

CASUAL COMMENTS.

In the way these of the most prominent of our religious bodies met in Conference, Synod and Assembly, received the circular addressed to them by the joint-committee of the various social reform societies, in any indication of the spirit pervading the churches, it will be a long time before "the Church" takes any actual part in the work to improve the material condition of our fellow-men. Copies of the address, which appeared in the Labour Advocate last week, were sent to the Methodist Conference, the Anglican Synod, the Presbyterian Assembly and the Congregational Union. The Methodists decided that it was unnecessary to take any action, as the matter did not concern "the Church," and the Anglicans quietly shied from it by a motion acknowledging the receipt of the document. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church passed a resolution "in sympathy with every wise effort" in the direction indicated, but in no way committing themselves to any action in the way of studying the causes of the social ills, or the remedies for such social ills. Only the Congregational Union perceived that there was any connection between social reform and Christianity. The committee to whom it was referred reported strongly in favor of co-operation by the Christian Church with any movement having for its object the betterment of mankind, and this report was subsequently adopted by the Union.

This is exactly the attitude of the "Church" as a whole on this question—a small section sympathizing with the efforts of those engaged in the fight, a large number oppose it, and the majority are passively indifferent. To oppose or to ally oneself, "it is not their business." The Church has weighed matters to consider that such trivial things as the address called attention to—such questions as, Shall milk or papers be sold on Sunday? Shall our children be brought up with the Church of England catechism sandwiched in between their three Ps and shall the boys be allowed to escort the girls home from prayer-meeting?

AS FOR those who are a matter of intense importance; vital issues hang upon their action. Perhaps the whole future of the race may be affected by the manner of their answering. No doubt it is only my ignorance that prevents my seeing this; but all I can say is, if it be ignorance, "Good Lord deliver us" from their fatalism. It is necessary to exalt such miserable grub-killing into a fight against evil. I prefer to continue on the way that "leads to anarchism" to following our "spiritual leaders" in such a noble crusade against "the works of the devil."

Moist importance to prohibit the sale of milk on Sundays. It is to remove the causes which compel women to sell their virtue for a livelihood. More important to struggle for the teaching of Anglican doctrines than to strive to make it possible for the children of the toilers to obtain leisure enough to receive the education necessary to make them good citizens. More important to regulate the hours of the young people after prayer-meeting than to prevent the expiring of the fruits of toil by those who stand by while the lower classes work and live like beasts in order that they may live delicately. Perhaps, but I can't see it, nor will most of you who read the Labour Advocate.

Yes this is precisely what these bundles of old Christian Church say by their action. As "Don" said in Saturday Night a few weeks ago, a good many of our ministers do not care how many hours non work through the week, so that they rest on Sunday and are able to come to church and drop their nickel into the slot of a theological machine which will at some future time return them a white robe and a tarp. This is about the size of it, and they call this Christianity. It is enough to make one say, as some have said, that the world would have been better without it, that more good would have been accomplished, more justice done, if Jesus of Nazareth had never been born. Were it not for the grandeur of His teachings, that the nobleness of His life and dogma so carefully placed over them by the Church, I would have joined this voice of protest long ago. Some day the van will be lifted and true Christianity will take its proper place in the world, and the words of the Reformer of Nazareth, which are but the utterance of eternal truths, will be acted upon by right and justice, will be acted upon by those who profess to follow Him. But it is not yet.

A GREAT deal of fun has at different times been poked at Ald. Hewitt on account of his banana peddler, but it is a question had some of those who laughed so merrily sat down hurriedly on account of these same peddlers, whether they would not have thought the laugh better directed against themselves and their foolish ridicule of a greatly needed measure. Certainly if people who appear to be utterly thoughtless will persist in strewing the pavements with these menaces to life and limb, they should be restrained. If common sense and a little thought for the safety of others will not influence them, the effect of a dollar and costs might well be tried.

I HAVEN'T had a fall through stepping on the back of the popular fruit, but I've heard of many who have, and thought it would be worth while pointing out the dangers attendant upon this and other thoughtless actions. Dropping a banana peel or an orange skin on the pavement is the easiest way of disposing of it, but it may be the cause of many weary days of suffering to some one else. The person falling is the least winner—others will suffer too, all through your carelessness or indifference. We notice an obstruction on the sidewalk or roadway; it's not our business to remove it, so we bring someone else to stumble over. Passing the elevator shaft in a building, we notice the gate open or close it, so it's left open, and someone walks to their death. These are only instances of many similar opportunities to prevent suffering, perhaps save life, that are neglected because it's none of our business. They ought to be our business. We should, if it is in our power to do it, consider the small amount of time necessary to check a banana or orange peel off the sidewalk, remove a brick or a stone or mark a hole, or to close the elevator gate, as well spent. Besides, in doing these little things we cultivate a trait of character, thoughtfulness of others, which goes a long way to make the individuality we are building up a good deal nearer completeness.

WANTING a trip to somewhere by water on Saturday, I took the steamer Macassa to Hamilton, and spent the day in our sister city. Hamilton is a pretty place, when you get to see more of it, and justifies the expense made to take a citizen like in it. Of course that is the chief characteristic of the residents. Everything in Hamilton or connected with it is just about right. Their bay, beach and mountain are familiar subjects for laudation, and in the last two years the oats which take you there have been added to the list. The Macassa and Madjagosa to Hamilton take out good ground for their enthusiasm, for the veterans are all that could be desired in the way of speed, comfort and safety, and the sail from Toronto to Hamilton and back, in sight of shore all the way, is perfect. I know that I hope to repeat the trip frequently before the season closes.

SUMMER time, to us who live by the shores of Ontario, should be full of enjoyment. There are so many pleasant ways of spending a day or an afternoon, and most of us can manage an occasional trip somewhere which is only to the island. The fact that this is not possible to some, save through the efforts of the Fresh Air Fund, should be a good reason for contributing to that excellent institution. It has come to stay, and Mr. Kelso is again ready to receive contributions, be they small or large. On the basis of last year's expense, every ten cents you send gets some child an outing, so send in as many as you can.

ITEMS OF INTEREST. In tearing down an old chimney at Fowler Street, on Friday, the other day, \$1,000 in gold was found. An Atholton (Kan.) man has sent a \$5 to England in an envelope every year for the past twenty years, and has never lost a dollar. N.Y.R. Buchanan, (Ga.), a day or two ago, W. A. Keith found a solid block near the center of the heart of a pig. How the rock got there is a mystery.

THERE are now, it is said, 194 cottonseed oil mills in the southern States, with aggregate capital of over \$20,000,000, \$3,000,000, in 1880. A crew of 216 men on the United States cutter, the Fish Hawk, which recently arrived at San Francisco, only forty are Americans. The rest are principally English, Irish, French, German, Scandinavian, Dutch, Japanese and Chinese.

A PHILADELPHIA chicken exhibits rare intelligence. A baker who supplies the family with bread is not very industrious; the front gate by his chicken, as soon as she hears the baker too his horn. She then commences to cackle and is given her customary meal of bread crumbs. The baker happens to be late in the morning she will walk sometimes half a mile to meet him. She never allows herself at the gate on Sunday morning.

POETRY

LOOK HIGHER. Inferred to the Quarterly Clergyman of New York. ASK is there no way that is better To help the sad world in its need, Than that to fight over the leter, Forgetting the needs of the dead? Whatever the cause or the reason You hold for this strife, in the end We circle toward the goal of reason To Christ, when you claim to defend.

The man of the cruel Middle Ages Has grown into something too high, To feel his starved soul on dull pages Of dogmas, as useless as dry. The thoughts of the world is preaching; So, lay your case on a better ground; Away with your technical teaching, And show us the Christ in ourselves!

Here cut of old ruts with his hollow And fear-fallen faiths. Mount above Where the world is all ready to follow, And seek the religion of love. As sure as the stars in your courses We circle toward the goal of reason, We are part of the Infim to Free—Our faces are turned to the light.

We cannot plod on in dark byways That limit the width of the soul, Our spirits soar up to the high ways; And we are part of the whole! We want not a creed, nor a matter, So long as his hands lead us to God, So long as his aim is to cheer. The best of right is living abroad.

How can we look up to our teachers, Unless they are higher than we? Come up, then, ye priests and ye preachers, Stand on top of truth's hilltop, and see How regard the crowd you are vaunting, When viewed from the mountains above, And how all that is dead and staid is wanting In the sweet endless lesson of Love. —Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

A MOTHERLY old cat near Hatford, Mich., having been deprived of her kittens a short time ago, adopted in their stead a young rat, and, not having its eyes open, probably did not detect the change in percentage. The cat cared for its adopted offspring very carefully until it grew to be good meat, and then it mysteriously disappeared.

It is told of Thad Butler, editor of the Huntington, Ind. Herald, that when he was married some years ago he had announced the event:—"Married—In Wabash, Ind., Tuesday, April 4th, at the residence of the bride's parents, Mr. Thad Butler (that's me) and Miss Kate E. Sivey (that's more of us)."

John Russey is a singularly insignificant-looking little man, with large blue eyes and a white beard, and is extremely tender as regards his personal appearance. He is quoted as saying that he is dissatisfied with all his portraits, and that the truer and more candid they are the less he cares for them. "I like to be flattered both by pen and pencil, so it is done prettily and in good taste," he said recently. He is now seventy-two, and is dressing up in the evening like a tranquil retirement. Mentally, he is a veritable "sensitive plant." On bright, clear days he is bouyant and elastic, but on dull, wet days he is equally moody and misanthropic. His two great aversions are tobacco and stupid people.

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