CASUAL COMMENTS.

REV MR GALBRAITH, pastor of Wesley church, is not satisfied with the Toronto dailies, complaining that they publish detailed reports of crime I would have thought that the Methodist clergy should be the last to find fault with them after their recent success in the suppression of the Potts scandal What greater subservience do they want than was displayed by the daily press in that instance, but it's the old tale of getting an inch and wanting an ell. His other remarks were in keeping with the cover-up policy of this good town of ours Ignorance is classed as innocence and an appearance of goodness must be maintained at any cost. How much longer will this fallacy prevail, and how long will our teachers of morals set this baneful example? But I must hush this language is insulting, at least so the *Ministerial* Association says. I see that someone had courage enough to write to that august body the other day regarding their attitude on the amusement question The letter was considered to be couched "in such language that it amounted to an insult to the ministers of this city" I have seen a copy of the letter, and I defy any member of the Association to point to one expression that warrants such a statement The worst that can be said of it is that it is true, and the latter part of it which dealt with the advisability of devoting their time to more important subjects, was worthy of their "serious consideration"

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ALD. HALL and a few others are doing noble work for their friends the contractors, and will doubtless be affectionately remembered by them. They oppose the city ownership of anything outside the city hall, and if it were not too late it is fair to assume that they would support with alacrity a proposition from some syndicate to erect a building with civic funds and lease the city a room or two in it Just now a determined effort is being made to repeal the fifteen cent an hour by-law, continue the contract system, under which the supplying of the fire brigade horses has been a dead soft snap for some favored contractor, and discredit in every possible way the day labor plan of constructing civic works. With a little care the contractors' party in the council can easily be distinguished. Their strenuous efforts for the continuance of a system which gives them such shares as the Godson haul should receive due appreciation at the polls next January.

—

SPEAKING of the Godson affair, was there ever such an exhibition of unlimited nerve in this city as that displayed by his proposition to refer the matter to the Board of Trade for arbitration? A man charged with deliberate robbery of the city suggests that the amount of his stealing be left to arbitration, and yet none of the dailies appeared to think it anything out of the way They let him down so gently in their editorial columns that you really hate to turn back to the account of the judge's finding to see if it wasn't all a mistake. If only the capital *lackers* stood by each other as the capitalists do, it wouldn't be long until both classes would be wiped out.

—

COMING along Carlton street the other day I was struck by a haughty stare from something in a passing dog cart. My attention thus attracted, I saw that a man sat beside it on the seat clad in the livery of servitude, arms correctly folded, head at the proper angle, and with as great an appearance of inferiority to the driver as was possible under the circumstances. This was what he was paid for, and he was only doing his best to earn his wages so we shouldn't blame *him*. But think of the irony of it. Here is a man withdrawn from the army of producers and *paid* to sit in idleness to give a distinguished appearance to another idler, and at the same moment numbers of shoeless, bootless, and coatless people are wondering why there are not enough of those articles to go round, while others are asking why there is not food enough to give them more than one meal a day. Society, aided by our friends the clergy, think it's all right, and that we who differ from them are cranks, doctrinaires, and many other things too numerous to mention.

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I WAS informed a day or two ago by one of the aldermen that a prominent labor man had said to him that as long as the city got a fair price for the franchise the Trades and Labor Council didn't care whether the road was run by the city or not. I was not aware that that body had so completely changed their minds on the question, nor do I believe that they have The city ought not to hesitate for a day about the advisability of running the road in the interests of the citizens. The advantages to be secured by such a course of action are so numerous that it seems incredible to me that there should be any question as to it being the best thing to do It would do away with all possibility of strikes, expensive arbitration, disputes with the company, and ensure to the city a service fully up to the latest improvements in transport systems. We could have reduced fares whenever the running expenses warranted it, and would above all retain control of the city's streets, barring the rights of a few electric light, telephone, and gas companies But they will go later

—

WE are slowly coming to the conclusion that the city of Toronto can conduct its own business without the aid of capitalistic sharks, and an opportunity of retaining in our own hands one of the best paying departments of public service should not on any account be missed

—

I HAVE said a good deal lately the reverse of complimentary to the representatives of the cloth—perhaps too much—but I felt they deserved it. Perhaps on this account I have all the more pleasure in noting the accession to their ranks of a broad-minded, fearless man I refer to the Rev. Mr Jackson, the new pastor of the Unitarian church. He is unfortunate like myself in being a young man, and will no doubt on that account be frequently considered very presumptuous He will "be carried away by the enthusiasm of youth," and will often "forget himself" These qualities in older men are called fearlessness and intense earnestness, they never "forget themselves," they only "lose themselves in their subject." Still for all this the thinking people of Toronto will be glad to welcome him, and the others might be able to forgive his youth if he agreed with them. For myself I am glad he is young—if we were all old with settled opinions on everything we could hardly say "the world do move"

BEV.

FREEDOM'S BATTLE.

THE FIGHT FOR AN EIGHT HOUR DAY—THE OUTLOOK IN EUROPE AND AMERICA.

FROM all directions come the news of preparations for a keen conflict between labor and capitalism for shorter hours of labor. By common consent the first of May has been selected as the date on which the organized labor of both continents will practically assert the principle that eight hours ought to be the outside limit of a day's labor. It is estimated that unless the employers yield—of which there appears no likelihood—fully half a million men will go out on strike. The result of the contest will be eagerly watched by Canadian workmen.

IN THE UNITED STATES.

The bituminous coal trade has suffered a terrible blow from the coke strike, and will suffer a greater one on May 1st. As far as is known up to this time, the eight hour strike of May 1st will be joined in by the 15,000 bituminous miners of the Clearfield, Huntingdon and Broad Top region, and the 10,000 men in what is known as the Pittsburg district of railroad miners. The latter are distributed along the Baltimore and Ohio, Pennsylvania and Pan Handle lines, within a radius of seventy-five miles of Pittsburg. The 50,000 coal miners of Ohio, West Virginia, Indiana and Illinois are also in the movement, and most of them will make a stand for the eight hour day.

In New York the situation is alarming, and half a dozen trades unions will go out of work on the refusal of an eight hour day. At St. Louis the outlook is good. Carpenters, marblecutters, carriagemakers and others are in line with the army of strikers, and will listen to no compromise. In Baltimore the stonecutters have set their teeth in the face of employers, and unless their requisition is heard before May 1st they will, to a man, march in to fight for shorter hours. In New England there is less agitation. Boston workmen want a nine hour day and more pay, and the smaller cities are in sympathy with the Hub. Excepting the miners, the trouble does not appear to be dangerous in the cities of Ohio, Cincinnati and Cleveland.

WHERE THE STRIKERS ARE LOCATED

The following table shows in figures the workmen in leading cities who will go out May 1:

Western Coal Mines	
Estimated in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and West Virginia	75,000
New York:	
Bricklayers' helpers	20,000
Bricklayers	5,000
Housesmiths	3,000
Marble polishers and stone sawyers	1,200
Furniture workers	3,000
Varnishers	2,000
Machine woodworkers	400
Baltimore:	
Stonecutters	2,000
Pittsburg	
Carpenters	5,000
St. Louis:	
All trades (estimated)	15,000

IN EUROPE

According to the cable despatches, "Anarchists" are busy throughout Europe organizing for a general strike. In Paris, Vienna and Madrid they are distributing fiery circulars. Fifty thousand of these circulars are said to have been distributed in the barricks of Paris surreptitiously during the past week.

Meetings of workingmen were held on Sunday throughout Austria and Hungary to arrange for demonstrations. In Spain the workingmen are agitating in Barcelona, Valencia, Cadiz Valladolid, Saragossa and other places

All the European governments have decided to prohibit outdoor demonstrations. The employers are combining to refuse a holiday in Spain and insist that every indoor meeting must be attended by a Government delegate

BEFORE FACTORY LEGISLATION.

THE STATE OF THINGS WHICH HERBERT SPENCER AND OTHER INDIVIDUALISTS WISH TO RESTORE.

THE victory of combination over competition is perhaps an economical result not to be regretted, but socially and politically it is fraught with grave perils Can anyone read the story of unrestricted competition in England before the conscience of the nation was expressed through its statutes, and wish to renew the era of laissez fare? We extract from David F. Schloss a article in the *Fortnightly Review* on "The Road to Social Peace," a well-drawn picture of those times "Never yet in the history of the world had the lower orders of society been plunged in an abyss of misery so profound as that into which the working classes of England sunk in the first half of the present century.

At the same time the continual improvements in labor-saving machinery enormously increased the number of the unemployed Wages fell to starvation point, while the hours of labor were extended to the most cruel length. The employer exercised an unbounded domination, compelling his workmen to purchase their supplies in shops belonging to their master, at any price which they chose to fix, to live in cottages for which he exacted exorbitant rents, and from which his caprice might at any moment eject them, and to risk their lives, from hour to hour, in tending dangerous machinery, which his callous parsimony allowed to remain without the slightest protection. Cheap as was the labor of men, it was yet too dear for the taste of the factory owners. Out of a total of 119,560 factory operatives employed in England in 1844, there were 242,296 females, of whom no less than 112,192 were under the age of eighteen years; while the number of males over that age was only 96,503. When we learn that it was usual for women to continue working almost up to the very hour of parturition, and to return to the factory within eight days after child-birth, we can easily understand how it was that in these evil days the physique of our working classes exhibited—as irrefragable evidence proves that it did—the most grave deterioration as to the intellectual position of the workers, it is not too much to say that they were left in a state of savage ignorance. Home life, under these circumstances, there could be none, drunkenness and immorality were universal; thrift was unheard of. Pauperism found no place in the hearts of the toilers in our factories, our fields, or our mines. The Church neglected their spiritual, the great world paid no heed to their material requirements. Crime grew apace. Between 1805 and 1835 convictions in England and Wales increased five-fold."

LITERARY NOTES.

ARCHDEACON FARRAR will contribute an appreciative paper on "The Salvation Army" to the next number of *Harper's Magazine*.

THE May number of the *North American Review* will contain a reply from Sir Charles Tupper to Mr Erastus Wiman's recent article, and also an article by the Marquis of Lorne on "Canada and the United States."

THE statement that Rev. Dr. Mendelhall, of Cleveland, is the author of "The Breadwinners" is denied by the publishers, Messrs. Harper Bros., of New York, who say that they negotiated with another person as the author. So the question is yet unsolved It looks a good deal like another "Beautiful Snow" mystery.

"THE intellectual progress of the West," says the *New England Magazine*, "is indicated by the number of good and valuable books that are being put forth by Chicago publishers, where but few really important publications appeared a few years ago. The fact may as well be recognized, in spite of the humorous paragraphers of rival cities, that Chicago is rapidly becoming a literary centre."

HART & Co., Toronto, have in hand a translation by Charles G. D. Roberts of "The Canadians of Old," by Philipe Aubert de Gaspé, a historical romance embodying many interesting descriptions of life, and fascinating legends of French Canada in the early 18th century. They also announce a work entitled "The New Empire," by O. A. Howland, barrister, dealing with the Canadian constitution and our relations with the United States.

At the recent bookseller's trade dinner in London, John Murray, jr., said in an address that while individual authors now make larger sums than ever before, there is yet greater poverty and distress among authors; there is greater research on individual subjects, and a greater degree of slovenliness; there is keener criticism on all that is published, and yet more worthless productions appear; there is greater education and less discrimination among the public; books are cheaper than ever, and yet individual books sell for fabulous prices.

We have received a copy of the second edition of John Imrie's poems, with an introduction by Gilbert Mercer Adam, published by Messrs. Imrie & Graham, Toronto. Mr Imrie is one of the best-known of the rapidly-increasing number of Canadian poets. His verse is simple and unpretentious, and totally devoid of that artificial straining after effect which mars the work of so many modern writers, but always characterized by true poetic feeling and melodious expression His themes are mostly those of every-day life, and are treated feelingly and in a manner which renders it evident that the author writes from the heart The volume includes a number of songs set to music, and is got up in neat typographical style It may be commended to all who enjoy the poetry of the domestic affections and the simple joys of life

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EDUCATION of the industrial masses brings thought, and thought brings discontent when things are viewed from the right direction. As fast as the people are educated and can see and think for themselves, they are condemning the present system of robbery that has been overshadowing them for the last decade They have no use for modern politics or modern politicians.—*Midland Mechanic*

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