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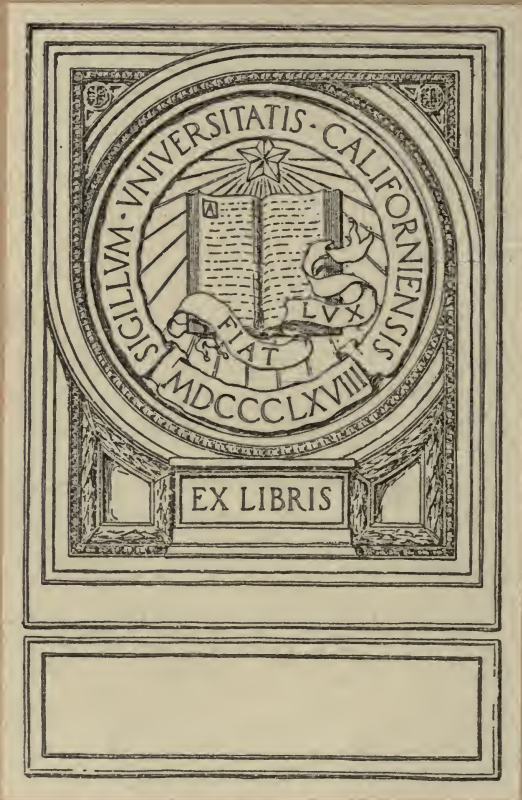
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# A Rural Survey in Southwestern Ohio

BY

PAUL L. VOGT, PH. D.

OXFORD, OHIO



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# A Rural Survey in Southwestern Ohio

BY

PAUL L. VOGT, PH. D.

*Professor of Sociology, Miami University*

Oxford, Ohio

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April, 1913

TO THE  
MANAGER

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## PREFACE

The discussion of rural social conditions included in the following pages is the result of the co-operation of Miami University with other educational and religious agencies of the State of Ohio in the Ohio Rural Life Survey. This survey was carried on under the direction of the Department of Church and Country Life of the Presbyterian Church, during the year 1912, twenty-one counties in the state being visited during that time. The present discussion presents the results of the survey of Darke, Montgomery, Preble and Butler Counties in Southwestern Ohio.

Among those to whom credit is due for the collection of material and assistance in the preparation of the discussion are: the field workers and office assistants of the Department of Church and Country Life of the Presbyterian Church, who furnished the schedule, took part in the field investigations and did the major part of the tabulation of results; J. B. Glick, Field Survey Agent of the United Brethren Church, who made the survey of Darke County and assisted in compiling results; W. B. Holliday, Secretary County Y. M. C. A., Montgomery County, who contributed the use of material collected during the survey of his field of work; E. E. Schwarztrauber, a graduate of Miami University, who assisted in the field work. The data as to farm incomes was collected by J. V. Ankeney, C. E. Miller, Orville Powers, and W. E. Steiner, Senior students at Miami University, as a part of their work in a seminar course in statistics. The writer wishes to express his thanks to the farmers, ministers, teachers, public officials and others who by furnishing information have assisted in this effort to obtain an adequate basis in knowledge for the improvement of rural social life.

PAUL L. VOGT.

Miami University.  
OXFORD, OHIO, 1913.



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MAP OF OHIO. THE COUNTIES SURVEYED ARE INDICATED BY A STAR.



COUNTIES DISCUSSED IN THE FOLLOWING PAGES.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Institutions exist only to bring the maximum of well-being to those for whose service they were created. When an institution ceases to be of service to the people, but one of two things should be done, either destroy it or reorganize it so that it will again become a vital force in the life of the community. In the course of years conditions change, so that the service an institution is accustomed to offer is no longer adapted to the demands upon it of a new environment, and the result is that it is either abandoned or retained through force of habit as a hindrance to true progress. The service offered by an institution must be adapted to the needs of the community if it hopes to continue as a useful factor in the life of the community.

It is unnecessary to go into detail in the discussion of the changes which have brought about the lack of adjustment between the needs of the people who live in the rural districts and the agencies intend to meet those needs. Continuous decrease in rural population, abandonment of land even in the fertile Mississippi Valley, increase in tenantry, rise of land values and deterioration of the soil owing to mining methods inherited from a pioneer stage and perpetuated through the combined influence of the absentee landlord and the short term tenant, and the national interest in the regeneration of country life because of the vital relation of agriculture as a basic industry to the welfare of the whole people all demand that every effort be made to hasten a readjustment that will again insure contentment and permanent prosperity to the rural community.

It is out of the recognition that a changed environment has brought new burdens to the institutions of the rural communities that the Ohio Rural Life Survey has grown. Churches, public schools and farmers' organizations were planned to meet conditions and in accordance with ideals that prevailed in a pioneer stage of society. The demands of the twentieth century civilization

are such that these agencies are found to be inadequate and the call for readjustments becomes increasingly imperative. Such readjustments can be wisely made only in so far as existing conditions are known; only as it is understood what the demands of the present are and in what ways inherited institutions fail to meet these demands. The study of rural communities of the state made during the year 1912 was undertaken in the belief that the knowledge gained would help those who wished to bring the school, the church, and the farmers' organization into harmony with new demands. Miami University, the Ohio Experiment Station, Ohio State University, Ohio University, the Department of Church and County Life of the Presbyterian church, and several other scholastic and religious agencies have co-operated in making the survey and in getting constructive results from the work done. The present discussion presents conditions in Butler, Preble, Montgomery and Darke Counties, which are typical of the Southwestern part of the state.

In conducting the field work of the investigation two schedules were used. The one was intended to give a general view of life from the point of view of the institution concerned in serving the people. The other schedule was designed for more intensive study of economic conditions in their relation to social life through information secured from as many families as possible in typical areas. While the point of approach to the problem was different the aim of each schedule was the same, i. e. to secure the fullest and most reliable picture of conditions existing in rural communities as a basis for constructive efforts toward readjustment and improvement.

The field work was done by men who were prepared by training and experience to collect data as to conditions of living in the country. Many of them were college and seminary graduates who entered the work because they were specially interested in problems of country life. The data secured were taken from the records of organized groups such as churches, schools, fraternal organizations and from public records. Where it was impossible, from the nature of the material, to secure written returns, the information was gained by personal conferences, verified by further



inquiry from other members of the community. The effort was made to secure the highest degree of accuracy possible and to interpret the information secured in the fairest possible way. If estimates were used, these were carefully noted as such and their probable accuracy weighed in making use of them.

The field work in Southwestern Ohio included an extensive survey of all of Butler County, thirteen townships in Darke and ten townships in Montgomery Counties and an intensive or house to house canvass of Oxford Township in Butler County, and Twin and Jackson Townships in Preble County. Owing to similarities in conditions in these counties it was thought that through an extensive survey of the three counties mentioned, together with intensive studies of typical townships in the district, a reliable picture of the entire district would be obtained.

The four counties studied have an approximate area of 1909 square miles. The areas of the individual counties are as follows: Darke, 586 sq. mi.; Montgomery, 455; Butler, 452; and Preble, 416. There is a total of 59 townships. Of this number the survey covered 38 townships, or 64% of the total number. Darke and Preble Counties have no large cities within their limits; in the other counties studied are located the three cities of Dayton, Middletown and Hamilton. These exert some influence upon their immediate environment. Cincinnati also influences to a certain extent the southern part of Butler County.

In the survey no unit could be adopted which would include all the interests of any given aggregation of people. The economic life of a community may center around a group of stores in a country village. At the same time the political life of the community may be divided among townships, counties or even states or any combination of these. Further, the religious community may not be coterminous with any of the other units and any one of these may be more far-reaching in its influence than distance, race, property-ownership, relationship, or similar factor. The political unit as represented by the township and the county was finally chosen as being the most satisfactory for the purposes of the survey.

## CHAPTER II

### Economic Conditions

The general topography and soil conditions of the section vary considerably. A large part of Darke, Preble, and Montgomery Counties is quite level. Butler County and the southern parts of Preble County and Montgomery County on the other hand are more irregular owing to their closer proximity to the Ohio River. The northern part of the district falls into a division of the state described by the United States Census as "an elevated rolling plateau which has been heavily glaciated, and whose surface soils are derived directly from the glacial till." The section has "black, mucky soils, or dark colored loams which are found in the depressions and upon the more level tracts." In the southern portion of the district the soils "are derived principally from a thin covering of loess overlying both the glacial till and the consolidated rock of the region, and are brown to yellow, silty loams, not remarkable for their fertility."

Climate conditions in this section are favorable to agriculture. Practically all of the four counties except the northern half of Darke County lie between the isotherms 51° and 54° F.\* The average dates of the last killing frosts in spring for most of Butler County, practically all of Montgomery, and parts of Darke and Preble are not later than April 30, and for a large part of Preble and Darke Counties not later than May 5. These dates are favorable for the planting of early corn and of vegetables. The dates of killing frosts in Butler and Montgomery Counties compare favorably with the record in the northern part of the state where the temperature is influenced by the waters of Lake Erie, and where the fruit industry has been highly developed.

The dates of average earliest killing frosts in autumn have a relation to the maturing of corn and tobacco. The average date for the first killing frost in the upper half of Darke County is

\*Ohio Experiment Station Bul. 235, p. 197.

October 10; for Preble County, the western half of Montgomery and the northern third of Butler is not earlier than October 15; and for a large part of the remainder of the county it is not earlier than October 20. Again, the date of killing frost in the autumn compares favorably with that of the fruit districts of the northern part of the state.

The average number of days in the crop growing season varies between 160 and 170. This compares favorably with other sections of the state, in some of which the average is as low as 140. In the river counties the average is higher, running in some places as high as 190 but other factors tend to lessen the value of these counties as agricultural producers. The precipitation for all of Butler County, a large part of Preble and for the southern portion of Montgomery is between 38 and 40 inches. This is about the average for the entire state. All of Darke County, about three-fourths of Montgomery and a small portion of Preble have a rainfall of between 36 and 38 inches, or somewhat less than that for Butler and the other parts mentioned.

The four counties mentioned are above the average for the state in the production of corn per acre, and, with the exception of Montgomery County, are above the average in production of hay and forage. Only Darke County exceeded average average production in pounds of tobacco for the state in 1909. The yield of oats and wheat per acre for each county is below the average for the state. Butler County produces relatively a smaller amount of tobacco than the others, but ranks second in the amount produced per acre. In the production of live stock, with the exception of Butler and Preble Counties, in the production of hogs, and in the production of cattle, the section falls below the average for the state.

The tendency in size of farms is shown by the following table:

TABLE I.  
Size of Farms, 1910 and 1900—Southwest Section.\*

Size of Farms Acres	Number of Farms	
	1910	1900
2 and under.....	58	266
3 to 9.....	1732	1488
10 to 19.....	1386	1833
20 to 49.....	3543	3521
50 to 99.....	5422	4400
100 to 174.....	3387	2770
175 to 259 ..	694	623
260 to 499.....	183	201
500 to 599.....	6	9
1000 and over .....	0	3

The tendency in the district at large is toward the medium sized farm ranging from 50 to 175 A. The greatest increase was in farms between 50 and 99 A. in size. Local conditions vary from these statistics. Butler County and Montgomery County shows an increase in 3-9 A. plots. Butler County also shows a decrease in farms of 50 to 175 A. and an increase in farms of 175 A. and above. With the exception of Butler County the average number of acres per farm decreased in the past decade.

The gradual improvement in agriculture is indicated by statistics of investment. Land values almost doubled during the past decade, yet the relative value of land as compared with buildings, machinery, etc., has, with the exception of Darke County, decreased. These figures indicate that many improvements in buildings and machinery were made during the period.

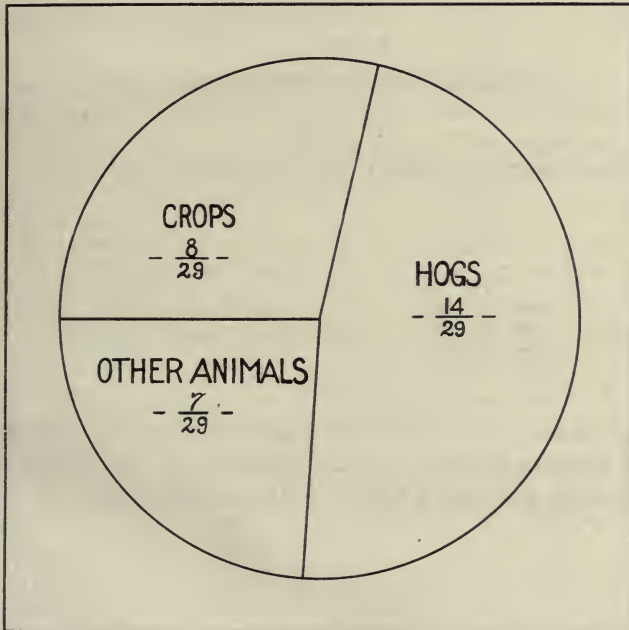
TABLE II  
Distribution of Investment, Farm Property 1900 and 1910.

Per Cent. of Value of all Property in	Butler		Darke		Montgomery		Preble	
	1910	1900	1910	1900	1910	1900	1910	1900
Land.....	68.3	72.06	71.0	69.80	66.0	67.32	67.7	69.24
Buildings. ....	20.6	17.28	18.2	17.77	23.7	21.84	19.7	17.60
Machinery.....	2.5	2.54	2.6	3.89	2.8	3.44	2.8	3.34
Domestic Animals, Poultry, Bees.....	8.6	8.12	8.2	8.54	7.5	7.40	9.8	9.82

\*This term will be used to include Butler, Darke, Montgomery and Preble Counties

The mortgage situation indicates the same tendency. In all four counties the ratio of the amount of the mortgage to the value of the land and buildings decreased absolutely, from 1890 to 1910. In Darke and Butler Counties both the total number of farms reporting mortgages and the amount of the mortgage debt has decreased while in Preble and Montgomery Counties these items have increased. The ratio of the mortgage to the value of the plant however, is the important figure and as has been shown in every case the mortgage burden has decreased. The data from 1890 and 1910 are not exactly comparable because in one case they refer to families and in the other to farms but the discrepancy is not sufficient to invalidate the evidence as to a general tendency.

## EIGHTEEN TYPICAL FARMS BUTLER COUNTY



Twenty-one twenty-ninths of value of all sales represent live stock.

During the year 1912-1913 four students of Agricultural Education and of Sociology at Miami University made an intensive study of incomes of eighteen farmers in Oxford, Milford and Riley Townships, Butler County. The schedules used were identical with those used by the State Experiment Station and the United State Department of Agriculture. The farms studied were among the best in the district and consequently cannot be considered as average but as representative of maximum income with a given plant. The men interviewed gave the fullest co-operation in the study and the results obtained represent the most accurate results possible from persons working under most favorable conditions. The following table presents a summary of labor incomes of farmers after interest on capital invested, labor and other expenses have been deducted. The total includes the element of profit as a part of the labor income.

TABLE II  
LABOR INCOME OF FARM OPERATORS

16 Farmers

Oxford, Riley, and Milford Townships, Butler County, Ohio.

LABOR INCOME	NUMBER OF FARMS
\$ 1 to \$ 249	3
250 to 499	2
500 to 999	3
1000 to 1499	6
1500 and above	2

These totals run considerably higher than totals from investigations in other fields. The distribution of the farms as to value of plant will throw light on the capital basis for these results.

TABLE III  
 VALUE OF PLANT  
 18 Farms Butler County, Ohio:

CAPITAL INVESTED	NUMBER OF FARMS
Less than \$ 5000	2
\$ 5000 to 9999	2
10000 to 14999	3
15000 to 19999	5
20000 to 24999	2
25000 to 29999	2
30000 to 39999	2

Southwestern Ohio is fairly well supplied with railway transportation facilities. The northern part of Butler County is traversed by the Pennsylvania R. R. and the Cincinnati, Hamilton and Indianapolis R. R., the southwestern part by the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway, while the eastern part of the county is reached by the Cincinnati, Hamilton, and Dayton, the Cleveland, Chicago, Cincinnati and St. Louis, the Pennsylvania and the interurban lines of the Ohio Electric Railway. Thus transportation facilities are available to within four or five miles of almost any part of the county. The other counties are better equipped with railway and traction facilities than Butler County.

The wagon roads in all the counties in the southwestern part of the state are well improved. According to the records of the State Highway Commission the proportion of improved roads in Butler, Preble and Darke Counties for the year 1910 was as follows:

Table IV  
 Road Improvement

County.	Total Miles	Brick	Stone	Gravel	Per cent. Improved
Butler. ....	933	1	82	788	93.35
Preble. ....	931	0	44	585	67.56
Darke. ....	1257	0	16	744	60.46
Montgomery..	1064	0	60	938	93.80

Butler and Montgomery Counties have done much more in the way of improving roads than have the other counties under consideration.

Butler County is also fortunate in the plan of wagon roads. Instead of all roads being laid out on section lines as in certain other parts of the country, they run diagonally from the principal shipping points thus saving distance and adding to the convenience of travel. The principal difficulty of wagon transportation is the hilly topography of the country. The investigation brought out the fact that in a number of cases the farmers preferred hauling their grain and other produce directly to the central market to selling it at the way stations of the railroads. From the southern part of the county some of the farmers haul grain and live stock directly to Cincinnati, fifteen or twenty miles away. Stock shippers from Milford Township in the northern part of Butler County deliver directly to the Cincinnati market. Oxford Township sells largely to local buyers. From many parts of the section milk is shipped to creameries located in Indiana. For a large part of Butler County the only market for perishable products is the local grocery. The same is true of Darke and Preble Counties. Owing to the development of traction lines the farmers of Montgomery county have excellent facilities for selling their produce on the Dayton market, which also becomes the selling point for many farmers who cannot take advantage of the traction lines. One lady is reported who lived "3½ miles from a traction line and 12 miles from Dayton" and who "sold \$900.00 worth of produce on the Dayton market last year over and above travelling expenses." Many farmers drive to Dayton three times a week, some of them for distances of 14 or 15 miles to dispose of their produce.

Tobacco raising is the only important type of specialized farming in the section. The problem of marketing the tobacco crop has not yet been worked out to the entire satisfaction of the producers. Beginnings have been made in the effort to sell the crop on a co-operative basis.

The great majority of families in southwestern Ohio have free mail delivery. The extension of the use of the telephone has also been very rapid in the past few years. In some of the townships as high as ninety per cent. of the families have telephone service. In none of the townships does the service fall below fifty per cent.



## CHAPTER III

### Social Conditions, General

The origin of the population in these counties is widely distributed. The early settlers came principally from the older colonies east of the mountains. Pennsylvania sent the largest proportion into all the counties, but many families came from New Jersey, New York, and Virginia. The section also received its share of the German migration of the thirties and of the Irish immigration of the middle of the past century. In recent years such movement into the section as has occurred has been into the towns rather than into the country districts. According to the census records the present population of the section is largely of native birth. The statistics of the four counties under consideration for the period 1880 to 1910 are as follows:

Table V

Population as to Nativity

County	Native Born			Foreign Born		
	1880	1910*	Per cent. Increase	1880	1910	Per cent. Decrease
Butler.....	36636	64482	76.0	5943	5778	27.8
Darke.....	38556	41912	8.7	1940	1021	47.4
Montgomery....	66253	147200	122.0	12297	16534	+34.5
Preble.....	23506	23363	-0.7	1027	471	54.1

\*Negro population considered as Native Born.

While each county has had an absolute increase in population, with the exception of Montgomery County the number of foreign born has absolutely decreased.

The data as to the number of colored people, indicate their relatively small importance in the country districts.

Table VI  
Population as to Race

County	White			Colored		
	1880	1910	Per cent Increase	1880	1910	Per cent Increase
Butler.....	41435	68479	65.3	1140	1781	56.2
Darke.....	39917	42557	6.6	579	376	-35.1
Montgomery.	77234	158253	104.9	1310	5481	318.4
Preble.....	24051	23569	-2.0	482	265	-45.0

This table shows that in the rural counties there has been an absolute decrease in the colored population. The only marked increase has been in Montgomery County where the colored population has been increasing at a more rapid ratio than the white population. In Butler County while there has been an absolute increase in colored population, the relative increase has not been so rapid as that of the whites.

That the colored population is to be found principally in the larger centres is indicated by the fact that in 1910, 4,842 of the 5,481 colored people in Montgomery County were living in the city of Dayton; in Butler County 1,130 of the 1,781 were located in Hamilton and Middletown and probably three hundred more in the village of Oxford. According to the report of the United States census 1910 there were 16 colored farmers in Butler County. The village of Eaton had 60 out of the total of 265 in Preble County; and Greenville 38 out of a total of 376 in Darke County. Darke County appears to have the colored population scattered over a larger territory than the other counties under consideration.

All these counties have a very large proportion of the population consisting of descendants of settlers from the older colonies or of the older immigration. The foreign immigration and the colored population is to be found in the cities rather than in the country districts. The rural communities present a homogeneity of race interests training and ideals that should serve as the basis of healthy development of social life.

A comparison of changes in population in the decades beginning with 1870 and the following show that the movements which have attracted such wide-spread attention during the past

decade began as far back as 1880. A comparison of the rural population of that year with the figures for the previous decade indicates that in most parts of the district the country districts were still increasing in population. During the 80's, however, many of the townships showed a rapid decrease, and in this part of the state the maximum rate of decrease occurred during the decade beginning with 1880.

From 1880 to 1890 every township of Butler County for which the figures are comparable, lost in population from 134 to 365; with the exception of two townships Preble County shows the same tendency; only one township gained in population in Darke County and but two townships in Montgomery County. In the last decade, 1900-1910, one of the townships in Butler County, three in Preble, six in Darke and three in Montgomery show an increase.

The record of the decade 1870-1880 indicates that the general movement towards decrease had not yet begun to make its appearance except in a few instances. The slower rate of decrease of the later decades indicates that the rural population is gradually adjusting itself to the changed conditions and that any policies of social reconstruction which may be introduced will find a more permanent period of adaptability to those conditions.

The effect of depopulation of the rural district on the country village is shown by the following table.

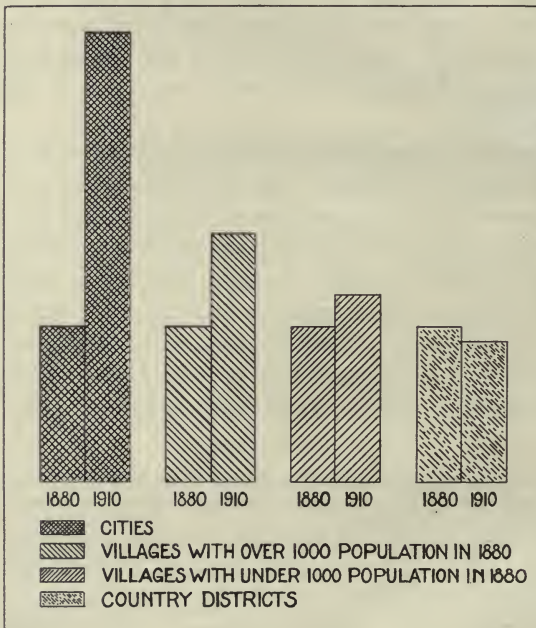
TABLE VII

Increase of population for 28 villages for which continuous record is given United States Census 1880-1910 and for the three cities Middletown, Hamilton and Dayton for the same period.

VILLAGES AND CITIES	POPULATION			
	1880	1910	Increase	
			Number	Per cent
1. Total 28 villages.....	23825	32306	8481	35.6
2 { 21 villages less than 1000 popu- lation 1880.....	9187	9797	610	6.6
3 { 8 villages having over 1000 popu- lation 1880.....	14638	22509	7871	53.7
4. Middletown, Butler Co., O.....	4538	13152	8614	189.0
5. Hamilton, Butler Co., O.....	12122	35279	23157	192.0
6. Dayton, Montgomery Co., O...	38678	116577	77899	201.0

With the exception of Montgomery County the total rural population during the same period has absolutely decreased. There appears to be a law that the community increases or decreases in population in proportion to its initial density.

THE LARGER THE TOWN THE FASTER  
IT GROWS. OPEN COUNTRY LOSING  
POPULATION. CHANGES IN  
POPULATION 1880-1910



The records of the census show that in general the country village has just about held its own in population. The census for 1870 records a number of small villages which are not mentioned in the later census reports. Those villages which are situated away from means of steam or electric railway communication have not generally grown rapidly. Villages having

the advantages of railway or electric line communication have in many instances had a vigorous growth. Illustrations of this influence are to be found in the villages Bradford and Union in Darke County, West Alexandria in Preble County, Brookville and Miamisburg and West Carrollton in Montgomery County. It is important to notice that in the last census a number of new villages are first recorded. This change may be indicative of a tendency toward a renewal of the village as a phase of rural life.

The testimony of the people remaining in the country districts is that those who have left have been attracted in the majority of cases to the neighboring cities. The rapid development of manufacturing interests has had much to do with the movement of people from the country districts into these towns. The fact that the increase of foreign population has been so small in these counties is further evidence that a large part of their increase has come from the surrounding rural districts. In many cases, however, the farmers have left the country to try their fortunes in the opening, more attractive farming territory of the northwestern United States or of southern Canada. This western movement will probably not be of increasing importance in the future and further drains on rural population must be in the direction of the cities rather than to other farming districts.

The majority of the few families that have moved into the rural districts have come from neighboring counties in the State of Ohio or of Indiana. A number of families from Kentucky have moved into the townships in the southern and southwestern part of Butler County. A number of Polish, Slavonians, Hungarians and Italians are to be found in the vicinity of the larger cities.

Table 8 shows the density of population in the counties under consideration.

County	Density per square mile
State.....	51.6
Butler.....	48.3
Darke.....	59.9
Montgomery.....	94.3
Preble.....	49.6

Butler and Preble Counties are both below the average density while Darke and Montgomery Counties are considerably above the average. For some time to come, distance evidently will continue to be a factor in the social life of the country.

The following table indicates the more important causes of death in the rural districts.

TABLE IX

Number of Deaths, Principal Causes of Death, Township Districts, 1909.\*

County	General diseases		2. Tuberculosis	3. Cancer	Diseases of Nervous system	1. Apoplexy	Circulation	1. Heart-disease	Respiratory system	1. Pneumonia	Digestion	Genito-Urinary	Early Infancy	Old Age	Violence
	88	6													
Butler	44.	6	20	2	23	11	18	10	25	23	18	13	12	13	26
Darke	88	6	40	19	27	12	46	34	34	23	32	17	21	13	17
Mont.	134	4	55	29	116	45	89	69	49	38	63	56	21	5	36
Preble	33	2	13	5	19	11	28	20	21	14	24	13	7	2	13

\*Report State Bureau of Vital Statistics, 1909.

The country districts are especially afflicted with tuberculosis and pneumonia. Exposure and housing conditions have much to do with this high rate. The death rate from typhoid fever is not high. That the vitality of country people is at a high standard is shown by the age distribution of deaths in township districts.

TABLE X

Deaths according to age groups Butler County, Calendar year 1911\*

Age group	No.	Per cent.
Total	235	100.00
Under 1	56	23.80
1-4	10	4.26
5-14	6	2.59
15-59	62	26.38
60-79	76	32.34
80 or above	25	10.63

\*Compiled from records of State Bureau of Vital Statistics.

The vitality of the rural population is indicated by the fact that of the total deaths recorded for the year 1911, 42.97 per cent. were 60 years of age and over, and of these, six were past ninety years of age. In this total is not included the deaths occurring at the county infirmary, where out of 13 deaths 2 were past 90, 3 between 80 and 90, 3 between 70 and 80 and 2 between 60 and 70. The others were between 40 and 50 with the exception of one child 2 years of age. The records from the infirmary were not included because the population of the institution comes both from the city and from the rural communities.

The data for Darke County furnishes further evidence of the vitality of the rural population. In the 13 townships studied in that county there were 122 persons over 80 years of age and a much larger number between 70 and 80 years.

Outside of the larger cities no special provision is made for care of the sick. These are cared for in their homes. The country people, however, do not find the problem of securing medical attendance the serious one it once was in days when the only means of transportation was by wagon and when if the services of the physician were demanded it was first necessary to drive to the neighboring village to seek for aid. At the present time the telephone and the automobile place the services of competent physicians within twenty minutes' to a half hour's call from the country home. This advantage has removed one of the once serious objections to living in the country. People living in the country generally prefer caring for their sick in their own homes to having them removed to some distant hospital. In many instances a prejudice exists among them against the hospitals. This is shown by the feeling that hospital treatment is not to be compared to that given by members of one's own family.

The rural communities have very few people who are in actual want. Typical cases of pathological conditions are as follows: In one instance, within sight of a village lives a family composed of father, mother, and four children ranging in age from 5 to 14 years. The father is afflicted with locomotor ataxia, is 47 years of age, and is unable to do any work. The family lives in a shack about 18 by 18 with one room on the ground floor and one room above.

A small shed is attached to the rear for a kitchen. The mother helps to support the family by taking in washing and by going out to work. The boy, now 14 years of age, is able to assist by farming the  $1\frac{1}{2}$  acre garden. The family is in constant danger of becoming a public charge and the surroundings of the home are not suitable for the care of a growing family according to the present standards of living.

Another case is that of "two old people, a brother and sister, the former 82 years of age and the latter 70. The brother lives in a small house by himself and does his own housekeeping while his sister, who is feebleminded, lives in a small eight by ten separate building in the yard. In her little room are a bed, table, stove and chair and such cooking utensils as are necessary to supply her simple wants." Still another case is that of a "family of four who are living in a tumble down house said by the investigator to be equal to the worst to be found in the cities. One of the sons, now a grown man, is insane and the other is feebleminded. The father is now 81 years old. The wife of the second son is filthy and dirty in appearance." In another instance "an old Irishman and his wife live in a little two roomed log house which has long since sunk its foundation deep into the ground. Both are in dotage and are simply existing awaiting the inevitable end. They are being supported by a son, single, who works out by the month." These are but a few of the conditions found in the country districts. Generally poverty affects the aged and generally it is to be found in the log house remains of a pioneer civilization. It is a question whether conditions such as these should be permitted to continue simply because the neighbors are ignorant or indifferent or because the cases in any one community are too few to attract public attention. Some county agency should be responsible for the care of these cases and should have the power to prevent violations of decent community standards.

In Preble and Butler Counties data as to marriage age were obtained for the entire county, including the cities. The average age of marriage for males is about 24 while that for women is 21. These figures correspond with dates as to age of mothers published by the State Bureau of Vital Statistics. In Butler



County, of 1400 births registered in 1909, 9 were born to mothers under 17 years of age and 222 to mothers under 21 years of age. In Darke County of 1032 births, but 4 were to mothers under 17 and 152 to mothers under 21; in Preble County 436 births were recorded, 8 to mothers under 17, and 82 to mothers under 21. There is no evidence available as to whether the age of marriage is rising or falling.

The question of morality is one that cannot be discussed with any degree of accuracy. Certain conditions are suggestive of tendencies.

Some of the physicians interviewed commented upon the prevalence of venereal disease or the effects of it among elements of the rural population. The impression given by them is that diseases of this kind are more prevalent than is generally supposed.

One indication of conditions is the number of illegitimate births in a district. According to the report of the Bureau of Vital Statistics for the State in 1909, the rates of illegitimacy for the state and for Butler and neighboring counties is as follows:

TABLE II

Rate Illegitimacy Per 100,000 Population 1909

Division	No. Per 100,000
State	47.7
Butler Co.	31.1
Darke Co.	47.0
Montgomery Co.	40.3
Preble Co.	25.0
Hamilton City	26.1
Middletown City	56.6
Dayton City	46.0

No relationship between rural conditions and illegitimacy seems to exist in these figures except that Darke County, with a large portion of its population living in the country districts or the villages has a high rate, and in Butler county the rate for Hamilton, O., is lower than that for the county at large. On the other hand, the rate for Preble County is far below the average for the state and the rate for Middletown city and Dayton is high.

The rate in each of the counties mentioned is below the average for the state.

The most careful investigation possible under the circumstances appears to point conclusively to the fact that moral conditions are constantly improving in the rural districts of Butler County and of the other counties mentioned. The decrease of rural population in Ohio does not indicate degeneration, but a rising standard of living for a more limited but financially better equipped population. No better way can be used to present graphically moral tendencies than by quoting the reports of the field agents as to conditions in the several townships. (1) "Saloons voted out, dry from four to eight years; more interest in schools; less rowdyism." (2) "Better language; less drinking." (3) "Religious; no graft; little drinking and profane language." (4) "Growing sentiment against the saloons." (5) "Saloon patronized less, church more." (6) "Few arrests, little drunkenness or rowdyism." In a few of the townships the reports are not so satisfactory. These are in cases where there is some centre of immoral infection. Here "Little interest in church;" "More drinking and profanity;" "Churches dead;" "Less care for the training of children" is the typical condition. In those communities where the cross road saloon still exists influence on the life of the community is quite noticeable. In one case in particular, in the neighborhood of one of the larger cities a resort is operated on Saturdays and Sundays. Beer is sold without restriction, a dancing platform is maintained and the place is operated without restriction as to age. Here a few of the foreign families congregate for the day's outing. This in itself would not be so objectionable, but the evidence is that the place also becomes the gathering place of the more corrupt elements of the social life of the neighboring city. Thus the good and the bad are thrown together and the results cannot be helpful to the community.

An interesting phase of the problem of morality in relation to the religious life of these communities is that while the churches in many instances are losing membership, the tone of the community is improving. The suggestion is that other fundamental forces are at work tending to raise the social standards of the com-

munities to a higher plane. These forces appear to be (1) the leavening of the rural community through contact with the higher culture of the cities. The crudeness of an earlier civilization appears to be passing away. The better and not the worse elements in the cities appear to exert the greatest influence. The resident in the country district who has had his habits formed and his love of the good fixed before coming into contact with city life copies the good of the urban community. Thus urban culture is gradually raising the standards of the country. (2) The greater force with which the moral influence operates in the country through the development of means of communication isolated rudeness disappears before the closer relationships of modern life. (3) The public schools. The introduction several years ago of courses on hygiene, of the study of the evils of the use of liquor has had its effects. The younger generation has been put on its guard against the dangers of many things that were formerly regarded with indifference. (4) The farm magazine and other periodicals. (5) The extension work of the colleges and experiment stations. The past few years have witnessed a wonderful advance in the point of view upon life by the country people through the ideas disseminated in the farm journals, and farmers' institutes. Culture is at a higher stage than it once was and the forces at work including the religious agencies are tending to bring it to a still higher level.

Housing conditions generally conform to the relative prosperity of the community. In the southern part of Butler County, for example, the "housing conditions are good. Practically every home has the ordinary household conveniences, many have bath, plumbing in the kitchen, furnace, one of the modern lighting systems, etc." The newer houses erected in sections of Preble, Darke and Montgomery Counties, where tobacco is raised, have every modern convenience and in many cases are superior to the average city home. In other parts of the section where the more progressive farmers live, the homes are also well improved. In some places owing to the fact that the community has been settled for many years, the houses are old and lack most of the modern improvements. In the majority of homes lighting is still

with oil lamps and heating is by means of stoves instead of furnaces. As a rule the houses do not have water or plumbing of any kind, the soft water being drawn from cisterns. Most of the homes, however, are plainly but well furnished with carpets, pictures, curtains, musical instruments and modern equipment for caring for the milk supply. They are generally well kept and the sanitary conditions are good. The principal difficulty is in the lack of protection against the inclemencies of the weather. The death rate from pneumonia in the rural districts is evidence of the effect of this condition.

Community leadership in southwestern Ohio is generally lacking. This lack of leadership seems to be a survival of the extreme individualism which has characterized the life of rural communities in the state during their entire history. Examples of this individualizing tendency are to be found in the ease with which small village communities could become incorporated; in the extreme localization of control of the common or district schools under a locally elected board of directors; in the provision for the formation of special school districts; in the multiplying of small denominational church units. This influence has broken up the life of the community so that no one man or group of men can be said to be the leaders of the community. The political leaders are a different group from the leaders in the churches; those teachers who have done efficient work in the district schools are influential only in their own districts or at least only indirectly in a larger field through voluntary organization with other teachers. The "Rural Community" can hardly be said to exist in the southwestern part of the state. There are rural districts but not rural communities. The "Rural Community" we are told once existed but owing to changes which have been going on has disappeared. Such social life as exists is found in small exclusive groups and many of these groups have but little in them that promises well for the regeneration of the life of the country.

It is difficult to estimate accurately the social forces operating in a rural community. Differences in amount of property owned do not appear to exercise an important influence in breaking up the community into classes. The fact of property ownership or

of being attached to a family that owns property is a guarantee of social standing in the community. With the increase in tenantry and the change in the type of laborers employed some social cleavage becomes evident. The transition to modern profit seeking agriculture, however, has had an indirect effect on social life in that it has emphasized the property acquiring motive until it has broken down many of the social tendencies of an earlier time. Families associate less because the struggle for wealth has tended to take more of their time. Increased family isolation accompanying the struggle has intensified the unsocial tendencies in the country.

It speaks well for the rural population that the dividing lines, so far as they exist between groups, are more along lines of ethical standards than along lines of property ownership. For instance, the fact that one individual is a "wet" and another is "dry," has more to do in determining group sympathy than that the one owns one hundred acres and the other but forty. The dividing lines in rural communities are that one is a frequenter of a saloon while another is not; that one family attends dances while another does not; or that one family is a staunch adherent of the church while another is not; these are of more importance than actual accumulations of wealth.

This ethical basis of rating friends in the country is distinctly favorable to the rural population and suggests that if the problem of reorganization is undertaken in time much of the evil in standards prevailing in cities may be avoided. Although there is extreme lack of social life, the country is nearer democracy than the cities, and prompt action may make it the leader in the renewal of the democratic spirit.

No sets or cliques exist other than those which are formed on the perfectly natural basis of close acquaintanceship and friendship arising out of co-operation in the work of harvesting crops, of carrying on the work of the church or of the farmers' organization. In many parts of Butler County "thresher's rings" are found. These rings afford a dividing line for invitation to social affairs which gives a group of convenient size for the average country home. These, however, cannot be called cliques in the

undesirable sense of the word. In Montgomery and Preble Counties are to be found a number of special religious groups belonging to the Brethren Church. These dress differently from the general community but in most other respects are assimilated into the community. In certain parts of Montgomery County the foreign elements moving into the county have not yet been assimilated.

The democratic spirit of the country still generally includes the hired help. Hired hands are treated as equals. The demand for help is such that any other treatment would result in not being able to secure any assistance. The only place where there is any tendency to depart from the time honored custom of equal treatment is in those districts where the farmers have accumulated considerable property and where the help is of a foreign or widely different type from the landlords. Here is to be found evidence of class differentiation.

So far the farmers as a group do not appear to have developed an effective class consciousness. This lack of recognition of common interests shows itself in the broken social life; in the exclusive attention to personal economic advancement regardless of the welfare of the group; in the lack of interest in public affairs; in the lack of interest in co-operative projects; and in the widespread dissatisfaction with farm life, especially among the younger people. The farmer shows his attitude toward his work by desiring to train his son or daughter to teach school or to enter a city profession and in his open or secret lack of respect for the young person who, having gone to college, should show himself so unworthy of the confidence placed in him as to return to the farm. Parents thus inadvertently admit that the life of the farmer is in the estimation of the farmer himself of a lower grade than the life of other groups in the community. This lack of community interest is prevalent in the southwestern part of the state, just as it is in rural communities elsewhere, and the existence of this spirit is one of the most serious hindrances to social reorganization. The farmer must come to a realization of the dignity of his labor and of his work; he must recognize that the farmers as a group

have certain common interests and that these interests must be worked for by the farmers through co-operative effort.

There are certain forces still at work tending to break down the social life of the country districts. Among these are, first, the telephone. When first introduced the telephone becomes an agency for communication between friends and neighbors. People like to call up their neighbors to try the new invention. So long as the novelty of the telephone exists it is quite popular. What is at first used frequently as a novelty in the end becomes a factor to prevent close personal relationship. The telephone eliminates those friendly personal chats that were almost inevitable when the farmer had to walk or drive to his neighbors on matters of business.

In some cases the telephone may be the means of permanently increasing social life, but its influence generally seems to be in the other direction.

The second disintegrating influence is the rural free delivery. Once it was necessary to drive to town at least once a week to get the mail and many farmers often found an excuse to go oftener than once a week for the same purpose. Or it might have been a trip to the neighboring country store to get some tobacco and the mail and stop to talk a few minutes with the store keeper or the others gathered around the stove. With the coming of the rural free delivery, with the daily paper from the county seat and with the introduction of the parcel post so that small packages may be carried from home to town for a nominal sum, the older agencies for bringing people together are fewer than ever and unless other forces are brought to bear upon the situation the life of the farmer will be still more isolated. The farmer's relation to the city and the outside world is closer than to his neighbor on the adjoining farm.

A third factor whose influence temporarily at least has been in the direction of further disintegration of country life is the introduction of the automobile. The farmer who has followed the plow all week finds a strong temptation on the sabbath day to get his family into the machine and to make a long cross country run.

The machine does not get into working order until it has run several miles past the door of the old church, and consequently we hear the plaint from the country pastor that it would be a good thing for the churches if these "infernal" machines had never been invented. The pleasure seeker with the automobile is not brought into more than a very limited social life. As yet the number of machines is too limited to justify the formation of automobile parties and even in that case the only social intercourse is at the wayside inn where refreshments partaken of far away from home may not be conducive to the moral development of the partaker. It may be that after the automobile has won its way into country life as a fixture and after the novelty of "seeing the country" has worn off it will become one of the most powerful of integrating agencies. It has already exerted a powerful influence in the direction of road improvement and will doubtless be the solution of the problem of getting the people together during the evenings and on the Sabbath day during a large part of the year. This will be especially valuable during the months when the available teams are hard at work in the fields and need rest on the sabbath day and during the evenings. The effect of the automobile on the church in the open country will be further discussed under causes of church decline.

Sectarianism in the churches is a survival that still acts as a dividing force upon the life of the country. Three churches in a community where there ought to be but one are as effective a disintegrating agency as could well be conceived. No one group can go ahead in the process of socializing the community, because none of the others will follow and because no one of the groups can reach a sufficient number of the community to become an agency of progress. So long as the schools, which are public and which are community affairs, deal exclusively with the children, and so long as they fail to extend their activities to the community at large, they also fail to become the agency for leadership for community welfare.

Good roads so far have apparently had an economic rather than a social influence. Other forces, such as the telephone, the rural free delivery, the automobile have been more far reaching



in their effects than have the changes in means of transportation. As has been shown, the improvement of roads has been so general throughout the different parts of the country that no very marked distinctions can be found based on differences in facilities of transportation. The fact that social life has not improved, but if anything has continued to deteriorate is evidence that other forces more powerful are operating in the rural districts. The only exception to this relation of roads to social life is that on some of the more inaccessible back roads along the creeks and on cross roads are to be found a larger proportion of older unimproved houses, and more of the population in these districts are not progressive than along the main lines of traffic where good transportation facilities have had an effect on the value of land. The social conditions here may be due to the tendency of the less efficient or those with smaller resources to gravitate to or remain in those districts where cheap lands afford an opportunity to make a living without the use of modern methods of agriculture. In this way the bad roads become a cause of social differentiation.

On the other hand, certain forces are operating to bring the people of the country together. The first is the growing feeling of rural solidarity and the growing class consciousness. This sentiment is the result of a combination of influences. The work of the Roosevelt Country Life Commission and the wide spread study of country life problems resulting from the movement started by that commission have led the farmers themselves to take up the problem of socializing the farm. The growing social spirit that has reached every class of society has effected the rural population and the farmer's devotion to money making as an end in itself is beginning to give way to ideals of community welfare as against individual advancement. The increasing economic welfare of the rural population lessens the pressure of existence and makes possible the development of the less sordid phases of country life. The feeling that the farm has possibilities and advantages as a place for living as well as for making a living is growing and is causing an increased interest in the solution of the problems of social life.

In sections where conditions have made necessary the development of co-operation the social spirit has one of the firmest bases for growth. Men who work together in a business way seek one another in a social way and with the increase in interest in community economic welfare the disintegrating influence of an exaggerated interest in individual or family welfare tends to disappear.

### A COMMUNITY CENTER



Reily, Butler County, Town Hall. Meeting place for township school entertainments, lectures, farmers' meetings.

At the present time there is practically no place provided in any part of the country for informal meeting. The street corner, and the grocery store, blacksmith shops, railway stations, saloons and commercialized pool rooms are the only places that could be thought of by the farmers in any of the communities. Such a thing as a social centre where people can come feeling a perfect right to be there and spend the leisure hours in friendly conversation is unknown. The lack of a meeting place is repeatedly

voiced by farmers who have come into new communities and have felt to the fullest extent the awful loneliness of farm life among strangers even in so densely a populated section as that of the southwestern part of the state. One lady expressed the situation by saying "that she almost died through loneliness when she first came into the new community." A tenant farmer said that for two or three years he would often go out on the road and walk for two or three miles in the evening in order to get away from the awful loneliness of the place. And yet both these families lived within sight of one of the representative villages in the country. The street corner is better than nothing, but it is a very poor substitute for some common gathering place where men and women can go and mingle with their fellows without feeling that they are encroaching on the privacy of others' homes.

The suggestion might be made that people could visit their neighbors. But the sensitiveness of country people is such that they hesitate to visit others often unless it be near relatives for fear that those visited will tire of them and prefer that they stay away. This is a very important factor in the social life of the rural community. In one case where the farmers in a neighborhood had turned an abandoned church into a dance hall the entire neighborhood was welcome at stated periods, and the majority of people went even though they had never danced in their lives and did not dance while at the meetings. The opportunity was given them to meet with their neighbors on a basis of equality and to talk or to get relaxation from watching the young people enjoying the pleasure of the dance. Here was one of the nearest approaches to a true rural social centre found in the entire section.

The young people have opportunities of meeting at the churches, at occasional local parties and socials given in the homes. These seem to be about the only opportunities for social life afforded the young folks in the country districts. Is it any wonder that our young people seek the more attractive and more lively environment of the city, even though they may not have the same opportunities of earning a good living?

There are few provisions made for the gathering of all the people in common assemblage for any purpose. The county fair is intended for the agricultural population and is well attended. Union Sunday School picnics are generally held once a year in the district studied and the farmers' institutes afford opportunities for community gatherings in different townships. The farmers' institutes are doing work in the way of arousing interest in more scientific methods of farming, but to the present time have done little with the science of making the farm a home.

A word should be said in regard to the social utility of the county and the street fairs as they are at present conducted in Butler County. At a fair held recently in one of the villages of the county special effort was made to have adequate agricultural and household exhibits and for this all praise is to be given. It is a step in the right direction. The special exhibit of literature available to the farmer, from the Experiment Station, the Ohio Department of Agriculture, the State University, and the United States Department of Agriculture, was also worthy of special commendation. But the side issues, the privileges which are granted to help pay the expenses of the fair, in some cases deserve the severest condemnation. Either there is a reflection on the interest of the farmer or there is most lamentable ignorance on the part of fair managers when such things as physical human deformity are exhibited for pay, or when petty gambling becomes a large part of the fair exhibit. The same criticism applies to the exhibitions at the county fair. At the last county fair in Butler County there were excellent exhibits from the Experiment Station, and from the farms in different parts of the county; but in addition to these were to be found the side shows and other amusements whose presence at a county fair may be seriously questioned. Farmers and their wives seeing the preliminary exhibits of these shows turned aside in disgust and did not patronize them. They were an insult to their dignity and to their ideals of morality. These relics of a ruder age should be omitted from the schedule of a modern gathering, and the farmers, for whom the fair is primarily intended, should see to it that their desires in matters of this kind be respected. The cheap, ques-

tionable show is a side issue and detracts from true progress in fair exhibits.

The same thing may be said of racing as it is conducted at fairs at the present time. Racing is on a professional basis and is carried on among horsemen who transport their horses from county to county to take part in the races for the sake of winning the large prize offered. The races have but little direct relation to stock improvement and in too many cases must be classed with the saloon, the gambling den and the dive in their moral influence.

### THE COUNTRY BOYS' OUTING



Montgomery County Young Mens' Christian Association.

Social life in the country districts in recent years appears to have been undergoing a process of reorganization along lines of blood relationship. Sunday visiting is largely among relatives and the family reunion has become a widespread and popular institution. Many of the families plan to meet once a year for a social picnic. Families not only from the home township but from neighboring counties or other states gather at these reunions

These gatherings, while not on a community basis and thus not democratic in the true sense of the word, serve a useful purpose in bringing people together from widely separated districts and in broadening the interests of all. The families that have these reunions do not do so with any thought of exclusiveness but because family relationships now offer the strongest basis for an attempted renewal of social life in the country. It may be that the family reunion is simply a transition state preparing the way for the reunion of the country people on a community basis in a larger relationship than that of mere flesh and blood.

The church appears to take the lead as an organization in furnishing social amusement to the young people of the several communities. The recreation furnished by the church takes the form of socials and picnics. In one township the church co-operates with the schools in carrying on a lecture course. The schools in some of the organized townships, furnish entertainment in the way of picnics and socials, get the young people together in athletic contests and provide for literary gatherings. While the schools do not take active part over as wide an area as the churches they furnish a much wider variety of amusement than do the churches. The saloons afford amusement and recreation to a considerable number in those townships where they still exist. Cards, pool, and billiards, and the opportunity for passing the evening hours in company with other men appear to be the attractions of the saloon. In addition to recreation afforded by these institutions the lodges have occasional gatherings of a social nature. In some of the villages are to be found the commercial pool rooms and the moving picture shows. These forms of entertainment are well attended by the village people as well as by those from the nearby rural neighborhood. Three townships in Butler County and several in Montgomery County reported Sunday baseball, with fair attendance by those not religiously inclined.

The percentage of people interested in any of these amusements aside from the socials and picnics is very small. The country people have practically no interest in basketball, bowling, football, lecture courses, tennis, golf, or indoor gymnastic exer-

cise of any kind. Probably 300 country people are reached by baseball contests in Butler County, and 150 by lecture courses. Reily Township in this county, has been particularly successful in this respect. Most of the people attended the county fair once a year, and attend a picnic or social at some time during the year.

The family reunions already mentioned, Sunday visiting and the friendly conversations on the street corners on market days and in commercialized amusement places, are about the only forms of social life in the country. This is good so far as it goes but evidently is not representative of the possibilities of social development.

The factors and the forces which condition social growth having been considered, it is now in order to describe the tendencies and influence of organized social life in the rural communities. The principal organized social agencies are the fraternal secret orders, farmers' organizations, the church and the school. In the following pages the extent of activities of each of these social agencies will be discussed and so far as possible an estimate of their utility will be made and suggestions for their reorganization will be noted. The secret fraternal societies will be discussed first.

The record of the numbers reached by the various fraternal organizations shows that as compared with the entire rural population they reach comparatively few. From a total of 62 societies studied in 26 townships of Butler, Darke and Montgomery Counties a total membership of 4,572 was reported. The average attendance reported by the secretaries was 928. As compared with the total rural population of these townships this number is almost negligible. Montgomery County reports the largest membership and the largest average attendance.

Very little has been done in the way of co-operation. A branch of the national organization of the Farmers' Educational and Co-operative Union has been organized in Butler County. This organization has been in existence since January, 1910. At present it has a membership of one hundred and fifty. Most of the members live in the western and northwestern part of the county. They meet in several local groups twice a month and have a county meeting at Hamilton, Ohio monthly. This organization is intended primarily for co-operative purchase of supplies

for the farm and gives comparatively little attention to the social side of farm life. The Farmers' Union buys everything needed for the farm and does its purchasing as a county unit in carload lots as far as possible.

In addition to the Farmers' Union the Oxford Township Farmers' Protective Association has organized itself into a co-operative purchasing society and is considering the development of co-operative marketing of their products. This society has a membership of seventy and is in a thriving condition. Unlike most of the protective associations throughout the county this organization has added to its functions those of co-operative activity as mentioned above. It has already purchased coal, fertilizer, and other commodities with a marked advantage saving, it is said, from \$4.00 to \$6.00 per ton on fertilizer alone. This association, though limiting itself largely to business activities, arranges for an annual picnic during the summer and a dinner during the winter season.

The fact that both these organizations are of recent development in the county is an indication of the growing sense of solidarity and of community interest among the farmers. The outlook is hopeful for a continued growth of the usefulness of these groups. In addition to the co-operative organizations mentioned, a few of the farmers in the eastern part of the county are engaged in shipping farm products co-operatively, and there is now a county mutual insurance company which had its origin in Reily Township, Butler County.

In Madison Township, Butler County, a number of the farmers are connected with a tobacco union for the co-operative sale of their products. Thus far this organization has not been very successful on account of the attitude of the farmers. Warehouses are built in various towns, and a man is hired to oversee the work of selling the tobacco. If a poor man is in need of cash, loans under certain limitations are made to him from the reserve funds of the association. The difficulty, however, is to get a large enough fund. Farmers hesitate to buy stock in the association. In some localities it has been given up on account of the attitude of the farmers.



The result of the survey in Butler County so far as farmers' organizations are concerned is of importance in showing the different forms these organizations have taken. The Farmers' Union and the Protective Associations afford some social advantage. In the western part of the county several farmers' clubs composed of twelve families each have developed. These clubs are limited in membership to this size because this number affords opportunity for each family to entertain the other members of the organization once during the year. The twelve family group is not too large to make the problem of entertaining a serious one. One of these organizations has been in existence for thirty or more years and has had the honor of being represented by several of its members in important positions connected with the State Department of Agriculture.

The social life of the country is also fostered to some extent by the so called "threshers' rings" which consist of the group of families which assist one another during the threshing season. After the close of the threshing season it is the custom for some of these groups to have a social gathering and other social affairs are held from time to time during the year. These "rings" do not appear to have social features attached except in the western part of the county.

The other groups reported are two women's clubs in the eastern part, of the county, a corn improvement association in the southern part, and the tobacco growers' organization in the northern part. Each of these groups reaches a small number of people and is doing good work in its limited field. The corn improvement association reaches about 200 people at its annual meetings.

The records of the other counties are similar. Montgomery County has had two granges, neither of which is active at the present time. It has had four corn improvement associations, one of which is now in existence and doing effective work. There are several "tobacco leaf growers' Associations, a farmers' Institute Association in practically every township, and in Randolph Township, Montgomery County, is a Social Betterment League. Darke and Preble Counties present similar conditions.

## CHAPTER IV

### The Rural Church In Southwestern Ohio

Owing to variation in the schedules used in the different counties complete comparative tables cannot be given. The total number of churches studied was 170, distributed as follows: Butler County (entire county) 54; Montgomery County (9 townships) 52; Darke County (13 townships) 64. This study excluded the churches in Arcanum, Bradford and Union City in Darke County, and Oxford in Butler County. Hamilton, Dayton and Middletown were not included in any studies.

The most tangible criterion for determining the success or failure of the rural churches is the increase or decrease of membership over a period of five or ten years. In order to bring out more clearly the problem as it affects the strictly "rural" church and the church that has a membership representing a combined rural and village population, the figures in the following tables have been classified according to "town-country" churches and "country" churches, the former representing those communities in which the church is located in a village but serves a rural population as well and the latter those churches located in the open country.

Of 39 "town-country" churches and 11 "country" churches in Butler County reporting, the evidence as to increase and decreases is as follows:

TABLE XII  
Increase or Decrease in Church Membership, Butler County

Status as to Growth	"Town-Country"		"Country"	
	Number	Per cent.	Number	Per cent.
Churches reporting....	37	100.0	11	100.0
Growing.....	9	24.3	2	18.2
Standing still.....	5	13.5	1	9.1
Losing membership...	23	62.2	8	72.7

This table indicates that the village church has the advantage over the church in the open country. 72.7 per cent. of the rural churches are losing ground while but 62.2 per cent. of the village churches are decreasing in membership. 24.3 per cent. of the village churches are growing as against the total of but 18.2 per cent. of the country churches; and a larger number of the village churches are holding their own without any appreciable change in either direction.

The corresponding data for Darke County are as follows:

TABLE XIII

Increase or Decrease in Church Membership.

Status as to Growth	"Town-Country"		"Country"	
	Number	Per cent.	Number	Per cent.
Churches Reporting..	28	100.0	35	100.0
Growing.....	13	46.4	14	40.0
Standing still.....	8	28.4	14	40.0
Losing membership...	7	25.2	7	20.0

The data for Darke County show that the total percentage of country churches either standing still or losing ground is greater than that of the "town-country" group. The percentage of "town-country" churches actually losing ground is greater for the churches in this county than for the country churches. This is accounted for in part by the fact that the two types of churches are more nearly on an equality as to resident pastor, there being thirteen resident pastors in the country districts in Darke County as against none at all in Butler County. However, eleven of these belong to the old order Brethren churches and do not correspond to the professional pastor of the modern church.

The change in church membership of the people in the country is shown also by the results of a study of church affiliations in three townships of Butler and Preble Counties, O. The following table shows the distribution of membership according to age, by totals and by sex:

TABLE XIV

Distribution Persons according to Age and Sex.

Age Group	Number			Per cent.		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Total .....	2069	1035	1035	100.0	100.0	100.0
20 and under...	810	382	428	39.0	36.9	41.4
21 to 29 .....	297	152	145	14.6	14.3	14.1
30 and over.....	962	501	462	46.4	48.8	44.5

TABLE XV

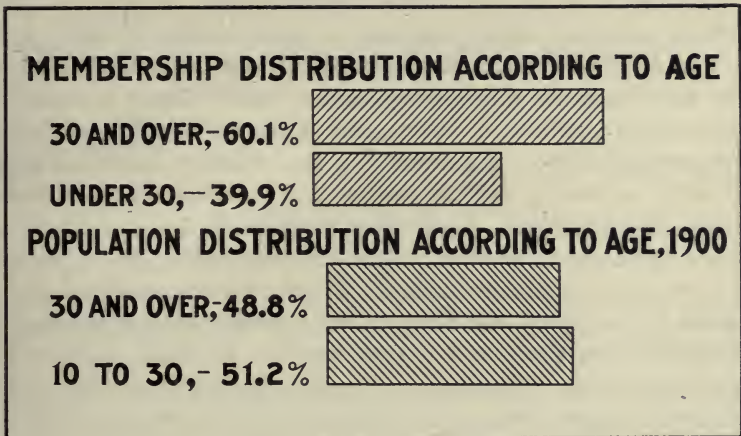
Distribution Church Members according to Age and Sex.

Age Group	Number			Per cent.		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Total .....	729	379	450	100.0	100.0	100.0
20 and under....	154	71	83	21.1	18.7	18.4
21 to 29.....	136	68	68	18.8	18.0	15.2
30 and over.....	439	240	299	60.1	63.3	66.4

These figures, while limited in the field represented, are significant in that they indicate a fundamental movement going on in the age of those belonging to the church. The percentages show that while 39 per cent. of the group studied are under 21 years of age, but 21 per cent. of the church members belong to this group while over 60 per cent. of the church members belong to the group over 30 years of age which represents but 46.4 per cent. of the population studied. Almost three times as large a proportion belong to the second group as to the first. These figures apply to both men and women. As a matter of fact it appears that the change in relative proportions is affecting the female population more seriously than the male. 18.7 per cent. of all the male members reported belong to the group under 21 years of age while but 36.9 per cent. of the males belong to this group. On the other hand, 18.4 per cent. of the females belong to this group as to membership while over 41 per cent. of all the women belong to this group. Those 30 years of age and over show a larger comparative proportion of women be-

longing to the church. It may be that modern life is bringing interests to women that compete with the church for their attention more than they once did, thus bringing men and women more on a basis of equality as to the influence of the church upon them.

### CHURCH MEMBERSHIP IN INVERSE RATIO TO DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION



Is the Church reaching the young people?

When these results are compared with the distribution of the population according to age their significance is further emphasized. Of the 57,500,000 people 10 years of age and over in the United States in 1900, 51.2 per cent. were under 30 years of age and 48.8 per cent. were over 30 years of age. Less than 27 per cent. of all the persons studied in the group under 30 years of age were church members while 45.6 per cent. of the group 30 years and over were members of the church. The indications are that the membership of the church is like an inverted pyramid. The question inevitably rises as to what will be the status of church membership when the present 27 per cent. pass into the group of those 30 years of age and over. The evidence as to the age at which church membership is recruited further emphasizes the importance of these figures. Of 398 cases for which data were obtained

in Butler County 309 joined the church while still under 21 years of age; 65 between 20 and 31; and but 24 after having reached the age of 31. 77.6 per cent. of all come into the church at the period of life where the evidence shows the falling in church membership is most marked. Truly the problem of the church is a serious one and if the coming generation is to be saved by the church, means must be devised to reach the young people as they are passing through the critical period of their religious experience.

A number of conditions exist which cause this tendency. In the first place the village ministers in Butler County receive on an average \$776.00 per year salary while the country minister is receiving \$528.00. Again not a single country church in Butler County reported a resident pastor while 35 of the village churches had resident pastors. The village church also has the advantage of having a larger number of services per month. In 65 per cent. of the village churches in Butler County services are held weekly while in nearly 65 per cent. of the rural churches services are held not more than once in two weeks. In Darke County 41.6 per cent. of the "town-country" churches have services weekly while but 24 per cent. of the country churches have weekly services. Further, 30 per cent. of the village churches in Butler County have a minister on full time while not a single country church is so supplied. The ministers who serve the rural charges are in general about as well prepared as those who serve in the village.

The number of denominations represented in the country districts is also of importance. Exclusive of the colored congregations which are made up very largely of village and city residents there are eleven different denominations represented by church buildings and organized societies in Butler County. They are Baptist, Congregational, Christian, Catholic, Evangelical, Lutheran, Methodist Episcopal, Mennonite, German Reformed, Presbyterian, United Presbyterian, and United Brethren. In thirteen townships of Darke County there were 17 different denominations represented, as follows: United Brethren, Christian, Church of the Brethren, Methodist Episcopal, Universalist, Old

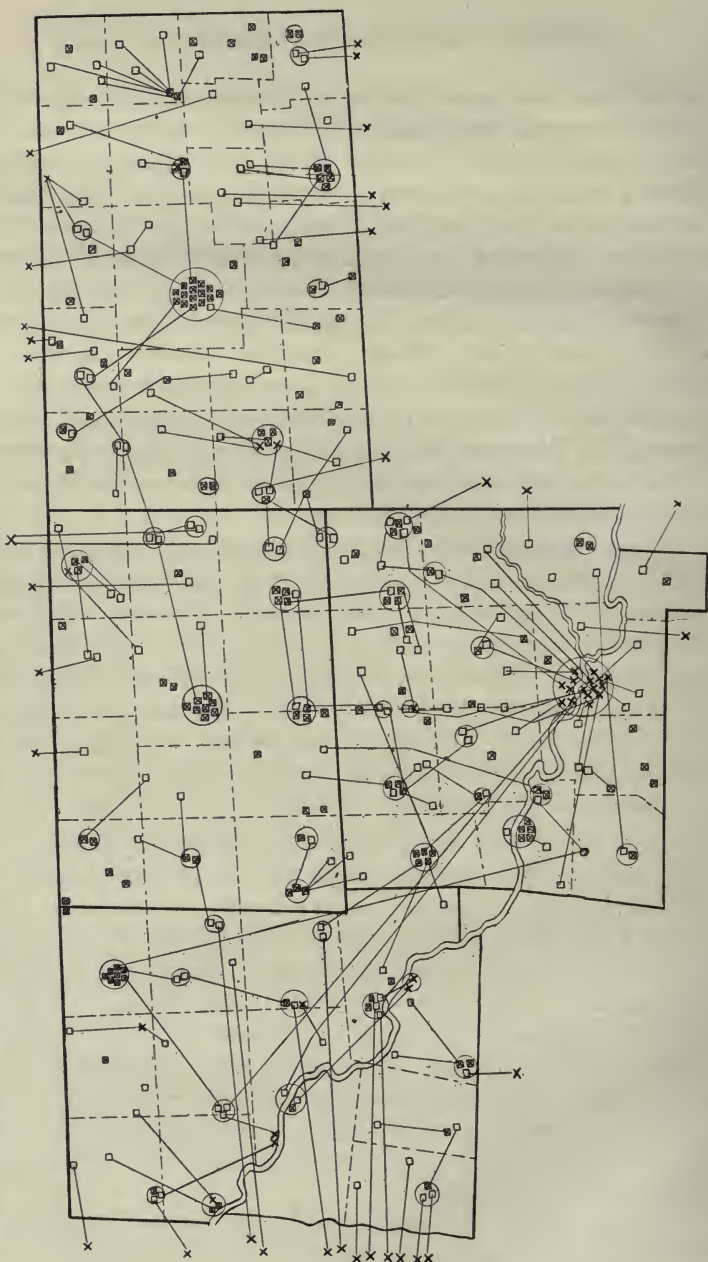
Order German Baptist, Reformed, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Disciple, Mennonite, Wesleyan M. E., Baptist, African M. E., Yorkers or Amish Church of Christ, Brethren in Christ. In 9 townships of Montgomery County, 16 denominations were found as follows: Methodist Episcopal, Baptist, Lutheran, Christian, United Brethren, Reformed, Progressive Brethren, Brethren in Christ, Old Order Brethren, Catholic, Conservative Brethren, Radical United Brethren, Liberal United Brethren, Evangelical, Mennonite, Presbyterian. These churches were organized and located not in reference to the social needs of the community at large, but in reference to the desires of a certain portion of the community. The accompanying map page 50 indicates the results of this indiscriminate planting of churches in accord with the demands of a limited number of the community.

This map shows that the churches have been located generally in places considered most convenient for the membership of the respective denominations. The tendency has been to plant the church buildings in the villages. The result of this tendency is that a number of churches of different denominations are located in the same community and there is a consequent over-churching of that community. In other instances, not so frequent, one finds parts of the county in which no church is within convenient driving distance of the people.

The map is also intended to show where the preachers live. It is significant that of all the preachers serving rural congregations in Butler County, fourteen come into the county from outside. Some of them have their residence in Cincinnati, some in Dayton and others in the neighboring counties. In but one instance did the minister live in the open country. In this instance, the minister was also engaged in operating a farm and lived just outside the limits of a village, several miles distant from the parish he served. The location of the church and the residence of the ministers both suggest problems which it appears must be dealt with in a constructive way before the country church can hope to be of the greatest service to the community.

Owing to the fact that membership in any church is not limited to the township in which that church is located, accurate

LONG DISTANCE MINISTRY WHERE THE CHURCHES ARE AND WHERE THE PREACHERS LIVE BUTLER, DARKE, MONTGOMERY AND PREBLE COUNTIES, OHIO.



Minister Resides at Church.  
  Church with Non-resident Pastor.  
 X Residence of Pastor.



data as to the proportion of the population that belongs to the church cannot be given. However, the following table will suggest the approximate situation since what is lost to churches outside the district will be to a large extent balanced by outside membership in churches within the district. The total church membership in relation to population in the townships studied in Butler, Darke and Montgomery Counties is as follows:

TABLE XVI  
Rural Church Membership in Relation to Total Population

County	Total Membership	Rural Population	Per cent. Membership of Population
Butler 10 townships.....	4229	15333	27.6
Darke 13 townships.....	5951	20248	29.4
Montgomery 9 townships. ....	6904	29145	20.2

These conclusions from the institutional survey correspond with results of the house to house canvass made in typical communities.

The data as to the condition of Sunday Schools in the counties for which data was obtained is as follows:

TABLE XVII  
Sunday Schools Butler and Darke County

	Butler	Darke
Total number of Sunday Schools .....	43	57
Number having services 12 months .....	41	53
Number churches without Sunday Schools.....	9	6
Number Sunday Schools without churches.....	1	0
Number Sunday Schools in villages.....	36	28
Number of Sunday Schools in country.....	9	29
Average enrollment per Sunday School .....	68.5	82.4
Average attendance per Sunday School.....	45.1	54.8
Per cent. of attendance of total enrollment.....	66.2	66.5

The number of persons enrolled in the Sunday Schools of the county as compared with the total population or with the average membership of the churches is small. The data as to the distribution of members according to their rank in the Sunday School as given in tables XVIII and XIX indicates that the proportion of children compared with the adult membership is small.

The data for 15 "village" and 4 "rural" Sunday Schools in Butler County which reported their enrollment by grades are as follows:

TABLE XVIII  
Sunday School Enrollment

Grade	"Town-Country" Total		"Country" Total		
	Enrol- ment	Per Cent.	Enrol- ment	Per Cent.	
Beginners.....	173	14.8	29	11.5	} 49.7
Primary.....	104	9.0	17	6.8	
Junior.....	189	16.2	30	11.9	
Intermediate.....	229	19.7	49	19.5	
Seniors.....	254	21.8	65	25.9	
Adults.....	215	18.5	61	24.4	
Total enrolment.....	1164	100.0	251	100.0	
Average	77.7		62.7		

In the "village" churches a larger proportion of the young people are reached. The per cent. of children in the grades below the senior in the "village" is 59.7 while in the "rural" it is but 49.7. The intermediate enrolment in both cases is about the same, which would indicate that during the critical period of Sunday School life the "rural" church has about the same advantages as the "village." The average total enrolment of the Sunday Schools that reported their enrolment by grades is above the average for all the Sunday Schools in the county.

The corresponding data for Darke County are as follows:

TABLE XIX

Enrolment Thirteen "Town-Country" and Fourteen "Country"  
Sunday Schools, Darke County

Grade	"Town-Country" Total		"Country" Total	
	Enrolment	Per Cent.	Enrolment	Per Cent.
Beginners.....	142	12.2	82	6.0
Primary.....	192	16.5	240	17.4
Junior.....	170	14.6	236	17.1
Intermediate.....	243	20.8	229	16.6
Senior.....	146	12.6	209	15.2
Adult.....	272	23.3	382	27.7
Total Enrolment.....	1165	100.0	1378	100.0
Average Enrolment	89		98	

Conditions in Drake County are similar to those in Butler County.

The graded country schools have a higher average enrolment than do the town-country schools. A larger percentage of the enrolment in Darke County is in lower grades.

In Montgomery County there was an average attendance of 3855 for 48 Sunday Schools. This was an average of 80 students per school. 71 per cent. of these as compared with 64 per cent. or less in other counties are enrolled in the senior or adult classes.

The activities of the church outside of the regular church service and the Sunday Schools are to be found principally in connection with the young people's societies and the societies for women. The following table shows conditions as to organization in a total of 52 churches considered in Butler County and 62 in Darke County.

TABLE XX  
Church Organizations other than Sunday Schools

Organization.	Number	
	Butler	Darke
No. of churches considered.....	52	62
No. young people's organizations.....	26	29
No. women's organizations.....	47	35
No. men's organizations.....	0	1
No. other organizations.....	4	0
No. churches without any organization.....	3	0
No. without any organization for young people.....	32	37
No. without any organization for women.....	14	31
No. without any organization for men.....	52	61

The characteristic feature of this table is the almost entire absence of men's organization and the predominance of organizations for women. The number of women's organizations is almost double the number for young people. Only three churches report no organizations of any kind.

The social activities of these organizations is shown in the following table:

TABLE XXI  
Social Activities of Church Organizations

Type of organization	"Town-country"		"Country"	
	Butler County	Darke County	Butler County	Darke County
Young people's organizations.....	23	15	3	14
Membership.....	517*	345	78	243
Average membership.....	27.2		26	
Total No. socials reported.....	32	17	1	4
Socials for pay.....	13	4	1	1
Not giving socials.....	8		2	
Women's organizations.....	39	24	8	11
Membership.....	930†	394	134	174
Average membership.....	27.3		18	
Socials.....	81	17	17	12
Socials for pay.....	76	17	13	12
Not giving socials.....	13		4	
Men's organizations.....	0	1	10	0
Other organizations.....	3		2	
Membership.....	62‡		45	
No. socials.....	0		4	
No. socials for pay.....	0		4	

\* 19 societies

† 34 societies

‡ 2 societies

It should be noted that in all the different societies the number of socials for pay reported form a large proportion of the total. This is particularly true of the social functions of women's organizations. Of 98 socials reported 93 were for pay in the "town-country" group and of 29 reported for the country group 25 were for pay. The number of socials for pay is not so large in the young people's social life. But one men's organization was reported. The figures indicate that in the smaller communities the social life of the church is subordinated to the task of financing the work of the church.

The distribution of church expenses in the counties where such data were obtained is very similar.

TABLE XXII  
Distribution of Expenses  
Per cent.

For what expended	Butler Co.	Darke Co.	
	(28 churches)	"Town-country" (26 churches)	'Country' (36 churches)
Total. . . . .	100.0	100.0	100.0
Pastor's salary. . . . .	55.6	53.3	54.8
Benevolences . . . . .	17.2	17.8	19.4
Sunday School . . . . .	5.1	11.3	11.9
Other expenses. . . . .	22.1	17.6	13.9

The marked variation in the two counties is the relatively large amount of money spent for the Sunday School in Darke County.

A consideration of the statistics of churches in southwestern Ohio as a whole leads to the conclusion that the church in the open country is slowly but surely losing ground and that in many of the villages the church is following in the same path. As between the two the village church appears to have the advantage in the struggle and the data are sufficiently striking to suggest that the solution of the country church problem is the encouragement of the congregation located in the village and the ultimate abandonment of the church in the open country. This movement toward the vil-

## PROVISION FOR TEAMS AS WELL AS MEN



Horsesheds, Methodist Episcopal Church, Darrrtown, Ohio.

lage as the centre of the religious as well as of the educational and social life of the community will probably continue in most sections.

In the consideration of the problem of readjustment of the church to the life of the community the question has arisen as to whether it should be in the direction of formation of union churches or the abandonment of the organization of certain denominations and the union of all the people in one remaining denominational organization. The data secured indicate that the latter policy will yield the better results. The union church has no affiliations with the larger church life of the nation or of the world and is in danger of losing all incentive to progress.

A few typical instances will illustrate the problem presented.

“One church (Butler County), is made up of Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, and Christians. At first the Baptists were the strongest and took matters in charge and everything went well. Now the Christians are a little the strongest but they (the church)

are a little more equally divided than formerly. There has been no preaching service for two years. The Sunday School is also losing in membership." In this case it would probably be better if the union organization, which today has no direct connection with outside life of any large organization, were abandoned and the district assigned to one of the regular denominations by agreement of the church boards.

Union services carried on by two denominations in the same community have worked successfully in a number of instances. At one centre (Butler County), the United Presbyterian and Methodist Episcopal churches have been holding union services for the past fifteen years. These are held alternately in the two churches and the most cordial feeling has always existed. This cordiality has been attributed in large part to the presence of a pastor of one of the churches who has been a resident of the town for many years and who enjoys the confidence of all the people. In this case affiliation with both larger organizations is maintained.

In another instance two churches (Lutheran and Methodist Episcopal) have conducted a Union Sunday School for about twenty years with good success. Services are held in one church for one Sunday and in the other on the next. The superintendent is elected according to qualifications regardless of church affiliations. The supplies of one church are used for six months and then the supplies of the other are purchased. Some years ago, one of the pastors is said to have attempted to break up this harmonious relation by the organization of a separate Sunday School, but the people refused to abandon their union organization. At one time, when one of the church buildings was partially destroyed, many of the leaders of the two churches wished to have all members of the community use the same church building, but sectarianism on the part of the pastors was too strong to permit this movement toward a community church. At the present time the village has two pastors, neither of whom lives in the community, and neither of whom receives a large enough salary to justify him in devoting his entire time to this charge. Both churches when considered in the light of ten years ago have been losing ground. The conclusion appears to be inevitable that the church life of the community

would be placed on a much stronger basis if one of the churches were abandoned and the divided salaries were united into one for the payment of a minister who could live in the community and become the permanent pastor of the entire countryside.

Another instance of a somewhat similar type is in two neighboring villages, each of which has a Methodist and a Presbyterian church. In one of the villages lives the Methodist minister and in the other the Presbyterian minister, each of whom has two charges, one located in each village. It happens that the particular charge of each minister is the strongest in the village in which he lives. The effort has been made to get the weak church of each denomination to close and join with the stronger church, thus enabling the pastor in each instance to devote all his time to a single organization. In this case the sentiment of the people is still too strong to permit the union of churches into a community organization. In still another instance a Presbyterian, a United Brethren and a General Reformed church are located in a village too small to be incorporated. None of the churches are strong, and all have non-resident pastors. Enough salary is sent out of the community to these men to justify the selection of a good resident pastor, if the three groups would get together.

The first step in the movement toward the community church is the education of the people to the realization that religious conditions in many of our communities are the result of ideals that existed in a period when people still placed great emphasis upon dogmatic statements of religious belief. Only the firm belief that Methodism or Presbyterianism or Baptistism was the true religion could have justified the duplication of plants in communities not large enough to support one as it should have been supported. It is only too true that even yet some of the leaders of our churches actually believe and teach that the brand of religion represented by their particular organization is the only one that will insure a safe entrance into the heavenly kingdom. Happily, however, the number of ministers who have larger views is increasing, and this increase promises a more prosperous and more efficient future for the church.



The leaders of some of our churches must also recognize that the church exists for the people and not the people for the church. The time has passed when the mass of the people believe that the church holds over them such a power of life and death that unless they conform to its demands they will be eternally damned. Like all other institutions it must fill a real need in the community life. It is the place of the church to reach the people and to take the lead in the moral and social uplift of the community.

Another problem that faces the country church has been brought about by the development of trolley lines and the use of automobiles. In many cases the trolley line and the automobile take to the neighboring city the families most capable financially and leave to the country church those who are not so able to support a strong ministry. This tends toward the progressive destruction of the life of the country church. In many cases, the abandonment of the country church from this cause does not bring with it a corresponding increase in the membership of the city church, because many families, willing to go to church in the country, do not as yet feel at home in the city church and consequently drop out of the church and neither the parents nor their children have the benefit of church life.

The problem of abandoned churches is one that has aroused much interest in recent years. So far as the investigation was able to determine Butler County has at least 27 abandoned churches within its limits. These churches are located as follows:

TABLE XXIII

## Abandoned Churches, Butler County

Township	Number	Denominations represented
Total .....	27	
Fairfield .....	3	M. E., U. B., Univ.
Liberty .....	3	M. E., U. B., Baptist
Madison .....	6	M. E., U. B., Bapt., Prim. Bapt., Ger. Ref.
Milford .....	1	M. E.
Lemon .....	1	Baptist
Oxford .....	5	M. E., Baptist
Reily .....	2	Baptist, Univ.
St. Clair .....	2	Mennonite, Luth., Reformed
Wayne .....	4	M. E., U. B., Ref., Luth.

The other counties report a somewhat smaller number of abandoned organizations.

Recent discussions in the periodicals in regard to abandoned churches have had a tendency to lead the general reader to look upon church abandonment in a more serious light than it really deserves. The fact that at least 27 churches in Butler County have been abandoned might be considered of itself a serious matter, but when taken in connection with other conditions it is found to be in most cases an evidence of progress rather than of retrogression in social and religious life. A brief statement as to the cause of abandonment of several of these churches will indicate the real significance of the movement.

In Oxford township there once existed 4 different Methodist churches that no longer have any place in the religious life of the community. One of these was abandoned, it is said, about 55 years ago, another about 45 years ago, still another about 35 years ago, and the last about 20 years ago. In each case the abandonment of the church was coincident with the shifting of population and with the growth of means of transportation enabling the members to affiliate with larger organizations. The other church in the township which has been abandoned was a primitive Baptist organization within the limits of Oxford. The passing away of the old members and the failure of the new ones to take their places finally forced the disbanding of the church. The same story is told of several other organizations that at one time met a need in the community but owing to changed conditions lost their influence. Some of the German congregations have been displaced by a younger generation of English speaking people and the old church has been abandoned. In other cases the membership find it more convenient to attend another church of the same denomination and the older organization is disbanded. In some cases the shifting of population bringing in people of another religious faith has gradually caused the old church to lose its hold. In many instances the abandonment of churches has not meant a decline of religious spirit but merely a shifting of influence from one denomination to another. The modern decline in church influence is related to causes much more fundamental

and serious than the causes that are accountable for the abandoned churches.

In a few instances the churches were abandoned because of internal dissensions, but the evidence is that in the majority of cases the abandonment was made in the interest of a larger religious life elsewhere.

In times past the church stood preëminently as the representative of the moral and religious forces of the community, but in modern times other agencies have come to the front and much of this increase in general culture is to be attributed directly to the public schools and the leavening influence of means of communication which have brought the country districts into touch with the culture of the cities. One illustration will indicate the demand for social life in the country and the opportunity for the church to do a positive social service. An abandoned Methodist Episcopal church in Butler County has been used for a dance hall during the summer seasons. Here every two weeks the young people, and the older ones too, of the community have come together. The gathering has been strictly rural and has been conducted along lines that have merited the approbation of the best people in the community. Men who would hesitate to go to their neighbor's house for a visit went to the dance hall because it was a semi-public place where they could meet others on a basis of equality.

The suggestion from this incident is that the country people are demanding more of the social in their lives; that this social demand will find expression in some way or other or the people will move to the city; that the church, which has to the present time contented itself with the prayer meeting and the church service as the principal means of grace, has before it a golden opportunity to enter into the life of the community, and to lead the community to look upon it as the agency for increasing its happiness in every way that is conducive to moral, social and religious uplift. The church has the opportunity to make itself the social centre of the community. If it does not embrace this opportunity now, the school will in time take the field and the church will have lost one of its greatest opportunities for usefulness.

## A COMMUNITY CENTER



Abandoned Methodist Episcopal Church, Butler Co. Ohio. Used as a dance hall.

The evidence indicates that so far as the churches are concerned it would be advisable for an interdenominational committee to be formed in the county or district to go over the church situation and to recommend to the respective church conferences, a policy of reorganization and reconstruction. These policies should be agreeable to the denominations concerned and a campaign of education should be carried on among the people to show them the necessity of taking hold of the problem in a constructive way in order to save the church as a useful institution in country life. The church, the school, and the farmers' organizations are all essential to the best life of the community, and conditions should be made most favorable for the thrifty growth of each of these institutions.

## CHAPTER IV

### The Rural School

The rural population generally has had the opportunity to secure the rudiments of an education. Table 24 gives the total illiteracy of the combined rural and urban populations of each of the four counties—Butler, Preble, Darke, and Montgomery, for the year 1910. The data as to rural illiteracy are not published separately by the United States Census.

TABLE XXIV  
Illiteracy, Persons 10 years old and over, 1910

County	Total Illiterate	Native White	Foreign Born White	Negro
Butler .....	1044	527	347	167
Darke.....	3465	335	42	30
Montgomery.....	988	683	283	22
Preble .....	407	1155	1646	655

Although in comparison with the total population of the different counties these figures for illiteracy seem unimportant, yet when one considers the relatively very large proportion of the illiterate who are children of parents born and raised in America, the conclusion must be that there are serious defects in our educational system. In each case except that of Preble County the illiterate of the foreign born population and of the colored race forms a large part of the total.

Intensive study of school conditions was made in Butler county only, and in discussing educational conditions it is thought best to present the data collected for this county as typical of the entire section. Other agencies have frequently described the consolidated schools which are gradually being introduced. The discussion in this report will be devoted principally to the sub-district schools and to the relation of secondary education in the country to the district school system.

A description of the school situation in Butler county will require in part a discussion of conditions that are passing away. Many phases of material equipment are representative of a time when but little attention was paid to the physical environment of the child and when the financial ability of the districts was not sufficient to enable the patrons of the school to furnish the equipment demanded by modern life. A statement of the facts as to present conditions is necessary as a basis for determining whether the changes to be made in the next few years shall be in the direction of following out present school policies or whether the several townships shall adopt some system of centralization or consolidation of schools.

According to the reports of the State Commission of Schools for the year ending 1911 there were 97 elementary and 1 high school township districts in the county and 28 elementary and 6 high school separate districts. The present investigation covered 93 districts including 3 special districts and 1 high school. The total number of schools reporting on each of the several points included in the investigation is noted.

Practically all the buildings are of brick. Of 90 schools reporting 86 were of brick and 4 were of wood. Most of the buildings are still in good condition. 74 of 88 buildings reported had but 1 room, 8 had 2 rooms, 4 had 3 and 2 had 4 or more. 85 of the 93 buildings were reported as having light from both sides of the building. Of 87 schools 69 reported heating with unjacketed stoves, 5 with jacketed stoves and 13 with furnace. Of the 13 reporting furnaces 7 were 2 room structures and 5 were 1 room. 1 school with furnace did not report number of rooms. 83 schools reported non-adjustable single seats and 3 reported adjustable seating. Of 85 schools 49 reported cloak rooms and 36 reported none.

The evidence from these figures is that the little red school house with light from all sides, with old-fashioned seats not adapted to the student, with stove that is too hot for those near it and too cold for those at a distance from it, is still the prevailing type of building. The one modern feature that appears to have been

introduced into the newer buildings is the cloak room. Over half of the buildings have this extra equipment.

### UTILITY VERSUS BEAUTY



Coal shed mars an otherwise attractive school yard.

The outside equipment presents a remarkable uniformity. 81 of the schools report wells. Practically all the country schools have outside toilets. These in nearly all cases are separate for the sexes and in 74 out of 80 cases they are reported as decently placed. The difficulty with the outside toilet in the country school is that it is hard to keep in a sanitary condition. In a number of instances the toilets were not clean and the walls were covered with obscene writing and drawing. In at least one case the old type double building with one apartment for the boys and an other for the girls still exists. This is a survival of an earlier period and like all the other relics of a past age, would do credit to the community if it were removed. In another instance, either the entrance to the school building is from

ONE OF THE BEST COUNTRY SCHOOLS IN  
SOUTHWESTERN OHIO

Consolidated school, Jackson Township, Preble County, Ohio.

the back yard or the outbuildings are in the front yard. In either case, the crudity of builders at an earlier period and their willingness to sacrifice the beautiful to the convenient is exemplified. The same tendency to sacrifice the aesthetic to the useful is to be found in the custom of placing the coal shed in the front yard of the school grounds. In many cases, otherwise attractive school grounds have their beauty permanently marred by the coal shed standing in the foreground.



The data as to the size of the school grounds are as follows:

TABLE XXV  
Size of School Grounds

Number of schools having	Number	Per Cent
Total .....	88	100.0
Less than 1 acre.....	12	13.6
1 or under 2 acres.....	69	78.4
2 or under 3.....	7	8.0
3 or more.....	0	0.0
Reported as having 1 acre.....	64 (included in 69 above)	

59 out of 80 were reported as fenced; 46 out of 61 as having good walks; 84 as having trees; only 6 were reported as having flower beds.

In general the grounds are very satisfactory as to topography and natural possibilities for beautification. The rolling ground in Butler County lends itself especially to the artist's task. The figures as to the size of the grounds indicate that the average country school was planned under the influence of radically different ideals than those which prevail in rural education at the present time. 76 out of 88 or over 86 per cent. are reported as having one acre or less of ground for the school building. The progressive country school of the future which hopes to utilize the school as a practice ground for teaching the principles of agriculture and for experimental work under the direction of the instructor must provide more ground for laboratory purposes. The country people must soon decide whether it will be cheaper to buy from ten to forty acres of ground for each district school or whether it will be better to equip a central plant efficiently and abandon the equipment which found its origin in earlier ideals of education.

The equipment inside the school buildings does not compare with similar rooms in the villages or cities. In many cases the rooms are in poor repair and there is but little attempt to keep them in attractive condition. 57 out of 71 of the schools report pictures of some kind on the walls. These are generally histori-

cal, biographical or representations of natural scenery. 14 schools reported no decorations of any kind on the walls. 72 out of 81 report globes, 71 out of 80 report maps, 76 out of 81 report charts, 9 out of 77 report an organ, and 2 out of 70 report a piano.

The library equipment of 72 schools reporting is as follows:

TABLE XXVI

## Library Equipment

Number of Books	Number	Per Cent.
Total Schools.....	72	100.0
None reported.....	18	63.9
Under 50.....	28	
50 or under 100.....	12	16.7
100 or under 150.....	9	12.5
150 or under 200.....	2	2.6
200 or over.....	3	4.3

This table shows that the library equipment of the majority of country schools is not at all adequate to the demands of a modern system of education. While it is impossible to give an accurate statement of the value of the libraries, the estimates of the teachers placed the great majority of them under \$25.00 and many of them under \$10.00. The class of books embrace encyclopedias, history, biography, fiction, and an occasional text on agriculture. A number of the libraries contain books intended specifically as reading supplementary to the studies.

There is but little difference in the number of men and women employed in the township districts of the county. In 1911 there were 52 males and 63 females employed in the elementary township schools. Data were not secured as to the grades of certificates carried by all the teachers, but the educational standard is indicated by the proportion of certificates of the different grades granted during 1911 by the county board of examiners.

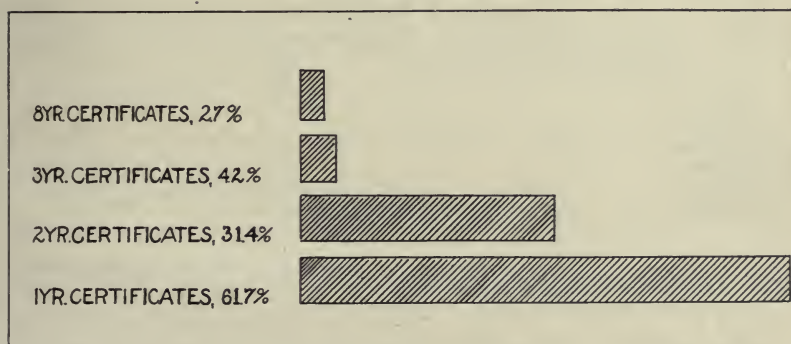
TABLE XXVII

Educational Preparation of Teachers, Butler County, 1910-1911.

Number of Certificates Granted	Males	Females	Total	Per Cent.
Total . . . . .	70	118	188	10.00
For 8 years . . . . .	2	3	5	2.7
" 5 years . . . . .	0	0	0	0.0
" 3 years . . . . .	4	4	8	4.2
" 2 years . . . . .	24	35	59	31.4
" 1 year . . . . .	40	76	116	61.7

61.7 per cent. of the total number of certificates were granted for 1 year and 93.1 per cent. for not to exceed two years. The relatively larger proportion of lower grade certificates points to the fact that the teaching force is made up largely of two groups, i. e., those who are in the teaching profession only as a temporary occupation and those who have entered the profession without adequate preparation for the work.

CERTIFICATES GRANTED TO TEACHERS BUTLER Co.  
1911



Nearly two-thirds for one year only.

That the educational preparation of the teachers is not so low as is indicated by the record of examinations is shown by the fact that out of 71 teachers reporting 48 had a high school, normal or college diploma. In a number of cases the teachers were

reported as having been taking courses in summer schools. Probably the rapid change in the personnel of the teaching force has more to do with the low record made on examinations than deficiency in scholastic preparation. High school courses, however, do not fit prospective teachers to pass examinations with high marks.

The low standard of educational qualifications of the teachers will be eliminated in large part by the ultimate consolidation of school districts and the centralization of the financial energy of the community upon a smaller number of teachers working in a more advantageous environment.

Another factor of importance in the relation of the teacher to the schools is the number of changes from school to school. Of 35 schools for which data were obtained the record of changes for a five year period was as follows: (22 cases were for five years including the engagements for the year 1912-13, 13 cases for the five years ending June 1912.)

TABLE XXVIII  
Changes in Teaching Force

Schools having in 5 years	Number	Per Cent.
1 teacher.....	2	5.7
2 teachers.....	11	31.4
3 teachers.....	10	28.6
4 teachers.....	9	25.7
5 teachers.....	2	5.7
6 teachers.....	1	2.9
		<u>100.0</u>

Over one-third of the schools have had four or more teachers in the five year period. Sixty per cent. have had two or three teachers in the period; while in only 5.7 per cent. of the cases did the teachers remain for the full period.

One of the most serious difficulties to be met by a teacher in the district school is the number of recitations necessary owing to the number of grades to be controlled by one teacher. For sixty-seven schools reporting the average number of recitations per day is twenty-eight. The recitation period rarely exceeds fifteen

minutes and in many cases is not so long as that. Country teachers soon learn to run three or four classes at the same time in order to get through with the day's work.

The following table will show the distribution of schools according to the number of recitation periods per day:

TABLE XXIX  
Recitation Periods per Day

Number of recitations	No. of schools reporting	Per Cent.
Total .....	67	100.0
Under 20.....	4	6.0
20 or under 25.....	13	19.4
25 or under 30.....	25	37.3
30 or under 35.....	15	22.4
35 or under 40.....	6	8.9
40 or more.....	4	6.0

The larger proportion of the schools have a number of recitations of twenty-five or under thirty per day. 37.3 per cent. have thirty or more recitations per day. Four schools report over forty recitations per day. The growing curriculum of the country school has had its complement in the decreasing length of the recitation period and the increasing number of recitations. This tendency can only end in the breakdown of the efficiency of the school. This is particularly true in cases when it is taught by a graduate from a village school where the number of recitation periods per day is much more limited.

Decrease in population in the rural districts has seriously affected school attendance. In Butler County during the year 1911-12 there were at least 17 schools which had an average attendance of 10 or less. Three schools had an average attendance of five or less yet these teachers received the regular salary of \$55 to \$60 per month and required the usual expenditures for repairs to building, fuel, etc. Only an unorganized system of rural education such as exists in the State of Ohio would permit such conditions to continue.

As compared with other parts of the state the salaries of country teachers in Butler County are above the average. In the last few years there has been a gradual rise in salaries. Ten years

ago 38 out of a total of 55 teachers reported received from \$45 to \$50 per month, while at the present time 66 out of 92 reporting receive \$55 to \$60 per month. The situation is such, however, that a permanent and most efficient teaching force cannot be secured without such an increase in salary as most district communities would not feel justified in paying.

### ORGANIZED RECREATION MONTGOMERY COUNTY Y. M. C. A.



More than 300 boys and girls participated in play demonstration for country school teachers in Montgomery County under auspices of Y. M. C. A. 27 new games taught.

No data were secured as to the number of teachers who reside within the school district while the school is in session. It is a matter of common knowledge, however, that in the vast majority of cases the only point of contact the teacher has with the district is during school hours. The teacher does practically nothing in assuming the leadership of the community in the larger work of

social betterment. The courses of study in the school have but little direct relation to the life of the community and as a result the parents have but little interest in what is taught in the schools.

Owing to recent legislation in the state providing for the teaching of agriculture in the public schools the rural schools are now attempting to teach the subject from two to five periods per week. In a few cases, particularly in Reily Township, Butler County, effort has been made to introduce vegetable and flower gardening during the spring months. Very little has been accomplished throughout the county generally in this direction. There is practically no formal instruction in music, drawing, manual training, or domestic science in any of the country schools and the teaching of hygiene in many cases consists of formal discussion of the framework of the body with a minimum of instruction as to personal hygiene, foods, household sanitation, etc. Evidently the time has come for a radical revision of the curriculum of the country school and a change of emphasis upon the relative importance of the material taught.

Schools in the township districts of the county are in session on an average of 35 weeks in the year.

Pupils still generally walk to and from school although there is now a tendency on the part of some of the parents to drive to school with the little ones in extremely bad weather. This tendency has become more pronounced since the older children have been transferred to the high schools.

The play activities of the children and the relation of the teacher to them are of importance because of the emphasis now being placed upon play as an educational agency. As yet in the country schools little provision is made of apparatus for play such as is to be found in the schools of the villages or larger cities. In 45 out of 61 cases reporting the teacher played with the children. In a number of these the teacher played very little. The standard games played are "ball," "blackman," and "dare-base." Thirty-one schools reported "ball" as one of their games, twenty-four "blackman," and fourteen "dare-base." In numbers varying from one to four each the following games are reported and are noted here to show the variety of games that find an

occasional place in the country community. "Cricket," "Hide and Seek," "Flinch," "Drop the Handkerchief," "Blindman," "Stay in School," "Football," "Skating," "Fox and Geese," "Ten Stop," "Crack the Whip," "Marble," "Miller Boy," "Catcher," "Rabbit," "Wolf," "Wood-tag," "Deer," "Blindfold," "Shinney," "Sixty," "Anthony Over." No one school reported all of these but all are to be found in one school or another in Butler County and doubtless if an exhaustive study of the games were to be made many more would be discovered. The fact that the greater number of pupils adhere to a few standard games indicates that in general there is but little incentive toward novelty in play in the country community. Children are not interested in learning the details of new games but in mastering the art of playing the old ones well. Owing to changes in enrollment and ages of school children some of the games adapted to older children are disappearing.

One phase of the play activities of the county district that is often overlooked should be noted. This is the psychical effect of organized play such as is usually found in the country. This topic is of the greater importance at the present time because of a manifest tendency in some of our smaller communities to imitate the inventions intended to solve the problem of play in the crowded sections of the larger cities. There, in some small park, are to be found poles with ropes attached, smooth boards for sliding, swings, etc. This equipment is probably the best provision for play in crowded parks. The unfortunate tendency developing is to allow the devices used in a city's extremity to displace the better adapted play activities of the village and country district. The activities of the playground should teach groups of children how to co-operate in an organized form for the attainment of a common end. They should give opportunity for the development of initiative and leadership; for the overcoming of personal weakness in social intercourse; for the development of will to give and take. Ball, blackman, dare base offer this opportunity and are incomparably better for this purpose than sliding down a board or swinging from a rope. The country and village schools need more play space rather than more equipment. The



THE BOYS' CROP, MONTGOMERY  
COUNTY Y. M. C. A. CORN  
CONTEST



The Y. M. C. A. prepares the way for agencies  
not yet organized for progressive activity  
in the rural community.

country school may be weak in its curriculum but it is strong in the naturalness and freedom of its play activities in the reconstruction of country school life these should be preserved. Changes in school enrolment have injured or broken down some of the standard games. Provision should be made for other games meeting the same ends but suited to smaller groups.

CORN CONTEST EXHIBIT RURAL SCHOOLS,  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY



The social activities of the country school at the present time are very limited. Of 73 schools reporting 48 reported no social activities during the year, 13 reported 1, 9 reported 2, 2 reported 3, and 1 reported 4 entertainments.

TABLE XXX

School Entertainments Reported for 1911-12, 73 Schools, Butler County.

Total Number Reporting.....	As to	Entertainments	73
“ “ .....	0	“	48
“ “ .....	1	“	13
“ “ .....	2	“	9
“ “ .....	3	“	2
“ “ .....	4	“	1

At one time the school house was the centre for many of the social activities of the community. Now, more than ever, it is limited to the formal task of imparting book knowledge to the young people of the community and the oldtime point of contact between teacher and district has disappeared. Those schools that report one or two entertainments in the year generally have a Christmas entertainment and another entertainment at the close of the year. These entertainments are almost uniformly well attended by the country people and indicate an interest in this phase of school life.

In 60 cases the school house was definitely reported as having been used for no other purpose than that of having the school sessions in it. In one case the Board of Education held a monthly meeting in the room and in another it was used as a Sunday School room.

In Reily Township under the leadership of the township superintendent there has been an effort to have a monthly gathering of all the schools of the township at the township high school. Each school is expected to furnish a part of the monthly program. These gatherings have met with considerable success in bringing about a community spirit among the people of the township and affording an opportunity not only of providing entertainment for the people but also for the discussion of school problems such as courses of study, consolidation, the teaching of agriculture, and the relation of the school to the farm.

The relation of high schools to the district schools of the county is shown by the following tables:

TABLE XXXI

Record of Attendance in High Schools of Butler County from Township and Special Districts in the County, 1911-12

Hamilton.....	76	} 164
Middletown.....	47	
Oxford (City).....	22	
Oxford (McGuffey).....	19	
Monroe.....	24	
Sevenmile.....	4	
Somerville.....	5	
Reily, Township High School.....	14*	
Millville.....	0	
Okeana, Morgan Twp. H. S.....	14	
New London.....	0	
Venice.....	0	
Trenton.....	10	
Wayne Township H. S.....	14	
Darrtown, Milford Twp. H. S.....	0	
College Corner.....	3	
	<u>252</u>	

\*Reily Dist. excluded.

188, or 74.6 per cent. of all the pupils in high school from the township and special districts not maintaining high schools of their own are to be found in the high schools of Hamilton, Middletown, Oxford, and Monroe. 91.2 per cent. of all the students are in these high schools and the three township high schools of Reiley, Morgan, and Wayne Townships. 91.2 per cent. of the country high school children are in 50 per cent. of the schools.

The very large proportion of all students enrolled in the schools of the three cities mentioned indicates that the young people from the country districts prefer the better equipped schools and it also indicates that the existence of good schools is in itself a factor in increasing school attendance. The attendance at the different township high schools indicates that these are doing a good service for their respective districts.

The distribution of the students according to townships is shown in the following table:

TABLE XXXII

Number of Students from the Different Township High Schools in Butler County, 1911-1912.

Township	College Corner	Hamilton	Middletown	Morgan Tw'p H. S.	Milford Tw'p H. S.	Monroe	New London	Oxford (City)	Oxford (McGuffey)	Riley Tw'p H. S.	Seven Mile	Somerville	Trenton	Venice	Wayne Tw'p H. S.	Totals
Total.....	3	83	47	14	0	16	1	26	28	14	4	5	10	10	14	275
Fairfield....		27														27
Hanover....		17														17
Lemon.....			30			4										34
Liberty....		4				10										14
Madison....			17										9			26
Milford....		3						5	2			4				14
Morgan....				14												14
Oxford.....	3							17	13							33
Reily.....									5	14						19
Ross.....		3														3
St. Clair....		17														17
Union*.....																0
Wayne.....		5									4		1		14	24
Outside county....		7				2	1		5			1		10		26
From other states....								4	3							7

\*Union Township reports 11 students attending Lockland, Hamilton County, High School. Union Township has among the best equipped district schools in the county. A comparison of total students in high schools from the township with other townships indicates the need of provision of high school facilities there.

The evidence is that proximity to a good high school has a very definite and a very important relation to high school attendance. Oxford Township has two high schools located within its limits.

One characteristic of the present high school training in relation to the country districts is that it becomes a means of transition for young people from country to urban life. The testimony

of high school principals is that rarely does the high school girl expect to become a farmer's wife or the high school boy expect to return to the country. On the other hand there are a number of boys in the villages and cities who are looking forward to farm life. This indicates that our high schools should have a wide enough vocational basis to facilitate the movement of students in either direction. This type of school will come nearer serving the people than will the high school for farmers and the high school for the townsman. Such a scheme in the educational system would tend to develop a farming class and a town class. Such a training should be provided as will permit the young people the fullest freedom in their choice of means of earning a livelihood so that class distinctions will not be encouraged.

In the conclusion of the study of the schools in Butler County reference to particularly bad and good conditions will make more real the changes going on. The bad conditions are mentioned only to emphasize the fact that in an extremely individualistic educational system such as exists in the state of Ohio evils may develop and persist that under the direction of a competent township or county superintendent would not be permitted.

While a number of the individual teachers in the several townships have been making progress in their own schools, three of the townships, i. e., Reily, Morgan, and Union, deserve special mention because of the organized efforts they are putting forth for the improvement of the rural schools. Union Township is mentioned especially for its advance in the material improvement of the rural schools of district type. The newer school buildings are equipped with furnaces and are erected according to the latest models of school architecture. It is possible that the expenditure of funds on expensive single buildings may ultimately act as a hindrance to real progress in the direction of consolidation of the schools of the township.

Morgan Township has a township superintendent, who is also principal of the township high school. He endeavors to correlate the work of the teachers of the entire township. Once a month the teachers gather at the high school to discuss questions related to their work. The township has a large library at the

high school and the books from this library are lent to the local schools for a certain length of time and then passed on to some other school. The books are selected by the teachers, partly in accordance with the suggestions of the State Commissioner of Education.

Reily Township has succeeded under township superintendency in providing a uniform course of study, in raising the standards of efficiency among teachers, in arousing interest in township school exhibits, contests, and literary entertainments, and in getting results in the teaching of agriculture. The results of the supervisory system in these townships indicate that it is an improvement over the unregulated district system. As an intermediate stage between the district school and the centralized school or as a permanent institution where centralization is impracticable, supervision is undoubtedly desirable.

The results of this survey of the conditions in the country schools of Butler County suggest the need of a definite constructive program. Among the points to be considered are:

1. The appointment of either a county superintendent of schools or of district supervisors who can co-ordinate educational interests.
2. Reorganization of schools which will result in:
  - a. Curriculum adapted to country
  - b. Better physical equipment
  - c. Better library facilities
  - d. More permanent teaching force
  - e. Better prepared teaching force
3. Formation of educational districts that will conform to convenience of the people rather than to traditional political dividing lines.
4. Provision of adequate and convenient secondary education for every district pupil in the county.
5. Ultimate centralization of schools.

This work cannot be done unless some unifying and co-ordinating agency is created.

The country school teacher has a very responsible part in the program of rural social reorganization. The progress of the country will depend very much upon the efficiency with which that work is done.

## CHAPTER VI

### Tenantry in Southwestern Ohio

The problem of increase in tenantry is one of vital importance to the southwestern part of the state. According to the census returns of 1910 the ten counties in the state which had over 40 per cent. of their farms operated by tenants were in this section.

Table 33 shows the changes that have taken place in the amount of tenantry in these counties since 1900:

TABLE XXXIII

Per cent. farms operated by tenants in Counties

County	1910	1900	Increase or Decrease
Butler .....	41.0	42.5	-1.5
Darke .....	46.8	39.5	+7.3
Madison .....	46.8	47.8	-1.0
Miami .....	51.7	46.8	+4.9
Montgomery .....	42.3	42.4	-0.1
Pickaway .....	43.9	43.4	+0.5
Preble .....	44.8	37.1	+7.7
Warren .....	43.1	41.0	+2.1
Champaign .....	40.6	37.7	+2.9
Fayette .....	40.2	38.6	+1.6

The evidence is that tenantry is on the increase in the more productive areas of diversified agriculture and that in the sections where truck gardening or specialized farming is in vogue the change from ownership operation to tenant operation is not so marked.

In the study of the social effects of this transition from ownership to tenantry, a house to house investigation was made in Oxford Township, Butler County, and in Jackson and Twin Townships, Preble County.



Table 34 shows the comparative age of owners and tenants in the three townships studied:

TABLE XXXIV  
Comparative Ages—Owners and Tenants

Township	Number Owners considered	Average Age	Number Tenants considered	Average Age
Total.....	288	54.3	219	38.9
Oxford, Butler County.....	83	61.4	43	39.0
Jackson, Preble County....	124	51.6	116	37.7
Twin, Preble County.....	81	51.2	60	41.0

The average age of the owners is over 15 years greater than that of the tenants. The fact that the average age of the tenants is near 40 also indicates that the coming year will find fewer of these men passing into the owner class and that, contrary to the conclusions of some of the writers on these topics, tenantry is becoming a permanent phase of American agriculture. Moreover the high average age of the owners is evidence that comparatively few young men are becoming owners. Oxford Township, Butler County, is especially noticeable in its average age of 61.4 years for farmers operating their own farms.

The result of the United States Census for Butler County for 1910 shows the tendency as to age of owners and tenants.

TABLE XXXV  
Farmers Classified according to Tenure and Age Groups, Butler County

Years	Number			Per Cent.		
	Total	Owners	Tenants	Total	Owners	Tenants
All ages.....	2288	1220	1068	100.0	100.0	100.0
24 and under..	61	11	50	2.7	.9	4.7
25 to 34.....	402	85	317	17.6	7.0	29.7
35 to 44.....	576	251	325	25.1	20.6	30.4
45 to 54.....	603	363	240	26.3	29.8	22.5
55 to 64.....	383	282	101	16.8	23.1	9.5
65 and over...	256	223	33	11.2	18.2	3.0
Unknown.....	7	5	2	0.3	0.4	0.2

This table does not include 272 part owners nor 46 managers. It should be noted that 71.1 per cent. of the owners are forty-five years of age or older, while but 35 per cent. of the tenants belong to this group.

Tables 36 and 37 show the relative permanency of occupancy of farms, by owners and tenants.

TABLE XXXVI

## Term of Occupancy—Present Farm

Township	Number Owners Considered	Average Number Years	Tenants Number Considered	Average Number Years
Total .....	286	14.89	210	4.49
Oxford.....	80	12.4	39	3.1
Twin.....	127	14.9	116	5.1
Jackson.....	79	17.4	55	4.4

TABLE XXXVII

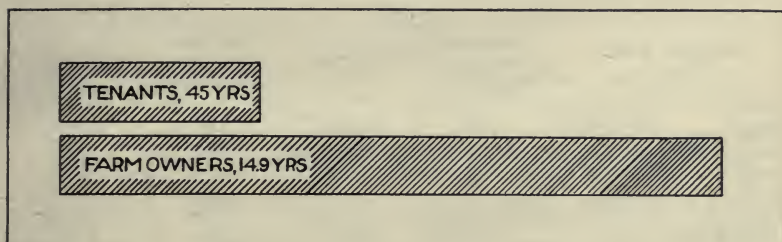
## Number Having Occupied Farms Specified Number of Years

Number Years	Owners		Tenants	
	Number Considered	Per Cent.	Number Considered	Per Cent.
Total.....	273	100.0	206	100.0
1st.....	25	9.1	69	33.5
2nd.....	18	6.6	31	15.1
3-5.....	54	19.8	58	28.2
6-10.....	43	15.8	25	12.1
11 or more.....	133	48.7	23	11.1

The average number of years the farms have been occupied by owners as shown in table 36 is 14.89. It should be noted in table 37 that 33.5 per cent. of the tenants were on the farms occupied for the first year, and that nearly half were on their farms for not more than the second year. 51 per cent. had been on the farm for 3 or more years.

The data as to term of occupancy of farm operators in Butler County reported by the United States Census Bureau give a somewhat higher average term.

## WHAT EFFECT WILL THE TRANSIENT FARMER HAVE ON THE FARM?



Relative time of occupation of farms, Owners and tenants.

TABLE XXXVIII

Term of Occupancy of Farm Operators, Butler County, 1910

Tenure	No. Reporting	Average No. Years
Total .....	2487	9.0
Owners free .....	780	15.5
Owners mortgaged .....	354	7.8
Part owners .....	262	10.1
Cash tenant .....	194	4.8
Unknown tenant .....	9	6.7
Share tenant .....	768	4.5
Share cash tenant .....	77	5.2
Managers .....	43	3.1

The shifting from farm to farm by tenants shown in table 37 does not necessarily mean a shifting from community to community. Table 39 shows that while there is greater shifting from community to community among tenants the majority of them remain in the same community.

TABLE XXXIX

Number of Years Lived in Present Community

Township	Number Owners Considered	Average Number Years	Number Tenants Considered	Average Number Years
Total .....	253	33.7	190	20.58
Oxford .....	69	31.8	36	23.3
Twin .....	109	35.0	98	23.3
Jackson .....	75	35.0	50	14.1

TABLE XL  
Number Having Lived in Community Specified Number of Years

Number Years	Owners		Tenants	
	Number Owners Considered	Per Cent.	Number Tenants Considered	Per Cent.
Total.....	255	100.0	183	100.0
1st.....	9	3.5	20	10.9
2nd.....	4	1.5	12	6.5
3-5.....	18	7.1	23	12.6
6-10.....	18	7.1	19	10.4
11 or more.....	206	80.0	109	59.6

The average number of years in the community for owners is 33.7 and for tenants is 20.58. 80.8 per cent. of the owners and 59.6 per cent. of the tenants have been in the communities in which they now live for eleven or more years. The problem of socialization then is not one of assimilating new individuals or groups but of properly utilizing the social interests already at hand.

Table 41 gives the data as to comparative size of farms operated by owners and tenants.

TABLE XLI  
Size of Farms Operated by Owners and Tenants

Township	Owners		Tenants	
	Number Considered	Average Size Farms (Acres)	Number Considered	Average Size Farms (Acres)
Total.....	286	87.4	212	101.4
Oxford.....	93	78.4	41	99.0
Twin.....	108	82.5	115	92.9
Jackson.....	85	103.7	56	121.0

It should be noted that the average size of the tenant farm is 101.4 acres while that of the farms operated by the owners is 87.4 acres. Jackson township in Preble County has an unusually large number of farms above the average in size.

The data for all owners and tenants of Butler County as reported by the United States Census Bureau show that the

tendencies in the three townships mentioned above are general throughout the section.

TABLE XLII

Farms Classified by Tenure of Farmer and by Size of Farm, Butler County.

Size of Farm Acres	Number			Per Cent.		
	Total	Owners	Tenants	Total	Owners	Tenants
Total farms..	2288	1220	1068	100.0	100.0	100.0
19 and under.	291	212	79	12.8	17.4	7.4
20 to 49.....	275	188	87	12.0	15.5	8.2
50 to 99.....	572	359	213	25.0	29.4	20.0
100 to 174....	832	358	474	36.4	29.4	44.4
175 to 499...	316	101	215	13.8	8.3	20.0
500 to 999...	2	2	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1000 acres and over.....	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0

This table does not include 272 part owners or 46 managers in the county. It should be noted that 62.3 of the owners' farms are under 100 acres in size while 64.4 of the tenants' farms are over 100 acres in size. The great proportion of both owners' and tenants' farms are between 50 and 174 acres.

That the church still remains the prime factor in the social life of the community is indicated by table 43.

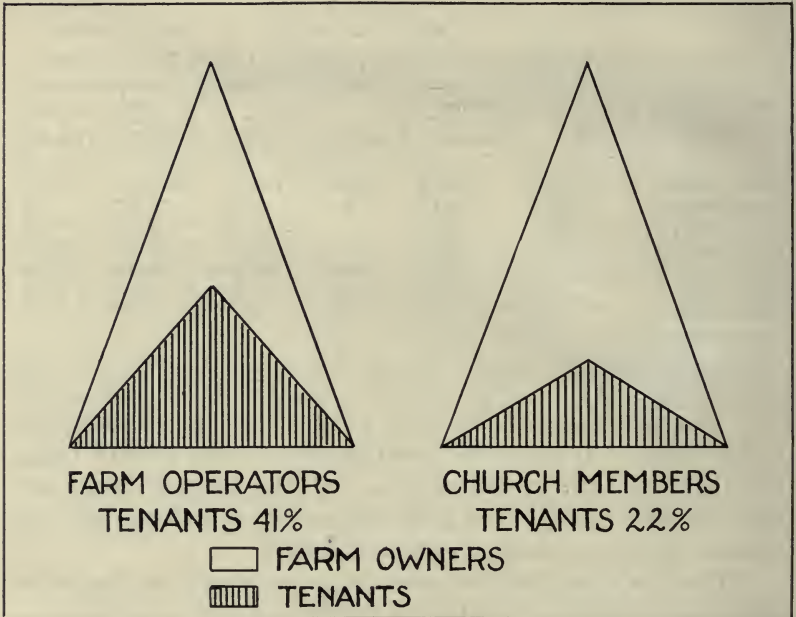
TABLE XLIII

Membership in Church and Lodge Compared

Types of Membership	Owners		Tenants		Total	
	No.	Per cent.	No.	Per cent.	No.	Per cent.
Total .....	193	100.0	136	100.0	329	100.0
Belonging both to church and to lodge or club....	52	26.9	30	22.1	82	24.9
Belonging to lodge or club but not to church.....	15	7.8	21	15.4	36	10.9
Belonging to church but not to lodge or club....	126	65.3	85	62.5	211	64.2

This table shows that a comparatively small number of either tenants or owners who belong to organizations of any kind belong to lodge or club alone. Less than 25 per cent. belong both to

## SHALL THE CHURCH BECOME AN OWNERS' INSTITUTION?



church and lodge or club, while a total of 64.2 per cent. belong to church but do not belong to lodge or club. These percentages apply only to those who are reported as having affiliations with organizations of some kind or other and do not apply to the total number of persons concerning whom data were obtained. The figures show that a large proportion of owners belong to both lodge and church and that the large proportion of those belonging to lodge but not to church is to be found among the tenants. The percentage of those of both groups belonging to church but not to lodge is about the same.

Tables 44 and 45 give the comparative data as to the periodical literature taken by owners and tenants.

TABLE XLIV  
Number of Periodicals Reported, Owners' and Tenants' Families

Number taking	Owners		Tenants	
	Number	Per cent.	Number	Per cent.
Total .....	271	100.0	193	100.0
1 paper only.....	43	15.9	50	25.9
2 papers .....	59	21.8	57	29.5
3-5 papers.....	119	43.9	71	36.8
6 or more.....	50	18.4	15	7.8

43.9 per cent. of the owners take from 3 to 5 papers while but 36 per cent. of the tenants take this number. 62 per cent. of the owners take 3 or more papers while but 43 per cent. of the tenants take this number. 24.9 per cent. of the tenants take but one paper as against 15.9 per cent. of the owners.

The data as to the kinds of papers taken throw light on the amount and quantity of periodical reading matter available to the farmer's family.

TABLE XLV  
Kinds of Papers Taken, Owners and Tenants

Kind of Papers Taken	Owners (273 Considered)		Tenants (203 Considered)	
	Number	Per Cent.	Number	Per Cent.
Agriculture.....	158	57.9	87	42.8
Religious.....	36	13.2	10	4.9
News.....	259	94.9	182	89.7
Women's Magazines..	74	27.1	44	21.7
Cheap Advertising....	39	14.3	24	11.8
Standard Magazines..	37	13.6	9	4.4

The owners report 94.9 per cent. taking a newspaper while the tenants report 89.7. Neither group is conspicuous for the number of religious papers taken or for the number of standard magazines. The owning group report 57.9 per cent. taking agricultural periodicals while the tenant group report but 42.8 per cent. Women's magazines are reported as 27.1 per cent for the owners and 21.7 per cent. for the tenants.

The two groups do not differ materially in the number of telephones used. Of 275 owners reporting 190 or 69.1 per cent. have telephones and of 212 tenants 128 or 60 per cent. report telephones.

In conclusion, it may be said that the problems of tenantry affect the social life of the country community in the lower standards of social responsibility of the renting class; in the lower standards of education as shown by the small number of agricultural and other periodicals taken; in the decreasing permanency of occupation of the farm by the operator; and the threatened depletion of the soil through introduction of means of production which will yield the largest immediate returns at the expense of the farm; and finally in the outlook for a permanent tenant class. This tendency towards a permanent tenantry is just now working out its economic and social influences and the lines of cleavage that may result have not as yet clearly defined themselves. The tendency seems to be indicated by the relative interest in the church and in the lodge by owners and tenants, and it may be that in time the renter and owner distinction will pervade the entire life of the country community.



## CHAPTER VII

### Summary and Conclusion

A survey of the results of the study of rural life in southwestern Ohio indicates that the following are among the principal problems awaiting solution at the present time:

- 1 Declining membership of the rural church. This decline in some cases is an evidence of absolute decrease of religious influence. In others it is an accompaniment of the decrease of rural population and consequently brings with it problems of church finance which in some communities tend to become serious.
- 2 Smaller proportion of young people belonging to church. The proportion of church membership according to age appears to be lowest in that period when church affiliation should normally be the greatest.
- 3 Non-resident ministry. With the increasing emphasis upon the pastoral function of the minister non-residence becomes a serious handicap. When public worship occupied a larger place in church life non-residence was not recognized as an influence limiting the minister's usefulness.
- 4 Survival of sectarianism resulting in over-churching in many communities.
- 5 Lack of organized rural recreation. Influence of commercialized village and city amusement.
- 6 Declining influence of secret organizations.
- 7 Inadequate rural school equipment.
- 8 Transient and non-resident teaching force.
- 9 Lack of correlation of school with life of people.
10. In some places tendency to break up homogeneity of rural population through growth of tenantry, increase of foreign population, and change in type of farm labor.
11. Persistence of traditional methods of farm management.

The recognition of a problem is the first step towards its solution and already measures are being taken in southwestern Ohio to deal in a constructive way with existing conditions. Some of the tendencies which indicate that rural life has already passed the low ebb and is moving toward a much higher plane are:

- 1 Gradual rise in rural economic welfare. This appears to be due to industrial changes affecting the entire population rather than to any rapid increase in efficiency in farming methods.
- 2 Gradual increase in rural culture, through influence of newspapers, means of transportation and communication, farmers' institutes, educational institutions and religious organizations.
- 3 Increasing interest in problems of rural life.
- 4 Increasing interest in co-operative enterprises.

In conclusion the following suggestions may be made as to changes to be brought about in rural life.

- 1 Re-organization of the church on a community basis, preferably in connection, however, with one of the national religious bodies instead of the "union" plan; abandonment of sectarianism; provision for resident pastors, preferably of "town-country" churches.
- 2 Re-organization of rural school to provide for proper correlation of school with life of people; adequate material equipment and permanent teaching force; and convenient and efficient secondary as well as primary education.
- 3 Encouragement of farmers' organizations for protection and advancement of farmers' interest and for the discussion of community problems.
- 4 Development of pride in rural life and rural institutions.
- 5 Establishment of adequate facilities for bringing to the farmer the work of federal and state departments of agriculture, experiment station and educational institutions.
- 6 Provision for social and recreational life of the rural community.
- 7 Further development of co-operative activity.

Other problems exist in the different communities, but these must be worked out by the people within the community and must be solved in a constructive way by developing co-operation along lines that affect the life of the community at large. The first step in making improvements is the determination of conditions as they exist. The relation of the institutions to each other should be determined; the service performed by each; services which are being duplicated by different agencies less efficiently than if they were performed by one; needs of the community that are not being met by any agency; standards of community life that are good and standards that should be readjusted to meet

modern conditions. All these things should be known by the people who are most interested in the community and should be dealt with in a constructive way because the readjustment which comes as a result of knowledge will bring increased happiness to the community. The discussion in the foregoing pages has covered in a general way certain areas of southwestern Ohio but it cannot be taken for a substitute for intensive study of community life by each of the communities concerned. With the fullest co-operation of religious, educational and agricultural agencies rural life may be brought to the highest standards and farm life will again assume that place in the respect of the people that it once held.





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