

Our Contributors.

IS IT A WISE POLICY?

BY KNOXIAN.

Near the end of his life Horace Greeley wrote a large number of papers on "What I Know About Farming." Some practical man with a fine turn for condensation summed up Mr. Greeley's essays in this way. What Horace Greeley knows about farming—*Nothing!* What did the Third Party accomplish by running a Prohibition candidate for President of the United States? *Nothing.* Well, perhaps, those who are on the ground can see some good thing that has been accomplished, but it is very difficult at this distance to see anything that Prohibitionists have gained by running a candidate of their own. At the last Presidential election they helped to elect Cleveland by taking temperance votes from the Republican party, but that made nothing for temperance. Not only did that work do no good, it did harm, for it alienated a large number of good temperance Republicans. They saw their candidate beaten by a small majority; they believed that the Prohibitionists took votes enough out of the Republican ranks to defeat Blaine, and they blamed the Prohibitionists for defeating him, without doing anything for Prohibition by the defeat. Naturally enough these Temperance Republicans were angry.

The *Christian-at-Work* says that one most significant feature of the contest in the State of New York was the failure of the Prohibition vote to show the increase generally anticipated. In 1884 it was 25,001; in 1886 it was 36,414; in 1887 it rose to 41,800. Increasing at the same rate it should have been 60,000 in the late contest. The Prohibitionists themselves predicted 75,000, but the number was only about 27,500. If these figures prove anything they prove that there is nothing gained in the way of votes by running a Prohibition candidate for the Presidency. And while there is nothing gained there is a good deal lost by alienating good men of both the great parties who think no Third Party should exist and that no third candidate should be in the race.

The public mind in Canada is at the present time in a reflective mood on the temperance question. No Scott Act elections are pending. The people are not excited. Earnest minds in the temperance ranks are asking such questions as: Have our methods of working been as nearly right as possible? What mistakes have we made? etc., etc. Many are asking, What next? This seems a good time to ask, Is it a wise policy

TO ALIENATE FRIENDS?

How is this done? It is done in various ways. It is done by

ESTABLISHING A THIRD PARTY.

Everybody who knows anything about Canada and the United States knows that there are thousands of good temperance men in both the great parties of both countries who are strongly opposed to a Third Party. There are thousands of Tories and Liberals in Canada who would vote for Prohibition on its merits when presented as a single issue who would never leave their party ranks and vote for a Prohibition candidate when that candidate was running against their party. More than this, the poll books have shown in scores of places that many who would vote for Prohibition as a single issue stuck to their party in election contests and vote against avowed Prohibitionist candidates.

It is easy to say that people should not do such things. Perhaps not, but sensible men know that in working for any good cause you must deal with men as you find them. Cheap talk about what people ought and ought not to do and be is not worth listening to. Wise workers will deal with men as they are, knowing very well that if all men were what they ought to be we would not need prohibitory laws at all. Knowing as we all do that many voters in both parties in Canada are opposed to a Third Party, is it wise to have a Third Party? Knowing that a Third Party would alienate many whose votes are needed, is it a wise policy to crowd a Third Party upon them? The wisdom of such a policy was certainly not made apparent across the lines the other day.

Another irritating question is

FEMALE SUFFRAGE.

The advanced Prohibitionists on the other side make this a plank in their platform. By doing so

they alienate thousands of the best temperance people in the Union. They also identify themselves in the minds of many with the old Women's Rights Party. Even such veteran Prohibitionists as Dr. Cuyler have been compelled to protest against saddling the temperance question with female suffrage. Is it wise to alienate good temperance men in this way? Whatever may be said on the abstract question of woman's right to the franchise it is clear that the people of Canada are a long way from being a unit on the change. Thousands of our best women do not want votes and would not go to the polls if they had them. Thousands of men are opposed to any such change. A great deal can be said against as well as in favour of female voting. Then why in the name of common sense hitch this difficult question to Prohibition? Are there not foes enough to fight without making an opponent of every decent man who does not want his wife or daughter to take part in political elections? Surely the liquor traffic can furnish opposition enough without alienating every man opposed to female suffrage.

Some advanced Prohibitionists make the use of UNFERMENTED WINE

at the Lord's table a plank in their platform. It is enough for our present purpose to say that tens of thousands of the most devoted Christians the world over are not prepared for any change in regard to that matter. The literature of the question would seem to show that the weight of learning and piety is against the two-wine theory. Is it wise to alienate thousands, yes tens of thousands of the most influential Christian people for the sake of changing this element? Has the use of fermented wine at the Lord's supper produced such disastrous results, that it would be good policy for temperance men to insist on a change that might throw a fire-brand into the Churches, disturb or break up congregations, and turn many whose votes and influence are needed into opponents? The men who would be grieved and alienated by such results are just the men who can give most help to the temperance cause. Is it a wise policy to force men of that kind into a position of neutrality or even antagonism?

Many Presbyterian people felt hurt at holding Scott Act meetings on Sabbath, though for the sake of the cause few of them said much about it. Was it wise to hurt the feelings of these people? Are not the men who keep the Sabbath just the men who can be most depended on for any good cause?

Those so called temperance meetings held in cities every Sabbath afternoon with their "cheers," "laughter" and "applause" are an offence to many Christian people, especially Sabbath school teachers who have their work about the same hour.

Is it wise to alienate people of that kind or even wound their feelings?

Would a wise election manager alienate friendly voters during his canvass?

Would any business man willingly adopt methods that would alienate his patrons?

Why in the name of common sense do some temperance men use methods that alienate the very men whose help they need and without whose assistance the temperance cause can never be advanced?

Are there not foes enough in front without firing on allies?

CLERICAL GLEANINGS.

BY REV. JAMES HASTIE, CORNWALL.

PENNY-WISE: POUND-FOOLISH.

Nearly \$29,000 were given to supplemented charges in 1887-8, according to last Home Mission report. This money was not a loan, but a gratuity. It is money well spent, and the Supplemental Fund is one deserving the enthusiastic support of all our people. And therefore there is no intention to apply to the Fund itself nor to its administration the caption "Penny-wise: Pound-foolish."

Yet, the benefits from this excellent fund are seriously abridged in consequence of the protracted vacancies among aid-receiving congregations; and the purpose of this paper is to indicate how this evil may be lessened, if not entirely removed. These congregations, it will be remembered, are allowed the same privilege precisely as is ceded to self-supporting charges—the privilege, to wit, of hearing candidates, *sine die*, and calling when and whom they please.

But special hindrances lie in the way of many of these fields securing an early settlement and then retaining a pastor afterwards. Salary is at the minimum, usually.

Then, discouragements in the field itself often far outweigh encouragements. Stations far apart and several of them, roads bad, population stationary or diminishing, the community cut up among several rival bodies, our own people disheartened and inert by reason of long vacancies and short pastorates in the past. All these things and others present grave hindrances to settlement in many of our supplemented charges. Were no remedy possible nor practicable, there would be nothing for it but to endure the evil, and make the most of our opportunities.

But the present writer is convinced that a better method than the present is open to us, and should be adopted without delay. I would respectfully submit that all aid-receiving congregations be made a class by themselves as regards the method of settlement, as they are now treated *sui generis* as regards financial help. The scheme in outline is this: When such a congregation reports to Presbytery its readiness to call, and applies for a supplement, let three months be given it to secure a pastor by call; but should it fail to do so in that time, then let Presbytery appoint a man for a certain term, say one, two or three years, as may be deemed best, just as the Home Mission Committee now does in a number of cases.

Further, let it be agreed that any time during said incumbency the preacher is open to a call from his congregation, and may be inducted as permanent pastor. Should he not be called during his term-service, he might be re-appointed were all parties agreeable, or his place taken by another on similar conditions. Presbytery could ascertain from the field what was wanted, say three or four months before the expiry of the appointment, and make such new arrangements as were found necessary.

Were the Home Mission Committee, the Distribution Committee, and the several Presbyteries to work hand in hand along the line here indicated, results would be very satisfactory, no doubt.

BENEFITS.

What are some of the benefits likely to accrue from such a course?

1. There would be continuous ministerial service, instead of intermittent as now.
2. In consequence of this unbroken service many of these fields would become self-supporting ere long, and thereupon would not only cease to be claimants on the fund, but would themselves become contributors to the exchequer.
3. Then, those other congregations which on account of peculiar circumstances may never become self-sustaining, would be worked up and kept up to the highest numerical and financial strength possible in the premises.
4. Scores of ministers—many of whom would prove efficient labourers were they only settled—could get immediately to work, without peregrinating the whole country in search of a parish, while not a few would so endear themselves to their *pro tem.* parishes, that they would be called ere their first term was out. The discomforts of a probationer's life could be avoided by every one who was willing to settle on the conditions suggested above. This would prove a great boon to a number of excellent men out of charges, and especially a boon to those somewhat advanced in life, who are yet good for five years' or ten years' service, but who are at a fatal disadvantage when competing as candidates against youthful attractions fresh from college.

DIFFICULTIES.

Difficulties will readily present themselves to the mind as one examines this scheme; but in actual administration, many of these difficulties could be overcome, while those that cannot be removed should be endured in view of the large benefits likely to ensue.

First difficulty.—To get the consent of supplemented charges to surrender, *pro tem.* their right to call after three months, and entrust Presbytery or Home Mission Committee to send a man.

Answer.—This difficulty would amount to very little, for many congregations would welcome almost any relief from their present troubles, while those who might demur at first could be won over by a judicious presentation of the matter by the Moderator of Session.