

shall be exhausted; but in my judgment science gives no hint of a time when energy in this portable form will not be a valuable and even indispensable pre-requisite of civilized life, and I think our descendants will have a real grievance against us for our barbarous prodigality. For I suppose you will not admit the Irishman's argument, what has posterity ever done for us that we should do anything for them?

But the greatest of Canada's assets is her unoccupied lands. Why are you in such a hurry to fill them up, often with the most unsuitable materials? You cannot be so much in love with our present organization of society, with its thin crust of blatant luxury floating on a volcanic mass of seething misery, that you should wish to see it multiplied without delay over the last remaining spaces of the earth. The report of the Pittsburg Charities Commission is painful reading. There you have a district marked by enormous and efficient production of wealth; but it results in a few great fortunes; and for the many nothing but grinding poverty, unremitting soul-killing toil, twelve-hour shifts, half the year therefore by night, with twenty-four hours continuous work once a week at the change; and, worst of all, pitiful child labour. Is that how you would see Canada prosperous? I cannot believe it.

What is the secret of our dismal failure to realize the high ideals so admirably expressed in the report of the Conference? I believe it is to be found in our over-haste to be rich. That is why we throw away our water-powers, squander our coal, and give up our timber limits to speculators with no thought for the future provided they can make money at once. That is why we pay five dollars a head to mythical steamship companies to fill up our North-West with the sweepings of Europe. I have no quarrel with business methods. They are good in their place. But this money-making spirit is encroaching on our higher activities. It captures our theatres and concert rooms, dictating what we shall see and hear: it grips our great newspapers and turns them to its own purposes, thus poisoning the wells of public opinion at the source; it even invades our Universities. And when a few great fortunes have been made and the millions are set to toiling, we are to fix our eyes on the display of the wealthy and call the country prosperous. To use a phrase of Dr. Macphail's, we are to *impute* the wealth of the few, like righteousness, to the many poor!

Now I am not setting these disagreeable considerations before you with a view to urging any counsels of despair. I am an optimist in these matters. I look for better things. In the course of a visit last summer to England I thought I saw many hopeful signs of a new spirit, not only among the younger dons and undergraduates of the universities, but among all classes with whom I associated. What do you say to