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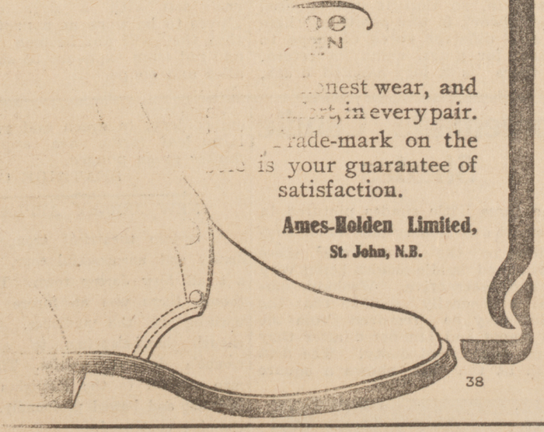
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PROPOSES A SUMMER SCHOOL FOR PREACHERS

Rev. Hunter Boyd Has an Interesting Plan to Enable Ministers to Make a Practical Study of Rural Conditions

Eastern Canada has problems to solve that are as great, and as urgent, as those which confront the West. But they are different. The West has helped to create some of our perplexities, but no matter how they have originated, they have to be faced. There are not wanting those who have contracted the habit of blaming the West, or the United States for adverse conditions of every kind. There are farmers who continually find fault with the weather, but the weather is still with us, and it will be long ere either the West or the States are absorbed into the provinces by the sea. The average natural increase per 1,000 population in 1901, for the combined provinces by the sea, was almost up to the normal point for the entire Dominion, which is 12.70 per cent. but if we examine the figures for the past 20 years it will be found that the combined population in 1881 was about 871,000, for 1891 about 881,000, and for 1901, 894,000.

On the other hand, if we consider the increase for Canada, we find it is 11.14 per cent. and New Brunswick, 3.06; Nova Scotia, 2.04, and Prince Edward Island, minus 5.34. These figures merit careful inquiry, and, in the judgment of many, it would seem that the time has arrived when a careful attempt should be made to appraise the social and economic forces that are operating in the older provinces.

It is possible for even ministers to become fatalistic, through dwelling too much on these materialistic factors, and many will admit they are discouraged as they see signs of depopulation.

Some have fled to the West or to the South to escape paralysis, and some who once entertained hopes of becoming pastors of self-supporting charges have relinquished sanguine hopes. This spirit has not been confined to those who have labored long, but it has affected the choice of vocation or location on the part of youthful aspirants.

II.—THE CHEERFUL VIEW.

There are others who feel that obligation rests upon them to care for the old folk who have remained; and courageously tend the boys and girls they scarcely hope to retain for effective citizenship. They rejoice to think that thousands have passed on to other parts to work for the cause of God, under the same flag, or it may be another. These men are patriotic, but they are also humanitarian.

Another and increasing section of the cheerful ones are confident that the tide will turn. They believe that the wheat system alone will not produce genuine homesteads, they look for improved methods in every branch of industry in the East, and anticipate, ere long, that these provinces will claim a share of the homeseekers who pass through our portals. They are firmly convinced, also, that no branch of industry here has yet had its full opportunity, and they contend that the chief need of the farms in the provinces by the sea is better farming.

III.—MARITIME ADVANTAGES.

The alternation of hill and dale, the abundant water and wood, climatic conditions, and shipping facilities appeal strongly to thoughtful men, and they regret exceedingly that so many children have been early inoculated with "Western fever."

The accounts of distribution of seed grain this spring remind them that not all is gold that glitters, and instances of over-cropping here point to the inevitable effects that will be produced there unless mixed farming is adopted.

The proximity to ocean steamers, the increased cold storage facilities, and the special advantages for certain branches of husbandry are good assets amid the discouraging items of depleted farms, and a new hope is springing up in the East.

IV.—THE OUTLOOK OF THE CLERGY.

All these matters are of deep interest to the ministers of all denominations. There are some preachers who have been so deeply affected by the economic problem that they have become strong advocates for church union. But a desire to secure coalition in order to reduce expense is indicative rather of parochialism than of a broad catholicity. There would rarely be found either too many churches or too many ministers if our farms could be reduced in size, and better work accomplished upon them.

Cromwell is reported to have said, "Trust in God and keep your powder dry." The leader of today might well say, "Put soul into your soil," or "Spray as well as pray." A minister is performing his duty if he urges his people to select the best seed: to make judicious use of good feed, and trains the children under his care to recognize a weed and encourages them to ensure its extermination.

Ministers would find it to be a great advantage everyway if they help to create a strong sentiment in favor of the Fruit Marks act, and urge the extinction of the small yield cows.

Many church finance problems would be solved if the people used business methods all the week. There are chances lost every year, by families in all branches of the church, which do not reflect the credit of Christian character. Two hundred thousand dollars were lost this season by careless packing of apples in Nova Scotia. Is Prince Edward Island where it formerly stood in its reputation for horses? The cows of these provinces do not yield one-half what they should.

It might be a healthy tonic if the people of these provinces, who have been blaming climate and weather, and government and fiscal systems, and everything but poor management, would get information on the progress in many branches of industry in Quebec, and still more if they would read exhaustively on the movements in Denmark and Japan. The farmer is too individualistic, and the social instincts must be cultivated right early, and restore prosperity by intelligently conducted, persistent co-operation.

V. WHAT CAN BE DONE?

Other countries have passed through our phases. The clergy in Denmark, led by Bishop Grundtvig, have turned the tide back to the country. Cannot the clergy of all denominations attempt work just as necessary, just as useful. Let them make a united effort to achieve this end. There is no thought here of so-called church union, or, rather, the churches are united, and there is no need for rigid uniformity. We have rigidity enough. We need a new springtide when the angularities shall disappear only to reappear in living verdure. Let our rural clergy search for records of the life and work of John Francis Oberlin and emulate his spirit. There is no need to attempt his work, for there is not a place in the provinces where his congregations are typified.

When art became conventional in England it was necessary to return to nature. Many eminently good men have been vainly endeavoring to perpetuate ideals of method that are well enough in a highly complex, well ordered, long established community, and their youths have been slipping past them all the time. If we cannot detain their bodies in these provinces, we have little scope for affecting their spiritual nature.

VI. "BACK TO THE FARM!"

Probably the majority of ministers of all the churches in these provinces were raised on the farms, and therein is found no small merit for the old order of things. But possibly the clergy need to modify plans as rapidly as the people amid whom they labor. If they are to justify their continuance as a separate order, it must be partly because they fill a function. Public worship is an indispensable part of life in the community, but religion and worship, as these terms are ordinarily understood, are not synonymous. They are contributory.

Sacredness does not reside in the profession as things now are, but in the spirit in which the work of the profession is conducted.

Someone has said, "It is better to pound an anvil and make a good horseshoe, than to pound a pulpit and make a poor sermon." Most of the Old Testament prophets and writers were farmers; and the Bible is permeated with the spirit of devout husbandry. Would it not be well if all the rural clergy of the provinces could gather at the Agricultural college, in Truro, this summer, and hold such a school as the clergy of Massachusetts and Rhode Island have arranged for at Amherst, Mass.? Not the least certain note that is being sounded in these provinces comes from the institute workers who are influencing our youth. Would it not be well to mingle with these men who indirectly inculcate ethics, morality and patriotism? The education of more than half of our population requires modification and the clergy should have a clear and uniform message to parents, trustees and educators. We need a federation of all rural forces for a general educational uplift, and surely it's the function of the church to be inspirational if not institutional.—Rev. Hunter Boyd in the Maritime Farmer.

NOTED MEN SEND GOOD WISHES TO DR. HALE

Congratulations Upon 86th Anniversary of Author's Birth.

The Rev. Dr. Edward Everett Hale, the venerable chaplain of the United States senate, Friday celebrated the 86th anniversary of his birth by offering, as usual, the invocation in the senate when that body was called to order. Since Thursday congratulations have poured in upon him from distinguished men all over the country, but he has borne these good wishes as modestly and unassumingly as he does his years.

One would well believe that Dr. Hale was born in Boston in 1822, for it would be untrue to say that he does not show his years, and he bears unmistakably the stamp of the sturdy New England stock from which he sprang. The distinguished author and clergyman spends much of his time in an easy chair in his residence in Washington, and even the brief service at the senate fatigues him somewhat, for he suffers considerably from a fall received in California several years ago, and is not as active as might be.

His face is marked with deep lines, lines not only of intellectuality, but of age; but is eye is as bright as it ever was, and his mind is as strong and vigorous as three-quarters of a century ago.

Dr. Hale takes a great interest in current events and is "abreast of the times." He is interested in politics and to an interviewer from the Herald he talked entertainingly on a variety of subjects, from statesmanship to the press, regarding which he holds some emphatic views. He does not believe that the newspapers of today wield anything like the influence of journals of the past, and regrets to think of it. However, he would not be quoted, either on current politics or on the public press.

"I have nothing to say to the people of New England," said he, "for I do not see why I should issue a statement or give an interview for them. 'Story, God bless you; I've none to tell, sir.' This about sums up my attitude."

"Doctor, how does it feel to be 86?"

"It feels just like it always did," he answered. "There is no difference." And plainly to this man the mere fact of being far past three score years and ten has no terrors, and holds no disadvantages. He looks upon life with the same youthful zest as in the past.

A magazine writer, with a scheme to enable the human race to live 150 years, a short time ago called upon Dr. Hale. The author of "A Man Without a Country," was not interested in his project.

"I should as lief," said he, "live in one world as another."

Dr. Hale was remembered by the Lend-a-Hand Society, of whom he was the founder, the remembrance taking the form of messages of congratulation and flowers.

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HE FOUND HIS WIFE MARRIED TO ANOTHER

Chattanooga, Tenn., April 10.—Returning to his home near Jonesboro, Tenn., after he had been mourned as dead for five years, John T. Strong found his wife, now thirty two years old, married to William Curtis and two children born of this union. Curtis had married Mrs. Strong fully believing her husband was dead. When Strong returned to his home he greeted the new family cordially. It was decided to allow Mrs. Strong-Curtis to settle the perplexing matter by deciding between the two men. She chose her first husband and now Curtis, who says he loves her will institute formal proceedings to annul the marriage between himself and the woman. Strong has been in the army in the Phillipines.

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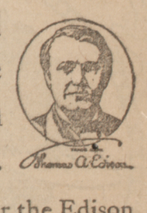


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