

*CHARITABLE CANT.*

"You preach your sermons, and you sing your songs, and talk your pious talk in the prayer-meetings, but the poor all around you are hungry and cold. Give us a little less theoretical and emotional religion, and a little more of the practical variety." We hear a good deal of this kind of talk, and a large share of it is simple cant. There is humanitarian cant that is just as meaningless and nauseating as the cant of the prayer-meetings.

Of course, the duty of caring for the poor is the first of Christian duties. When you find a starving family you must feed them first and preach to them afterward. Of course, the religion that is merely theological or sentimental is the worst sort of a sham.

But, in the first place, the work of visiting the sick and feeding the hungry is mostly done by the people who preach and sing in the churches, and who talk in the prayer-meetings. If the folks who stand outside and snarl at them did as much for the poor as they do they would find much less time for snarling.

In the second place, nine-tenths of these poor need moral help more than they need material help. While they are in their present condition of mind, alas are more likely to be a curse than a blessing to them. They are poor and degraded only because their inner life was first impoverished; if they could be taught self-denial and self-respect, and the value of character, they would speedily find their way out of pauperism. Inspire them with a higher motive, teach them to postpone present gratification for future good, lift up before them a hope of better life, and the great majority of them would soon be above the need of charity. In other words, the ideas and sentiments which it is the business of the churches to propagate, are what they are starving for. Those of them that come into the churches, not after the loaves and fishes, but after the Bread of Life, do not remain in penury and dependence very long.

The doctrines of the gospel, as interpreted by the evangelical branches are always potent in saving men from sin. Wherever preached in love, in fulness and in the fear of God, there will be conversions. The well-established principles of that "faith once delivered to the saints," are rock-like in weight, in security, and immovable in grandeur. They are as old as the beginnings, and as new as every new day's need. Science, as its secrets open, only proves the "old, old story" to be true. Preach this blessed power of salvation to all.—*Methodist Recorder.*