

time will justify the tone of complaint and depreciation which runs through his article. The facts recorded in the Dominion Census, the records of progress published in our Church publications, the special efforts put forth to sustain our missionary and educational work, the numbers added to the Church by the labours of our ministers, the amount of money expended in Church building, and the extension in our book and periodical department, are all against the conclusions alleged in this article. The whole record is one of great progress, not of decline and failure.

These questions which imply, though they do not formally declare that there is general spiritual decline, we think are not justified by the actual state of the Church at the present time. No doubt every Church falls below its own standard, and has room and need for improvement. There always have been some who are disposed to claim that the former days are better than these. But the conclusions adopted on this point are always largely determined by the mood in which we look at things. We can always find either cause for encouragement, or for complaint, according to our mood and desire in seeking. I am confident, however, the complaints and comparisons of this article would have had as much point any time during the last twenty-five years as they have at the present time.

But even if such decline and failure really did exist, there is no good reason to ascribe such declension and worldliness to our present form of government. There have been in the past times of spiritual declension under all forms of Church government. And it is an unquestionable fact that in all which relates to evangelistic and pastoral work, there is no change in our agencies and methods. They are the same as before the union. We still "walk by the same rule and mind the same thing;" and if times of spiritual deadness should come, the influence of the quickening Spirit is a far better remedy than any change in our Church machinery.

The same reply is applicable to the disparaging remarks about our mission work. It seems of no avail that our Church has extended her fields of labour largely in Manitoba—that our missionaries in Japan have been re-inforced—that the ordinary income has been largely augmented—that a large debt has been paid off by a noble and united effort, which indicates the vital unity of our Church from ocean to ocean, and its deep interest