

cessary. It tended to make the pastoral relation permanent, and to draw forth the best efforts of the pastor in behalf of his people. He could feel at home among them, and lay his plans for the whole of life. It tended to make him a diligent student, for he had no expectation of moving to the next parish, to live upon the pulpit preparations of past years. Necessity was laid upon him to study and grow, mentally, to meet the wants of a people with whom he expected to die.

It tended to make him a diligent laborer in his fields, either in person, or in directing the labors of others, for he could expect to reap the harvests of the fields that he sowed, and to eat the fruits of the trees that he planted. He could gather around him the comforts of a permanent home in the country, and expect to enjoy it while he lived.

This policy of our fathers fostered a love of agricultural pursuits among the clergy, and some of the best farmers the state has ever produced, have been connected with this profession. Jared Elliot, of Killingworth, was a good type of the Connecticut clergyman of the last century. Says his biographer: "He published agricultural essays, and devised various ways for draining swamps in the interior, and also for reclaiming marshes from the sea. He was very industrious and methodical, and was particularly careful, that whatever he undertook should be well executed. It is difficult to conceive how one could be successful in such a variety of pursuits as those in which he was engaged; for he seldom failed in any undertaking. He possessed a very large estate in land, which consisted of farms in various sections of the State. These were generally better cultivated, and furnished more profits than those of his neighbours. Amid all his avocations, as a farmer and physician, he was distinguished for his piety and talents as a clergyman. So conscientious was he in the discharge of his duties as a Minister, that he always so contrived his journeys as to be with his people, if possible, on Sundays; and for forty successive years in the course of his ministry, he never omitted preaching either at home or abroad, on the Lord's day."

Owing to the insecurity of the pastoral relation and other causes, there has been a great change in the habits of the clergy in regard to agricultural pursuits. The parsonage lands in many of the towns have been sold, and invested in stocks paying larger dividends. The parsonage itself in many of the parishes, especially in vil-

lages and cities, has disappeared, and the pastoral relation has become a matter of convenience between the contracting parties. Ministers have been virtually thrown back into a sort of nomadic life, having about as little attachment to the soil of their parishes, as the Arabs of the desert. They form no strong attachments, and for slight causes they ask dismissal of their own prompting, or to suit the caprice of the people. This instability of the pastoral office is by no means confined to the cities and villages. Rural parishes are quite as much infested with the love of change, and statistics will show even shorter pastorates.

It is not then altogether an irrelevant question that we propose to discuss, viz: What can ministers do to promote the interests of agriculture? The leading secular interest of three-fourths of our parishes is husbandry, and the temporal prosperity of these communities must wax, or wane, with the cultivation of the soil. For want of a better method of agriculture, many of these parishes have declined in wealth and population, very steadily from 1810 to 1850, and if the decline has been arrested, it has been within the last ten years. Many other parishes have remained about stationary, within the same forty years, while the increase of our wealth and population has been mainly confined to our cities and villages. The improvement of these rural parishes, their steady increase in population, wealth, the means of education, and of religious culture, depends mainly upon the improvement of their agriculture.

Clergymen in these parishes then, have a vital interest in agriculture, and may as legitimately labour to promote it, as to labour for the cause of education, or of temperance, or for anything else, outside of their profession. But it will be said perhaps, by some pastors, and by not a few of their hearers, that a minister ought to confine himself strictly to professional labours within the bounds of his own parish. It is undoubtedly true, that the details of parochial duty are enough to absorb the sympathies, and to occupy all the energies of the best men in the ministry. No parish is so small that it does not afford ample field for the display of the best talents in our churches. But religious sympathy is not a material thing, that it can be confined to the bounds of one parish. The charity which begins at home is least likely to end there. The pastor who finds more than enough to do at home, is the man, of all others, to put his hand to the work that needs doing abroad. It is not because our whole American population is