

**Addresses given at the Rural Life Conference Middlebury College Middlebury, Vermont July 7 to 13, 1913**

COMPILED BY PROF. RAYMOND MCFARLAND DIRECTOR SUMMER SESSION

**INTRODUCTION.**

The first Rural Life Conference held in Vermont resulted from an invitation from the Interchurch Federation of Vermont to the officials of Middlebury College that opportunity for a conference be given at the Summer Session of the College. The College accepted the invitation, opened its halls to the use of conference members, and provided speakers for the week's program. The Interchurch Federation was established in 1905; in 1912 it adopted the following program, through which it accepted responsibility for the general betterment of conditions in Vermont:

"We propose to take for our first endeavor the economic, social and intellectual, and religious, improvement of the small towns of the State.

"We pledge our help to communities of this kind, especially in securing for them an efficient religious leadership:

"By the promotion of summer conferences for instruction and inspiration for religious work in the open country.

"By extension work, including correspondence courses in the country church, and in modern agriculture.

"We agree to outline plans for the uplift of certain districts, to assume the task through a common effort to be made under the leadership of a committee to be chosen under the separate churches of that district, and requesting that these churches become responsible for the special field assigned, and labor for its uplift by all possible means, but including:

"The approach of the people on the side of the work whereby they earn their daily bread, and the endeavor to stimulate better farming and better living, so that Vermont boys may realize that they have a chance in Vermont.

"The organization of towns for recreation and common social amusement to cure the ills of isolation and neighborhood jealousy.

"We believe that each religious body represented in Vermont should work first for the welfare of Vermont, and should subordinate its own promotion to that end.

"We promise to lay to heart the condition of our rural schools--teachers underpaid and frequently changed, insufficient books and supplies, inadequate buildings and grounds,--and we pledge our co-operation in any movement looking to the equalizing of educational advantages between country and city children."

Prof. Robert J. Sprague, head of the department of Humanities and professor of Economics and Sociology, Massachusetts Agricultural College, was leader of the conference and conducted the discussion of the sessions and round-table conferences.

Acknowledgments are hereby made of the valuable assistance of the leader and speakers of the conference, the success of which was due in a great measure to their generous co-operation and efforts.

RAYMOND MCFARLAND, Director Summer Session. ADDRESSES BY PROF. ROBERT J. SPRAGUE MASSACHUSETTS AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE, AMHERST, MASS

**THE IMPORTANCE OF THE RURAL PROBLEM.**

The rural problem is important because it affects the life, health, morals and virility of the whole nation. The rural region under a healthful, economic and social condition, with a fair degree of prosperity develops a population with better health and longer life than the city brings forth. In the country there is less crime and a steadier standard of morals. The birthrate is higher and a surplus of population is produced, whereas in the city the population does not reproduce itself. In the country there is a higher degree of democracy and a better balanced and more all around citizenship, because there is an even distribution of property and a larger proportion of the people are tax payers. There is nothing like a tax receipt to make a man into a citizen, and nearly everybody in the rural region owns something and helps to support the government.

**LESSONS FROM ROME.**

Some lessons can be learned from the experiences of the Roman Empire. In Rome wealth was concentrated largely for purposes of consumption and there were many wealthy men who as such came well up to the millionaires of the present day. One of the fatal mistakes of the Roman civilization was in concentrating the farm property, driving off the small farmers and middle classes, and filling the rural regions with slaves and wage earners. In addition to this heavy taxes were thrown upon the rural communities and the economic life of the countryside was sapped by such methods. The concentration of this wealth in the city of Rome led to conditions which in the end caused the extinction of the dominant and brainy classes. They lived a life of extravagance and waste. They feared honest labor and sought to live a life of speculation and unearned increment. The young people who were obliged to work at all wanted white-collar jobs and a sporting life. Divorce and the instability of the family were prominent features of society. Lawlessness and other forms of race suicide soon became a racial menace. The independence of woman and charitable work were also interesting developments of the times. The result of these evils were that the old conquering Roman stock died off. Rome was never conquered, she died, and the virile democratic races of the North merely occupied the old shell in which the once virile Roman lived.

**RACIAL DECLINE OF THE ANGLO SAXON IN AMERICA.**

In some ways the features of Anglo Saxon civilization in America resemble those of the decadent Roman days. We differ from them in two important points, viz.: we still preserve a great rural population and the even distribution of rural wealth, and we have a higher degree of intelligence and education of the whole people. But, after all, there are indications that the Anglo Saxon has a tendency to decline under industrial and urban conditions of life. The British people have recently had this strikingly brought to their attention and are carrying out numerous revolutionary reforms in order to re-establish the small farmer and something like the old English yeomanry. In Massachusetts the State takes a census of its own in the middle of each decade, and this shows that the native stock has for many years been failing to keep up its numbers while the foreign born stock has been increasing rapidly by the excess of births over deaths. The tendencies of our intense civilization may be seen in the marriage rates of college women wherein it appears that, on the average, they do not produce one-half enough children to replenish their numbers. Again, the system of public education, especially as it is carried out in the high schools, divorces the young people from a desire to work, and is liable to leave them stranded with high standards of life and little earning power. This condition drives them to the cities after white-collar jobs, compels them to delay marriage, and, finally, causes race suicide.

The rural regions of America now populated by Anglo Saxons give different results. The rural middle West, the agricultural South, the countryside of New England, in Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont keep up their population as far as births versus deaths is concerned, although they export many of their products to the industrial and commercial centers. It appears at present as if the Anglo Saxon would survive only by holding the rural regions and the farmer's occupations. All of the evidences are that if he gives up the land and concentrates in the cities he will die off and his homes and institutions be occupied by foreign bloods.

## **REFORMS NEEDED.**

In the first place, the rural regions, in order to retain the ambitious and brainy Anglo Saxon; must be made profitable. Economic prosperity is an absolute essential for holding the old stock on the farm. In order to bring this about there must be education of the youth in the rural regions which will stimulate interest and increase knowledge in methods of getting a living. Education must get down to the ground and bury its hands into the dirt. The present methods of education, if carded out to their ultimate end, and universally applied, will cause the elimination of any race in a few generations. Education must be turned less towards culture of the superficial type and more towards survival and culture of the real enduring kind which is based upon prosperity and racial virility. Again, our Anglo Saxon farmers must learn co-operative methods and school and college and government must combine to enable them to enjoy the profits and other benefits of such methods. Again, the rural life must be made a happy life. The most of the pleasures and good things of the city must be worked out in it. The theatricals, social organizations, church interests, athletics, boys' and girls' play life, and all of those lines of development which the normal boy and adults find enjoyable, must be worked out for rural communities. Transportation and easy communication have made these things possible. The old "hay-seed" must forever disappear and the rural citizen and the rural social life must become more cosmopolitan and generally enjoyable.

Finally, with the application of science to the agricultural industry, and with the education of a new race of farmers who will have a new vision of rural life and work, and with the development of a lively and more progressive social organization, the country life will appeal to the ambitious and out-door loving Anglo Saxon. Only by such development can the race survive over the tendencies of the modern age.

## **SOME CORRECTIVE MEASURES IN RURAL COMMUNITIES.**

Lawlessness is prominent in American society and it appears in the rural regions especially. This is probably grounded in the Anglo Saxon's individualism and has been developed under conditions of the pioneer life where each individual was supposed to defend himself against invading man and animal. Lawlessness appears in the country in several ways. In the first place, about our villages there is a good deal of hoodlumism and reckless liberties taken by the boys. On Hollowe'en and on the night before the Fourth it is traditional that boys may take liberties with other people's property which would not be endured in any country where pioneer ideals were not prominent. Again, fruit stealing in the more thickly populated parts of New England, near the cities and villages, and oftentimes in the open country, has become a handicap to horticultural activity. Personally, I have known of several men living in small towns who have desired to plant orchards in the outskirts of the town, but have been deterred from doing so because of their inability to get the fruit. I could name several people who have chopped down their orchards because they became nuisances due to the invading on nights and Sundays by the village boys and the uncontrolled foreign population. Compared with this situation we see the highways of Prussia lined with fruit trees and the boys of the public schools given charge over the trees and the fruit, with the result that the crops are allowed to ripen and are distributed among the citizens,-- thus increasing the economic wealth of the country. If New England could have the same observances of law and order and the same safety of fruits, I estimate that the income from her new developments would, in the course of time, amount to five million dollars per year.

## **THE RURAL SLUM.**

Another feature of country life is the rural slum where a group of more or less degenerate, and, perhaps at times, criminal people live together for generations. These people are often terrors to the community and they intimidate the farmers and to them are traced various deeds of lawlessness and crime; besides, in them there are often produced successive generations of feeble-minded people with very little check placed upon them by the community. Such conditions may exist in the country indefinitely, whereas in the city they would be cleaned up and scattered. But the country-side with its lack of organization and enforcement of law may suffer permanently from such sore spots. The rural community has difficulty in handling all of these types of lawlessness and degeneracy. The local constable is well-nigh helpless. Even if he had the intelligence and the spirit for preventing lawlessness and clearing out social pest holes, he must live in the community and hold property there and he is often under such circumstances that he cannot enforce the law. For such conditions we need the general State officer or State police who does not have such local relations and connections that he is afraid to tackle these conditions. All of the European countries and even Canada have more or less been compelled to adopt some general police system with which to control the country, and in the end it has been found to be practical and efficient. But perhaps we cannot get such a system established and must continue to work along the old lines. In such a case one of the best methods is to organize some village or town association that will stand behind the officer in working for better conditions, and oftentimes it is only such an organization that will stimulate the local authorities to take up these problems at all.

## **CONSTRUCTIVE RE-ORGANIZATION.**

To offset the tendency towards lawlessness which our country boys inherit from pioneer traditions we need the development of play rooms and the organization of play activities, athletics, and other social interests which will take the boys from the street and give them some legitimate and desirable interests. A short time ago, I was asked to discuss this matter in a rural village, and the meeting which was gotten up for such purpose was made almost impossible by the pranks of the village boys on the outside of the building. These boys had nothing else to do. The fault was not theirs. It lay with the inaction and stupidity of the community which had not provided any place or any system or any leader for keeping the boys engaged in more interesting and helpful activities. And in many of our villages the problems will be practically overcome, as far as the boys are concerned, by the development of the proper facilities and leadership for play along with considerable education and social activities. This work does not require any revolutionary turning over from our old traditions, it can be taken up anywhere, at any time, and a movement in such a direction will always meet with response on the part of the best people. It is constructive and can do no harm. The Y. M. C. A. is making good progress in some of these matters and many a rural community could do no better than to send for the Y. M. C. A. secretary, put him up against the local problem, and then follow his advice as to organization and methods of operation.

## **THE PROBLEM OF THE RURAL CHURCH.**

The rural church in many localities has suffered from the declining population and decreasing property values. Like all other social institutions it has been subject to the influence of these economic changes. The rural church differs from the city church in that it must do more general service for the community and it cannot be so highly specialized as the church can be in the cities. The time has come when many rural communities cannot afford to support the mere preacher, because ideas and facts are now obtained through a thousand sources which in previous generations did not reach the people.

The constructive problem of the church is, how can it best serve the community, and it must be solved in each locality according to the factors in the situation. It takes today a stronger man to be thoroughly successful and to fill the needs of the people in the country pastorate than it does in the city pastorate. The country pastor must be the general practitioner and he must know well many lines of activity. He must be a keener student of human nature than the city pastor need be. In the future, the country pastor will have to be more of a social organizer and the general director of the various activities of the rural population. His preaching probably will occupy a smaller amount of his time and interest. He must be a sort of a general secretary for promoting every line of social, play, and religious activity. He must remain a strong preacher all the while, and his work as a religious leader will probably be predominant. This kind of a social worker and a preacher calls for an all around man with a universal education in economics, sociology, anthropology, as well as in religion. The theological schools of the day are apparently not giving this training for the rural preacher. They are educating more for the specialized city pulpits, but we must have training schools that will bring forth efficient, well prepared country ministers. The methods of the country church will be obliged to change a good deal. The moving picture film and other efficient means of entertaining and instructing the people will come in. The pastorate will have a larger job and ought to have better equipment. The church should supply its pastor with some quicker means of moving about, either a run-about automobile or a motor bicycle, so that he can do more work and not waste his life jogging about the country after an old horse. In general, the rural pastorate is rapidly becoming a big man's job and ought to be equipped for higher efficiency than it ever had before.

## **THE RURAL SOCIAL SURVEY.**

The rural social survey is the introduction of business methods into the work of the country pastor. Every country pastor ought to chart and tabulate his field so that he will know definitely the location and character of every person within his parish, so that by a card index, or some similar system he can keep track of all of the changes which take place within his field. He ought to learn not only the religious conditions of his people but a good deal about their economic, physical, mental and social interests and difficulties. Only by a

survey method can be positive and definite about the facts within his parish. The making of such a survey frequently opens the eyes of the pastor and it always enables him to set before his people the definite conditions which they have to face. Besides that the survey is needed by general secretaries and societies who are working for the betterment of the State and the rural pastor is perhaps the person best fitted to collect all of these data. The survey cannot be made at once, it would take a year in order to record and tabulate the facts about the population and their manner of life. Surveys may be made according to the needs of the one most interested. They can be made very extensive and comprehend nearly everything in the life of the people, or they can be especially adapted to some particular end in view. But they have been found to be efficient helps in working out the problem of rural communities according to business-like methods.

#### **THE BEAUTIFICATION OF THE RURAL COMMUNITY.**

In natural scenery and opportunities for beautifying villages and rural homesteads, New England has the greatest advantages of any region in America. The New England evergreen trees are numerous and not excelled in beauty by anything in the world. In New England the country-side is lacking in plan and design for the beautification of the landscape. Thousands of New England homesteads stand with cold feet in the snow, cheerless and swept by the wintry winds, when, with the judicious planting of evergreens, they might be made the most beautiful in the world. Our winter scenery needs the warmth and color of these evergreens. Villages can be greatly improved by the organization of neighborhood societies and town societies for improvement and beautification. One of the best methods is to organize street and neighborhood societies and start up a competition between sections of the village. This kind of thing stimulates individuals to improve their own properties. Those interested in such work try to use features of decoration. Streets and blocks and neighborhoods can adopt distinguishing plants or trees or shrubs and the use of evergreens in the village is very effective when properly grouped and related to the rest of the decorations. Such improvement will nearly always increase values and sometimes very great financial benefits are derived from efforts of this kind. In the open country individual farmers ought to be stimulated to use the natural advantages for the beautification of their homesteads. Such improvements will enhance values and will create a sentiment about the homestead that will make the life of the owners perpetually pleasanter and happier. We can easily make New England the most beautiful home region of America because we have the hills, the woods, and the native trees with which to work.

The rural churches and the school houses need attention most of all our institutions. Many of our rural churches have the same unbeautiful and dry exterior that the blacksmith shop and the grocery store have. Dry indeed would be the impression of a sermon and the ideals taught within it if they are judged from the ordinary church yard. Here is a chance for the Young People's Society or any other agency for a much needed work to be done.

The average country school yard is a place where there is no beauty or law or right, but we often expect our children to spend ten years under such environment and to come out with a love of the beautiful, the true and the good. Many of these yards are decidedly degenerating in their influence upon the whole population. Every school yard ought to have its play-ground but it ought also to be decorated in a sensible way and the children themselves should be called upon both to plant and to care for shrubs, flowers and other improvements, and their interest will bear fruit in their desires for such things in later life. The neglect of such wholesome and influential improvements is a crime against the future generation. Here is an opportunity for ministers and school teachers, especially, to lead off in the beautifying of these two important social institutions of the country.

Rural highways can be improved oftentimes by a little judicious cutting of the trees and the brush, and rural bridges can be made distinctly characteristic and beautiful by allowing trees to grow at the corners and about the approaches. Nature is ready to help in such work and is only waiting for the ideals and the leadership of man.

#### **THE NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE.**

The "neighborhood house" has become in many communities a very efficient organization for social workers. I doubt not that in some places it will displace the church unless that institution becomes more liberalized and more active in many of the things that are vital to the community. The most complete "neighborhood house" in the country probably is at Northeast Harbor, Maine. This building, situated in the midst of the village, has a village library and reading room, a woman's club room, a men's lounging room, a boys' game room, a kitchen with an equipment of dishes, and, in addition to this, a large gymnasium well supplied with materials which is used also for dances, theatricals, lectures, community dinners, and any other large social activity of the village. The house is controlled by the village organization, to which practically everybody belongs and which appoints a board of directors to have immediate charge of the building. The boys and girls of the public schools have a play leader and trainer and they use the "neighborhood house" as their headquarters. In general, the institution is serving the needs of the community in every way that it may, and its success is both remarkable and well-nigh without qualification.

There is another type of "neighborhood house" developed in McClellandtown, Pennsylvania. This house is in the open country and is called the "brotherhood house of the Presbyterian Church." That wise pastor, Mr. Bemis, has succeeded in making the church serve nearly all of the social, and religious needs of that rural community. In his "brotherhood house" are kept the community library, the library of agricultural bulletins and periodicals, and here is the social center of that rural region where are centralized the organizations of boys and girls for play, for social life, for Bible study. In this building the parish social organizations of men and women of the country-side meet, and, in general, the church has been liberal in its views and efficient in its administration of this institution for the welfare of the community. Mr. Bemis has never preached against the dance halls or dancing, but he has organized substitutes which are carried on in the form of masquerades, etc., which have emptied all the dance halls within a radius of five miles, because he has offered a more attractive and pleasant activity. Mr. Bemis has approached his problem and from the point of view of social organization and has well-nigh solved most of the great social problems of his rural community.

There are a good many types of "neighborhood house," some conducted by combinations of churches, some of them carry on religious functions and some are quite distinct from religious interests. Such developments depend upon the genius of the leaders who are interested and upon the peculiar needs of the community. The "neighborhood house" seems to have a profitable field and to be in demand, and here is an opportunity for many churches that wish to become influential and to do a strong social service, to bring within their own organization such an institution, or to work for one independent of the church and to keep closely in touch with it while it is serving its purpose.

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#### **INTRODUCTION.**

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#### **REFORMS NEEDED.**

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To offset the tendency towards lawlessness which our country boys inherit from pioneer traditions we need the development of play rooms and the organization of play activities, athletics, and other social interests which will take the boys from the street and give them some legitimate and desirable interests. A short time ago, I was asked to discuss this matter in a rural village, and the meeting which was gotten up for such purpose was made almost impossible by the pranks of the village boys on the outside of the building. These boys had nothing else to do. The fault was not theirs. It lay with the inaction and stupidity of the community which had not provided any place or any system or any leader for keeping the boys engaged in more interesting and helpful activities. And in many of our villages the problems will be practically overcome, as far as the boys are concerned, by the development of the proper facilities and leadership for play along with considerable education and social activities. This work does not require any revolutionary turning over from our old traditions, it can be taken up anywhere, at any time, and a movement in such a direction will always meet with response on the part of the best people. It is constructive and can do no harm. The Y. M. C. A. is making good progress in some of these matters and many a rural community could do no better than to send for the Y. M. C. A. secretary, put him up against the local problem, and then follow his advice as to organization and methods of operation.

#### **THE PROBLEM OF THE RURAL CHURCH.**

The rural church in many localities has suffered from the declining population and decreasing property values. Like all other social institutions it has been subject to the influence of these economic changes. The rural church differs from the city church in that it must do more general service for the community and it cannot be so highly specialized as the church can be in the cities. The time has come when many rural communities cannot afford to support the mere preacher, because ideas and facts are now obtained through a thousand sources which in previous generations did not reach the people.

The constructive problem of the church is, how can it best serve the community, and it must be solved in each locality according to the factors in the situation. It takes today a stronger man to be thoroughly successful and to fill the needs of the people in the country pastorate than it does in the city pastorate. The country pastor must be the general practitioner and he must know well many lines of activity. He must be a keener student of human nature than the city pastor need be. In the future, the country pastor will have to be more of a social organizer and the general director of the various activities of the rural population. His preaching probably will occupy a smaller amount of his time and interest. He must be a sort of a general secretary for promoting every line of social, play, and religious activity. He must remain a strong preacher all the while, and his work as a religious leader will probably be predominant. This kind of a social worker and a preacher calls for an all around man with a universal education in economics, sociology, anthropology, as well as in religion. The theological schools of the day are apparently not giving this training for the rural preacher. They are educating more for the specialized city pulpits, but we must have training schools that will bring forth efficient, well prepared country ministers. The methods of the country church will be obliged to change a good deal. The moving picture film and other efficient means of entertaining and instructing the people will come in. The pastorate will have a larger job and ought to have better equipment. The church should supply its pastor with some quicker means of moving about, either a run-about automobile or a motor bicycle, so that he can do more work and not waste his life jogging about the country after an old horse. In general, the rural pastorate is rapidly becoming a big man's job and ought to be equipped for higher efficiency than it ever had before.

#### **THE RURAL SOCIAL SURVEY.**

The rural social survey is the introduction of business methods into the work of the country pastor. Every country pastor ought to chart and tabulate his field so that he will know definitely the location and character of every person within his parish, so that by a card index, or some similar system he can keep track of all of the changes which take place within his field. He ought to learn not only the religious conditions of his people but a good deal about their economic, physical, mental and social interests and difficulties. Only by a survey method can he be positive and definite about the facts within his parish. The making of such a survey frequently opens the eyes of the pastor and it always enables him to set before his people the definite conditions which they have to face. Besides that the survey is needed by general secretaries and societies who are working for the betterment of the State and the rural pastor is perhaps the person best fitted to collect all of these data. The survey cannot be made at once, it would take a year in order to record and tabulate the facts about the population and their manner of life. Surveys may be made according to the needs of the one most interested. They can be made very extensive and comprehend nearly everything in the life of the people, or they can be especially adapted to some particular end in view. But they have been found to be efficient helps in working out the problem of rural communities according to business-like methods.

#### **THE BEAUTIFICATION OF THE RURAL COMMUNITY.**

In natural scenery and opportunities for beautifying villages and rural homesteads, New England has the greatest advantages of any region in America. The New England evergreen trees are numerous and not excelled in beauty by anything in the world. In New England the country-side is lacking in plan and design for the beautification of the landscape. Thousands of New England homesteads stand with cold feet in the snow, cheerless and swept by the wintry winds, when, with the judicious planting of evergreens, they might be made the most beautiful in the world. Our winter scenery needs the warmth and color of these evergreens. Villages can be greatly improved by the organization of neighborhood societies and town societies for improvement and beautification. One of the best methods is to organize street and neighborhood societies and start up a competition between sections of the village. This kind of thing stimulates individuals to improve their own properties. Those interested in such work try to use features of decoration. Streets and blocks and neighborhoods can adopt distinguishing plants or trees or shrubs and the use of evergreens in the village is very effective when properly grouped and related to the rest of the decorations. Such improvement will nearly always increase values and sometimes very great financial benefits are derived from efforts of this kind. In the open country individual farmers ought to be stimulated to use the natural advantages for the beautification of their homesteads. Such improvements will enhance values and will create a sentiment about the homestead that will make the life of the owners perpetually pleasanter and happier. We can easily make New England the most beautiful home region of America because we have the hills, the woods, and the native trees with which to work.

The rural churches and the school houses need attention most of all our institutions. Many of our rural churches have the same unbeautiful and dry exterior that the blacksmith shop and the grocery store have. Dry indeed would be the impression of a sermon and the ideals taught within it if they are judged from the ordinary church yard. Here is a chance for the Young People's Society or any other agency for a much needed work to be done.

The average country school yard is a place where there is no beauty or law or right, but we often expect our children to spend ten years under such environment and to come out with a love of the beautiful, the true and the good. Many of these yards are decidedly degenerating in their influence upon the whole population. Every school yard ought to have its play-ground but it ought also to be decorated in a sensible way and the children themselves should be called upon both to plant and to care for shrubs, flowers and other improvements, and their interest will bear fruit in their desires for such things in later life. The neglect of such wholesome and influential improvements is a crime against the future generation. Here is an opportunity for ministers and school teachers, especially, to lead off in the beautifying of these two important social institutions of the country.

Rural highways can be improved oftentimes by a little judicious cutting of the trees and the brush, and rural bridges can be made distinctly characteristic and beautiful by allowing trees to grow at the corners and about the approaches. Nature is ready to help in such work and is only waiting for the ideals and the leadership of man.

#### **THE NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE.**

The "neighborhood house" has become in many communities a very efficient organization for social workers. I doubt not that in some places it will displace the church unless that institution becomes more liberalized and more active in many of the things that are vital to the community. The most complete "neighborhood house" in the country probably is at Northeast Harbor, Maine. This building, situated in the midst of the village, has a village library and reading room, a woman's club room, a men's lounging room, a boys' game room, a kitchen with an equipment of dishes, and, in addition to this, a large gymnasium well supplied with materials which is used also for dances, theatricals, lectures, community dinners, and any other large social activity of the village. The house is controlled by the village organization, to which practically everybody belongs and which appoints a board of directors to have immediate charge of the building. The boys and girls of the public schools have a play leader and trainer and they use the "neighborhood house" as their headquarters. In general, the institution is serving the needs of the community in every way that it may, and its success is both remarkable and well-nigh without qualification.

There is another type of "neighborhood house" developed in McClellandtown, Pennsylvania. This house is in the open country and is called the "brotherhood house of the Presbyterian Church." That wise pastor, Mr. Bemis, has succeeded in making the church serve nearly all of the social, and religious needs of that rural community. In his "brotherhood house" are kept the community library, the library of agricultural bulletins and periodicals, and here is the social center of that rural region where are centralized the organizations of boys and girls for play, for social life, for Bible study. In this building the parish social organizations of men and women of the country-side meet, and, in general, the church has been liberal in its views and efficient in its administration of this institution for the welfare of the community. Mr. Bemis has never preached against the dance halls or dancing, but he has organized substitutes which are carried on in the form of masquerades, etc., which have emptied all the dance halls within a radius of five miles, because he has offered a more attractive and pleasant activity. Mr. Bemis has approached his problem and from the point of view of social organization and has well-nigh solved most of the great social problems of his rural community.

There are a good many types of "neighborhood house," some conducted by combinations of churches, some of them carry on religious functions and some are quite distinct from religious interests. Such developments depend upon the genius of the leaders who are interested and upon the peculiar needs of the community. The "neighborhood house" seems to have a profitable field and to be in demand, and here is an opportunity for many churches that wish to become influential and to do a strong social service, to bring within their own organization such an institution, or to work for one independent of the church and to keep closely in touch with it while it is serving its purpose.

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