

CASUAL COMMENTS.

They are over one more. We are to have "The Old Man, The Old, etc. for another year, and, according to "the old supporters," the country has been saved again. I was going over the list of old chestnuts for the benefit of a good Ort, adding to it such items as appeared appropriate, when he struck in, "Yes, well have to do with our old things, time will be so hard that we will be able to get any new ones that we may want." These are about the sentiments expressed by the general public. A few "cranks" think that it will take more than a change of Government or a spirited trade policy to relieve the existing state of things. I am one of them, and not having faith in the honesty of the utterances or intentions of either party, I did not vote at all last "crack" except of elections. I hear you say, and I agree with you. Next time let us be able to report the election of a Labor Reform member for this good town of ours.

I was in a Sherbrooke Street car the other day, and opposite to me a lady was detailing to a friend the great work being done by some kind of willing workers among "those poor people." They appeared to be thoroughly in earnest, and no doubt really desired to help "the poor" in their need, but through all the conversation seemed to run the idea that they were divinely appointed dispensers of half worn pants and flannel petticoats to their less fortunate fellow mortals. When they were asked why they did after a while, to speak of the children, this idea would intrude itself, and you would see that they were considered a distinct race apart, "these poor wretched children." God had made them, it is true! He is to them our Father who art in Heaven, but, by some vague notion, they are their fathers and mothers are not, in common with us as members of man's great brotherhood, but "these poor people, you know." I am not one of those who attribute all efforts of this kind to a desire to let our light shine before men, for I know that many who go among the more unfortunate to help them in their need do so from the best and truest motives. It is worth every reward of the existence of the famine I have mentioned, that I am filled with contempt for the whole race of charity-mongers, and would see how we will be benefited by a system which makes charity a necessary virtue and divides so many of us into believers that we are benefactors when we are only giving to "these poor wretches," as they are termed, a little of what is theirs by right.

The notice of application for incorporation of The City and County Water, Light and Traction Company, which appears in the last issue of the Ontario Gazette, is worthy of careful perusal. They propose to bring water from Lake Simcoe to the city, and, after asking for power to construct all necessary works and to dispose of the surplus water as they may see fit, make some most important requests for power to acquire, take and use such lands as lands covered with water as may be necessary for the purposes of the Company; to acquire and reclaim marsh lands and lands covered with water, and to lease or sell such lands when so reclaimed; and with power to acquire and charge lands specially benefited by the operations of the Company, but not taken or acquired as for a local improvement." This, with liberty to occupy in all the business going, constitutes a portion of the moderate desires of the Company. One thing is lacking to make the bill complete, and I would suggest to Mr. W. G. McWilliams, their solicitor, that he amend the application so as to include power to close up all wells or other sources of water supply which are situated in the district reached by the Company. This could be represented as in the interests of the public health, and would no doubt be of great advantage to the Company. Taken in connection with the powers they are already applying for, it would be a very reasonable request. The fact of such applications being made shows to what an extent the giving of the rights of the people to a few individuals has been carried.

The Senate of the State of Minnesota has re-introduced a bill, introduced by Senator Hildes, for the appropriation of the battle, to be passed in the form of the punishment of any female person who shall in any public place display her neither limb or limb dressed in tight, or in any manner which shall make visible the shape and form of such neither limb. Poor Sisters! It is to be seen how we make such other cases of themselves, and yet they are considered as the benefactors of the Wyoming Legislature has gone them on a better. The members

of that august body have entered their solemn protest against the new State seal, because a nude figure appears upon it. The Governor has signified his intention of using the old draped seal until a govern can be made for the poor woman who is shivering upon the new. Here are a Senate and Legislature trying to create jobs where none existed. And now for a Town Council Blackout, Minn. To come any nearer than, fill out the seal. By a vote of four to one, a picture of ballet dancers shall be allowed upon bill boards in that town. Truly, these are noble deeds. Look at them! An act to regulate the length of women's skirts, a protest against the unclotching of male figures, and a law to prohibit the posting up of paper biller dancers. That, too, as a result of public opinion, which, while demanding such legislation, permits unto to ruin young girls and force women into a life of shame, and welcomes them into their houses with open arms, promising of course that their vices do not belong to our set and; they have money enough. This, while a law remains upon the statute book fixing the age at which a child may consent to her ruin at fourteen years. Apart from their comparative triviality, laws like these—protests of that kind, but make funneously where none was thought of—call attention to something which only a comparative few looked upon as indecent, and by the very forbidding of the view may create a desire to behold in secret pictures which are really obscene. No doubt the goodly, godly people of these States will congratulate themselves upon the great advance in public morality, but perhaps when some of their daughters are arrested for donning bathing suits, and so exposing said members, as would be quite possible under wording of the act, when their fellow citizens are looking in secret pictures which they have in their house a work of art, to which no obscenity, in their opinion, could be attributed, or when the Town Council, "in the interests of public morality," seized such obscene or satirical and destroyed it, they might realize that there was something not exactly right about such proceedings. Much done these, and the forbidding of the mails to Tolstoi's "Kreutzer Sonata" go hand in hand. "Cover up, cover up!" suppress "is the cry—make things immoral which are not immoral, and at any rate maintain the ignorance which is falsely termed innocence.

It is amusing to notice the unanimity which prevails among our civic solons upon one point. Each one is satisfied that the city would and would do things in a vastly superior manner if it were not for the incompetency and dishonesty of the other aldermen. If it were not for this, our water-works would be in good shape, we could operate the Street Railway, make our gas and electric light, and even reclaim Aabridge's! If all these things could be done if the terrible mismanagement of those other fellows did not stand in the way. I have spoken to a great many aldermen, and this is always how it lies. Now, why can't they just let the other way—the only way—to the realization that the dishonest and incompetent aldermen is located just about under their hat, and that if only he did the right and square thing the city could do just what they would like to see it do—manage its business in a business like manner. It's not hard to see that if it were not always the other fellow that needed to be straightened, we would have model care governments so quick that to one would know how it happened. I commend this to the aldermen for their consideration.

STRIKES AND HARD TIMES
Some people in this country have the idea that the numerous strikes of late in the Old Country are a sign that times are hard there, and that the working classes are being impoverished by free trade and harassed by want and low wages. But this is not the case. When there are many men are walking the streets in search of work, strikes are never heard of. The men are not so glad to get no kind of thing to do, and to accept any kind of wages to make any kind of face about it. They know that if they are not satisfied with their work they can get another kind. With good times, lots of work, increased wages and security of workers, the men seem as advantage to themselves, and the trades unions begin to move for more pay and less hours of work. At such times the bosses don't themselves so pleased to treat their men as they do. They don't get down and fight their men, and in consequence would rather make terms with them than quarrel with them. The men, however, often press for the whole bag of goods, and thus strikes are seen when trade is down. *Hamilton Times.*

NEWS FROM NOWHERE.

AN INTERESTING NEW BOOK ON THIS SOCIAL QUESTION, BY HONOR O. PASTOR, HAS THE FOLLOWING IN THE "NEWS FROM NOWHERE" THE LATEST OF WILLIAM MORRIS' BOOKS.

William Morris as the well known English poet and Socialist of the school represented by the London "Commonweal" "News from Nowhere" is the story of a man who after attending a Socialist meeting in London, went to bed and to sleep, and dreamed that he awoke in a new world. In his latest article in the book the author tells what the man dreamed he saw and of the people he dreamed he met. The work belongs to the class of stories which include "Looking Backward," "A Fair Look Ahead," and "Omny Column," but, in my opinion, is a considerably superior and more subject matter to any of its predecessors. The style is more charming, and the subject matter pleasing in the extreme.

One naturally compares Mr. Morris' idea of the regenerated future to that of Mr. Bellamy's, and in my opinion, "Looking Backward" is very greatly by the comparison. Mr. Bellamy's book is so interesting that I have read it several times, and it has a very strong effect upon the mind also with an increasing sense of oppression in contemplating the mechanical system of industry proposed in his book. When the smell of the earth, the rustling of the young leaves, and the chirping of the birds, and the fresh air of the mind, and invite the body to indolent repose.

In Mr. Morris' book there are no great cities, no dwelling factories, no telegrams, no telephones, no hurrying, hurrying people. London has become a peaceful community, with certain centres about which are placed in which the people live in low artistic houses with thatched roofs. The Thames flows on either side with its willow grass, and bridged with structures built of massive oak instead of ugly iron. The people move up and down the stream in boats and barges, and about the country on foot or in marriage.

No system of education is in vogue. Books are out of fashion, the inhabitants of "Nowhere" being interested mainly in the growth of grain, fruits and flowers, and the passing events of the day. Very few modern books are to be seen, but almost all the old ones, with the result of having things that are well made and very artistic. Nothing is said of paintings, or sculpture, or theatre, and the reader understands, without the author having to tell him, that where the people want for nothing there is no market. The things which mainly serve to partially feed and satisfy the soul.

The society which Mr. Morris depicts is not composed of perfect persons, by any means. There are some who are dishonest, and occasionally a swindler is committed, but in "Nowhere" they understand much better how to deal with murderers than we do, so we may be seen by reading chapters 24 and 25. The author of "News from Nowhere" has been particularly happy in his choice of delivery and suggestiveness in handling his difficult subject, and particularly successful in portraying a people who have all the so-called naturalness of primitive peoples coupled with the grace and finesse which belong to real civilization. The author would have us believe that the imaginary society he portrays is Communism, and perhaps it is, but we need not quarrel about names. The charm of the book is that it shows what might be if there were no poverty, and no selfish individual freedom. What matters it what a system makes it under it if it is voluntarily poor, and no one is compelled to do what he does not wish to do, and Mr. Morris has tried to present the idea of such a system, and to try and make it do better than any one else.

It is to be expected that the conservative press will not do "News from Nowhere" as an inspiring dream, and so, for the present, it is, but some of us are thankful that there are men who dream such dreams, and that we are some extent, understand what they mean when they tell us of what they dream.

RECENTLY in Portland, Me. two ladies who had not seen each other for fifty-three years, met at a party. After a brief recognition, one of these recollected that at their last meeting the Liverpool fifty-cent piece for the date was in her pocket, and she had it with her. She will send the lady her pocket, but the borrower is satisfied upon payment of principal and interest.

EMPIRESS HOTEL, 329 Yonge Street, Toronto. Richard Binnet, Proprietor.

Machinery, Milling, Paper, etc. COSGRAVE & CO. Milliners, Dressers and Bottlers, TORONTO. Also supplying the Trade with their ALLES AND BROWN STOUT, Pilsener Beer, etc. etc. etc. Solely recommended by the Medical Faculty for their purity and strengthening qualities. Drinking Office, NAGARA and Queen Streets Telephone No. 294.



AGENTS WANTED TO SELL CHILD'S BIBLE AND CHILD'S LIFE OF

CHRIST THE BEST SELLING BOOKS OF THE DAY. Grip Printing & Publishing Co. 26 & 28 Front St. W. TORONTO.

JAMES MURRAY & CO. ALL BRITISH MANUFACTURE. PHOTO & HALF-TONE. A SPECIALTY IN MAGAZINE NEWS PAPERS ETC. WALL MAPS FOR SCHOOLS.

Table with columns for City, Price, and other details. Includes entries for Montreal, Quebec, Toronto, etc.

The most accurate and best series of wall maps published. Drawn and surveyed by the most eminent authorities. V. G. O. N. Publishers, Montreal or Toronto, with Railway, Club, and other maps.

Established by A. Patterson MAMMOTH BOOK STORE 250 CHURCH ST. NEW AND STANDARD BOOKS. THE LATEST YEAR BOOK, MY LAND'S A GOOD ONE, etc.

Bond Street Laundry, 88 Bond Street. Gent's Work a Specialty. A. T. HERNON, The Wash and Clean Specialist BUTCHER.

A. ELVINS, Merchant Tailor. To be found as usual at No. 9 Adelaide - Yonge St. AGENTS WANTED! THE LABOR ADVOCATE. In Every City and Town in Ontario. T. O. WILSON, Manager, GRIP PRINTING & PUBLISHING COMPANY.

THE HIGH SCHOOL Drawing Course. The course is now complete! No. 1 - FRENCH. No. 2 - PRACTICAL GEOMETRY. No. 3 - LINING PERSPECTIVE. No. 4 - OBJECT DRAWING. No. 5 - INDUSTRIAL DESIGN. PRICE, ONLY 15c. PER COPY. Grip Printing & Publishing Co. TORONTO.