

Our Contributors.

ON WHAT DOES PROSPERITY DEPEND?

BY KNOWNIAN.

Honest Alexander Mackenzie once said, that the prosperity of Canada depends on the industry of the Canadian people. From the point of view at which the veteran statesman was then speaking his words were distinctly true. He might have gone a little farther and said that the prosperity of the country depends on the harvest. Or a little farther still and said that the prosperity of Canada may and often does depend on a few showers of rain. The people in some parts of Ontario are fairly prosperous at the present time and are looking forward to good business in autumn just because they had a few good showers of rain at regular intervals during summer. One or two places are suffering and may suffer more severely during winter because the showers did not fall on them. One good rain may have millions in it.

Supposing a visitor were to come to this country from another planet, how long would he need to remain here in order that he might learn that our prosperity depends mainly on the weather. If he came during a general election, night and day he would hear and read that the prosperity, yes, the very existence of the country, depends on which party happens to be in power. If any citizen ventured to say at a political meeting that the prosperity of Canada depended mainly on the harvest, that the harvest depends on the showers and sunshine and that these are governed by the Great Ruler, that citizen would be howled down and ridiculed as a Sunday School politician. Men who call themselves Christians would vie with brabbers, bummers and election bullies and personators in denouncing a man who had the courage to say that the prosperity of this country depends on anything but keeping the right party in power. How much does party politics help those townships in Grey and other north-western counties that have had little or no rain?

For sixteen years Canadians have been taught that the prosperity if not the existence of Canada depends on whether we are under revenue tariff only, the N.P. or free trade pure and simple. One good shower of rain at a critical time may do the country more good in sixteen minutes than any tariff could do in sixteen years.

So far as a candid human eye can see, the frost in the Niagara Peninsula last May was a much greater affliction than the Jesuit Estates Bill. Fortunately our prosperity does not depend nearly as much on what party is in power at Ottawa as a great many politicians would make the people believe.

One evening four years ago a kind Winnipeg friend drove this contributor out to see Kildonan. Coming home after sunset the air became quite chilly. "A little more cold," said our friend, "and we are all ruined." The great wheat crop of '91, was then in the "milky stage" and two or three degrees of frost would have destroyed it. Two or three degrees of frost at the present time might do Manitoba many times more harm than Separate Schools properly regulated would do. A rainy week when the wheat is cut would do much more harm than the Remedial Order, harsh as that document was.

There are hundreds of faddists in this country who tell you with a perfectly straight face that the prosperity of the country depends on their fad.

Looked at from a Divine side, the future of the country depends on the sovereign rule of the King of kings. Viewed from the human side, it depends on the industry, intelligence, enterprise, steadiness and honesty of the people.

Ram's Horn: Only love can make a fire hot enough to burn an enemy to death.

MISSIONARY CONTRIBUTIONS OF OUR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES.

MR. EDITOR,—In one of your recent issues there appeared a letter signed by the respected secretary of the Foreign Mission Committee on the above subject. Since its publication letters not a few have been sent me, taking very strong objection to the sentence in Mr. McKay's letter, which reads as follows.

"By the authority of the Committees Home and Foreign, we suggest that for the year 1895-96, contributions be given for the support of the Missions in Honan and British Columbia."

In reply to these, I may say that such a proposal never came before the Home Mission Committee, nor was the convener asked to do so. In a private communication from Mr. Conning, of Caledonia, mention was made of a meeting of friends of missions in Toronto, when action had been taken along the above lines; and I was asked to name some Home Mission field towards the support of which the Young People's Societies might be directed. My reply was to the effect, that in view of the explicit deliverances of former General Assemblies, directing Young People's Societies especially to give for Home Missions and Augmentation, I could not see that such action, as contemplated, was at all regular. But I added, that as there were doubtless Christian Endeavor Societies and others, who preferred to divide their contributions, such could render great service by apportioning amounts to British Columbia or some field in the North-West. A letter just received from Mr. Conning more than bears me out as to the reply I sent him. He says: "I have a distinct recollection of the contents of your letter. You decidedly objected to the division of the funds of the Young People's Societies in the way proposed, on the ground chiefly of the action of the General Assembly. But if such a division of the funds was insisted upon, you specified British Columbia as a field towards which the Home Mission givings of the young people should be directed." This letter, Mr. Conning tells me, was forwarded to Mr. McKay, who is at liberty to publish it, if he sees fit.

The proposal made in Mr. McKay's communication, which is addressed not only to Christian Endeavor Societies but to all the Young People's Societies of the church, seems at least to override the decisions of the General Assembly. It is well known to many, if not all you readers, that several years ago the Home Mission Committee made an unsuccessful effort to enlist the Woman's Foreign Mission Auxiliary in Home Mission work, by giving to its funds a share of their revenue, however small. At the Joint Conference then held by the Home and Foreign Mission Committees, and by ladies representing the Woman's Auxiliary, it was suggested, not by members of the Home Mission Committee but by members of the Foreign Mission Committee, that the young people in our congregations might do, to some extent at least, for Home Missions, what the Woman's Auxiliary were doing for Foreign. Accordingly in 1890, the Presbytery of Toronto overruled the General Assembly, asking it to sanction the foundation of Young People's Societies, for the procuring and diffusing of information, concerning the mission work of the church, the discussion of missionary topics, and especially that, "all monies received from membership fees or otherwise be paid over to the treasurer of the church, and that in the application of such monies, special attention be given to the necessities of the Home Mission and Augmentation Funds." The prayer of the overture was granted, as was also that of another overture from the Synod of Manitoba and the North-West, asking for the foundation of such societies. At the following Assembly in 1891, the Home Mission Committee reported what they had done, in carrying out the instructions of the previous year, and presented a

constitution for such Young People's Societies for approval. The result was that the following resolution was adopted: "The General Assembly approves of the constitution of Young People's Societies, Auxiliary to the Home Mission Committee, as submitted by the committee," and article second of said constitution expressly says "that the object of the society shall be, the diffusion of information concerning the mission work of the church, especially that done within our own country, and the collection of funds for such missions."

I might go on and quote the approval given by subsequent General Assemblies, of the efforts made by the Home Mission Committee to enlist the sympathies of the young people of the church in Home Mission work, but I forbear. There are now three Presbyterian Young People's Auxiliary Societies, besides others in different Presbyteries not thus associated, and although the total contributions so far received, may seem small, in comparison with the magnificent sum given by the Woman's Foreign Mission Society to Foreign Missions, yet they are much valued, as giving evidence of the interest taken by the young people in Home Missions, and as hopeful of greater things in the future.

Now in these circumstances I ask, is it fair to attempt in the way described, to override the deliberate action of successive General Assemblies, and represent to the Young People's Societies, that the Home and Foreign Mission Committees have authorized and agreed upon a division of their funds? The Home Mission Committee certainly has not. It never had such a proposal brought before it in any shape or form, and could never have approved of it.

Having no desire to prolong this correspondence, let me say in reply to Mr. McKay's letter:

1st. If the Foreign Mission Committee desired the views of the Home Mission Committee, as to a division of Young People's Missionary monies, the communication should have come from the secretary, and the matter would have come before the Home Mission Committee.

2nd. Mr. McKay (unintentionally no doubt), misrepresents Mr. Henderson's position and my own when he says "that we want all the funds of the nine hundred Endeavor Societies throughout the country to be applied to Home work." We desire nothing of the kind. All that we do ask is, that the Young People's Societies, sanctioned under the General Assembly's Act (and Christian Endeavor Societies also), should at least give weight to the recommendations of the General Assembly as to the claims of Home Missions.

If, as Mr. McKay intimates, my position in this matter meets with the disapproval of one or two members of the Home Mission Committee, I can only express regret. I am simply defending the Assembly's action, and their disapproval should be directed to the source of legislation. I have neither the leisure, nor if I had, the desire to "feel the pulse of the Church," by approaching individual members, either of the Home or Foreign Mission Committee, and getting the approval or disapproval of officials. My business as Convener, is simply to carry out the instructions given me by the General Assembly and the Home Mission Committee which I believe I have done hitherto, to the general satisfaction of its members.

I reciprocate what I believe to be Mr. McKay's sincere good wishes for the success of Home Missions; and I trust that nothing that I have written now (or ever written) will be considered as depreciatory of the grand work in which the Foreign Mission Committee, and the Woman's Foreign Mission Society are engaged.

I have just received the following letter from Dr. Robertson, the Moderator, who, as Superintendent of North-West Missions, feels strongly in this matter. May I ask you to give it a place in your columns, along with this letter.

Yours faithfully,
WM. COCHRANE,
Convener H.M.C.
Brantford, Aug. 9, 1895.

DR. ROBERTSON'S LETTER.

DEAR DR. COCHRANE,—In THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN of the 24th inst., appears a circular signed by the Rev. R. P. McKay, which, I confess, surprise me a little. In brief, the circular recommends all Young People's Societies belonging to the Church to contribute to the mission schemes of their own church—which is perfectly right and proper—and suggests that some specific field be selected from time to time, and the efforts of the societies directed to the support of mission work there. The circular concludes: "By the authority of the committees Home and Foreign, we suggest that, for the year 1895-6, contributions be given for the support of missions in Honan and British Columbia." Mr. McKay adds: "A considerable number of societies have already agreed to this arrangement, and the first leaflet with the first letter from one of our missionaries upon the work in Honan will be issued in a few weeks."

This arrangement between the committees is news to me, and I write for information. My own action was contemplated, surely it ought to have been reported to the Assembly and the sanction of that court received. The Assembly of 1890 authorized the organization of Young Men's Missionary Societies, to raise monies, and instructed that, in the application of monies raised, special attention be given to the necessity of the Home Mission and Augmentation Funds. This Assembly also expressed approval of an overture praying for the formation of Home Mission Societies affiliated with a Presbyterian Society, and remitted the overture to the Home Mission Committee to perfect such a scheme. In 1891 the Home Mission Committee reported to the Assembly, submitting a constitution for Young People's Societies, with provision for Presbyterian and Synodical societies. This constitution received the approval of the Assembly; and since that time steps have been taken to organize such societies, and with gratifying success, as appears from the Home Mission report submitted to the last Assembly. If the arrangement referred to by Mr. McKay has been effected, it seems to me to contravene the spirit if not the letter of the Assembly's legislation, and to run, at least in part, counter to the aims of the Home Mission Committee in the organization of such societies.

And I am more than surprised that such action as is indicated, viz., that all the contributions of these societies should go to support Foreign Missions, should have been taken this year. You know that it was by a very special effort that the Home Mission Committee got enough money last spring to pay its missionaries their full grant. The F.M. Committee, on the contrary, had a surplus of \$17,500. The outlook in Ontario for this year, is not promising, and our Home Mission obligations are heavier than last year. How in these circumstances did the Home Mission Committee consent to have its necessary drained in the way indicated?

If the compact of the circular has been effected, it seems to me it will diminish our revenue when we most need it to be increased, that it will demoralize our organizations and defeat to a great extent the aim of the Assembly. If there has been no such understanding between the committees, as Mr. McKay intimates, then the circular should be promptly withdrawn, and the societies set right. I am writing only of course, as a member of the Home Mission Committee; but I am writing to you as Convener, for you can give me facts in the case, as far as the Home Mission Committee is concerned. With much respect,

Yours truly,
J. ROBERTSON.

Winnipeg, Man., July 30, 1895.

LETTER OF REV. R. P. MCKAY.

Rev. Dr. Cochrane says: In reply to a letter I addressed Mr. McKay, I have received the following, which it is only fair to him should be published in full.

DEAR DR. COCHRANE,—Your card came to hand yesterday, making enquiry as to the authority upon which the statement is made in the circular issued by the Foreign Mission Committee, that the Home Mission Committee authorized the division of the contributions of Young People's Societies between Home and Foreign work, and stating that such authority was not given, save in a private letter by you to Mr. Conning.

There seems to be two misunderstandings. First, as to the character of that letter which you call private, addressed to Mr. Conning. Mr. Conning was instructed to write to you by a small committee that was considering the question, and when he sent me your reply, I accepted it as official, and upon that authority the statement was inserted in the circular. And then I did not understand that Mr. Conning was to write asking authority for the division of the funds of the Young People's Societies, but to ask whether you would be willing to assign to the young people some one field of Home work in which they could take a special interest. That the young people would continue to take an interest in both Home and Foreign work, as they have been doing in the past, was not regarded as an open question. I regret very much that you have seen fit to take the position taken by yourself in the Assembly, and by Mr. Henderson in the last *Presbyterian Review*, that all the funds of the 900 Endeavor Societies throughout the country, should be applied to Home work. It has not been so hitherto, and cannot be in days to come, and taking that position is only courting needless conflict. The *Golden Rule* has been pressing Foreign Missions on their attention for years with some success, and at this date that