protestant church-member took no diversion without some compunctions or questionings of conscience. John Bunyan's experience was by no means exceptional; and the keen remorse which he experienced at the time of his conversion for the awful wickedness of his youth—which awful wickedness consisted in ringing the bells in the church-tower, in dancing with the girls on the village green, and in playing the nefarious game of tip-cat—shows in what light all worldly amusements have been held by great numbers of Christians in the reformed churches. "In the middle of a game of tip-cat," says Macaulay, "he paused and stood staring wildly upward, with his stick in his hand. He had heard a voice asking him whether he would leave his sins and go to heaven, or keep his sins and go to hell; and he had seen an awful countenance frowning on him from the sky." When we reflect that this game of tip-cat was regarded by Bunyan as one of his darling sins, continuance in which would land him in perdition, and remember that it is none other than that innocuous diversion still played by small boys in the streets of our cities under the various titles of "cat" or "kitty" or "shinny," we discover how conventional the treatment of this subject has been, and what grievous burdens of ascetic self-denial have been bound upon men's consciences.

Doubtless this inveterate hostility to amuse-

ments of all sorts is partly traditional, a survival of that wholesome horror and righteous enmity with which the first Christians resisted the amusements in vogue throughout the Roman Empire. The frightful debaucheries and cruelties which constituted the sports of the Romans merited the holy indignation with which the disciples of the early days denounced them. The conflict of Christianity with heathenism began in this very arena. One of the broad lines of distinction which the Christians drew between themselves and their pagan neighbors was their refusal to attend the Roman games. When we know that the best actor was the one who could behave the most obscenely; that the chariot races at the circus, where there were seats for three hundred and eighty-five thousand spectators, were deemed most successful when horses and men were killed in the contest; that the spectacles at the amphitheater derived all their relish from the butchery of gladiators by scores and hundreds in their battles with wild beasts and with one another; that the public executions also offered a delectable entertainment for the populace, the condemned sometimes appearing "in garments interwoven with threads of gold, and with crowns on their heads, when suddenly flames burst from their clothing and consumed them," all for the amusement of the people,—we are not disposed to find fault with the protest of the early Christians against the popular diversions. "Bread and games!" was the cry of the Roman populace. "Work and prayer!" was the watch-word of the Christians. Against the indolence and savage frivolity of the people about them, they lifted up their standard of industry and soberness. It was a great conflict on which they thus entered; and there was small opportunity for compromise or discrimination. The sentiments and maxims which had their origin in this early warfare have been perpetuated in

the Church, and the judgments of the early Christians upon popular amusements have been repeated in modern times against sports altogether different from those of Rome in the first century.

At the time of the Reformation in England, the hostility of the Puritans to popular amusements was even more bitter than that of the early Christians to the Roman games, though the reasons for this hostility were much less cogent. Doubtless there was good cause to protest against the roystering sports of that period. The desecration of the Lord's Day by noisy and wanton pastimes was common everywhere, and this called forth their loudest protest. But when they entered upon their crusade against the diversions of the people, they became so extravagant in their judgments, including in their denunciations so many harmless things and failing so utterly to preserve any moral perspective in their teachings, that they never could have carried with them the consciences of intelligent persons. Those who were trained in their own households and who were subjected to the strenuous pressure of their public opinion could be brought to adopt their theories. By an educational process as careful and insistent as that, for example, to which John Stuart Mill was subjected, a child can be made to believe or to disbelieve almost anything. Bunyan was not a fool, yet he honestly thought that he was in danger of being sent to hell for playing tip-cat. By such rigid training the Puritans did create in the minds that were brought under their influence the strong belief that every species of amusement was sinful; and this theory they enforced with all the fervor of religious enthusiasm, and, when they were able, by all the power of the State. But it was only from those who had been subjected from childhood to the pressure of this intense philosophy that any steady conformity to its rules could be expected. Nature and reason were against it. The utter disproportion of its judgments must soon become evident. The moralist to whom the dancing of the boys and girls around the May-pole on the village green is a "horrible vice"; who cries out, with old Stubbes, "Give over your occupations, you pipers, you fiddlers, you musicians, you tabretters, and you fluters, and all other of that wicked brood," holding that "sweet music at the first delighteth the ears, but afterward corrupteth and depraveth the mind"; who damns the simplest and most wholesome sports quite as roundly as the worst debaucheries, — will soon find himself speaking to a limited audience. If it be true, as Knight tells us, that "drinking, dicing, bear-baiting, cock-fighting — the coarsest

temptations to profligacy — were not such abominations in the eyes of the Puritans as "stage plays, interludes, and comedies," then the Puritans ought to have lost their influence with the English people.

Macaulay's remark that the Puritans opposed bear-baiting less because it gave pain to the bear than because it gave pleasure to the spectators, has often been quoted as an example of his vicious fondness for antithesis; but it is by no means clear that the cynicism lacks justice. Many a Puritan did think merriment a worse sin than cruelty to animals. The story of the Highlander who reported that he saw, on the Sabbath, men and women walking along the streets of Edinburgh, and "smiling as if they were perfectly happy," adding, "It was an awfu' sight!" illustrates the view of life which was taken by the more strenuous Puritans. Knight says that the Judicious Hooker's statement about the Anabaptists was indirectly pointed at them: "Every word otherwise than severely and sadly uttered seemed to pierce like a sword through them. If any man were pleasant, their manner was fervently with sighs to repeat those words of our Saviour Christ, 'Woe be to you which now laugh, for ye shall lament.'"

That this overstrained asceticism of the Puritans was excusable, in view of the excesses against which they testified, may be freely admitted; albeit the reveling Cavaliers might doubtless claim some similar mitigation of their condemnation, in view of the rigors of the Roundheads. Each party was driven into worse extremes by the extravagances of the other. The philosophy of life which underlay the Puritan regimen has given way slowly. Down to the present generation it has been the received doctrine in most of the reformed churches, that all "worldly pleasures" ought to be eschewed. If personal testimony may be offered, the writer remembers very well that, when a boy of twelve, he mentally debated the question of conversion, under the impression that the change involved the sacrifice of base-ball, and base-ball was then an innocent game. This impression was gained in the religious services upon which he was a constant attendant. It is true that at that time, and long before, members of churches did engage to some extent in sport and merriment, but generally under some protest of conscience, and with the feeling that the indulgence was a charge against their piety. The ideal Christian of the reformed churches was a man who had no use for any kind of diversion, and whose neighbors would have been shocked if they had seen him unbending in a merry game. The only enjoyment deemed strictly legitimate for the eminent saint was re-

ligious rapture—the “awful mirth” described by Dr. Watts in his psalms. It was the implicit, if not the avowed, doctrine of the Church, that all kinds of diversions were substitutes for this holy ecstasy, and as such sinful. It was said, indeed, in sermons and in songs, that

“Religion never was designed
To make our pleasures less”;

but by this was meant that the pleasure to be found in prayer and meditation, and in the anticipation of heaven, was superior to the “worldly” pleasures abandoned; not that the common diversions of life could themselves be continued and sanctified. The time is within the memory of many of those who will read this essay, when ministers first began to say frequently and freely that a long face and an ascetic habit were not signs of saintliness. Those who were so bold as to make these assertions in the pulpit were regarded at first as somewhat erratic; it was not easy for the average Christian to comprehend that a genuine piety could consist with cheery manners and a hearty joy in the good things of this life.

Out of this traditional estimate of the nature of religion, and its relation to what is known as the secular life, came the maxims which the Church for many years applied to amusement. It is needless to say that these maxims are obsolete. In this case, at any rate, prohibition has not prohibited. The parson, with the pitchfork of excommunication, has not prevailed over nature. The rigorous rule of the Puritan, long enforced by the most tremendous motives, is utterly broken, and will not in our day be restored.

Failing to prohibit, the Church has now for some time undertaken to regulate amusements by drawing the line between the clean and the unclean. Certain diversions have been allowed, and certain others forbidden. Much casuistry of a dubious sort has been expended on this discussion; the questions whether dancing is sinful, and whether billiards are worse than croquet, and whether cards are always an abomination, and whether church-members ought to be disciplined for attending the theater or the opera, have been widely and hotly debated; most of us have had a hand in the threshing of this chaff. Whether these controversies have aided greatly in the formation of a sound public opinion on this subject may well be doubted; the grounds on which the permission of some amusements and the prohibition of others have been rested are often inconsistent and irrational; and the Church would be far wiser to give over these questions of casuistry, and insist upon a few general principles, such as these:

1. Amusement is not an end, but a means—a means of refreshing the mind and replenishing the strength of the body; when it begins to be the principal thing for which one lives, or when, in pursuing it, the mental powers are enfeebled and the bodily health impaired, it falls under just condemnation.

2. Amusements that consume the hours which ought to be sacred to sleep are, therefore, censurable.

3. Amusements that call us away from work which we are bound to do are pernicious, just to the extent to which they cause us to be neglectful or unfaithful.

4. Amusements that rouse or stimulate morbid appetites or unlawful passions, or that cause us to be restless or discontented, are always to be avoided.

5 Any indulgence in amusement which has a tendency to weaken our respect for the great interests of character, or to loosen our hold on the eternal verities of the spiritual realm, is, so far forth, a damage to us.

These principles will apply to all kinds of amusements, but the application must be made by individuals. Parents must reduce these principles to rules for the guidance of their children, for the power to comprehend and use principles is only gradually gained; children do not always possess it; authority rather than reason must often be their guide. But the Church must use reason rather than authority; and the pulpit can do no better than faithfully to enforce some such general maxims as I have suggested. Whatever the Church can do in the regulation of amusements, can best be done by this method.

But is this all that the Church has to do with the amusements of the people? Is its function fulfilled, in this important realm of human conduct, by repressing or regulating the diversions of the people,—by preventing excess and abuse? Has the Church no positive duties to perform in providing popular amusement?

Let me say at the outset that the churches are doing already all that they ought to do in the way of furnishing amusements of various kinds in connection with their own organizations and in their own houses of worship. The church sociable has become a recognized institution; and, in spite of certain scandalous reports, its influence, on the whole, has been salutary. It is certain, however, that the churches have gone fully as far in this direction as it is safe for them to go. It is not the business of the Church to organize dramatic troupes or minstrel companies for the amusement of the people in its own edifice. The proper function of the Church is that of teaching and moral influence; and when it goes extensively into the show business, it is apt to lose its

hold upon the more serious interests with which it is charged. The duty of the Church, with respect to the provision and direction of popular amusements, will be discharged, if at all, as its duty to the unfortunates of the community is discharged,—by inspiring and forming outside agencies to do this very thing. The hospitals and the asylums are the work of the Church; it is neither economical nor desirable that each church should undertake to provide in connection with its own edifice, and under the care of its own officers, a hospital, an asylum for the insane, and a home for the friendless. When it is said that the Church ought to provide wholesome diversions for the people, it is meant, therefore, that the Church ought to stir up the intelligent and benevolent men and women under its influence to attend to this matter, and ought to make them feel that this is one of the duties resting on them as Christians. And the question now before us is whether any such obligation as this is now resting on the Church; whether this is a field which Christian philanthropy can and should enter and cultivate. In answering this question several considerations must be borne in mind.

1. Popular amusement is a great fact. A large share of the people are seeking amusement of one sort or another continually. In every city or considerable town the opera-houses, the concert-halls, the rinks, the museums, the beer-gardens, as well as many lower and less reputable places of diversion, are always open and generally well patronized. It is probable that more persons attend places of amusement than attend church; or, rather, that there is a larger number of persons in almost any large town or city who seldom or never attend any place of worship, than of those who seldom or never visit any place of amusement. The places of amusement are generally open six or seven days in the week, while most churches are open only two or three days. Even the poorest people, those who obtain but a meager subsistence by their labor, and who often appeal to their neighbors for charity, spend a good part of their scanty earnings for amusements. A family, known to the writer, that sold the last feather pillows in the house for money to go to the circus, is a type of a large class. Church-going is a luxury too expensive for multitudes who spend three times as much as a seat in church would cost on the theater and the variety show.

2. The business of amusement constitutes a great financial interest. An army of men and women get their living by providing diversion for the people. Millions of dollars are invested in buildings, furniture, instruments, equipage, scenery, animals, vehicles, and appli-

ances of all sorts, devoted to this purpose. Busy brains are all the while contriving new forms of diversion that shall prove attractive to the people and remunerative to their projectors. Large fortunes are made by successful managers; indeed, the capital of a millionaire is required for the handling of some of our great popular amusements. This liberal outlay and this enterprising provision involve a general and large expenditure of money on the part of the people. In one inland city of sixty thousand inhabitants there are two opera-houses. In each of these there is an average of five performances a week during the season, which lasts about forty weeks. Four hundred performances a year, with average receipts of two hundred and fifty dollars, give us one hundred thousand dollars expended for amusements every year in these two houses—more than is paid for the support of all the Protestant churches in the city. A base-ball club in the same city received during the last season, for gate money, about twenty thousand dollars. Add all the money that was paid for diversions of various sorts at the other halls, and the rinks, and the public gardens of the city; all that was taken by several circuses and other outdoor shows; all that was devoted to billiards, and to dances, and to horse-races, and to a multitude of other amusements, more or less refined,—and it can be easily seen that the amusement bill of a city of this size must reach a formidable figure. Not counting the cost of drink or debauchery, which is not properly reckoned against amusements,—counting only the expense of what may be fairly classed among the diversions of the people,—we see that a large share of their earnings is devoted to this purpose. Complaint is sometimes made of the cost of education and of religious privileges; but it is safe to say that the people of this country spend every year for amusements more than they pay for their schools, and three times as much as they pay for their churches.

3. Amusement is not only a great fact and a great business interest, it is also a great factor in the development of the national character. If a wise philanthropist could choose between making the laws of any people and furnishing their amusements, it would not take him long to decide. The robust virtues are nurtured under the discipline of work; if the diversions can be kept healthful, a sound national life will be developed. The ideals of the people are shaped, and their sentiments formed, to a large extent, by popular amusements. It is claimed that the drama renders important service to public morality in this direction; but the claim can hardly be allowed. A careful collection and analysis,

by a well-known clergyman, of the plays produced at the leading theaters of Chicago during a given period, clearly indicated that the actual drama is far from being a great teacher of morality. Doubtless many plays are produced whose moral lesson is helpful and stimulating; but it cannot be claimed that the preponderance of the influence of the drama is on the side of virtue. It is conceivable that the drama might be a great friend of morality; it is possible that it will be one day; it is undeniable that there are a few noble men and women now upon the stage who are doing what they can to lift up its standards; it is not necessary to indulge in any sweeping censures when we speak of it; but it is quite clear that this form of popular amusement, as at present administered, tends to the degradation rather than the elevation of the people. It is not only nor chiefly by the questionable morality of many of the plays that this injury is done; it is by their flippancy, their silliness, their sensationalism, their unreality. Their effect upon the intellect is like that produced by the reading of the most trashy novels, only more debilitating. So far as the drama is concerned, therefore, I fear that it must be said that the net result of its influence upon the national character is injurious rather than beneficial. And the same thing must be said of popular amusements in general, as at present organized and conducted. Although the people receive much wholesome refreshment and innocent pleasure from the diversions now provided for them, yet the effect of these amusements, as a whole, upon their minds and their morals and their physical health, is not salutary. I am not inclined to pessimism on this or any other subject, and I am able to look without horror on many diversions commonly regarded as wholly pernicious: yet careful observation of the effect of the popular amusements upon the people at large leads me to believe that the balance of their influence is on the side of injury. They are a great factor in the life of the people, but their product, on the whole, is evil; they do much good, but more harm.

4. Seeing that amusement is so large an element in the life of the people, seeing that it lays so heavy a tax on their resources and affects their character so powerfully, the questions naturally arise: How is it managed? By whom is it furnished? How much of intelligence and of philanthropic purpose enters into the plans of those who provide the amusements of the people?

Concerning the class of persons who devote their lives to the business of amusing the people, it is not best to make any unqualified statements. Among them are many who are

exemplary in their conduct, and who would never engage in any enterprise the tendency of which would be immoral or degrading. But if what has been said is true, that the preponderance of the influence of the popular amusements is on the side of evil, then it is reasonable to conclude that the majority of those who furnish them are not persons of exalted character. As a matter of fact, the business of diverting the people is largely in the hands of men and women whose moral standards are low, whose habits are vicious, and whose influence upon those with whom they come in contact must be evil. It is to people, chiefly of this class that this most important interest of life is intrusted.

When we ask on what basis the business of amusement is conducted, the answer is that it rests almost wholly on a pecuniary basis. The main interest of those who furnish it is a pecuniary interest. The principle that regulates it is the principle of supply and demand; and this principle is interpreted, as we have seen, by persons who would not be likely to discover a demand for diversions of an elevating nature, if there were such a demand.

The question now arises whether this great interest of human life ought to be left to settle itself in this manner, by the law of supply and demand. It may be wise to allow the material interests of men to adjust themselves according to this law. But amusement is not one of the material interests of men. Man's need of amusement is one of the needs of his higher nature—his spirit, as well as of his body; his use of amusement affects his mind and his character directly and powerfully. And whatever may be said about the introduction of the principle of good-will into the business of producing and distributing commodities, there can be no question, when you enter the realm where those forces are at work by which character is produced, that the principle of good-will must come in, and must be allowed to rule. If this is true, the business of providing amusement for the people ought not to be merely or mainly a mercenary business; the intelligence, the conscience, and the benevolence of the community ought to recognize this realm of amusement as belonging to them, and ought to enter in and take possession.

Does the Church leave the religious wants of the community to be provided for under the law of supply and demand? Is it supposed that this matter will properly regulate itself; that the people will call for what they need and get it; that no care is so exercised and no effort made to provide wise and safe religious teaching for them? By no means. It is assumed to be the function of the Church to provide Christian institutions and Christian

instruction for the people; to spread the gospel feast before them and send forth the invitations to them; not to wait and see what they would like, and give them what they may ask for; not to leave this matter to be attended to by those who seek to make gain of godliness.

How is it with the intellectual wants of the community? Does the State leave these to be supplied under the economical law? Is it imagined that the people will get all the education that they need if they are left to provide it for themselves, irregularly and spasmodically, according to their own notions of what they want? Not at all. The intelligence and philanthropy of the best citizens, expressing themselves in the laws of the state, provide education for the people, build school-houses, organize systems of education, employ teachers, offering thus to the public a large and wise and constant supply of one of their deepest needs. It may be said that the provision is only a response to the popular demand, but this is not true. The great motive power of education is not the cry of ignorance; it is the offer of intelligence. How is it in our homes? Is the education of our children the result of their call for learning, or of our constant and insistent proffer of learning to them? Here and there is a child that hungers for useful knowledge; but the great majority need to have this hunger created in them, and need to have it stimulated continually by a wise and patient presentation to them of the knowledge which we wish them to acquire. Thus all popular education proceeds, and has always proceeded, from an altruistic motive. The demand has been created by furnishing the supply; it is the intelligence, the conscience, the patriotism, the philanthropy of the best citizens — not always of the richest citizens — that have taken this business of education in hand and managed it for the benefit of the whole people. A large part of the work of education — the work of school-boards, and trustees, and visitors — is done gratuitously. Philanthropy is not the sole motive in the work of education; the self-regarding motives have large scope among teachers as well as pupils; but the philanthropic element is an integral element in all our best educational work. Benevolence is one of the forces that keep the machinery in motion. Education deserves always to rank as one of the great missionary enterprises. The best reward of the faithful teacher is not his salary, but the consciousness that he is rendering a valuable service to those whom he instructs and to the state. When a prominent educator announced, not long ago, his purpose of abandoning his profession that he might devote himself to the getting of

money, a murmur of indignant comment was heard from the noble fraternity of teachers. Among them are thousands who fully appreciate and adopt the saying of Professor Agassiz, that he had no time for money-making. If there are millions in the land to whom such a statement is incredible, and the man who makes it a hypocrite, this only indicates how deeply we have sunk into that abyss of mercantilism, wherein, as true prophets are warning us, the best elements of our national life are fast disappearing. A sorry day it will be for this land when the work of education is wholly or mainly done for mercenary reasons.

Now, amusement, like education and religion, is a real need of human beings — not so deep or vital a need as education or religion, but a real and constant need, and a need of the higher nature as well as of the lower; an interest that closely concerns their characters; and it is almost as great a mistake to leave it to take care of itself, and to be furnished mainly by those who wish to make money out of it, and who have no higher motive, as it would be to leave education or religion to be cared for in that way.

It is time that we begin to comprehend the idea that this is one of the great interests of human life which Christianity must claim and control — one of the kingdoms of the world which, according to the prophecy, are to "become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ." When these words are quoted, the thoughts of disciples are apt to fly off to Burmah and Siam and Timbuctoo; these are the kingdoms of this world that are to be Christianized. Doubtless they are; but the text ought to mean more than this. It should signify that all the wide realms of human thought and action are to be brought under the sway of the King of righteousness; that the kingdom of industry, and the kingdom of traffic, and the kingdom of politics, and the kingdom of amusement are all to be made subject to his law; that all these great interests of men are to be brought under the empire of Christian ideas and Christian forces; that instead of standing aloof from them and reproving and upbraiding them, Christianity is to enter into them and pervade them and transform them by its own vital energy. The duty of the Church with respect to popular amusements is not done when it has lifted up its warning against the abuses that grow out of them, and laid down its laws of temperance and moderation in their use. It has a positive function to fulfill in furnishing diversions that shall be attractive, and, at the same time, pure and wholesome. This cannot be done, as we have seen, by the churches as churches, but it can be done by men and women into

whom they breathe their spirit, and whom they fill with their intelligence and good-will.

When I say that it can be done, I speak of what I know and testify of what I have seen. The most remarkable success in the way of popular entertainment that I have ever witnessed has been achieved along the line which I have just been pointing out. And inasmuch as an ounce of experience is worth a pound of theory, I can do no better than to tell the story of one successful experiment in this field.

The Cleveland Educational Bureau has closed its third season and issued its annual report. This enterprise owes its existence and its success to many men and women of good-will, who have heartily coöperated in sustaining it, but chiefly to the ingenuity and enthusiasm of Mr. Charles E. Bolton, its secretary and manager, to the literary skill and facility of Mrs. Bolton, and to the liberality of Mr. W. H. Doan, the treasurer, who owns and rents to the Bureau for a nominal price the People's Tabernacle, in which its work is done. The plan of operations is varied slightly from year to year, but the general design can be clearly indicated.

The "People's Tabernacle" is a plain but capacious assembly-room, built on leased land, and devoted to educational and religious purposes; it boasts few decorations, and not much upholstery; but it is clean, and well ventilated, and brilliantly lighted by electricity. A gallery runs around the hall, and the platform is pushed forward so near the center that the audience of four thousand or forty-five hundred hears a distinct speaker without difficulty. The platform is usually covered with a profusion of potted plants; and handsome bouquets of cut flowers in baskets and vases wait to be bestowed upon the performers at the end of the entertainment.

The manager describes his evening's programme as furnishing a "fourfold intellectual treat." Very little is said about diversion in connection with this enterprise; it is not called a bureau of amusement; it is an *educational* bureau. The appeal is wisely addressed to a higher principle than the mere craving for diversion; and the recreation is incidental and secondary, as it ought always to be. If the Bureau announced itself as a purveyor of amusement, it would not amuse the people half so successfully as it does. The play has a better relish when it is brought in as the sauce of a more solid intellectual repast. It is a high compliment to the working people of Cleveland that is paid by the managers in the invitation to devote ten of their Saturday evenings, every winter, to the exercises of an Educational Bureau. The magnificent success of the entertainment shows how well the compliment is deserved.

The "fourfold intellectual treat" begins usually at a quarter before seven, with an excellent orchestral concert. During this time the audience is assembling, and by seven o'clock the building is packed to the walls. No reserved seats are sold: the motto is, "first come, first served." Early comers are not even allowed to reserve seats for their friends. A large force of neatly dressed ushers assists in seating the audience. No single tickets are sold before a quarter past seven; season-ticket holders have the exclusive right to the house up to that time.

The orchestral concert ends with a grand chorus by the entire audience, which rises and joins, under the lead of a precentor, with the orchestra, the organ, and a trained choir, in singing one of the national hymns.

Following this, at precisely a quarter past seven, is the "lecture-prelude," which is generally an off-hand address of half an hour on some scientific or practical subject. Among the topics treated in these lecture-preludes, I find these: "The Pyramids," "Architecture Illustrated," "Wonders of the House we Live In," "Microscopic Objects Magnified," "The Terminal Glacier—Illustrated," "Wrongs of Workingmen and How to Right Them." Next is a "singing-school," in which a vigorous precentor, aided by the orchestra and the choir, leads the great congregation for ten or fifteen minutes in singing national hymns. The precentor drills them finely, singing-master-fashion; he tells them how he wants the piece sung, and gets them to sing it as he wishes; he divides them into choirs, and makes them sing antiphonally; they have the words and music in their hands, and are able to join, as most of them do, heartily in the great chorus.

After this comes the principal attraction of the evening, in the shape of popular lecture, dramatic reading, debate, or concert, which begins at eight o'clock precisely, and always closes promptly at half-past nine. Mr. Bolton himself has contributed several lectures of travel, finely illustrated with the stereopticon. A debate on Protection *vs.* Free Trade, between Professor W. G. Sumner and Professor Van Buren Denslow, filled one evening last winter, and aroused the deepest interest. Another debate, between Mrs. Livermore and Professor Denslow, on the question whether women ought to vote, closed the recent course with great éclat. It is safe for the manager to promise any speaker who has something worth saying a cordial and appreciative hearing.

During the last season, five illustrated lectures on the art of cooking were delivered by Miss Juliet Corson to an average audience of three thousand women. These lectures were free to the holders of season tickets; the ad-

mission fee to those not members of the Bureau was fifteen cents, or fifty cents for the course. It is difficult to understand how Miss Corson could make herself intelligible to so large an audience, but we learn that her lectures were very successful, and that they were received with great enthusiasm. "Whole carcasses of animals," says the report, "were cut into suitable pieces on the platform, and all kinds of plain cooking were done."

The Bureau also furnished during the summer ten open-air evening concerts on the public square, which were enjoyed by many thousands of people.

Another important feature of the work is the circulation of useful literature. Each person who attends the winter's entertainments receives on every evening a little book in paper covers, printed by the Bureau for its members. Four thousand of these little books—a whole wagon-load—are distributed every evening. They are continuously paged, and the advertisements upon the fly-leaves can be removed for binding. At the close of the course a Cleveland binder puts the series of ten pamphlets into neat red muslin covers for thirty-five cents. Each pamphlet contains about forty pages, and is devoted to the popularization of science, or to some sort of useful information. The series for 1882-3 includes a "Short History of Modern France"; a "Brief History of Science"; a "Sketch of the History of the United States"; "The Story of the Steam Engine"; an excellent little archæological essay on "Early Man," well illustrated; a series of brief biographies of "Great Artists"; a crisp and sensible essay on "Secrets of Success" (of which twenty-five thousand extra copies were distributed), and other similar matter. Each pamphlet contains also the national hymns sung by the great chorus on the evening of its distribution, and the programme for the evening.

For all this, how much are the patrons of the Bureau required to pay? The season ticket, which admits to the ten "fourfold entertainments" on successive Saturday evenings, comprising the ten orchestral concerts, the ten "singing-schools," the ten books, and the ten "special attractions" (popular lecture, elocutionary readings, debate, or grand concert), costs for this year one dollar and a quarter, or twelve and a half cents for each evening. These tickets also admit to the course of lectures by Miss Corson, and from the proceeds of their sale the summer evening concerts are provided.

In only one sense is the Bureau a gratuity. A great amount of unrewarded labor is performed in its behalf by the ladies and gentlemen who are directly interested in its management; and many of those who take part in

its entertainments volunteer their services. The "lecture-preludes" are generally given by gentlemen of the city or the vicinity, who are glad to serve the Bureau, and whose carefully prepared addresses have been highly appreciated by the audience. Most of the "special attractions," however, come from a distance and cost money. But the sale of more than four thousand season tickets pays the expenses of the Bureau, and leaves a balance in the treasury at the close of every season. The people get a great deal for their money, but they have the satisfaction of knowing that they pay for what they get—all but the good-will and kindly effort on their behalf put forth by their employers and their neighbors, which money will not buy.

I have spoken of the audience as composed mainly of workingmen and their families. Last year three thousand two hundred season tickets were sold in the shops of Cleveland. When the work was begun, Mr. Bolton visited all the great manufacturing establishments, obtained permission from the managers to have the men collected ten minutes before the stroke of twelve, and then, in a brief speech, explained to them his plan. Tickets were placed on sale in the offices connected with the shops, the employers heartily coöperating. The interest of the mechanics was thus enlisted in the beginning, and although about four hundred school-teachers and a sprinkling of the dwellers on "Algonquin Avenue" may be counted in the evening audiences, they still consist, for the most part, of working people and their families. Mr. Bolton says that many of the mechanics carry their suppers to their shops on Saturdays, that they may be early at the Tabernacle in the evening. Few signs of this are visible from the platform, however; the audience seems to be clad in its Sunday clothes. It would be hard to find anywhere a company whose attire was neater, whose faces were brighter, whose behavior was more decorous, or whose appreciation of wit or eloquence was keener. It was my pleasure to look into the faces of these people for an hour and a half while two accomplished lady readers were entertaining them, and a more responsive audience I have rarely seen. It was an exquisite pleasure to sit and watch their movements, to note the eagerness with which they hung upon the lips of these gifted women, and the relish with which they listened to the interpretation of the masterpieces of English poetry and humor recited to them, and to feel the surges of pure and strong emotion that swept over the throng and broke continually at my feet in a sympathetic sigh, or in happy and wholesome

laughter. That it is an extremely well-behaved audience will be understood when I say that it has abolished encores and the pandemoniac practice of stamping the feet, and — *ecce signum!* — that it keeps its seat respectfully until the performance is concluded.

It was impossible not to reflect that a large share of these thousands would, if it were not for this Bureau, be spending their Saturday evenings in such places of amusement as might be open to them, admission to which would cost them three or four times as much as they pay at the Tabernacle; that the great majority of these would be places where their minds would be debauched and their morals damaged; where they would find a temporary excitement, to be followed by disgust and ennui; where they would receive no wholesome impulses and gain no new thoughts; and where they would often have their prejudices roused and their hearts inflamed against their more prosperous neighbors; for the cheap theater is one of the mouth-pieces of the communist and the pétroleuse. Now they are brought together in this great assembly, that is itself an inspiration, and, in its decorum, its self-restraint, and its good-nature, an incarnate Gospel; good music charms their ears; a profusion of flowers on the platform delights their eyes; they join in the national songs, and their best emotions are aroused; they listen to the kindling words of poet or orator or teacher, and are instructed and quickened; they rejoice in this ample and admirable supply of one of their deepest wants, and recognize the benevolence that has devised it, and their hearts are filled with a kindlier feeling toward all their fellow-men. They go home sober, with all their week's earnings in their pockets, and a little book to read in which they will find something to divert and enlighten them; and they are much more likely to be found in church the next day than if they had spent the Saturday night in the beer-garden or at the variety show. A free gospel service is held in the Tabernacle every Sunday afternoon, and the attendance upon this service has greatly increased since the Educational Bureau was organized.

I have thus endeavored to set down a plain account of what seems to me a most wise and noble Christian enterprise. A charity it is not, in the ordinary acceptation of that word, and it is all the more charitable because it is not a charity, and because it pays its own expenses; but it is one of those effective applications of Christianity to the social needs of men that we may expect to see becoming more and more common in the future. It is doubtful whether any revival services held in Cleveland during the winter help so efficiently in the

Christianization of the people as do the entertainments given at the Tabernacle. Applied Christianity is what the world wants, and this is Christianity applied to one of the great interests of human life.

Whether Mr. Bolton's enterprise is indebted to any hint from Dr. Holland, I have not heard him say; but readers of this magazine have not forgotten the story of "Nicholas Minturn," nor the experiments of the hero in entertaining the people of the "Beggars' Paradise," in the "Athenæum." The fiction with which the name of Nicholas is connected is far less remarkable than the facts which I have just recited; the enterprise of the novel was undertaken in behalf of a more degraded class of persons; but the ideal of the story and the achievement of the Bureau are identical; both show us Christianity at work in the same field, turning the love of diversion into a pure channel and making it aid in the enlightenment and elevation of the people.

The fiction was plausible enough, but the accomplished fact admits of no gainsaying. What has been done in Cleveland can be done in every city and large town in this country. The scheme may well be varied; the application of the principle calls for ingenuity and practical sense; methods that are successful in one city would need modification to fit them to the conditions of another; but the purpose is easily understood, and the main idea can be realized, with the expenditure of very little money, wherever there are men of good-will who will give to the enterprise the necessary thought and care. It cannot be done without work; nothing important is accomplished without large expenditure of time and effort; but it is work that brings in a large return.

Some of the conditions of success in such an enterprise may be readily named:

1. A large and cheerful hall. That the prices may be low, the audience must be large.
2. A capable manager. Enthusiasm, good temper, fertility of resource, and sympathy with the people are among his qualifications.
3. Variety in the entertainment, with no hitches or wearying pauses between the parts. The movement must be swift and sure.
4. Punctuality and business-like thoroughness in the management. Begin and end on the minute. Give exactly what you promise, or, if that be impossible, what will be recognized as a full equivalent.

An institution of this nature, wisely managed, would quickly prove itself to be a seminary of sacred and benign influences, and an agency more potent than many laws in the preservation of peace and the reformation of the public morals.

Washington Gladden.