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The New England Country Church Association



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READ AT THE

Conference on the Problems of the
Rural Church

HELD IN BOSTON
MARCH 13 AND 14, 1911



The Cosmos Press

EDW. W. WHEELER

30 BOYLSTON ST., CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

PROGRAM OF THE CONFERENCE

Monday, March Thirteenth

4 P. M.

ADDRESS.— *Rev. Warren H. Wilson*, Superintendent of the Department of Church and Rural Life, Presbyterian Church.

ADDRESS.— *Professor H. K. Rowe*, Newton Theological Institution, Newton Centre, Mass.

“Some Statistics Regarding Church Attendance and Church Work in Rural New England.”

ADDRESS.— *Rev. J. N. Pardee*, Bolton, Mass.

“The Awakening of the Theological Schools to the Needs of the Country Pastorate.”

7 P. M.

THE SOCIAL EDUCATION CLUB of Boston held an open dinner-discussion at Youngs Hotel, on the general topic of “Rural Education and Rural Life.” Those who were in attendance upon our conference were invited to meet with them.

Professors Fred Rasmussen, of the New Hampshire College, and B. H. Hibbard, of the Iowa State College, were the principal speakers.

Tuesday, March Fourteenth

10 A. M.

ADDRESS.— *Rt. Rev. Edward M. Parker*, Bishop Coadjutor of New Hampshire.

“An Ideal of Country Church Settlement Work.”

ADDRESS.— *Professor Robert J. Sprague*, University of Maine, Orono, Maine.

“The Rural Church and the Beautification of the Country.”

2.30 P. M.

ADDRESS.— *Rev. W. M. Cutler*, East Jaffrey, N. H.

“One Solution of the Problem of the Country Church.”

ADDRESS.— *Professor O. H. Benson*, United States Department of Agriculture.

“Education for Rural Uplift.” Illustrated with Stereopticon.

Officers.

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Secretary, Rev. J. N. Pardee, Bolton, Mass.

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Professor HENRY K. ROWE, Newton Theological Institution, Newton Centre, Mass.

Professor A. R. MERRIAM, Hartford Theological Seminary, Hartford, Conn.

Professor HENRY S. NASH, Episcopal Theological School, Cambridge, Mass.

Professor George M. HARMON, Tufts College, Mass.

Professor W. W. FENN, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

THE CHURCH FOR THE WORKING FARMER.

BY REV. WARREN H. WILSON, D.D., NEW YORK.

THE church is dealing in the country community with a healthy and moral population of American stock. Our recent investigations in Pennsylvania, Indiana, and Illinois have shown that the farming population has high vitality, is free generally from immoral conditions, and is but little affected by the immigration which is filling the cities and the factory towns. The process described by Anderson in "The Country Town" is shown to be very general in the sifting of the country population. The bolder and more enterprising individuals, both good and evil, have gone to the city. The country church, therefore, has to deal with an unprogressive, healthy, satisfied, and American population.

The work of the church is profoundly affected by the redistribution of land which is going on all over the United States. Since 1890, as recently shown by Professor J. B. Ross, the exploitation of land throughout the country has gone very far, especially in the Middle West. Before that time the farmer had permanent notions of country residence. The evidences of this exploiting in land are shown in tenant farmers, absentee landlords, retired farmers, and speculators. Under these conditions entirely new values of land and men have come to prevail in the country community. The earlier values were based on the first use of the soil, the first values of timber and of pasture, the first profits of the market.

Present values are based on final or marginal utility. Their source is not plenty, but bare subsistence. The profit made under the new condition is a profit in the by-products, whereas the earlier profit was a substantial portion of the raw products of the soil, the forest, and the pasture. We are obliged to deal too with marginal values in men. The church in the early days standardized her work upon the leading citizens, upon the brighter and abler, the wealthier and the more successful members of the congregation.

The modern church is directing her policies by the needs of the poor. The country church today has learned that her survival is dependent on the tenant farmer and farm hand, upon the young people of the community, and the boys and girls in the farm household. If the church can minister to these effectively, it will survive, for they are the marginal units by whom human values are today determined.

Once again in America we have a time when the "soil is holy." In the early days the soil was sanctified at Plymouth Rock and at Philadelphia and at Baltimore; indeed on all the eastern coasts, by the devout feelings of those who fled from oppression and found in America religious liberty. The Pilgrims knelt in the sand on the New England shore. William Penn called his grant of land from Charles The Second, a "holy experiment." The Catholics consecrated the soil of Maryland to religious liberty.

The modern prophets of the holiness of the soil are economists. These men value the soil for its utility in meeting the needs of the whole people. The soil is holy in their estimation because only by its conservation can the poor be fed and clothed. The test of American husbandry is its value to landless men, tenant farmers in the country, and workingmen in the city, who do not own the tools by which they get their living. The soil is declared to be holy by the scientific agriculturist, because it has values for our children as well as ourselves. It must not be wasted, or robbed, or exploited, because to waste the soil is to rob the poor and to increase the cost of living for the workingman and to lay burdens upon our children, yet unborn.

We have, then, a new kind of holy man and woman in this country. I think it is fair to say that no woman in America is more loved and revered than Jane Addams, who has devoted her life to the service of marginal people in Chicago. The leading member of the Negro race, who possesses the respect and affection of both the White and the Negro, is Booker T. Washington, who is ministering to the Negro as a marginal element in the American population. The poor, that is, they who are without land and without ownership in the tools of modern industry, determine the moral and spiritual conditions in the community. Tenants and farm hands set the moral tone with the same precision with which the marginal mill hand fixes the wages in the cotton mill. For this reason institutions such as the country church are obliged

to turn their attention to the service of the poor. The country church and the country school will survive or perish by the ministry they can render to the duller and weaker folk in the country. To help them is to help all. This can be said of no other class in the country community. The poor are the distributing centre of all advantage for the community, as a whole. The dull and the ignorant who are just able to survive in the community must be the target of all policies which are to have value for the whole community.

This is the reason why the country school needs to be improved. The one-room country school has had great influence upon the bright and ambitious pupils, who loved books and desired to get on. It has sent them out of the community, being organized "as if to populate the city at the expense of the country." But the country school must be reformed in the interest of the dull, but industrious, who will permanently live in the community. The determining principle in reforming the country school is to make it an institution for teaching agriculture and giving general industrial training to those whose lives shall be lived in that community.

We have churches of this sort. Du Page Church in Illinois, under Mr. McNutt's pastorate, has ministered to the needs of the young people in a populous countryside. It has satisfied the social requirements of that community and thus served all the needs of the people there.

West Nottingham Church in Maryland, under the leadership of Mr. Polk, has become a centre of better agriculture. In an old farming country where the tillage of the soil must be radically improved, Mr. Polk has become conspicuous in the Farmers' Club, which is reorganizing the farming industry on a scientific basis. This church is reestablishing the farming population and making it permanent on a basis of husbandry.

The uniting of a whole community in one church was my own task in this State in my first ministry in Dutchess County. The determining principle in organizing this church at Quaker Hill was that all the Christian people of the community should be served by the new organization. Members and attendants of all the denominations were received into this small church. At its organization it was sanctioned by the five congregations surrounding it, representing five different denominations.

At Rock Creek, Ill., and at McNab, Ill., the leading members of

the country church have in each community effected the reconstruction of the country schools. They have secured in the open country a centralized and consolidated school, through which the retirement from the farms has been stopped and the building of the country community has been made possible.

“The best farmers in America,” says Professor Carver of Harvard, “are the Mormons, Scotch Presbyterians, and Pennsylvania Germans.” I am not an authority on economics, but I can lay alongside of this statement the fact that the best country churches in America are Mormon, Scotch Presbyterian, and Pennsylvania German. These farmers till the land by their religion. They worship God as united farming communities. They think the land is holy, as Dean Bailey has declared. They have not been affected by redistribution of land. Their acres are not for sale, neither are their country churches suffering any distress, because they have long ago discovered and continued to practice the principle that agriculture is a religious occupation and the Christian Church is a perfect expression of the devotion of the rural economy.

SOME STATISTICS OF CHURCH ATTENDANCE AND CHURCH WORK IN RURAL NEW ENGLAND.

BY PROFESSOR HENRY K. ROWE, NEWTON THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTION.

THE statistics that make up this report are the result of investigations made a little over a year ago into the conditions of rural churches here in New England. A series of questions was sent out to about thirteen hundred country ministers of all denominations. Of these ten per cent were returned with replies. One hundred were worth tabulating, and it is on these as a basis that this report is presented. In general the records were unsatisfactory; a very large proportion of the churches reported nothing by way of social effort aside from the routine activities of most churches. Thirty-eight ministers showed sufficient interest in the investigation to volunteer remarks in addition to answering the questions, and many of them reflected a spirit of hopefulness. Some are in a very difficult situation, and asked for suggestions, but they showed no evidence of despair. One pastor with a church of twenty-five members asked to be directed to a source whence he might secure evening lecturers. Another requested speakers for a local conference in the interests of a federation of effort. Another reported union of evangelistic effort in a whole county. A Vermont town told of the organization of a committee of nine from three churches to canvass the town in the interests of temperance, and the extension of the scheme to include a joint campaign of education for the young people of the town. A Massachusetts pastor in an unusually overchurched community writes: "I am watching your association with interest, and waiting for the waters to get troubled enough to give a fellow a chance to do some of the things he would like to do." A Vermont minister gives the crux of the whole situation at the same time that he shows his own sense of duty when he writes: "We are anxious in our position of exceptional responsibility and opportunity to get into the minds and hearts of all without the church that the church is ideally the community worshiping and serving God. It is hard to kill the old

notion that it is a private limited body with narrow aims and functions and restricted range of appeal."

It is plain that common criticism of ministers is not to be extended to all. But some are pessimistic. One writer, lamenting sectarian jealousy, declared that until this spirit was eliminated, it was impossible for conditions to be made very different. "Nitroglycerin would hardly explode the conscience of many indifferents," wrote another. Bigotry and clannishness, a disposition to be satisfied with the past and its methods, and a general indifference are among the evils deplored. Expressions like these mark the feeling of the discouraged ministers. "It would be difficult to bring congregations to work together. Too many difficulties in the past to forget. Perhaps after a number of funerals it might be different:" "The work drags. The pastors have worked hard, but it is hard to get warm in a refrigerator."

A very common evil is the presence of too many churches in a community, but this is not so universal an evil as some seem to think. Not only are there too many church organizations and buildings in towns that have been depleted of population, but seating capacity is also out of all proportion to church membership and attendance. A town in New Hampshire with a total church membership of one hundred and sixty-five and an average attendance of one hundred and fifty has sittings for nine hundred. A town in Massachusetts with a population of only a thousand has sittings for twelve hundred persons. The data are not sufficient for drawing very general conclusions as to attendance, but the indications are that in the typical rural community not more than fifteen per cent of the people attend church. Yet four towns report a proportion of one church to every one hundred people or less, seven towns report one church to every one hundred and seventy people, fifty towns one to about two hundred and seventy-five, and twenty-six towns one to about three hundred and seventy-five. Naturally the membership of the churches reporting is small. Fifty-seven out of eighty-three have between twenty and one hundred members; fifteen number from one hundred to one hundred and fifty. Of these only twelve had an appreciable gain yearly.

Two ways have been recommended frequently to remedy the evils of overchurching: union of churches, and federation or coöperation. Inquiry, therefore, was made as to the extent of such getting together. About half the churches reported coöpera-

tion of some kind, two thirds of the instances consisting of union evangelistic meetings, mostly occasional. Eight united in furtherance of temperance and good government. Two pastors report that mutual consultation goes on between them and others in their towns, and they call on all Protestants in town. One writes: "With a union picnic, union Christmas tree, union Memorial Day service, union Sunday evening services, the Congregationalist and Methodist pastors calling jointly on all the families of the town in a canvass — how beautiful and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." In two places a mutual arrangement is maintained for services in jails, and one at a county farm.

To determine what agencies existed in the rural communities for social life and moral uplift, definite information was asked. In reply the following facts were brought out. Forty-nine communities contain one or more granges; thirty-six have other lodges or clubs for men; twenty-four have free libraries, and the same number possess women's organizations of some sort, with the Woman's Christian Temperance Union especially prominent. Village Improvement societies exist in nine localities; one of them is reported to have restricted its activities to cutting down a few weeds in a street last summer.

One of the difficulties is to persuade the churches that they have any special duty to the outlying districts or for the social betterment of the community at large. Investigation revealed the fact that a considerable number of churches maintain extension activities, consisting principally of district schoolhouse meetings. Twenty-six churches regularly sustain prayer-meetings in cottages or schoolhouses or both. Seven carry on Sunday schools in addition. Several pastors take occasion to testify to the value of the Sunday school department. One busy pastor finds time for a weekly Bible class at different houses. Public conveyance to church on Sunday is provided in one place. Two have successful boys' camps in the summer.

With regard to social activity for the benefit of the community, it is usually the case that individual members rather than the church as an organization take part. Most of the social undertakings of the church are for its own members. A men's club is fairly common, less often one for boys. Several churches provide facilities for athletics. Of course there are "sewing circles," but clubs for women or girls are infrequent. Two churches main-

tain social study clubs, two a current events club, one a dramatic club, several musical societies. Church libraries and reading-rooms prove popular. In one place churches unite to maintain a nursing association in aid of the sick; in another the Baptists carry on a sewing-school, and the Episcopalians a social settlement in a Negro district.

While it is not possible to give very conclusive figures as to conditions all over New England, these reports are sufficiently representative to warrant the following conclusions:

1. It is clear from the small number of replies received and the quality of the work done generally that there is a deplorable indifference on the part of ministers to the opportunity for larger and more aggressive work, and where there is genuine interest there appears a lack of understanding of method that indicates great need of better training for country ministers.

2. It is most encouraging that there is a nucleus of ministers who are genuinely in earnest and desirous of finding a way to do more. Around this nucleus might be built up a new and larger work for the rural churches.

3. The small attendance and stationary membership of the churches indicates the need of a religious awakening of the average New England community.

4. There is need of the elimination of some churches, but local coöperation in a forward campaign is needed still more.

5. The social leadership of the community has passed largely into the hands of other social organizations. There is great need of well-planned social effort by the church.

6. The church is not reaching special classes.

7. The church is not reaching the community frontier.

THE AWAKENING OF THE THEOLOGICAL SCHOOLS.

BY REV. J. N. PARDEE, BOLTON, MASS.

WHEN I found this subject assigned to me I wrote to a number of the leading theological schools for information. Replies received indicate that all the schools are giving consideration to the advisability of some special instruction adapted to the peculiar conditions the ministry faces in rural communities.

This consideration seems to be a part of a new emphasis being put upon the practical side of the training of students for general service to society.

A realizing sense of certain sociological differences between urban and rural conditions is so new that the most of the schools have as yet done little more than to survey the ground, with a view to laying out lines of future procedure.

Certain schools, notably those of Newton and Hartford, have already instituted courses of lectures on rural sociology and the special needs of the country churches. I have myself had the honor of speaking to the students of the Harvard, Andover, and Meadville schools. At present there is little to report except a decided interest in the subject, both upon the part of the faculties and the students, that promises results. A number of students with a true missionary spirit, have indicated a purpose to seek country parishes.

Perhaps I can do no better than to call attention briefly to a few points that should not be overlooked, and to certain needs.

In the discussion of rural conditions I see a danger in generalizing from insufficient data. There may be isolated communities that can be called "degenerate" fairly, but I have been unable to find any community that can be so stigmatized. As Mr. Anderson has pointed out, there are communities, even in New England, where the church, with its moral influences, never did gain a foothold. A careful study of the "depleted" towns of Massachusetts that I have made, convinces me that the economic conditions have steadily improved with a decline of the population,

and most men of sixty years of age agree with me that the moral condition of those towns is much better than it was half a century ago. Just how far this will apply to the northern New England States I cannot say with certainty. There is danger too of underestimating certain forces that are at work, such as the improvements in agriculture, the close touch of the farmers with the agricultural colleges and experiment stations, the generally high order of intelligence of the rural population, the breadth of information, the shrewd judgment that adapts means to ends, and the real appreciation of the best things that is evident, though often handicapped by narrow economic margins and lack of generous culture. And it should not be forgotten that within two decades a practical revolution has been taking place in the rural school system.

The common opinion that the draft of population has taken away from the depleted towns the best blood, leaving behind the old, weak, and inefficient, is not justified by the facts. I have treated this subject to some extent in an article soon to appear in the *Atlantic Monthly*, and will pass it by now.

The resources of the country are by no means exhausted. But they call for the best men to work them.

The country churches need men of capabilities of a high order; educated men, men of the missionary spirit; but in putting emphasis upon the needs of an all round equipment, there is danger of overlooking the importance of qualifications that have always stood at the front in the training of ministers.

The young man who looks countryward for his field of labor should never forget that the primary work of the Christian minister, in the country as well as in the city, is to call the attention of men, women, and children to the Eternal Realities; to translate the terms of a sane, vital philosophy of the universe into the terms of the common thought and life; to find in high thoughts of the moral government of God motives for the conduct of human beings in their relations to one another; to stimulate high ambitions, clarify thought, widen knowledge, give hope in discouragement, and soothe the sorrows of the afflicted. To enable him to do this in the most effective way, all is fish that comes to his net; but how far he shall go to fish in other than religious waters depends upon the circumstances of his environment, and the character of his tackle.

Some of our most successful, most inspiring, most helpful

country ministers, who have molded the character of rising generations, have been saintly men, who knew little about common affairs, and could handle no tool heavier than a pen; but men who knew much about the deep things of God, and the aspirations of the human soul; men of high scholarship, profound thought, and spiritual vision; men who loved the people, and whom the people loved.

It should not be forgotten that the coign of vantage of the country minister is the pulpit. It is here that the candidate is "sized up." He is called almost exclusively upon his character as a preacher; and the keenest, shrewdest critics he will ever face he stands before in the country pulpits. Country congregations, as a rule, will forgive neglect and shortcomings in all other departments of his work sooner than failures in the pulpit. They will go into their pockets far deeper for a live preacher than for a good social worker, teacher of civics, organizer of clubs, or even for a good pastor, though all these things are highly appreciated.

I want to make this point clear, because there is an impression abroad that almost any kind of preaching will "go" in the country. Poor preaching does go; many cheap things go for the simple reason that the people of a poor church feel their inability to pay for anything better; but the man who lets himself down from his very best, be he a preacher, singer, or entertainer, through a vain impression that his audience does not know a good thing when it hears it, makes the mistake of his life. The farther back you go into pioneer regions, the more really educated men and women are you likely to meet. I know how summer visitors bring back to the city stories of rural stupidity, but summer visitors, like the novelists, are apt to generalize from incidental cases, and to look through glasses colored by their own abnormal aestheticism. It is a mistake, too, for a student to get the idea that country congregations call for extemporaneous preaching. There is only one safe rule, and that is to do the best you can.

The crying need of the country towns today is not social service so much as a revival of religion; a sane, rational revival of religion that will open up the springs of life and inspire the development of character; a type of religion that can be formulated by a penetrating study of the Sermon on the Mount.

Given such a revival, social service will follow as naturally as

a stream flows from its fountain head. The fine dream of the good Bishop of New Hampshire will come true.

I would not be understood as undervaluing social service. I simply say "amen" to the Bishop, and "God bless you!" to Brother Wilson.

Another point that needs attention by the theological schools is instruction in ecclesiastical law. Many of our churches of the Congregational order are in a condition of legal anarchy, and consequently of business inefficiency. The great numbers of ministers and standing committees who do not know that the statutes of the states furnish the constitutions of their societies is simply amazing. Many of our old parishes have not done business legally for years, and do not know where the title to their property lies. The courts dread nothing so much as "a church case." Business methods are notoriously lax, and more ministers lose their pulpits on account of this laxity than on account of all other causes combined. Here is a direct challenge to the theological schools.

Finally, there is no situation that requires more "tact," or that calls for more of the wisdom of the serpent and the harmlessness of the dove than the position of pastor of a country church. It would hardly be just to faculties of our theological schools to expect them to lay out lines of training when their beginnings run back and their efficiency runs forward in qualities of personality for which they cannot be held responsible.

AN IDEAL OF COUNTRY CHURCH SETTLEMENT WORK.

BY RT. REV. EDWARD M. PARKER, BISHOP COADJUTOR OF NEW
HAMPSHIRE.

I MUST begin with a word of personal explanation of the rather ambitious scheme of country work which my title suggests. I was for twenty-six years a teacher in St. Paul's School, Concord, New Hampshire, for a quarter of a century the minister in charge of a small country church more than five miles distant, and for twelve years of this period a pluralist in charge of a second congregation in a village ten miles from my front door. My parish stretched as far over a thinly settled district as I could travel. When I wished to indulge in tall talk it was my custom to speak of the area of square miles that I could call my own, or the number of times I had driven across the continent without leaving my five New Hampshire townships, and to allude to the small classes presented for confirmation at the Bishop's visits as being so many miles long rather than as containing so many individuals. There was no large centre in my field of work; my first church was in a part of the towns separated by two miles with a long hill from the two churches at "the Centre" with its eighty people, and the second had to be built in the little railroad village where it was sadly impossible to buy or to repair either of the disused and decaying church buildings which it contained, because one could get no deed from "the Church," "the Society," the scattered pew owners, and the unknown numerous descendants of the original donor. Some of the difficulties of rural work were therefore unfelt by me, a non-resident who did not depend on his people for financial support and social intercourse, since my work as a teacher gave me fellowship and money to live on in a long pastorate, wherein I had the intense satisfaction of knowing a small area and its problems intimately, and the joy of such ties as the christening of the children of people whom I had married and whom I had known as babies

playing in the dooryard or on the floors of the country kitchens or parlors where I made my first calls on their fathers and mothers.

Out of my experience has grown an ideal of the way to minister to a tract of country with a small town or two, with a few villages with tiny hamlets or clusters of farm houses, with perhaps a five years' lumber camp community, some summer boarding houses, a small summer hotel, and with many isolated farms dotted here and there along the country roads. In planning with my fellow workers, I am very apt to clarify their ideas and my own by asking first, "What would you have if you could do *just* what you wished?" and then, "*How* can we begin in some practical way with our inadequate resources of workers and money to do a part of what we desire?"

So here is my vision of what I would do if I could have my wishes carried out, a vision woven partly of accomplished facts in work done in my square miles of country or by others elsewhere in New Hampshire, and partly of rainbow colors not yet brought down to earth.

In the town of A is the central Home of the Workers, the Country Church Settlement House. It is a village house made over a little, a country parsonage, or an old tavern on a disused turnpike ruined by the coming of the railroads, such as I know well in one town, or such as has been redeemed in another to serve as a centre of Christian work. I always like to repeat the story told me, that in a drunken brawl in the unregenerate days of the latter that are past, they saved a man from being done to death by throwing him out of a second story window. If the Central Home in the village of four or five hundred people is an old tavern, its dance hall will give the assembly room needed for social gatherings; if the Home is a smaller house, such a hall must somehow be otherwise obtained for our ideal place of work. And then, close at hand, must be the village church for the central scene of effort of a Country Church Settlement.

And in the Home are the headquarters of the workers, the first being the Senior Parson and his wife and children. He should be an experienced man in middle life. Second is the Junior Parson, a young man not long from the Theological Seminary; he will probably soon need a separate house for a young wife, since young parsons and young army officers set an example, good or bad, of early marriage on small means. I believe with all my heart that

nine times out of ten the country parson is a far more useful man if he has the blessing and the strength of a loving wife, but in our ideal band of workers the Junior Parson might perhaps wait as men of other professions do for this happiness, till he has put in a few years of hard bachelor work. The third man would be a Layman, who was ready for awhile to teach in the village school; and the last member of the group of workers should be the District Nurse, whose duty it should be (as was the case in a well planned piece of country work near Brattleboro), not so much to wear herself out nursing every sick man and woman in her district, as to train and organize all the kindly effort of watchers and neighbors whom the country should supply in the present as in the past. She will be the right hand of the village doctor in the desperate cases which he has sometimes to face almost unaided with heroic self-sacrifice.

The Settlement may lodge a Normal School girl who has just come to town to care for a small district school, and there will often be visitors who pay their board and give their work. But what a body of workers you have planned for your village group of a few hundred people! My dear listeners to a dream, it is the business of our Settlement to own a whole countryside!

I am writing this ideal with a road map before me, and work out the details of my scheme on a real section in New Hampshire. And so I can say that three miles away from my centre A, is the village of B, to reach which I pass a lumber camp hamlet C, two miles from our centre. Three miles beyond B is a small village D, with a church and schoolhouse. And starting from A on a new road, two miles south is the village of E with its seldom-used church building; one mile beyond it is the tiny hamlet of F, and two miles still farther away, on the same south road, is the village of G with its disused church. We can go eight miles from our centre, south-east by train, to a hamlet K with nothing better than a schoolhouse for a meeting place. Five miles of good up-and-down-hill driving will bring our workers to a small village H, and six miles due north lies its fellow, I, its fellow except that the quiet of H among its hills is contrasted with the new paper mill with its thirty or forty hands, which has brought new life and some foreigners to I.

Eight miles northwest by rail is a village of five or six hundred people, which is a little outside our immediate field of work, and where we could not, perhaps, be able to think of doing social or

religious work. It is included in the outside region with its 3000 people who live just beyond our immediate field of work. Our field has today ten church buildings, two libraries, seven summer boarding houses or small hotels, a good many little mills doing rather a poor and failing business, and about 2000 people. I am supposing that our workers supply in part that which is now done by resident ministers, in this home field, many of whose people live on the isolated farms all up and down the many roads that it contains.

Our workers must begin by getting to know every family in this section. The Senior Parson will have his special field; to the Junior Parson will be assigned a particular section for which he will be responsible, since Americans desire to be independent if possible in their work. The Lay Worker might take a small hamlet or two, to relieve the others, or better, might be the helper of the Senior in his central district. Country people in New England are always glad to receive calls, and if one has a little common sense and is courteous, the country parson can be sure of a warm welcome. It is well not to begin as I did, the afternoon before Thanksgiving Day, when housewives are not altogether idle; but I think I gained as much as I lost by the touch of Yankee humor with which many women laughed at the raw inexperience of a young man who had forgotten that pumpkin pies cannot be gathered from November chilled appletrees in the back yard. I shall never forget the dignified cordiality with which I was met several years later on by Mr. Q., who had been told by a mutual friend that "the minister was going to call on him," and who had compared the minister to the moulding machine in the village furniture shop, which he feared "because you did n't know, Edgar, what it was going to do." Warned by the delighted Edgar, the Moulding Machine and Mr. Q. both avoided religious topics and began their acquaintance with grave converse about the proposed village creamery, the likelihood of an early frost, and the comparative advantages of the hill and valley roads. And so our Settlement workers will first of all make at every house the long chatty calls which will make them acquainted with every family and individual, and the card catalogue will speedily have its record of names, ages, and religious connections. The District Nurse and the Doctor will bring the Settlement into closer touch with house after house as sickness visits them, and the Parsons will find it increasingly easy to minister religiously by simple sick-room

prayers to such families, while the steady work of public worship, preaching, and Sunday School and Home Lessons for isolated families will slowly tell on the community as people get to know the minister personally, and to return the compliment of social calls at the houses by occasional, and increasingly regular, visits to the Church or School House service.

I should enjoy drawing up a schedule of work for Messrs. X, Y, Z at all the alphabetical points which I have named earlier. My theory is that at many of those far distant from the central house the parson should have a room in some respectable house, where he can spend the night and leave his books and other belongings. It should be simply furnished with a bed, a table, a few chairs, and an air-tight stove, and there should be in the barn a stall for the horse, as there is a place in the house for his master. Church services, schoolhouse services, house services, short sick-room prayers, all these our workers are to provide for the whole countryside. The house wedding and the leisurely country funeral give one ever new opportunities to reach and to touch people who are slow to come to church. "The house going parson will make the church going people," as the old proverb says, not forgetting that another proverb bids us, "When you go to the city, take your best coat; when you go to the country, take your best sermon."

But in my group of buildings at the Settlement House I have forgotten to speak of the stable! I ought perhaps in an up-to-date ideal to imagine a small automobile in place of one of the horses which the country parson must keep. I know country ministers who do splendid work on "shank's mare," or on bicycles, and one whose parishioners often loaned him "their teams," but it is really a criminal waste of force that the countryside should have a minister unsupplied with such an assistant as "Major-General Jim Parker," who after years of faithful service ended life with a set of rather alarming fits, or like the four-legged gentleman variously called "Dobbin" and "the Arch Deacon," who recently did 189 miles of travel, bringing Christmas cheer along the winter roads of three northern towns.

I have begun with the religious work, because that is the special business of a religious settlement and of a minister, but social work is a help to religious success, especially if there be a thorough conviction that it is worth doing just for its own sake. My experience is that in country social work play comes before serious intentions;

I have a great respect for the old church sociable, if some sort of a programme can be provided; the songs which I have heard are not up to those in Denmark of which Professor Rasmussen spoke last night, but our ideal Settlement could easily get chorus singing by a hall full of people if it printed a few hundred pamphlets of patriotic and simple popular songs, such as "The Red, White and Blue," "The Star Spangled Banner," "Auld Lang Syne," and the "Swanee River," and I know of effective lumber camp words set to the tune of "My Old Kentucky Home." Social workers gave one set of children in a mountain district the first Christmas tree, and the first picnic, they had ever had. One of the most Christian meetings that I ever attended was a village Christmas tree (one of a series managed on an undenominational basis alternately by the ladies of the Baptist and Episcopal churches), at which one heard quaint old English Christmas carols, magazine songs and recitations, the words of the Christmas story from St. Matthew and St. Luke recited by rows of little boys in knickerbockers, and by little girls in white dresses and pigtails, and really lovely French *chansons* about Christmas, sung by the Roman Catholic children from a lumber mill hamlet, who had been drilled and trained by a French Canadian girl. It did not make our meeting less Christian that I had succeeded, in spite of profound anxieties on my part and dismal prophecies of failure on the part of others, in brewing strong coffee in a wash boiler, and that, careful to make the French Canadians feel that they were not asked to do anything in which the others were not ready to take a hand, that I had stood next to a woodchopper's wife, washing coffee mugs in the blacksmith's kitchen. The Christian Settlement worker must never forget the native New Zealand proverb: "Gentleman gentleman does not mind what he does," and that "it is pig gentleman who is very particular."

It is to be hoped that our ideal Settlement workers will not be prevented by Church traditions from killing out or preventing the harmful public dances which sometimes injure a country community, by promoting or encouraging well chaperoned dancing parties which break up at a reasonably early hour. It is a great thing to have the good girls and the wild girls both come to feel that by far the pleasantest parties are those held at home or at the Settlement Hall, and that one need not break bounds to have a good time. Anyone who has not seen a Country Promenade led

by a couple of clever young people who invent new and surprising figures, for the older folk and the children and the young people who follow their lead, has something still to live for.

I have left myself little room to dwell on some of the more serious sides of my ideal piece of country work. As one gains the confidence and the warm friendship of a countryside, clubs for reading, for study, for magazine subscriptions, for the promotion of handicraft, can be organized. Weaving and rug making may increase local wealth; classes in embroidery and music and language may be started and maintained. There is no limit to the leadership that may be developed among the neighbors, or that may be given by the workers who have become friends. And here perhaps is the chance to draw together the summer visitors and the twelve month residents. Summer residents and those who indignantly refuse patronage and often look suspiciously for condescension where it does not exist, can sometimes be drawn together by work for others.

And there are the country schools. I have known one country minister who has set our Settlement workers a splendid example of sympathetic coöperation with the teachers and the leaders in the community for improved methods of instruction, by starting patriotic courses of simple civics and by prizes given at social gatherings of parents and children in the schoolhouses. It will be a clear duty and a keen pleasure for our workers to promote nature studies and vocational courses of study, to work at the problem of ruralizing and improving the schools of their district. Village Improvement Societies and School Gardens once started by interested workers may be taken up by the town; a model school term's work, at the expense of the Settlement, may easily bring in others at the public expense; a worker may become an official on the School Board.

And as tastes and leisure permit, the Settlement gardens and stables may become centres of "agricultural demonstration." Big strawberries in the parson's garden, or well sprayed, well trimmed apple trees, will suggest possibilities unthought of before. Countrymen can understand the practical advantages of reasonable management of woodlots or of tree planting, if the management *be* reasonable. I know one parson who has, and who sells, extra good fresh eggs all the year round, and another who has one of the best gardens in town because he buys good seeds, and has by careful

management of a sandy soil made it capable of large returns. Then there are lectures and conferences, carried on independently or in coöperation with the Grange, the Teachers' Institutes, or the State College at Durham. I should get Professor Rasmussen to talk about milk tests and cow tests, and Mr. Hardy of Hollis to tell us how he beat all New England with Baldwin apples from an old orchard which he had pruned and sprayed, and how he thus won the Governor Draper silver cup. Much may be done in coöperation, and something also independently, by the help that can be obtained because a band of workers and their friends have a wider acquaintance and better financial resources than a single minister.

But why such an elaborate piece of machinery for country work? **FIRST**, because it presupposes the serious effort to provide financially for serious work. **SECOND**, because it provides for an avoidance of the loneliness and isolation which come to the solitary country parson. With associates in work, "his strength is as the strength of ten," because four or five people are associated with him. **THIRD**, because it provides for a continuance of effort in work, and prevents the short pastorates that are the curse of much country work. The Head stays on and there is a succession of helpers with shorter terms of work, or the Head leaves and the Junior Parson steps into his place, already knowing the field and known in it. **FOURTH**, because the Settlement can own, or borrow, or rent, such tools as lanterns, maps and books. **FIFTH**, because it can form a centre to utilize temporary workers and helpers in summer, autumn, and winter, and to train the green city people filled with enthusiasm and having only city experience, for country work.

I might have put my Settlement in a New Hampshire town where there is a rather feeble Academy, a skilled agriculturist, and a number of intelligent summer visitors ready to coöperate with our workers, or it might take as its field a narrow mountain-lined valley twenty-one miles long by a mile or so broad, with many villages, many lumber camps back among the mountains, many summer visitors, and undeveloped rather barren farms.

Here is my poor picture of Country Work as I see it in my fancy, and yet not altogether there, for almost every detail is a reality somewhere, though I have combined them in an imaginary picture of one locality where I know every road. Christian courtesy and

interest and love can win affection and coöperation where there is no thought of establishing church connections; workers who are trusted as men and women may become leaders in schools of agriculture where they have only an imperfect knowledge. If one knows country people well, and enters into their lives and cares supremely for them personally, one may stimulate and lead them into paths of material progress where one has never gone, and into spiritual paths where one must tread very humbly one's self.

THE RURAL CHURCH AND THE BEAUTIFICATION OF THE COUNTRY.

BY PROFESSOR ROBERT J. SPRAGUE, UNIVERSITY OF MAINE.

THERE are many proposed solutions of the rural church problems. Some of these require stronger preachers, social secretaries, or the reorganization of the religious forces which will take much time or experiment; but there is one line of activity which every church can adopt, be it rich or poor, large or small, and it may know that its efforts will always meet with public approval, if exercised with wisdom, and there is no limit to the improvements that are possible. The rural church must be more of a generalized institution and work for the whole life and numerous interests of the community which it serves. Wherever charitable, civic, literary, musical, or even recreational needs are apparent in the rural community, the church should stand ready to satisfy them, if it be the best agency available for such work. The church must realize that all of these interests are essential to a well balanced, wholesome community, and all belong to the Kingdom of God.

The special interests of the rural church may best be conserved by working for the general welfare when the need is evident. The church must cease struggling to save its own life and work for the community interests, for only thus can it live and fulfill its vital purpose. The preacher is frequently the best trained man in the community, the natural leader, and he must serve every interest of the Kingdom according to its need and his power. The city preacher can specialize, but the country parson must be a general practitioner.

It often takes a stronger, more all round man, with more brains and grace, to meet all the needs of the country parishes and get success than it does to carry successfully the city church with all its helpers and stimulating environment.

One of the best influences for getting effective men into the rural churches is to broaden the work in scope and influence until

it becomes only a strong man's job, until it appeals to the large brained and noble hearted individuals with all of its religious, moral, civic, and aesthetic possibilities.

The local improvement club, the literary society, the grange, the town offices, the children's organizations and athletics, all furnish collateral opportunities for the rural preacher to serve his community. I wish, however, to speak of one special interest which is crying out for attention and on which the people very easily unite, that is, the beautification of the country and the village.

UNBEAUTIFIED GROUNDS.

Many of our village and rural churches have no more decorations about them than the blacksmith shop and the grocery store, and yet within the church the beauty of the lily and the God in nature are supposed to be strong sentiments of Christianity. If the sermons are to be judged by the bareness and crudeness of the exterior of many of our churches, it is not to be wondered that people seek their preaching in the mountains and on the lakes. The Catholic people often show more interest in the beauty of the church grounds and the general exterior than the Protestants do, and their properties hold the respect of their people.

Then there is the old burying ground where the hearts of so many of the people lie buried, it is often left neglected and dilapidated. In the beautifying of this may be the only way of reaching some broken lives.

The next object of aesthetic interest should be the country school yard. The most of these yards are lacking in all the characteristics which encourage high ideals and civilized living. They are places where there is no law, no beauty, nothing which appeals to the esthetic, the just, or the civic. The children run rough shod over everything and learn to think that bareness, battered fences, and crude liberty are the proper things, with the result that they are liable to duplicate them in their own homes and are willing to live in naked tenements. Every school yard should have trees, shrubbery, and flowers, which young America must respect and, still better, cultivate. Here is a great field waiting for workers, and the men and women of the churches could do no better than to push developments along this line. They will find that the people are easily united for such improvements.

THE NEW ENGLAND TREES.

New England is second to none in her wealth of flora for summer scenery, but for winter landscapes she has the most beautiful trees on the planet. Our rural people generally do not realize the possibilities for unrivaled beauty in the pines, spruces, and cedars when applied to villages and country homesteads. Hundreds of villages could make themselves strikingly beautiful, winter and summer, by taking advantage of their natural surroundings and decorating with the native evergreens. As it is, we plant deciduous trees which have nothing to present but bare arms for seven months of the year, while we might have that color and warmth on the groundwork of snow which would give us unparalleled winter beauty. Many of our parks have nothing but cold shivering sticks in the winter, although they might be warmed up and protected by living evergreens. The land values about many a park can be raised greatly by the use of well grouped cedars and spruces, for where bleak desolation has held sway in winter, beauty and color may reign supreme. The soft, waving, murmuring pine which turns every breeze into music, towering alone over other evergreens gives a most striking effect; while spruces grouped for backgrounds and cedars (*arborvitae*) grouped for foreground complete the combination for charming New England scenery. In summer there is hardly any effect equal to flowering shrubbery against a solid background of evergreen, but these settings are used very little.

The *Spirea Van Houtii* and the *Hydrangea Grandiflora* make beautiful combinations with evergreen backgrounds, they can be used separately against the green or they can be combined. When they are grown together the spireas give bloom in the early summer and the hydrangeas in the late summer and fall. The use of the green background permits the use of a thousand effective combinations, but those mentioned above are perennial and good for permanent landscapes.

HOW TO TRANSPLANT EVERGREENS.

The transplanting of evergreens is simple and safe if done in accordance with their nature. If the roots of the tree are allowed to dry the resinous substances harden and the tree cannot live. Because of this fact it has been considered more difficult to

change evergreens than maples or elms, but the spruces, pines, and cedars are really very tough for transplanting if the roots be carefully treated. It is always best to take up some earth with the roots. A tree five or six feet tall should have a lump two or three feet across removed with it, the more earth the safer, smaller trees of course requiring less. It is always best in changing any tree to take a good lot of its native soil. Transplanting can be done in the spring with perfect success. Last spring I changed some evergreens of every kind and no tree died or even seemed to know that it had been moved, judging from the normal growth which all the trees made during the summer. If large trees are to be moved, as they may well be, the best time is in the fall after the ground has frozen enough to hold the soil together. Dig around the tree before the ground freezes too much, leaving a radius of soil according to its size, and after the earth is well frozen the whole thing can be loosened and a drag or dray put under it for transportation.

In every town some teamster ought to construct a special apparatus for the transportation of trees with masses of soil attached. The possession of such a thing will make the act easy and safe and create a demand for transplanted trees. In some parts of the country a few men make splendid money moving trees in the winter when the ground is hard, the lawns are uninjured, and the other business is dull.

THE TOWN STREETS.

The streets of towns and villages have suffered greatly from the lack of plans and care. Many a residence street is laid out like a commercial highway, with a broad, dusty, muddy road stretching from sidewalk to sidewalk. A better way to use the same space would be to leave a parkway between the sidewalk and the road on either side, having a narrow driving street with turning spaces at the corners. This plan prevents much dust, is cheaper to build and keep in repair, while the parkings may be decorated with trees and shrubbery to the great betterment of the town and the land values.

Many of our cities cannot be rebuilt or entirely improved in general appearance for a hundred years yet, but the villages with their open spaces and dusty streets can be made to look like differ-

ent places with little expense and labor. One of the places that needs treatment most of all is the railroad station and the property adjacent to the track through the town. Some towns are under a permanent handicap because of the frightful condition about the railway station, which advertises unthrift and demoralization to every traveler.

THE RURAL HOMESTEAD.

There are thousands of country homesteads standing with cold feet shivering in the icy winds of winter, which might, almost without expense, be given a permanent aspect of beauty and comfort. With a background of spruces thickly walled or grouped behind the house or along the fence with an occasional lone pine at the corners for variety and feature, and with cedars and shrubbery in front, many common looking places can be made remarkable for comfort and attractiveness, the property value increased, and the sentimental interests doubled.

I do not mean to ignore or discourage the use of deciduous trees; they can be used with others and we all know their beauties, but they do not compare with the evergreens in the possibilities for improving the homesteads and landscapes. The evergreens cost nothing in the country, they are permanent, and they can be trimmed and trained to conform to any fancy or system of decoration. They are healthy and free from destructive pests to which our best deciduous trees are subject.

THE COUNTRY SCENERY.

The improvement of urban scenery is expensive and very difficult, but not so with the open country. Here is room for expansion and the expression of ideals, a free field and abundant resources. Every New England town ought to have a society devoted, in part at least, to the preservation and development of beauty along the common highways. The bushes can be effectively cut so as to leave clumps of picturesque trees and openings for good views. Farmers can be influenced to leave old trees where they are most needed and young ones to grow in prominent places. Many of our country bridges can be treated with good results by leaving trees or planting them at the approaches. Evergreens are especially effective in such places.

THE CHURCH'S OPPORTUNITY.

Here is a field of opportunity for the preacher and the church, yea, even a duty long neglected. Let the work begin with the beautification of the church grounds and extend to the school yards, the cemetery, the public square, the streets, railway station, the roads and bridges, and even out into the open country. On such a subject the people will listen to the preacher and follow his lead in the coöperative betterment of the community. Here is an opportunity for the young people's society to engage in landscape gardening, for the men's clubs to realize permanent social service, for the boy scouts to get long tramps and exercise at cutting bushes, trimming roadways, and planting trees, and for the preacher to show the living God in a beautiful world of nature and of works for the common good. It is just as effective for the people to mingle their fingers in the dirt while carrying out a coöperative public service as to blend their voices in prayer meeting, and it may be more beneficial to the church.

“NEW ENGLAND 1920.”

Of course New England will celebrate her 300th anniversary in a fitting and impressive manner, but she can make no improvement which will be cheaper, more natural, more permanent, or more beneficial than to use the God-given advantages at her very doors and make herself the most beautiful section of all America. It can easily be done. New England is geographically and historically only one state; her whole six commonwealths combined are not as large in area as Kansas or any one of a score of Western States. She is naturally the most beautiful area in America, and with a little effort she can surpass all other states in those things which make life satisfactory and joyous. She has population exceeded only by New York and Pennsylvania, and her wealth is equalled by the Empire State alone.

Land of the sea and the lake and the mountain peak,
Of the pointed spruce and the murmuring pine,
Of the scented cedar's lacy leaf,
Of majestic elms and trailing vine.

Land of the leaping waterfall,
Of the secret brook and the speckled trout,
Of the cliff and the sand and the tumbling surf
Where smudge and care are all washed out.

Land where freedom first arose,
Where the Red Coat felt the patriot's fire,
Land of the seer, the prophet, and bard,
Of learned halls and sacred spire.
 New England, old enchanted land,
 We hail thee, Queen of Columbia's realm.

ONE SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM OF THE COUNTRY CHURCH.

REV. MYRON L. CUTLER, EAST JAFFREY, N. H.

THE Problem of the Country Church is a problem of men, of finances, and of conditions, local and modern.

The last point must be studied by each church and pastor and dealt with by themselves. The first two are more general and of these I shall speak from an experience of nearly twenty-four years in our little country parish with all the usual difficulties one meets. I shall treat this matter briefly, putting into few words my conclusions arrived at with much difficulty and long experience.

The conditions of country life are not as unfortunate and evil as often pictured by the occasional city visitor who knows little about these things and attempts to measure appearances by city standards. Morally, intellectually, and progressively, countrymen are up to date, and especially in matters of morals and propriety. We can teach our city cousins some things to their advantage. In the city nobody knows anybody else nor cares what others do, and hence public opinion has little regulative force. In the country everybody knows everybody and what he is up to, and public opinion is a great force which few dare ignore.

Hence the importance of the country church, the only organized effort to shape the moral life of the community. We read the best books, papers, and magazines, and have time to think on these things.

The country laity demand good, thoughtful, sound sermons. and will not waste time listening to any other. Moreover everywhere men like to listen to and follow their own kind, especially the best of their own kind. Jesus, the peasant, of the common people, preached to all the people, but the common people alone heard him gladly, because he was of their kind and better than they. So the country minister should be a country man, born and bred, well informed of country life and interests. A city man will be heavily handicapped. So too he must be honest, sincere, unselfish, ready to serve without money and without price.

People are quick to discern the man behind the preacher,

none quicker than the countryman. And if the man fails his words will fail. The man is of much greater importance than the orator, for a handful listens to the sermon on Sunday, but the whole community watches the minister all the week and measures him carefully, and if he falls short of the well understood standard his influence is nothing. The same is true of the church member. The Church *must lead* to better things or die. Therefore let quality not quantity of church membership be considered. A dozen goodly people working together for righteousness are worth more than a thousand who will not work together and care nothing for righteousness and are only selfishly seeking their own salvation.

The other point in the problem of the country church is the financial one, and by many it is deemed greatest if not insoluble. I do not think so. I know better. Hundreds of communities are denied the gospel because of lack of financial ability to pay for it. The poor are not having the "gospel preached to them," disciples of Jesus Christ are not doing their duty. Some churches are endowed. Rich people die and leave funds to help support the church. All this is good but not sufficient. Money can not make churches. Dead men are beyond the power to help. A church is a body of people organized for the purpose of advancing the welfare of men within and without the church. This must be borne in mind. A million dollar endowment is useless in an empty church. Moreover people will usually pay currently for what they want and are convinced they need, but small communities of moderate means cannot pay princely salaries and no minister has a right to expect to be supported above the average of his people.

What then is the solution of the financial problem of the small country parish? I studied this for years, lay awake nights, and worried over the matter till I threw away my selfish ambition to get into a larger church with a bigger salary, stopped listening for the Lord to call me up higher, threw away my plug hat and ministerial garb on week days, forgot my dignity as a man and sought the dignity of a good citizen, remembering that my Master was a carpenter without a salary, that Saint Paul earned his own living making tents that he might have the opportunity to preach. And so I took off my coat and went to work like the rest of my people; and the financial problem is settled. The people pay what they can without impoverishing themselves and I earn the rest.

Brethren in the Christian Ministry, the church is not here for us to exploit, but to use for humanity's welfare, present and future. Our attitude should not be one of self-seeking. What can we get out of it, not of salary but of opportunity? Are we willing to do anything honorable for the sake of the opportunity to tell the world of Jesus' way to live and glorify the Father of all men? Hundreds of small country places are waiting for some one to come and tell the "old old story" and can and will gladly pay from \$100 to \$500 a year. But we are sending our heroic missionary men and women abroad at a good salary to preach to the foreign heathen who understand little and care less. Meanwhile our own heathen are neglected within our own borders and getting ready to make our nation trouble. If we can get young men to look at this matter rightly we shall not need even home missionary boards with great resources. All we want is men, just men, of Christian motive, who will go anywhere and, working with head and hands, make a place for themselves and build up little churches in every little community, and at the same time build up the community and save the nation from falling and save men from ruin.

Jesus' last command was "Go ye into all the world and preach my gospel to every creature." He said nothing of salary and he did not tell us to all run for the city. No earnest man who believes in God and men and does his best need worry about salary or wages.

Much might be said of the importance of the country as feeding the city life and of kindred things, but I think those things are well understood.

The world is growing fast, and has less and less use for peculiar garb, or pretended excellence, but more and more use for men who fit their work and station and fill their station, and there is great satisfaction in even a small task well done.

The personality of Jesus Christ is the most potent force for good in this world.

The solution of the problem of the country church lies very largely in the quality of the Country Minister, and of this I am now firmly convinced every day I live. And farming is the best means of helping out in this problem because it is an independent occupation and a good farm well kept is the best authority on theology I have ever found.

EDUCATION FOR RURAL LIFE.

BY PROFESSOR O. H. BENSON, BUREAU OF PLANT INDUSTRY,
WASHINGTON, D. C.

(In Boys' and Girls' Demonstration Work.)

THE greatest need of America today is an educational policy built from the ground up, rather than from the "up to the ground down" as has been generally true during the past fifty years, throughout the states.

The depopulation of rural communities and rapid growth of our already congested centers of population should give us serious concern.

A RE-DIRECTED EDUCATION.

The demand for a re-directed education in our rural and common schools is not a local matter, but a demand which is being made all over the United States upon the men and women in charge of educational work, and everywhere the questions are being asked: What shall we Teach? How do you Teach It? Can it be done without *loss* in efficiency and the results to the three R's?

To the first question I would answer, teach all the subjects of *farm* and *home life* that can be studied in connection with the daily school studies and as substitutes for many of the non-essentials now existing in the average common school. Instead of "cube root" "compound proportion," "alligation," etc., substitute practical farm and kitchen arithmetic.

Instead of the months of hard work outlined in the average grammar text book (a boys' natural enemy) in technical and formal analysis, substitute for this the necessary practice and drill that will help the child to express his ideas and facts in clear and cultured English.

Instead of the great amount of technical physiology, such as scientific names of bones, nerves, and muscles, substitute for these some home-economic subjects, such as ventilation, food values,

laws of home and personal hygiene, balanced rations, composition of foods as related to human needs, and many other subjects of equal importance and related to the elementary science of living.

Instead of the large amount of meaningless copy-work usually given in the penmanship exercises, substitute the practical writing exercises in story and discussion about live and first hand subjects, such as relate to the farm and home interests.

Instead of the criminal exploitation of wars and bloodshed in the study of United States history, take up a systematic study of the history and development of our great American industries as they are related to man and his economic welfare, agriculturally.

Instead of juggling with the vast amount of dead matter in map boundaries, location of foreign cities, and geographical precisions which point nowhere but kill time and furnish the teacher with excuse for spending time and energy in teaching the subject of geography, let us study geography by using the great *agricultural, commercial, and industrial interests* as they relate to man, as the basis and reason for the existence of the subject. Map study should be incidental instead of basic in its use.

In answer to the second question I would say in brief, there are three important methods or plans by which elementary agriculture and home economics can be taught in our common schools, viz:—

1. By effective correlation as suggested in the booklet work and in the above plan of substitution.

2. By general lessons to be given daily in a systematic and seasonable way, on subjects that most concern the community and home life.

3. By regular classwork with textbook in hand of pupil and with available supplies for laboratory experiments in the study of seeds, soils, plants, and chemical action of soils.

It must be understood that the school library should contain a good list of helpful books and references on the farm and home life subjects, also available agricultural bulletins and many splendid books and publications on the book markets of our land.

To the third important question I would answer emphatically "yes." After four years of careful investigation and experience in promoting this work as a County Supervisor of Schools, I have positive evidence to the effect that, without an exception, the teachers and schools following this plan of teaching agriculture and home

economics give greater efficiency in reading, writing, and arithmetic than do other schools where this work is neglected. Seventy-five per cent of the boys and girls who failed to pass the uniform eighth grade examination in Wright County, Iowa, in 1910, came from the schools in which practically nothing was done to correlate agricultural and home life studies with regular school work. To be plainer, the ratio of three to one was in favor of the "re-directed school." In looking over the written manuscripts the writing and compositions from the pupils of the "re-directed schools" were markedly better than the papers that came from the schools where nothing was done except to defend in the usual and sentimental way the old "culture sake" and "three R" education.

We desire to impress upon our auditors the fact that the prime object of this kind of re-directed education is to get the teacher into a correct personal attitude toward her pupils and their environment, and to render more efficient the work of reading, writing, and arithmetic; to give the training that "fits into life and makes us capable of self expression and the larger service to our fellow man."

The schools of today must determine very largely the citizenship of tomorrow. We cannot hope to secure a citizenship trained in agricultural and industrial tastes and interests unless we give this direction in our common schools. Too long we have left this most important phase of education to our few technical schools in large cities, reformatories, penitentiaries, etc., until it would seem impossible to conserve our industrial interests and our American agriculture without increasing in youthful crime. As Superintendent J. D. Eggleston of Virginia puts it: "The gospel of better agriculture is a holy cause and we are treading upon holy ground," and no longer should we desecrate it by ignoring our relation to the humble but dignified tiller of the soil.

The problem of rural leadership is a four square proposition; it involves all the interests of the farm, home, church and school; and the leader must be a four square individual, trained in *head, heart, hands, and hustle*, the "four H's" rather than the "three R's." It involves a leader with *head* trained to *think, plan, and reason*, and not a slave to the mere text book or the formal institution, a leader with *heart* trained to be *true, kind, and sympathetic*; *hands* trained to be *useful, helpful, and skillful*; and the *hustle* trained to render ready service and to develop health and vitality which will furnish a suitable background for a noble purpose.

We acknowledge with shame that most of our rural leaders of the past have, because of their training and life-time environment, turned out to be pirates and robbers on rural life. They have aroused a false discontent with members of agricultural territory, and have pointed the way to the already overcrowded professions and towards our congested centers of population. The result has been that nearly all of our agricultural states have lost greatly in population during the past ten years, and our large cities show a marked increase — many of them a gain of over 200 per cent during the past ten years.

BROAD VIEW OF RURAL UPLIFT.

In order to serve the needs of rural life and develop all the forces which belong to an intelligent people, we must provide, on an equal basis and at the same time, for a greater and more efficient agriculture; a better and more attractive home life; a healthful and interesting social life, and, last but not least, we must give them a rural-life church, headed by a practical clergyman capable of expounding the gospel of Jesus Christ in the language of his agricultural environment. I can point you to no greater rural-life preacher as your ideal than the lowly Saviour, who used at all times illustrations from agricultural and industrial life in His references to "lost sheep," "shepherd," "the sower," "tares," "sheaves," "the carpenter shop," "good and poor soil," etc., and by which multitudes were attracted to the higher life. Let me emphasize the fact that with this kind of rural church leadership our thousands of country churches, now desolate, will soon become densely populated and the working as well as the paying efficiency of the membership will exceed that of our city churches. The trouble with our rural pastors, like our rural teachers in the past, has been, most of them have been out of touch and genuine sympathy with our farm population and have preached into them city, commercial, and political ideals instead of rural interests.

Every country church pastor should have an agricultural course in correlation with the study of Hebrew and theology, and some of this training should be first-hand agriculture in demonstration work. Friends, believe me, that the greatest reputations to be made in teaching and preaching in the future will be in rural life work. Public sentiment is in favor of agriculture and if we

take advantage of the psychological moment we can do much to hasten the day when, in the language of our beloved Bishop of Southern Agriculture, Dr. Seaman A. Knapp, "rural life will be upon a plane of profit, honor, and power," and where "the common toiler will become educated in the things that lead to easier bread."

VALUABLE RURAL EVENTS.

Annual township graduation exercises ought to be held in the center of the township, in which all schools, together with patrons and friends, spend the entire day in the educational and social uplift of the community. Here is a typical program of such an event, this or a similar one having been carried out in all sixteen of the township schools of Wright County, Iowa, for several years, with an attendance varying from 250 to 1260, men, women and children.

(1) Literary program of graduates; (2) presentation of diplomas or certificates of promotion to nearby high schools; (3) basket dinner, in which all participated, and usually the people of one district would spread dinners together, thus cementing friendships, and unifying their ambitions for a common purpose; (4) in the afternoon agricultural and rural life lectures would be given on such subjects as Stock Judging, Soil Fertility, Prevention of Diseases on the Farm, Better Sanitation, Our Schools And What They Need, etc.; (5) following this lecture we would have our annual field sports, in which all the young people of the township would participate, while fathers and mothers would be the interested spectators. During the entire day the school exhibit tent would be full of the specimens of school work of the year, such as writing, solution of problems, sewing, wood work, and maps.

The county school official would erect the tent in the morning and take it down at night and move on to the next township event. These gatherings are always held in a fine grove or at one of the best and most modern farm homes, the philosophy of which you can well understand.

At District Agricultural and County Fairs and the Farmer's Institutes, the schools and their work always held a conspicuous place. Exhibits put up in competition for honors and premiums were always in evidence, such as booklets on agricultural subjects, wood work, sewing, baking, vegetables, corn, etc. Contests in potato-paring, sewing, seed-corn stringing, stock judging, grain

judging, practical rope-knot-tying, addition, spelling, reading, etc., were held. Let me illustrate by giving a few facts about one of these contests. In the rope-tying contest last year the champion rope-tyer of the county, Russell Breckenridge, tied, named, and untied 38 practical rope knots in six minutes and did it to the complete satisfaction of both referees and spectators. Upon investigation we found that the boy had spent his otherwise idle moments for one full year in quest of help and information on rope-tying; he had exhausted all the information available from his father, teacher, hired man, neighbors, dictionary, set of reference books in school library, and had found some information from state agricultural professors. To the fool the above named contests would seem folly and mere "fun show," but to the thinker and philosopher of the needed rural education it has deep and significant meaning in this business of reclaiming the arid interests of a country people. I only wish I had time to tell you about the influence of this kind of work on the character and ambition of the boys and girls.

At the Farmer's Institute and County Short Course nearly half of the students each year are boys and girls and their rural teachers. In the rural schools the subjects of elementary agriculture and home economics are taught by effective correlation, general lessons, and in regular class work. Too much of our rural education has been a process of marking time and of perpetuating an ancient and fossilized *caste education*, and many of our so called educational leaders have spent much time in defending in a sickly and sentimental way the "culture sake" and "three R" education without regard for the child life and his environment.

FARMERS' COÖPERATIVE DEMONSTRATION WORK.

You are all more or less familiar with the work in the Southern States which has been directed by Dr. Seaman A. Knapp, Special Agent In Charge, a work made possible by the financial support and coöperation of the General Education Board and the Department of Agriculture at Washington, D. C. In my judgment no greater nor more significant work of service for the common people has ever been instituted on this continent by man.

The increased production of southern farm areas; the evolu-

tion of a rural population from poverty, inefficiency, and despair to a people of dignity, hope, and national influence, will be a lasting tribute to our departed leader who loved, served, and planned for the masses of our common people so long and well.

Dr. Knapp organized the Farmers' Demonstration Work in 1904, and every year since that time thousands of southern farmers have become demonstrators and educators in their respective localities for the better and more efficient agriculture. Last year (1910) 72,685 men farmed one or more acres on a scientific basis and followed carefully the instructions furnished by Dr. Knapp at Washington. The Boys' Corn Club and Demonstration Work was organized in 1907. It was started with but a few hundred members and this branch of the work grew with electrical rapidity. In 1909, the Boys' Corn Club numbered 12,000, in 1910, 46,225. Three hundred of these boys produced a yield of over 100 bushels of corn per acre, one hundred of the boys raised on an average of 133.7 bushels per acre, with a champion yield by Jerry Moore of South Carolina of 228.7 bushels per acre.

The Boys' Corn Club for 1911 will number over 75,000 who on their one or more acre plots will follow the Department instruction, given below:

1. Boys joining clubs and entering contests must be between 10 and 18 years of age on January 1, of any given year.
2. No boy shall contest for a prize unless he becomes a member of a club.
3. The members of the clubs must agree to study the instructions of the Farmers' Coöperative Demonstration Work.
4. Each boy must plan his own crop and do his own work. A small boy may hire help for heavy plowing in preparing the soil.
5. Exhibits must be delivered to the county superintendent of education on or before November 1.
6. The land and corn must be carefully measured in the presence of at least two disinterested witnesses, who shall attest the certificate of the boy.
7. Gather the corn and weigh it. Weigh two 100 pound lots from different parts of the total. Shuck and shell each lot and then weigh the shelled corn in each instance in order to find the average percentage of shelled corn. Multiply the total weight by this per cent and divide by 56 to get the number of bushels.

8. In awarding prizes the following has been used:

	Per cent
a. Greatest yield per acre	30
b. Best exhibit of ten ears	20
c. Best written account showing history of crop	20
d. Best showing of profit on investment based on the commercial price of corn	30

Last year the thirteen Southern States had winners who were entitled to the free prize trip to Washington, and the diploma from Secretary James Wilson.

The boys from eleven states came to Washington. The average production of the eleven winners was 134 bushels per acre. I regret that time will permit but few statements in regard to this work.

Last year Dr. Knapp felt that it was time to look after the education of the rural girls for a more contented and attractive rural life, and so he had the girls of a few counties organized into tomato canning clubs, with a membership of about 300 who raised one-tenth acre of tomatoes each, canned and marketed the surplus products. During the present year over 2000 girls will follow the demonstration instructions for the garden and canning work.

The mothers are usually interested with the girls, and hence you see that Dr. Knapp's plan for rural education is for the entire family, a plan which recognizes the real needs of our present day rural life.

In conclusion let me emphasize the necessity of education in all of the interests of rural life, and of recognizing that the school exists for the child, and that its efficiency lies in the ability to give power and definite expression to the "ninety and nine" within their industrial and agricultural surroundings. Every country child should be helped to understand that intelligent farming and home-keeping are two of the most dignified and worthy professions on earth.







