

Our Contributors.

A THANKSGIVING ADDRESS TO CANADIAN INGRATES.

BY KNOXIAN.

FELLOW-COUNTRYMEN,—We have met this morning at the call of Church and State to give thanks for national blessings. I am sorry you do not look more thankful. Glancing over the sea of up-turned faces now before me I can see without the aid of a microscope that your hearts are not glowing with gratitude to any great extent. You do not seem to be in a thankful mood. I would not like to give five hundred dollars for the collection to be taken up at the end of this service. Please give me your attention while I try to make you feel grateful. You are not satisfied with this country. You think Canada is a splendid country to emigrate from. Several thousand people have suffered from the same delusion. They left and were very glad to come back. They left to make a fortune and came back carrying all their real estate on their boots and the bottoms of their trousers. They returned lords of the soil; but their soil was not great in extent, nor was it productive. What have you against this young country of ours? Perhaps you say

THE CLIMATE IS NOT GOOD.

It is too cold in winter and too hot in summer. Indeed. Do you know any climate that has no drawbacks? Suppose you set out to-morrow morning and travel round the world, do you think you will strike a climate in all respects perfect? Go South and you will have less frost but more fever. Frost is better than fever—yellow or any other colour. Go East and you will meet any number of Old World epidemics. By the time you arrive in India or China you will begin to sigh for one of our cool mornings. Go West and when you come to the Pacific Coast you will have what is called a "wet season." A wet season means six weeks of rain. For a man who likes that kind of climate it would be just the kind of climate he likes; but there are a good many people who can set up a magnificent growl over a rain of three days, or even one whole day. Some of you, I fear, belong to that class. Would you feel happy and thankful in a six weeks' rain? Suppose half-a-dozen of you went together in search of a perfect climate. Each one would no doubt have his own peculiar taste in the matter of weather. The climate that suited one might not suit the other five. Then five of you would be as much dissatisfied with that climate as some of you now are with the climate of Canada. How much would that mend the matter? Suppose one of you moved his family to another climate. You might not be in the new country a month until a majority of the family decided that in moving you made a huge mistake. Such things have often occurred. Perhaps you sigh for an old country fog. You like that delightful atmosphere which Gough describes as "illuminated pea-soup." We have any amount of that kind of soup in this country. Just go down to Halifax or St. John for a few days at the right season and you can have an article of fog that will please the most fastidious. Most of us prefer the clear blue sky to fog. Our sky compares favourably with that of Italy or any other country. On the whole, then, our climate is as good as any other. Our frost makes a healthy man sharp and frisky. That is one reason why Canadians are such clever people.

Some of you are, I dare say, severe economists and you object to Canada because

THE TAXES ARE HIGH.

Well, taxes are rather high in some places. But who is to blame for our high taxation? Who elected the men that levied the taxes and arranged the tariff? Now wrestle with that question for a moment, please. Canadians are a self-governed people. They choose their own school trustees, councillors and members of Parliament. Every official in Canada that has power to levy a dollar of taxes received his power from the people who pay the taxes. Now what is there to complain about? The country is being ruined, is it? If so, that simply means that Canadians are ruining Canada, for the Canadian people govern Canada. The country is badly governed, is it? Then the people govern themselves badly. That is all there is in it. If you could prove that the government of the Dominion is a total failure, all you would then have proved

is that Canadians are unfit to govern themselves—and you are Canadians!

But, after all, what does this cry about high taxes amount to? In many cases it simply means that those who raise it would like to have good things without paying for them. In the country, local taxes are used for building school-houses, paying teachers, making roads, building bridges and making various kinds of improvements. In the city and town, taxes are used for paying policemen for defending life and property, for school purposes, for making good sidewalks, good streets, procuring good water supply and good light and other necessary improvements. What right has a man in city or country to have these good things without paying for them? A man that would take his light, or his sidewalk, or his police protection for nothing would take his groceries for nothing too if he got a chance. Those people who want good things for nothing are not good citizens. Nine-tenths of the grumbling about high taxes is simply a grumble because good things cannot be had at other people's expense. Much of our taxation in Canada has been caused by building railways. How can any reasonable man expect to have the advantages of a railway without paying for them? Perhaps some of you complain that we have

TOO MUCH PARTY POLITICS IN CANADA.

Well, there is a good deal of politics to the acre in this country no doubt. What self-governed country is without politics? Party feeling is running as high in Old England just now as it ever ran in Canada. The politicians are giving each other just as hard knocks as our people ever give each other. The newspapers, with a few exceptions, are just as lively as ours are during election contests. How would you arrange the affairs of government? Would you put the affairs of the country under the control of one man? Name your man. Who would you have appoint your man? What would you call him? Would you call him a Czar? The Czar of Canada! We don't want any Czars in this country. We prefer Sir John and Mr. Mowat. Some Czars have had an unpleasant habit of putting people in dungeons and sometimes hanging them for rather small offences. Canadians don't admire that style. The Czar sends budding young political orators to Siberia. He would have sent half the Young Liberals there had they held their convention anywhere on his ranche. We don't like that way of doing things. Come now, how would you govern Canada? It is all very well to rave and rant about "dirty politics," "corrupt politicians," etc. If politics are dirty the people made them dirty, and you are part of the people. Perhaps you say

THE TIMES ARE HARD,

and therefore we don't feel thankful. Well, business is a little dull in some localities. In this new world we have a financial reckoning every ten years and we are in the midst of one now. How much have you suffered from the hard times? Did you stop smoking because the times are hard? Not you! Did the world ever see a man who took one drink or one smoke less on account of financial depression? What you mean by hard times is that you are not making quite as much money this year as you made a year or two ago. That is not a very acute kind of suffering.

Perhaps some of you say you do not feel thankful because

PRICES ARE LOW.

Prices of grain I suppose you mean. Well, if you get less for your wheat our poor relations pay less for their bread. This world was not created for the special benefit of Canadian farmers. Think for a moment of the

THOUSAND AND ONE BLESSINGS

you enjoy in this new country. Your boy has just as good a chance in this country as Lord Lansdowne's boy if he has as good a head and behaves himself as well. There is no country under heaven in which young men or young women stand so squarely on their merits as young people do in Ontario, not one. Your family has a good chance here. Your life and your property are well protected. For the most part the law is fairly administered. There is an occasional miscarriage of justice; but such things do not occur often. You have liberty of conscience. Your family may have a good education for nothing. If your little ten-year-old boy who studies in a comfortable school-house were in England he would probably be working in Mr. Chamberlain's screw factory ten hours a day—

his little hands both black and hard—while Mr. Chamberlain was discussing the question whether boys like him should have free education or not. You have plenty to eat and drink and wear. Canada is not a very aristocratic country, but very few of us are hungry. We don't make idiots of ourselves by boasting about our "culchaw" but we do take three square meals a day. That is a good deal more than some people who talk about their "culchaw" and their "tone" and their "blue blood" are able to do. Go home and think of your thousand and one blessings and give thanks for them!

MUSKOKA.

MR. EDITOR,—At the meeting of the General Assembly in June last, the Presbyteries of Barrie and Guelph asked permission to ordain Mr. Henry Knox who for the last five years has laboured so successfully as Catechist in Muskoka. The request was cordially and unanimously granted and the Presbytery of Barrie at its last meeting appointed the ordination to take place at Magnetawan, on Wednesday, 14th inst., at two o'clock—Mr. Findlay, Superintendent of Missions in Muskoka, to preside, Mr. Leishman to preach, Mr. James to address the minister and Mr. Thos. McKee to address the people.

The village of Magnetawan has a population of nearly 300, is situated between Lake Ahmic on the west and Lake Seesuba on the east, and is the centre of one of the best farming districts in Muskoka. Locks are being built here to connect the navigation of the two lakes so that steamboats can run daily to Burke's Fall in connection with the railroad from Gravenhurst to Callender. It is expected that Magnetawan will grow rapidly and become a very important centre commercially, and, I trust, ecclesiastically as well.

The route we travelled was by train to Gravenhurst, where we took the boat to Rosseau and thence by stage to Magnetawan. The sail through the lakes to Rosseau was delightful. The *Nipissing* is a splendid boat, well officered and manned with a crew of genial, quiet, hearty fellows, who do their work quickly and cheerfully. At the different landings we made it a point to watch the men closely. I am glad to say there was not one unkind, hasty word spoken, not an oath uttered and not a voice raised above the ordinary tone of conversation. I never saw a crew of men do their work so quietly, so cheerfully and so quickly. The captain seemed to be a favourite with his men. His success is in leading and not in driving. While looking well after his boat, he is not unmindful of the comfort of his passengers, and is genial and pleasant to all. The dining-room is cosy and comfortable, the waiters attentive, and the table would do no discredit to any of the leading hotels in our largest cities. The whole management of the boat reflects credit on our good elder, Mr. Cockburn, M.P., the owner. On Tuesday morning, in a pouring rain, we left Rosseau by stage at seven o'clock and began the day's work of climbing the Muskoka hills and jolting over the corduroy at the rate of three miles an hour. One traveller became tired after we had made five miles of our journey, walked ten miles and reached the dinner table about half-an-hour before those of us who preferred to ride. The road is one of the roughest and most lonely we have ever travelled, particularly the five miles through what a member of Stratford Presbytery, some time ago, named "Abandon Hope," who, on entering which, exclaimed: "Abandon hope all ye who enter here." We felt that it was suitably named. We were not sorry when the end was reached. Our Moderator gave expression to his delight by remarking as we crawled along through bunches of poplars: "Well! we are on a more popular way now." We plodded our weary way till about half-past seven when, tired, wet and cold, we drew up at the door of Mr. L. G. Best, land agent. The journey of thirty-four miles was made in twelve and a-half hours, including one hour for dinner. We were met by Mr. Best and given a most cordial welcome. After a pleasant evening we assembled round the family altar, while your correspondent was asked to conduct worship in which all most heartily joined. Next morning we felt ready for work. At the appointed hour the Presbytery met and was constituted by prayer by the Moderator, and the ordination service proceeded with, each member taking the part assigned him. Owing to the unpleasantness of the day the at-