

of about sixty, came in and took a seat at my side. This man had an enormous head, which was very bald at the top. His face was long, his forehead was high and full and his jaw was as strong as that of Prince Bismarck. He had a clear blue eye, a complexion fair to rosiness and his bushy side whiskers were of a bright red. He wore black clothes, and was well but simply dressed. There was nothing in his attire, in fact, to distinguish him from the rest of the people present, and it was only from having seen his photographs that I was able to recognize in him the noted Philip D. Armour. He put his overcoat on the back of the seat, sat down and looked with what seemed to me to be decided pleasure upon the crowd which was fast packing the hall. There were at least 1,500 people in the house. Boys and girls, young men and women, were moving rapidly about getting their seats. The ushers were making places for the strangers. The most of the people seemed to know one another, and a general air of good fellowship prevailed. Phil Armour's presence was by no means an unusual thing. He comes to the mission services every afternoon, and from his retired seat in the back of the hall he seemed to attract no attention whatever. Twice an usher rapidly passed him and each time I heard him speak out in a low metallic voice the words:

"Hello, boy, get me a singing book."

But the boy did not hear him and went on. I noticed that Mr. Armour seemed to know many of the young people present. Boys and girls came up and shook hands with him and no one appeared to be afraid of him.

Before I give my talk with Mr. Armour, I would like to say one word about the Armour Mission and the Armour Technological Institute. The mission was founded several years ago by his brother, but has been added to by him, and upon it and the Institute he has already spent more than \$3,000,000. It takes about \$100,000 a year to keep the Institute running, and it is giving out what is, perhaps, the best system of education in the United States. About seven hundred boys and girls, young men and young women are being educated in it, and it is, in fact, a large college taught by the best of professors and equipped with some of the finest mechanical and other laboratories that you will find in the world. The plan of the institution was outlined one Sunday in a sermon by Dr. Gunsaulus, and at its close Mr. Armour came to the doctor and said that he believed in his scheme, and that he would supply the money for such an institution if he would take charge of it as its president. I might make a letter on the institute alone, but I can only say that its system of education is so fine that the rich cannot afford not to send their boys to it, while the charges are so low that the poorer classes of children are able to come. By it Armour is aiding in bringing the people of the avenue and the alley together and in this school the rich and the poor are treated alike. He does not believe in socialism, and this is his means of aiding in counteracting the theories advocated by Governor Altgeld and the anarchists. The school is thoroughly practical. In addition to giving all the advantages of a first-class college, it has a cooking school, a millinery and dressmaking department, blacksmithing

and woodworking shops and such other branches as will enable a young boy or girl to learn almost any trade within it. A large number of young men and women are making money out of the training which they have gotten there. I remember one black-eyed girl of about eighteen, who stopped and shook hands with Mr. Armour as she passed by. As she left he turned to me and said: "That girl is the daughter of the cook of one of our Chicago hotels. She is now getting \$15 a week in a millinery establishment. When she came to the institute she left a place where she was working for \$3 a week, but she learned a new trade there, and she is now getting a good salary."

Mr. Armour then pointed out some boys in the mission who were doing equally well, and as he did so I said:

"I should think, Mr. Armour that you would receive much pleasure from the work that is going on here. It must be a great satisfaction to you to know that you can do some good. This must be a good thing to think about when you want to sing at night."

"Yes," replied Mr. Armour, "I think I am getting a good profit out of this institution. I consider this a good 10 per cent investment. I know that I get the worth of my money out of it every Sunday. Yes, I am sure the investment nets me in satisfaction alone more than 10 per cent."

"Most rich men leave such investments until they are dead," said I.

"Yes, I know that," replied Mr. Armour, "but they make a mistake. Such action is bad business. As for me, I prefer to do the work now. It is cheaper, you know, it saves the commissions, and it gives a man a chance to kick if his plans are not carried out as they should be."

At this moment the services began and our conversation stopped. I continued it, however, the next day at Mr. Armour's office. I had noticed that the majority of the people at the mission services were children. I referred to this fact during my talk, and with Mr. Armour replied:

"Yes, the chief object of the Armour Mission is to do good for the children. I don't care much for the old men and the hardened sinners. I don't think you can do much with the one-legged, one-eyed drunkard who lies in the gutter, and I tell the preachers they ought to step over him and let him go, and save the young child who is playing on the street. You can't make much out of the old drunkard. There is some margin in the child. The most important time in life is before the age of twelve, and the impressions gotten before that time are the most lasting."

"How about religion, Mr. Armour; you don't seem to believe much in the churches?"

"Yes, I do," was the reply. "I believe in them, but there are many people whom you can reach best outside of the churches. I don't think much of the cast-iron kinds of religion—I mean the hell-fire and the brimstone kind. When the mission was first started I put it in charge of a preacher of this kind. He was a Scotchman. When I engaged him I was about to leave here to take a tour of some months. The first thing I asked him was as to whether he could sing. He straightened himself up, inflated his chest and said, 'Just try me.' I had apparently hit upon his stronghold,

and I saw that he thought he was good at singing if he was good for anything. I wanted a good singer as well as a good preacher, and I engaged him. I left the mission in his charge. When I returned I went out to attend the services. I entered the hall when the preacher was in the midst of his sermon. He was charging up and down the platform, and you could see the lurid flames of hell and smell the brimstone in his every sentence. It was a fine piece of word painting, but it did not create the impression I thought we needed. When he had closed I asked him to call upon me at the office the next day, as I wanted to have a talk with him. He came, and I said:

"Now, Mr. Blank, I heard your sermon yesterday. It was a very good sermon for some places, but it is not just what I want for the mission. I want you to drop the hell-fire business. I want you to get some little children onto that platform. I want them to sing hymns and speak pieces. The exercises can be religious ones, but I want the children to make up the greater part of the service." As I said this the preacher looked at me in a rather angry way. After a moment he said:

"Now, Mr. Armour, there is no doubt in my mind that you know all about pork, but I don't think you know very much about religion."

"I laughed, but I answered: 'Well, Mr. Blank, I think I know what I want, and I want to know whether you will do what I want done.' The preacher thought a moment and then replied that he would. The next Sunday afternoon I went again to the mission. I found that he had accepted my suggestion, and that he had at least one hundred children on the platform. He increased the number every Sunday, and in a short time he had the thing running in good shape. He stayed with us for some time. Just before he left he called in to say good bye, and at this time he said:

"I want to thank you, Mr. Armour, for what you have done for me in connection with the mission. You have given me a new knowledge of human nature. I can see that my theory was wrong, and that there are other ways of doing good than my own."

"You have no church organization at the mission," said I.

"No," was the reply. "The chief trouble I have had is to keep out the churches. Dr. Milne, who is at the head of the mission, would like to have a church organization, but I don't want it. Our people can join other churches if they wish to, but I think such an organization would hurt our usefulness. Besides, we don't make any great pretensions. We don't offer to give everything in the way of salvation. All that we aim to do is to give sixteen ounces to the pound and one hundred cents on the dollar. When we baptize we feel that we can use a finger bowl or a dishpan just as well as a cut glass jar or an immersion vat. It is the fact, and not the means, that we want."

"Now, Mr. Armour," said I, "I am going to ask you a personal question. It is one often asked in connection with missions. I want to know whether you are a Christian."

Mr. Armour thought a moment and then replied: "I am not a Christian in the sense of being a member of the church, but I believe in Christianity, I believe in Christ rather than creeds. I