

of conjecture. The death of King Edward has changed everything. A desire on the part of all parties to avoid anything which might embarrass the new Sovereign, and a general inclination toward compromise which the interval of cooler thinking has aroused, have resulted in the conference, between quartets of leaders from the Liberal and Conservative parties, which has been going on for several weeks. Shortly before adjournment Mr. Asquith reported in the House of Commons that the Conference was proceeding satisfactorily but slowly, and that its meetings would be continued. In whatever form the question finally presents itself to Parliament in November, it will most certainly not present so threatening an aspect of a lighted candle over an open powder keg as it displayed in the first few weeks of the present Parliament. England generally compromises her serious difficulties, and with happy results to all but the extremists on both sides.



WHAT A LABOR UNION CAN DO

A curious strike ran a brief but instructive course in England a fortnight ago. It began without notice and spread with startling rapidity among all classes of workers on the Northeastern Railway. It quickly threatened widespread disaster in the region served by the Northeastern. The London "Times," only a day or two after the strike had begun, said: "Trade is at a standstill. Food is perishing on the quays, ships can neither load nor unload, nor without the greatest difficulty supply themselves with coal; passenger as well as goods traffic is suspended; collieries are already closed, throwing thousands of miners out of work, and more must presently follow. The iron and steel trades must shortly be paralyzed, reducing a huge and industrial population to idleness." The pretext for the strike, though it can hardly have been the real cause, was the discharge of an employee who refused to accept transference from one end of a railway yard to the other. Beyond the reinstatement of this man, no demand seems to have been made on the company by the strikers. The officials of the trade union to which most of the men on strike belonged—the Amal-

gamated Society of Railway Servants—learned of the strike only through the newspapers, and apparently could get no better information about the real or imagined grievances of the men than could the company or the public. The union officials, however, acted promptly and forcefully. They told the men in no uncertain tones that their action in striking was illegal, that the terms which the management offered were just and generous and that they must be accepted. The union refused to recognize the strike and to provide any funds for its support. This action on the part of the union leaders brought the men to their senses, and the offer of the railway management, which provided for the return to work of all the strikers without prejudice to their records, for a general inquiry into grievances, and for a special inquiry into the case of the discharged man, was accepted. This strike is a dramatic example of the benefits of organization. The strike was rapidly bringing disaster to all three parties concerned in it—the railway, the workmen, and the public. The union by its prompt action saved the men from the fruits of their reckless folly, assisted the railway managers to put an end to an intolerable situation, and saved the public from continued loss and inconvenience.



LABOR SUNDAY

Has the Church become a class institution? We do not think so; but many churches have given cause for the impression that it has. Certainly a few years ago there was abundant reason for the belief that most wage-earners, and particularly those wage-earners who are members of trade unions, felt either unwelcome or unregarded in church, and, on the whole, when not indifferent, rather resentful that the churches had so little to say about their problems of life and about the relation of religion to their peculiar struggles. Within a few years, however, there has occurred a marked change. This has been due in no small degree to what has been done by Charles Stelzle. An article about this "Union Preacher" will be found in another place in this issue. Beginning as a wage-earner in a factory, later becoming a minister, Mr. Stelzle has understood

the point of view of both the workmen and the Church. As executive head of the Department of Church and Labor of the Presbyterian Board of Home Missions, he has succeeded in persuading members of many trade unions that the churches want to understand and to help solve the problems created by modern industry. A few years ago the Methodist Episcopal Church in its National body adopted a platform regarding social and industrial questions that indicated an awakening on the part of the Church. Episcopalians have maintained an organization for active effort in the same direction. Other bodies have taken similar action. Finally, the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America at its initial meeting made a somewhat elaborate and very enlightened pronouncement setting forth in outline what, in the light of Christianity, should be done by the churches to help set right what is wrong in the social and industrial system of the present. This pronouncement, offered officially on behalf of the great mass of Protestant churches in America, was accompanied by the organization, on behalf of the same churches and as a constituent department under the Federal Council, of the Commission on the Church and Social Service. How ready organized workingmen were for such action was soon shown. At the Toronto meeting of the American Federation of Labor the delegates strongly recommended that organized labor co-operate with ministers in the observance of Labor Sunday. Throughout the United States, except in Louisiana, Nevada, North Dakota, Alaska, and New Mexico, a day commonly known as Labor Day and set for the first Monday in September is declared a holiday. It is the preceding Sunday that, it is now proposed, should be observed as Labor Sunday. The Commission on the Church and Social Service has responded to the suggestion by a recommendation "that each minister preach to his own people on the morning of Labor Sunday with reference to the social problem of the Church, especially as it has to do with the life of working people, emphasizing the Church's obligation to the industrial masses from the social and economic view-point." When the Federal organization representing the great mass of trade unions pro-

poses a method of bringing the working people and the churches into closer relation, can the churches hesitate to accept it with alacrity? And when the Federal organization representing the great mass of American Protestant churches agrees with the Federal organization representing the great mass of trade unions, a situation is created of which every church should take advantage. Many proposals have been made, and some have had wide acceptance, for devoting specified Sundays to specific objects, so that ministers and churches have reason to be cautious lest they find themselves devoting Sunday after Sunday to prearranged objects and losing all spontaneity from the observance of the day; but this proposal is altogether exceptional. It happens also that the day set apart for Labor Sunday comes at a time of the year when those churches, happily an increasing number, which observe the Christian year are not engaged in the celebration of any special season. There is information to be had that may indicate to them not merely appropriate action for this special day, but possibly a new line of thought regarding their whole ministry. The Commission on the Church and Social Service accompanied its commendation of Labor Sunday with several practical suggestions as to methods of making its observance successful. A letter addressed to the Rev. Charles Stelzle, Secretary of the Commission on the Church and Social Service, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York, will undoubtedly bring to the inquirer more definite information. It is in the direction indicated by this movement that the Church needs in the immediate future to turn its strongest efforts, and it is there that it will find that larger service which is the Christian reward for service already rendered.



IMPROVING THE RACE

Interest in the welfare of children needs no explanation. Even animals die for the protection and sustenance of their young. The instinct which keeps two birds busy finding bugs and worms and grubs for a group of gaping nestlings has ruled the conduct of men and women from the beginnings of mankind. It is only recently, however, that this interest in the