

Our Contributors.

CONCERNING ECONOMY.

BY RHOXONIAN

Long years ago we knew a thrifty Scotchman who defined economy in this way. *Economy—long o—consists in the keepin' of what ye hae and the puttin' of a little till.*

That Scotchman grew rich. He did not worry himself about the incomes of Sheriffs and Registrars, and other official people, though the salaries of these officials were larger then than they are now. He never formed part of a deputation to the government to ask for special legislation of any kind. The price of wheat was about as low then as it is now, and the markets were much farther away from most farmers, but our thrifty friend managed to accumulate a considerable amount of valuable real estate and there was a pretty strong suspicion, that somewhere on his premises a stocking might be found well filled with coin of the realm. His definition of economy might not have looked well in a dictionary, but it worked well in actual life.

His was a much better kind of economy, than the modern variety which consists mainly in cutting down the income of the other fellow. Thousands of men in Ontario have been shouting about economy for months. Do you know one who offered to reduce his own income for the good of the public? Can you name one patriot who threw off ten dollars to save his country from the impending bankruptcy in which he declared was near. Did the members of the Legislature, who spent much time and money in speaking, and moving motions and amendments in favour of economy, refuse to draw their sessional allowance? Did they decline to accept their boxes of stationery? Did they send back their railway passes? They said a good deal about the salaries of officials, and the sums paid to messengers and the board bill of lunatics, but we have yet to hear of one apostle of economy who saved the Province a cent by taking less Provincial money himself.

The Patrons are economists, or nothing. Many of them are members of County and Township councils. How many have refused their daily allowance for the good of the municipality? How many? Has one done so.

The fact is, if we go over the entire list of loud shouting economists, there probably is not a man among them who has taken a cent out of his own income for the good of his country. The agitation reminds one of the proposal of Artemus Ward to send all his wife's able-bodied relations to the front, to fight for the Union. Save the country by reducing incomes, but always be sure that the income reduced is the income of the other fellow.

After all the abuse that is heaped upon lawyers, the only men in Ontario to-day who make sacrifices for the country are lawyers who serve the country for one half or less than one half the money they could earn in their profession. This is the fact, but fact is the last thing wanted by men whose only chance for promotion consists in raising odious class feeling in the country.

There is a short and easy way of reducing the expenses of government in this country. Why not abolish the whole thing, and go back to the cheap style of the aborigines. The greater part of the expense is incurred for Legislation, Education, the maintenance of Asylums and the administration of Justice. Is there any reason why we might not do without expenditure along these lines. Why should not the Province do without

LEGISLATION.

Why not abolish the Legislature and the municipal councils, and have no new laws made or old ones mended. There are people in the world—in Central Africa, for instance—who do without law-making bodies. In that happy land they even manage to do without clothes. Why may we not imitate their economic system, and do without councils. Much money might be saved by abolishing the whole legislative and municipal machinery. Let it be abolished and the expense saved. Is there any real necessity for

EDUCATION.

This Province spends over \$600,000 on educating the young people, and giving them a chance for a good start in life. Was such criminal extravagance ever heard of. Why cannot we do without schools? What are colleges good for anyway? Because other nations have schools and colleges, is that any reason why Ontario should indulge in such extravagant folly. There are more students in one university in little Scotland than in all Canada, but Scotchmen always were extravagant fools. They have always been noted for throwing away their money, Scotchmen have. The Irish school system was once the best in the world, but Irishmen never had any sense. Let us adopt strictly original methods for Ontario, and abolish education.

There is a great lot of money spent in keeping the insane, the imbecile, the deaf, the dumb, the blind and other unfortunates not able to take care of themselves. In days not long gone by we used to feel proud of these institutions, and thank God that in our happy little country these unfortunates were well cared for and so much done to brighten their darkened lives. Things are changed now. The age of chivalry, as Burke would say, is gone and the time has come when the highest effort of a would-be statesman is to economize a cent per day on the board of a lunatic or imbecile. There is a more economic way. Just abolish the system and turn the patients out.

What is the use in spending money on the ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

Why not abolish courts? It would be a great thing to live in a country in which a man can neither sue nor be sued. What a royal time some fellows would have, if there was no dock to put them. Anyway, if we must have courts, men can be had who would act as judges for 75 cents a day. People could be found to take care of the money paid into court, for less than that amount.

MISTLETOE CHRISTIANITY.

BY REV. JOHN BURTON, B.D.

Baldur was the most loving and lovable of all the Aesirs of the Scandinavian mythology. So universally was he loved as the embodiment of all that is bright and beautiful, that his mother, Friga, secured an oath from all that live or lie on the earth, in the waters, or that fly through the air, that they would not hurt Baldur; she forgot there was a parasite, the mistletoe, which neither lived on the earth or in the water, nor sped its flight through the pathless air, but fed on the life-stream of that which drew its nourishment from earth, air and water. Loki, the evil genius of the Aesir's abode, found this out in her persistent quest, and pointed an arrow with mistletoe; with this Baldur was slain. The parasite accomplished what all nature refused to do, and mourning filled the home of the gods, from whence it descended to the abodes of men. So much for the parasite in the old Norse myths. Our application as to its pertinence, must be estimated further on. We may, however, premise that nothing may be trusted more surely to destroy the bright, beautiful, lovely and lovable as parasitism.

We meet occasionally with a class of workers, self-styled Christians, whose specialty seems to be not the building up of true Christian character, or the conversion to loving righteousness of those who are out of the way, but of turning tender consciences and unstable souls from one form of Christian faith to another; a decided preference for what in ecclesiastical language we call proselytism, in common speech—sheep stealing. We know that such endeavours are given a pleasant name, such as winning to the truth; Lucifer is a heavenly name, but he who bears it is none the less an angel fallen. A name to live is quite—we had almost written, consistent with, we correct ourselves and say—possible while the bearer of the name is dead. Call it as we may, proselytism is not conversion; nor sheep stealing winning for Christ.

These thoughts were suggested by a recent sojourn in a thoroughly rural congregation, where not only good work has been done but the good work still is going on; there, as

ever in the rural districts, the churches feel the constant drain of the young people going elsewhere to find for themselves a home; now and then a family that have prospered somewhat more than the average, or over whose hearth some shadow has fallen, is drawn to town or city for enjoyment, or in the hope of finding employment. Walking over this field with an elder, and speaking of the present condition of the congregation, our friend pointed out how because of such circumstances, the present condition was not as outwardly prosperous as erstwhile it had been; adding, "at the other station the Baptists are pressing hard upon us." And we pondered: why are the Baptists pressing hard? Memory, too, was aroused, a discussion upon the great question of church union in the Toronto Ministerial Association was recalled, at which the writer had stated that such union was impossible on close communion Baptist lines; to which a representative Baptist minister replied: "If I believe my distinctive practices to be right, why should I not insist upon declaring them, and persuading others to accept them?" As Mr. D. J. Macdonnell said, we may appreciate the honesty of the statement, but we detest its application. What new gospel have the Baptists to bring as they press hard upon that Presbyterian congregation? Does it conduce to Christian charity and home sanctification that the lad who is justly his father's pride and his mother's joy, should be induced to leave the fold which hitherto has guarded his life, and find another in which he is constrained from joining his parents in observing the injunction: "This do in remembrance of Me"? Is that bright and tender girl, her mother's companion and cheerful help, made more real and true by saying to that mother from whom she first learnt the name of Jesus: "Mother, unless you come over to my way of thinking we can no longer hope to sit together at the communion table"? We may get a parasitic church by draining the life blood from another, but like the mistletoe in the old Scandinavian myth, its chief commendation will be that it has ability in blind hands (for Loki placed the shaft in the hands of blind Hoder) to destroy the beautiful and the bright. So little are Baptist peculiarities needed for the furtherance of the gospel, that Spurgeon could send forth volume after volume of sermons, and a treasury of David without once insisting upon them; the President of her college was for years an Independent Pædobaptist; and John Bunyan—some of whose children, by the way, were "christened" in the parish church—has written his allegory with so little of these peculiarities, that no critic has yet been able to identify them. We confess to little sympathy with those travelling evangelists who leave unexplored the by-ways and hedges for the fat things of other people; and as little for those communities whose great mission manifests itself in persuading people "to their way of thinking." We may be pardoned in the saying that we have studied the Baptist question, too, in all its depths—save the water—and see ample reason for continuing in the old way along which our fathers walked and glorified God.

WINTER SUPPLY.

It is admitted on all hands that this is one of the most important questions in all our missionary circles, affecting as it does, not only our home work, but the foreign work as well, for if we have not a vigorous missionary spirit at home, how shall we promote an interest in Foreign Missions?

Various means have been devised from time to time but even yet large districts are left during the winter months without the means of grace. The institution of the summer session in Manitoba College was doubtless a step in the right direction, yet, under the present circumstances, it is not likely to fulfil so well as it should the end for which it is intended. The blame cannot be wholly attached to the students, the very fact of their engaging in the work should imply that they are willing to comply with whatever means seem best suited to advance the interests of Christ's Kingdom. They are universally, may we say, advised by graduates and college professors to take a good course in theology; at the same time they are advised (and rightly we

believe) to take their entire course in theology in the same college, otherwise they may, though having spent three sessions, have after all, only a partial course, having gone over some of the work twice, and leaving about one-third of what should constitute a full course, practically untouched.

In order to meet this difficulty, is it not possible that a uniform course could be adopted, so that a student having completed his first part in theology, in one of the eastern colleges, could spend a whole year in the mission field, take his second year in Manitoba and return to his own college to complete the course, thus taking just as full a course as he would have done by remaining in his own college for three consecutive sessions? This, evidently, was the intention of the promoters of the scheme, but under the present circumstances the interests both of the mission fields and students are affected. Fewer men are willing to take the summer session because of the partial course it thus affords, and therefore more fields are left vacant for the winter. We noticed in the report of the last meeting of the Home Mission Committee, a resolution was passed urging that graduating students should be compelled to spend one year in mission work before being eligible for a call. We are of the opinion that a uniform course in our colleges would be fairer to the students and would equally obviate the difficulty. During the past year there were upwards of thirty men in the junior class in Knox College, taking their first year in theology; of these only two went to Manitoba to take the summer session, and one of these intends going to Honan in the present year under our own Foreign Board. Thus we are not sure that more than one out of the entire class will avail themselves of the opportunity of supplying the means of grace during the winter, in those fields where it is most needed. Were it otherwise, doubtless the majority of the cases as well as those in our other colleges similarly situated, would take their second year in Manitoba, after spending the winter in the Home Mission field. The present system will doubtless suit the students that take their entire course in Manitoba College, but why should Dr. Robertson have to visit so frequently our eastern colleges, urging upon the men the necessity of spending a winter in the North-west and Manitoba? If the resources are at present inadequate, why not adopt such means as would put at the disposal of the Home Mission Committee the services of all the men available?

PRESBYTERIAN.

A PLAN FOR SETTLING VACANT CHARGES.

MR. EDITOR,—Since I came to this city, five weeks ago, I have heard a good deal about the difficulty of effecting settlements in vacant congregations in a reasonable time—an evil, I am sorry to say, not confined to the church in Canada. I have also heard that there is a disposition here to grapple with the evil, and that a scheme has been tried, not with complete success. So it happened that a few nights ago, being rather wakeful, I turned my attention to this question, and the result was that I hammered out something like a plan—a plan which I am sure is very far from being perfect, but which may possibly contain some elements which the combined wisdom of others might incorporate in some comprehensive, practical scheme. I sketched the plan to one of the brethren who has been actively identified with the methods lately in use, and he strongly advised its publication that brethren may see what merit there is in it, with a view to some action being taken at next meeting of Presbytery. It will be noticed that this plan may be adopted by any single Presbytery, and I have thought the large Presbytery of Toronto would be a good field for a trial; but the more Presbyteries that adopt the plan the better it will work. And though their scheme may look cumbersome on paper, because drawn out at so much length for the sake of clearness, I venture to think it would not be very cumbersome in practice. Not knowing what has been done already, I just try to deal with the matter from my own point of view. These are its provisions: