

"must be stamped out!" Yet a little reflection should suggest how futile, and on the whole how wanting in pertinency and value, such declarations are.

It is not possible to "stamp out" evil. It has never been done, though tried innumerable times. For evil is not a physical, an outward thing, which can be dealt with by physical means. If it were it might be comparatively easy—were men willing to part with it—to gather it together, and at one stroke work its destruction.

Evil, on the contrary, is inward and spiritual. It is something hidden and elusive. It is seen not of itself, but in its manifestations. It must be sought and dealt with by inward means. It is a problem of chemistry, not of mechanics. We must neutralize it with influences as secret in their nature as it is, and in their action more powerful.

The experience of those nations which have adopted the "stamping out" policy most resolutely and persistently does not encourage others to follow in their footsteps. Such nations are well exemplified by Spain with her inquisition, in the past, and by Russia in the present day. Spain did, it is true, stamp out the Moors, the Jews, and nearly all religious independence, but in doing so she inflicted wounds upon herself from which in centuries she has not recovered. Russia places upon her people fetters of restraint under which they struggle and suffer, and on account of which they plot anarchy and conceive nihilism. Russia, as much as any other country, and probably more than any, breeds anarchy by the harsh "stamping out" measures which she adopts to check and destroy it.

And this is perfectly natural. Force, untempered by mercy, relentless and harsh force, is not curative of any disease. Its effect may be to crush, but the fragments remain. It may seem to extinguish the fire, but it scatters the embers.

So far as the human experience goes the only cure for the ills of society is that which removes the cause of illness. This remedy is radical, but not new. Philosophers, statesmen, philanthropists, the wise and the good in all ages, have known better than to expect to make the world righteous by violence. All the body of teaching which has stood the test of time is to the one effect that we must overcome evil with good.

This is the divine chemistry.—Editorial in Friends' Intelligencer of September 28.

THE GERMAN LAND REFORM ASSOCIATION.

For The Public.

The German Single Tax club, or as they call themselves, the Land Reform association, met in Berlin in September 21 for the annual Henry George festival, which is the official opening of the season's work. Henry George's birthday, September 2, being a little too early, the celebration is held three weeks later, to be sure of an audience. It takes the form of an informal concert with music, recitations, speeches, etc. This year more than 400 people filled the hall, and the leader of the Land Reform party here, Dr. Adolf Damaschke, in his main speech of the evening, could give the gratifying information that with each successive year the hall engaged proved too small for the gathering, although each year a larger hall was taken. "We began with a gathering of four or five ardent souls in a private room," said Dr. Damaschke, "and our party has grown so rapidly that we are justified in the hope that in a not too distant future the largest hall in Berlin will be none too large for the audience we can gather at our annual public meeting." In sharp clear outlines, Dr. Damaschke gave the narrative of the most important successes of the party during the past year.

Most excellent work has been done by the association in instituting public inquiry into tenement house conditions, rent, etc. In Berlin, Hanover, Frankfurt on Main, Halle, and other prominent cities, the association has aroused the municipal authorities into taking legislative action to restrict speculation in land. Speculative land schemes, which had without doubt proved disastrous to hundreds of share buyers, have been unearthed and made harmless by the energetic work of the association. Old and almost forgotten laws restricting the sale of land to private persons have been dug from the depths of the archives, and their enforcement demanded. The work of the association has been private as yet, but now the Berlin group is just entering upon a vigorous campaign in the Moabit district to secure for one of its members a seat in the city council. Dr. Damaschke named a long list of men of prominence in science and in positions of authority in public life, who were all active members of the

association and ardent disciples of Henry George. After telling his hearers something of what was being done in other countries—and naming as most important the election of Tom L. Johnson as mayor of Cleveland—Dr. Damaschke pointed with pride to the German colony of Kiau-Chau, as the first official governmental experiment in the land tax theory.

Dr. Damaschke's speech was most interesting, and was received with enthusiasm by the large audience, which filled the hall to overflowing.

GRACE ISABEL COLBRON.

CONSECRATED ABSURDITIES.

An extract from a sermon with the above title, delivered in the pulpit of the Vine Street Congregational Church in Cincinnati, September 29, by the pastor, Rev. Herbert S. Bigelow.

Of all the consecrated absurdities which have been written in the creeds, this doctrine of the total depravity of human nature, which lies at the core of the old theology, is most remarkable. This doctrine is refuted every time a child is born. There never lived a mother who, when she looked into the eyes of her babe, did not feel and know that it was as spotless as God. People would not cling to those consecrated absurdities if they did not frequently hear the kind of sermons I heard recently. In the presence of the great congregation the preacher denounced doubt as a vampire. To this demon, Doubt, he gave battle with all the fury of a prophet, contending against principalities and powers. He did not tell his hearers that there might be "more faith in honest doubt than in half the creeds." He did not tell them that it is only by doubting the authority of consecrated absurdities, that it is only by losing faith in pious frauds, that it is only by growing skeptical of traditional nonsense, that faith ceases to be a superstition and becomes a virtue.

There is a New York lawyer who is more religious than orthodox whose wife's father is a preacher of the strenuous sort. In discussing the old gentleman's theology with her, he said: "Molly, your father as a man is a good-natured Irishman, but as a theologian, he is a savage."

This is true of a great many men. They are better than their creeds. As theologians, they may be savage enough to believe in the doctrine of total depravity, but as fathers and mothers they repudiate it every night they tarry at the cradle, that inner shrine, that holy of holies of the home, and with a reverent and awful love, drink in that picture of innocence,