

KILLED ON CROSSING

SUNSHINE TRAGEDY.

Widespread regret has been expressed on all sides regarding the untimely accident which resulted in the death of Mr. W. C. Batten, of Sunshine, on last Saturday morning. Mr. Batten had a country round for the sale of smallgoods, as well as a shop, and while on the round he found it necessary to cross the railway line at Anderson street crossing. The Bendigo passenger train was due at the time. The view is obscured at the point by tall buildings, and in some way the driver appears to have ignored the presence of trains. The driver of the express says he set the whistle going, that Mr. Batten hesitated and then made another start, the vehicle moving again. The express, travelling at the rate of 40 or 50 miles an hour, dashed into the vehicle. Mr. Batten was propelled by the force of the impact out of the vehicle, and falling under the wheels was dragged along by the train for a distance of many yards. Death must have been instantaneous. The hope was also carried along by the train and horribly mangled, while the wagonette was smashed to pieces.

Mr. Batten had a large establishment in Hampshire road, Sunshine. He was in the same business in Nicholson street for many years before he moved to Sunshine. For a considerable period he was closely associated with the Methodist Church, often acting as a lay preacher. He was also an enthusiastic member of the Footscray Bowling Club for many years.

Seldom or never, in the confused state of our cities, does an agitation attain its object. Strikers crawl back to work with a compromise giving an inch where they demanded an ell. A political movement falls dead after the public has been moved one step where fifty steps were hoped for. A reform in dress advances one short stage, and those who have been advocating comparative nudity, or veiling, or some other extreme, become tired and reasonable. Every agitation overshoots the mark. The agitators begin as enthusiasts, men and women who have seen the light, zealots who would with one rush sweep away all the old and instal a brand new. They are necessary to the world. We must have the zealot, or we shall never get the energy for reforms; but how much more valuable is the man in the middle, the hard-thinking, cold-minded man who sees the faults on both sides, and at the crucial moment leads everybody along the safe middle road? It is because Great Britain has always produced such men that it has been spared such horrors as the Revolution, and the Napoleonic Wars of Conquest, and strict conscription. At one time they came from the aristocracy, at another from the church, at another from the Parliaments. Lately they have come from the industrial people; and these have been more useful than any others, for the battles of modern societies are becoming more and more in-

ers, for the battles of modern societies are becoming more and more industrial battles.

An inquiry into the circumstances will be held to-day at 9 o'clock.

The funeral on Monday was largely attended by local residents and sorrowing friends from other parts. The remains were interred in the Footscray Cemetery, Rev. E. Smith conducting a most impressive burial service.