

What Constitutes Prosperity

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“What profiteth a man that he gain the whole world and lose his own soul.” In other words what does a man gain by the accumulation of riches if he is exposed daily to the living conditions in the filthy community? Men who move from city to city are even now asking “What is the typhoid death rate? What is the incidence of the acute diseases of childhood? What is the water supply? How are sewerage and garbage disposed of?” A time will come when a city merchants' association will offer as the chief inducement to prospective citizens (if some have not already offered) the vital statistics and sanitary activities. Industries, land, banks, libraries, parks, etc., will come after the principal attraction.

Education is having some appreciable effect. People now want to know how they and their children will be protected from disease. They have come to expect competent service from the Health Department.

Prosperity, now-a-days, thank God, is not built for the few upon the bodies of many. Society is half-blindly groping its way along the paths blazed by the leaders in Preventive Medicine. Were it not for crass political inefficiency we should not today have some diseases, which are absolutely preventable.

The saving feature is that with all our halting and stumbling we do move forward. Even the present world war, the most terrible of calamities, has developed a spirit of sacrifice and giving which, if properly managed, bids fair to continue and redound to the good of the world.

Prosperity is after all not the millions in the bank nor the bonds in the safety deposit vaults. It is the awakened conscience of people which radiates love for their fellow-beings. Let us hope that the day will soon come when the prosperity of a community is known not by its large purse, but by its large heart.

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