

Written for this Paper.

## LIVING PROGRESS.

Upon the possibilities of improvement all the hopes of progress rest, and it is only through experience that defeats are noted and effort becomes stimulated toward desirable change.

All reform, too, to be permanent and of real value must come from inward to the outward, must begin in the man, the institutions the organization. Criticism from without is effectual only as it may find lodgment and response in the criticized. Pressure may compel outward submission or acceptance of a policy; but when the pressure is removed the normal condition reasserts itself, and whatever the benefit of a supposed good, it has simply been transitory because it did not originate or was not seconded from the inside.

A case in point as to institutions was inaugurated in this city many years ago. Its leading men asserted that there was imperfection in the Church of which they were members, that its authorities were subject to human infirmities and weaknesses, that their policy did not represent the ideal even of accepted and promulgated standard—all of which was not unlikely, seeing that human nature, perverted human nature, that training and tradition, that ignorance and superstition are continually asserting their influence and power. But the remedy was inside, was to be secured only by experience, by fuller conversion, by a better or broader conception of the ideal or standard written or otherwise; and the malecontents held influence in this direction as long as they had recognition in the body, and tempered their views with modesty and the true spirit of loving reformation. It pleased them, however, to secede, to inaugurate "the New Move," so as to reform from without, which immediately provoked resistance and probably deferred things desirable, because force thus applied is uncongenial, unauthorized, and is an innovation recognized as interference by universal man.

This seems to be just as decided a principle in business directions as in religion. Our largest institution has had to contend with ignorance, inexperience and such criticism as naturally grows out of these conditions. The work of business education in Utah has been just as onerous, has required just as much patience and pertinacity as in the domain already alluded to. When a semi-official pressure was deemed advisable in the early history thereof, acquiescence was pretty general; but when this slackened the very first to speculate on a presumed liberty were the most unfitted for experiment, and because of their inexperience, many of the stores controlled by such became involved in difficulty, and were only extricated after considerable loss, and some "went to the wall" altogether. The converted ones, those who had the largest and longest experience, or were the most thoughtful and conservative, are today the most prosperous of local traders everywhere in the Territory. They have learned the lesson so well understood and fully accepted by one of our early eastern buyers, that "concentration in business" is one of the primary elements of success.

If the organization of the business element of this Territory were as complete and as susceptible to instruction as the religious one, the financial status could be so solidified that in one brief year its condition would be invulnerable to panic, or "hard times," so-called. Debt, credit, markets, production and distribution in all forms could be so supervised that failure would become unknown; helps if needed, would come at the proper time and in the proper way; and the spirit of progress would be so exhibited that men would wonder how they could have been slaves so long to an individualized looseness which even here has been financially fatal to so many.

In the domain of morals and self-gratification how often has it been found that undue pressure, that even stringent legislation, has been inefficient as a restraining force, save as a momentary thing! The drunkard, the licentious man, the one whose profession is larceny, the one guilty of capital crime in fact, is rarely ever reformed by prison discipline or confinement. A few months or years may suppress, perforce, the vicious inclination or propensity, but far too often on the removal of the pressure "the last state of that man is worse than the first." Years and generations have essayed to curb and restrain the "social evil," to hold it within respectable (?) limits; to force it into allotted quarters, to subject it to municipal and medical control and supervision; but we have not yet heard of any radical change. Immorality, while it may not flaunt itself as in the past, is yet permeating society, and all the more fully and insidiously because it is looked upon as a very venial thing, as more criminal because of discovery than because of the act itself. Two things have militated against success in the suppression of this iniquity. The first, because the execution of the law or ordinance was partial—it visited the paler and penalties upon the erring woman, and gave immunity to the cowardly and active male participant in the crime; man went "scot free," his victim, bedazzled and bedrugged, bore all the hideous burthen, while he was privileged to enter the most chaste and sacred precincts of "society" without his rebuke, and, may it be said, with a heartier welcome as if possessed of an added fascination!

One of the topics now agitating the local mind is in connection with prospective Statehood, and known as the "liquor traffic." Some are agitating for prohibition as a policy, and the suppression of drunkenness by law, and others suggest high license to make respectability compulsory. That this traffic, restricted or otherwise, is carried on at great cost to the average citizen is beyond controversy. It is the fruitful stimulus to much crime. Police, courts, jails and the penitentiary are sustained at immense expense for which this traffic is, in the main, legitimately and directly responsible; and as the price of license to individuals contributes but a moiety in this direction, while allowing a business to be energetically pushed, we say let the future State control by and for itself, and for the public weal, the entire business.

The profits would then inure to the State and recoup it for associated expense, and in the carrying out of the traffic, this control, while efficient, would not use its opportunity to further or increase its sales. This if feasible, would certainly be more just, and it liable to the designation of monopoly, failure in all other directions would certainly justify a good deal of patient experiment.

While we are continually asserting our greatness as a nation, and inviting the world to share our unparalleled resources, it is painfully evident that our experiences have not kept pace with our increasing responsibilities. There are many very subtle questions of national import with which we are hardly prepared to grapple—the labor question, finance, the tariff, international affairs, etc. Our representatives can vote money (not their own) with the facility of experts, but the weightier matters are pushed from month to month, from session to session, in the hope (Micawber-like) that "something will turn up" so that partisanship and half comprehension of "the right thing" may somehow finally coalesce. What is needed in the high places and low places, in national and local affairs, and in individual life, is a transmutation of righteousness into the soul, a more rigorous cultivation of the conscience, a radical conversion of the heart. Its conceptions of right, justice, honesty, integrity, virtue, need to be purified, expanded and enlightened—a greater sense of personal responsibility, and more assurance that penalty is inevitable whether the sinner—the criminal, is high or low, whether educated or illiterate, whether of the select few or belonging to "the great unwashed."

When cultivation is thus far advanced, all the lines of progress will tremble to the touch; all the avenues of improvement will be widened and more crowded; all reforms will have the stability of the everlasting hills, for ideas once received swell outward; all thought cherished seeks expression in words—then work. Man, moving mentally and spiritually, moves on institutions and organizations which readily and unconsciously almost respond to this force, which says to a mountain, "Be thou cast down and buried in the sea and it obey!"

This is a frivolous if an earnest age. It is essentially godless, spite of all its religion; selfish, notwithstanding its assumptions of liberality; corrupt, although it is outwardly "in good form;" pharisaical, when envy of others libels itself; and doomed to destruction because there is no disposition toward repentance. The legitimate reformation which should thus come from within is stifled, it is too exultant, too self-satisfied, too much in love with material success, to develop that manhood or those institutions which in the order of Divine providence in obedience to law, looks with assurance into the future for its grand ideal. The susceptible man and community, feeling within them this progressive spirit, this love of progress and improvement, will transmute into general life its magnetic force, religion, then business, then social order, then education, professions and politics. From these, or co-working together, will come "the tug of war,"