

occupy a house of certain dimensions, or by compelling conformity, in other respects, to the outward requirements of health and civilization. Such laws might, if necessary, be made to apply to all citizens, irrespective of race. They would, if strictly enforced, go far to cure the wage difficulty, by rendering it impossible for Chinese labourers to live on the miserable pittance which now suffices them in their crowded dens. Such regulations would also tend to check Chinese immigration, without the invidious and unjust distinction of the obnoxious poll-tax.

TWO of the great religious bodies of Great Britain have recently held their anniversaries. The Congregationalists have had their "Union" at Swansea, in Wales, and the Established Church its "Congress" at Hull. To the student of current events one of the most marked features of these influential gatherings was the prominent place given to what are coming to be known as "Social Questions." In the Congregational Union a lengthy and most interesting report was presented by a special committee, which had been appointed to deal with this subject. The key-note to this report is given in a striking passage, in which the committee point out that, whereas the educated and well-to-do classes, from which the persons who have hitherto taken the lead in Christian work have come, have almost exclusively been accustomed to regard human interests as those of individuals, the decided and strong tendency of our workingmen is now to take the collective point of view. Instead of starting from the individual, and regarding public authority as merely a means of guarding his rights, they start from society as the unit, and deduce alike the rights and duties of individuals from its interests. "In this country," say the Committee, "alike in Gospel and in law, the individual has been first and last. The demand now made with more and more emphasis is that the good of the whole shall stand first, and determine the attributes of each of the parts." "This," they affirm, "is the proper and non-invidious sense of a much-abused but indispensable word which it is time to reclaim and restore to its rightful use—this is the true meaning of Socialism." Socialism and Individualism, it is argued, are not opposed to one another as good and evil. The affirmation of one is not the contradiction of the other. One system regards society as the highest aim of moral development; the other makes the same claim for the individual. In ideal Christianity each has its place, each enlightens, guards and completes the other. Christianity, it is maintained, does not deal with human society as simply a concourse of human atoms. Its founder distinctly proclaimed a "kingdom" with laws protecting the weakest and most lowly of His subjects, and binding the proudest to do His will. The idea of solidarity, of organization, in which every part exists for the whole, and the whole for every part, seems, the Committee aver, to have fallen into abeyance. A return to the simple and sublime morality of Christ would make it once more resplendent. This suggestive and somewhat remarkable deliverance, which was adopted without cavil by the Union, closed with a recommendation that a "Social Questions Committee" be formed in connection with the Union. The principal function of this committee is to be to "give information, advice, and other assistance, in furtherance of upward social movements."

THE Church Congress at Hull was even more practical than the Congregational Union in the choice of its subjects and the tone of its discussions. Papers by able writers on such topics as "The Church's Attitude towards Strikes and Labour Disputes," "Sanitation," "Betting and Gambling," "Socialism and Christianity," "Free Education," "The Ethics of Commerce," etc., were read and discussed in a most earnest spirit. The President (Dr. Westcott, Bishop of Durham), referred, in his address, to the "burning questions" on the programme, which "gave a most conspicuous place to social questions." He rejoiced in the selection of such topics, because the social question, in its complete range, was a religious question—the religious question. Christian faith dealt with all life. If many were overworked and underpaid, the Christian must face the evils and endeavour to remedy them. What law could not do, the personal ministry of love could do. Social questions, then, must be religious questions. They touched the unseen in their essence. The competition of trade had been assimilated to war, and thereby condemned. Nowhere was the change passing over contemporary thought more impressive than in the writings of the latest school of economists. It would be useless to attempt to

summarize, within the compass of a paragraph, the views expressed by prominent clergymen on the various important subjects with which they dealt. It is quite possible that the range of vision of some of the speakers would be regarded as narrow by those more accustomed to study and discuss these large and complicated questions, and especially by those having a living personal interest in them. The significant facts are the recognition, implied and expressed, of the supreme importance of this class of themes, and the general sympathy shown with the great movement amongst the labouring classes for the attainment of a better position and a higher intelligence. The Bishop of Manchester declared, in an eloquent sermon, that social movements, largely due to the Gospel, were bringing them to a better understanding of that Gospel. Christian men had long lived lives so utterly unlike that which their Master set forth by His teaching and example that we had felt it necessary to bring precept and practice into some sort of tolerable harmony by all kinds of ingenious and non-natural interpretations. It had seemed to us that the Lord could not have meant His words to be taken literally. Such an acceptance of them would involve nothing less than a social revolution, a change which would unsettle everything. It could not be said that all this was changed, but assuredly all was changing. In similar strain and spirit other speakers addressed themselves to the great practical questions of the hour. Whatever may be the direct results of this change that is coming over the spirit and conduct of the Churches, one of its indirect results is already, it seems to us, pleasingly apparent. We refer to the gradual breaking down of the social barriers which have so long separated between the clergymen of the State Churches and the Nonconformist ministers. Such events as the entertainment of Nonconformist ministers by the score at luncheon, by a distinguished Bishop of the Church; the reception of Nonconformist delegates into the houses of bishops and other clergymen of the Church; the reception of delegations, etc., are, if not absolutely new, at least extremely rare in religious circles in the Mother Country. It has long seemed clear to us that those who set about promoting union of the Churches by proposing doctrinal bases, and common lines of church polity, are beginning at the wrong end, and spending strength for naught. But when the clergy and laity of the great religious bodies begin to fraternize in each other's homes, and to combine their energies and efforts for the promotion of great religious and social movements, then, and not till then, may we look for the gradual crumbling of the walls of intolerance and a cordial reunion of the evangelical Churches in a grand federation for practical Christian endeavour.

THERE is, perhaps, no other sphere in which the democratic method of government has come so near to serious failure as in the municipal administration of towns and cities. Here incompetency, wastefulness, favouritism and corruption seem to be almost universal. In the largest city in America the administration of civic affairs has long been notorious for all the above-named sins, and at the present moment the leading clergymen, and many of the best citizens of both great parties and of all classes are engaged in what may, with slight hyperbole, be called a life-and-death struggle to rescue the city from the hands of a corporation which has long ruled it in the interests of monopolists and knaves. In many other cities of the union the state of things is better only in the degrees of evil. Our readers know but too well the great need that exists for municipal reform in most of our Canadian cities, and especially in Toronto. It is happily true that the faults charged in most cases are not so much gross corruption or malfeasance in office, as incompetency, narrowness and favouritism. The causes of this great evil on both sides of the line are not far to seek. They have their root in the apathy and mistaken selfishness of the better classes of citizens who permit themselves to become so absorbed in their own private affairs as to pay little or no attention to the duties and obligations of citizenship. The natural and inevitable result is to throw the management of civic affairs largely into the hands of those who are willing to give them time and attention, too often for personal or partisan ends. Such men find but too ready means for their purposes in the partyism which is unhappily so prevalent, in the selfishness and greed of individuals and of wards, and in petty, personal aims and ambitions. It would be unjust and unwise to deal in wholesale and indiscriminate denunciation. We do not forget that in our city councils, as no doubt in those of most other cities,

there is an admixture of good men and true, and competent. But the event usually proves the numbers and influence of such too small to overcome the traditional and almost inveterate tendencies to extravagance, if not corruption. The constitution of our city councils, combining as they do legislative and administrative functions, yields itself but too readily to the manipulation of the forces which make for inefficiency and waste. But had the citizens made their best and ablest men their civic rulers, these would surely have long ago wrought out a better system of city government. It is the duty of everyone who has faith in democratic institutions and wishes to see a vigorous and economical administration of the business of the city to study the question, and give time and energy to the work of civic reform. Whether such reform is possible under the present system, whether it can best be accomplished, as some propose, by separating distinctly the executive from the administrative function, whether the former work, at least, should not be entrusted to a half-dozen or less of thoroughly trustworthy and competent citizens, who should be fairly paid for devoting their whole time to the duties put upon them,—these and related questions demand the immediate attention of every good citizen. When the citizens refuse time and again to vote the funds asked for by the councillors whom they have themselves chosen to manage the city's affairs, it is evident that the wheels of civic administration are nearly at a deadlock, and disastrous consequences may at any moment ensue.

TO those who look at the matter from a theoretical point of view, nothing seems so natural as that the misunderstandings between labour and capital should find their ultimate solution in some application of the principle of co-operation, or at least of profit-sharing. It is pleasing to learn that the latter method of harmonizing the interests of employer and employed is making substantial progress on both sides of the ocean. At a recent meeting of the Unitarian Club in Boston, Rev. Dr. Gilman sketched the main features of the profit-sharing system and gave some interesting facts touching its successful application. The feasibility and economic value of the system are attested by the fact that it is now in operation in 250 or more firms. Seventy of these are in France, in which country the idea was, it is said, first reduced to successful practice. The *Maison le Claire*, in France, after forty-eight years' trial of profit-sharing, is to-day one of the most admirable industrial organizations in the world. Several well-known English firms are, as we have from time to time noted, applying the principle with excellent results. More than a dozen large American firms are cited as employing it, all of them eminently practical, driving business concerns. Their experience, it is asserted, removes all doubts of the practical advantages of this system. There is also abundant testimony as to its good moral effect. Roland Hazard, of the Peace Dale Mill, which uses this system, said at the Boston gathering that there was a better feeling between employer and employed. Rev. Brooke Herford told the story of the Briggs collieries, in South Yorkshire, England, where profit-sharing was begun in 1865, and which broke down after about seven years' trial, not because of the strain of failure, but because of the strain of enormous success. While it lasted it turned an employment which had been a misery into a blessing, and made a good class of citizens of men who had formed the worst class in Yorkshire. The objection has sometimes been made that if the employees are to have, in addition to their wages at current rates, a share of the profits of the concern with which they are connected, in its successful years, they should, by parity of reasoning, bear a share of the losses in unsuccessful years. In regard to this point Dr. Gilman said: "If the commercial department shows a balance on the wrong side at the end of the year the workman gets no bonus, but he cannot in right or reason be asked to contribute to make good losses which he had no share in incurring, as he had no power over the business management." Many of our readers will probably recollect, however, the incident in connection with an English firm, which was noted in these columns some time since, in which the workmen voluntarily surrendered a portion of their wages in order to share with their employers the loss on an unsuccessful year's operations. That one fact, attested at the time by the manager, or one of the members of the firm, speaks volumes in behalf of the good moral effects of a system which must surely be destined to have a much wider application than it has yet received.