

thought, and influence, and power; and summons to its aid the vision and enthusiasm of youth, and the experience and wisdom which years alone can bring.

Conservative Years of Depression

It will be found that, for the most part, third parties owe their origin to one or other of two causes. They are bred of hard times, or of quarrels. They are the offspring of long continued and widespread depression; or of dissatisfaction, real or feigned, by members of some existing political party with its leadership or policies. It is seldom that third parties are not used to further the special interest or ambition of some individual, organization or class. They become identified with some particular "ism" or panacea, and with a part, rather than with the whole, of the country. Their numbers seldom become sufficiently large to give them any hope of ultimate triumph at the polls. One of the effects of third parties in general elections, invariably is to draw a number of persons from one or other of the major political parties. This number, while insufficient to elect its own candidates, is frequently just sufficient to permit of the return to Parliament, by a minority of votes, of candidates of the political party to which they themselves are most strongly opposed. In this way they help to defeat the very objectives they have in view.

I should like to draw your attention to another fact which is not without special significance at the present time. Third parties, in Canada, have invariably had their rise during years of Conservative administration. These have been years of depression, due, in large part, to reactionary policies. Years, moreover, in which dis-

content has been augmented by the administration hanging on to office long after it was abundantly apparent that it no longer enjoyed the confidence of the electorate.

As Conservative administrations have given place to Liberal administrations, the country, through the substitution of Liberal for Conservative policies, has been brought out of depression into prosperity. With returning prosperity, discontent has vanished, and with it the third parties, which discontent had helped to bring into being. This was the case after the return of the Liberal party to power in 1896. The Tories that year, amid depression, had clung to office till the last minute. The country was lifted by Sir Wilfrid Laurier and his government out of the depression in which it had been for years, into an era of unparalleled prosperity. With returning prosperity, little more was heard of either the Patrons of Industry, or of the Equal Rights party. To many, their names are scarcely known today.

Liberal Period of Prosperity

The same was true in 1921. The Tory party had carried on government, under Mr. Meighen, long after the Union Government, formed by Sir Robert Borden during the war, and for war purposes only, had ceased to exist. It was during the period of the war, when the Conservative government was in office that the Progressive party had its birth. It gained in numbers and strength in the year which witnessed the formation of the Union government, and, more particularly, in the years of Tory administration which followed, and which witnessed another period of depression. Once again, between 1921 and 1930, a Liberal administration brought