

Talks about Books.

MESSRS. DRYSDALE & CO. have just issued the report of the recent meetings of the Evangelical Alliance in this city under the name of *Vital Questions*, Montreal Christian Conference, October, 1888. This paper bound volume of about 300 pages contains the papers read, addresses delivered, and reports of the discussions that followed, during the week of the Alliance meeting. One expects to find all sorts of things in a Conference, and as a rule is not disappointed. In most of them there is gush, the outcome of Christianity which, while innocent of intellectual activity, is yet threatened with softening of the brain. The Montreal Conference, if it had any of this article, has been wise enough not to publish it. Then one looks for eloquence, which in its efforts to attract popular attention may range from Demosthenes to Mark Twain. There is a little eloquence, not much, nor does it look foolish on paper as it sometimes does. Taking it altogether, it was a working Conference, and its report sets forth a good amount of honest work in the collection of facts and orderly statement of principles. It was also a kindly Conference, for even when the irrepressible juvenile, with a mission to convert his seniors grown grey in Christ's service, administered rebukes to the grave and reverend, they did not resent it, but metaphorically patted the little curly head and said "Go on brother." There were in all ten sessions of the Conference, two of which were taken up with addresses of welcome and responses, and with Alliance business. Of the remaining eight, no fewer than three were devoted to the Church of Rome, a compliment which that ancient body of sectaries did not becomingly appreciate and acknowledge. Current Unbelief, Capital and Labour, National Perils, Co-operation in Christian Work, and the Church in its Relation to the Evangelization of the World, were the topics discussed in the other five.

In a brief review such as the Talks can afford it would be profitless to take up every paper and address and characterize each with a word, yet it may seem invidious to make distinctions. Let us however be invidious in the old sense of failing to see all that is contained within the *Vital Questions*, but not in that which would grudge a meed of praise to any writer or speaker kind enough to devote his time and talents gratuitously to the best of works. On the subject of Current Unbelief the Chancellor of Victoria University writes briefly but manfully, exhibiting an insight into the actual phenomena of the age and their causes, and setting forth the duty of the