

cumbent on Canadian philanthropists to exercise their benevolent wits to find out remedies for those evils inherent in unorganized attempts at relief.

WHAT ARE THESE EVILS?

They are embraced in the one result of creating a class of *professional beggars*, who follow begging shamelessly, with resort to all the "tricks of a trade" peculiarly susceptible to misuse. They beg without stint and without ceasing, they are never satisfied, while any "mine" of charity remains unexplored—societies and individuals, none are spared. The benevolent gentleman sitting at his grate fire after dinner, finishing up the day's "chores" of business, while the wind howls fiercely outside his casement, is a plump and ready prey. He is taken at an advantage, and gratitude for the possession of his own pleasant and comfortable surroundings makes him disposed to "shell out" for the benefit of every applicant that professes to be in want. There is no time to investigate—and so the pauperizing goes on, "wholesale" in fact.

WHY IS THERE NO CHECK?

The reason of such unchecked liberality and generosity is that people generally have no confidence in the effectiveness of various existing relief agencies—they overlap and outstrip and overlook so notoriously, that many cases of real hardship may be imagined to exist, while much relief given is misplaced, disproportionate, or useless. A lot of good natured blundering men—with an immense idea of their own "business capacity" in this matter—organize a relief association, and make a dash at the work in the style of a "bull in a china shop." The "dear ladies," horrified by the stupid mismanagement of those horrid men, organize another society, and try to patch up the mistakes of the others. Englishmen, Irishmen, and Scotchmen, fancy their several national brothers are being neglected: so they form their St. George's, St. Patrick's, and St. Andrew's Societies. This and that "Church" gets the same feeling that indiscriminate charity is often too discriminating—against them: so they organize too. Then, too, the municipality "must do its duty!"

"CONFUSION WORSE CONFOUNDED"

is the natural result, and amid this very wreck of charity, paupers of the worst class reap the golden harvest. They get enough food to feed a small army, enough clothing to cover a whole tribe! Very naturally the surplus is disposed of "cheap," and a nice little fortune is realized by those who are most skilful and unscrupulous at "working this mine." The worst of it is that, in "all this confusion," the very needy and most deserving cases are just the ones which are most overlooked. They are left behind in the "scramble:" they go to the wall—exist (if they do not die) on the verge of starvation, half frozen and wholly miserable. The worse the weather, the more feverish the haste with which "charity" is dispensed by all hands—and, as usual, "more haste the worse speed."

THE REMEDY IS OBVIOUS.

Do something clear and unmistakable to restore the want of confidence which exists as to the efficiency of these clashing methods of relief. Whatever sort of relief any person or society undertakes should be administered (1) *thoroughly*—so that no excuse will exist for asking or giving any more relief of that kind. (2) No one society or agency can give, fully and sufficiently, all sorts of relief: so, each should have some *specialty*—

wood, coal, clothing, food, meal, meat, medicine, shelter, work, etc. (3) The quantity of relief should accurately correspond with a definite period of *time* for which it is supposed to be given. Suppose, for instance, the men's association (which usually exists everywhere) undertakes to supply all the *fuel* needed by everyone in need within a certain area and for a certain time—and nothing else. The "Woman's Relief" might fitly undertake to supply all the ordinary *food* required in the same area and time. The national societies might undertake to add to this such luxuries or delicacies as they think advisable: meat, medicine, etc.—equally needed by weak or delicate persons. The churches or religious associations could supply the *clothing*, and the municipality could easily provide shelter or work.

THIS WOULD RESTORE CONFIDENCE,

insure effectiveness and relief, and do away with all possibility of successful imposture. Each applicant would simply be referred to the particular agency which his needed relief would indicate: and the benevolent individual need do nothing more than supply his cash, fuel, clothing, victuals, etc., to the proper agencies, respectively: trusting to them severally to distribute his bounty according to need and with due circumspection in the proper quarter. The work of a "Conference of charities" would be to *organize inspection*, mapping the given area out into small districts with plenty of visitors carefully assigned to each and all, who would recommend each case in the proper quarter, with all desirable particulars. This plan would give full play to male and female, religious, national and municipal benevolence—regulating and encouraging, but not checking or hindering its outflow, and—*boycott pauperism!*

"CRANKS."

The variety of species in this class of human beings is almost infinite. They vary from the comparatively harmless soft-headed species whose members each fancies himself the only person capable of running a newspaper or an hotel, to those dangerous characters who indulge in the assassination of better men than themselves—kings, presidents, mayors, etc. Indeed, medical experts give us to understand that the line between sanity and insanity is so faintly drawn that there is room for large difference of opinion even among the most sane specimens of humanity as to the position of many a criminal who stands somewhere in the vicinity of the borderland. There have been "philosophers" who denied the existence of *matter*, just as there are "scientists" (?) nowadays who deny the existence of *disease*! It is open to question whether there is really any such thing as we so often read about—a "*harmless crank*." Those who hold such absurd notions about hotels, newspapers, matter and disease, come nearest to it: but even they do harm—by their senseless talk. They infect other ninnies and at last do outrageous things.

THEIR THREATS

are sometimes by no means "idle"—especially when they take the form of murder. How many valuable lives would have been saved to the world ere now, if the proper authorities had noted the so-called "idle threats" of hair-brained cranks, vowing vengeance on their superiors in Church or State. Such persons should instantly be placed in *close confinement*. It may be said that this would be "hard measure" to mete out to this army of idiots; but it would be discovered that such repressive measures would have a very whole-

some effect in silencing a number who do "idly" indulge in such threats, and the very silencing would gradually kill the tendency to give way to the thirst for vengeance, as a plant may be ruined by stripping it of leaves. Notoriety is the very "breath of their lives"—deny it to them and their crankism pines away and dies!

RESTRICTIVE MEASURES

would, indeed, have a far-reaching effect. We suffer in these days from *excess of liberty*—no one likes to interfere with "liberty of speech." Our American cousins have sometimes shown a surprising and refreshing vigour and decision of character in dealing with such matters. We know how Chicago once treated certain "anarchists"—the lesson seems to require repetition there. New York has now set up its "awful example"—Emma Goldman has been put on trial there for inciting to riot. The very arrest has wonderfully modified her anarchical views. "I do not believe in murder or in any act of violence except in self-defence. Well," says *Living Church*, "this is to roar as gentle as a sucking dove." In Spain, the other day, one of the same lot there threw a bomb which dealt death indiscriminately. He died with "Long live anarchy!" on his lips.

"TAKE THEM AT THEIR WORD,"

they cannot complain of that, and if they knew that such were to be the criterion of their guilt or innocence, they would assuredly be very careful of their words! It is just these "words" that do so much harm, uttered in the presence of thoughtless people who have just brains enough to see the meaning, and rush on impulsively to carry it out. Oftentimes these dupes are the ones who suffer for crime, because they have not sense enough to avoid the consequences of what they have done. Which is the more dangerous?—the Spanish or the New York crank cited above. The Spaniard certainly seems to have believed in his views most thoroughly, stood his trial bravely enough, etc., died "for his faith." Such a man or woman simply carries out a principle which—however absurd and suicidal even—has been instilled into his narrow brain until it becomes the one idea there.

WHO TAUGHT HIM?

That is the radical enquiry which ought to be set on foot by the authorities in regard to all such matters. "Free speech" must be limited by considerations of public safety, otherwise the byword "murder by a crank" will become more and more frequent as time goes on. There are certain blatant *demagogues* who labour to persuade people into thoughts which lead directly and unmistakably to just such deeds. The deeds of violence attributed to "insane cranks" are the natural result of their teachings. The old Roman maxim, *principiis obsta*, is the only one to apply if we wish to be effective. Even if the officials of justice cannot reach the very *root* of such matters, they can at least reach the "stem" of the noxious weed near enough the ground to deal with it effectively.

INFIDELITY AND SCEPTICISM

are, of course, responsible for much—we do not say "all"—of this sort of thing. One can easily see how the convinced atheist looks at such matters. He has only one principle of living—*self-interest*, as far as he can see. He does not want to see far—he might see too much! If there be no God, there is no right or wrong, no righteousness or crime; selfishness becomes the idol of the abandoned heart. Let somebody stand in the way of such a man, and his only idea of bettering