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OTTAWA, WEDNESDAY, OCT. 4, 1905.

The late Samuel Bingham, at one time mayor of the city, who was drowned upon the Gattineau in June last, left an estate valued at \$221,000. There are bequests to the amount of \$25,000, of which \$14,500 goes to Roman Catholic and Protestant religious, educational and charitable institutions.

One of our ministers, Rev. W. T. Allison of Stayner, is contributing a series of articles on the Early Reformers—Luther, Knox, Calvin and Latimer—to the Orange Sentinel. The first treats of Martin Luther, who is described as one of the best known men of history. The series promises to be specially interesting and useful. We constantly require to be reminded of our indebtedness to the brave men of bygone centuries for the large measure of civil and religious liberty we now enjoy.

Surgeon-General Suzuki, of the Japanese navy, fresh from the battles of the Japanese and Yellow Seas, declared with affecting earnestness and sincerity before the Railroad Y.M.C.A. Convention at Detroit that he had been for 20 years a Christian, and that his wife and five children shared his belief. His eldest son had been the first to become a convert, having been interested at first through an accidental visit to a Christian meeting while walking along the streets of Tokio. Next the wife had been converted through the influence of her son, and all the family had followed in the steps of these two.

It is one of the most encouraging signs of the times that in a gathering convened by Hindus and Mohammedans, a Christian should be asked to open the proceedings with a prayer. A few days after the earthquake of the 4th of April some prominent Hindus of Dehra convened a meeting of thanksgiving for preserving the people of the station from the danger of the earthquake. The real movers and organizers of this gathering were non-Christians. It was open to the public. Hindus and Mohammedans and Christians filled the spacious hall of the local mission school. At the request of the organizers of the meeting the chair was taken by the Rev. Grant Jones, Presbyterian Missionary, and the Rev. B. M. Bose offered the opening prayer.

## RURAL EVANGELISM

At the Winona Bible conference a paper was read by Rev. Charles O. Bemis on "Evangelistic Work in the Rural Districts," and the message was considered of so much importance that the evangelistic committee of the conference has taken steps to have it printed and placed in the hands of every pastor within bounds of that conference. A writer in the Presbyterian Banner in summarizing the important points of the message says that unconsciously, perhaps, but none the less certainly, the Presbyterian Church, leading as it is the world in evangelistic effort, has allowed its energies to become centered in and its whole thought to be occupied by the evangelization of the larger cities. The "simultaneous movement," always attractive, sometimes spectacular with its army of evangelists, its soloists and mighty choruses, its flaming headlines and midnight parades and its startling conversions, has filled the eye and held the attention of the church to the utter neglect of the rural district. And while she urges, by letter and leaflet, upon the struggling country church the necessity of earnest evangelistic work she still devotes her splendid equipment of men and money (chiefly drawn from the country) to the evangelization of the city. How far the message referred to—which dealt specially with conditions in the United States—will fit the conditions prevailing in Canada we are not prepared to say, but we consider the summary published by the Banner sufficiently important to justify its publication in the Dominion Presbyterian.

In the course of his address Mr. Bemis pointed out how utterly dependent is the city upon the rural regions for fresh material in every thing—food, clothing, light, heat, and above all, for the new rich blood of men and women without which the city must become anaemic and perish in a few generations. It is a fact well known and readily recognized, that a large majority of successful business men, professional and industrial men in the large cities, were reared in the country. The same rule obtains in the Church. A vast majority of the working force of the city church, as well as seven-eighths of its ministers, are from her great source of supply—the rural district. Now if the supply of red blood and grey brain and Spirit-filled soul is to be kept up the rural church, the source of the stream, must be kept pure and vigorous and progressive.

### AN ALARMING CONDITION.

It is a startling fact that while the Church has been taking such forward strides and so many large cities have been stirred and awakened and purged and vitalized, the rural church has gone backward. Because of the constant draining of the best life of the country to supply the demands of the city and the leaving of a residue which the city cannot use, there is in the rural district a constantly increasing proportion of indifferent, ambitionless people who, living on a lower plain of life physically, mentally, socially, politically and morally become more and more a burden and a hindrance to vital Christianity. The local country church is the key to the rural regions, yet the best-equipped pastors are, as a rule, shunning the country because of its "small field," and furthermore, because of an undefined and un-Christian reproach which attaches to a "country preacher."

The rural church is easily seen to be the source of supply for the whole Church, for laborers in both the foreign and home mission fields. That source has been failing because the Church has neglected to give back to it as it receives from it. The very sea, if it refuses to give back to the mountain brook in refreshing showers, must soon become lifeless and foul.

Referring to the urgent appeal for more ministers, Mr. Bemis said: "We have heard reasons without number for the lack of candidates for the ministry; every reason has been given except the true one. If there is a decrease in the number of candidates for the ministry, and the candidates (seven-eighths of them) come from the rural churches, and the rural churches have degenerated, then the only vital reason for the dearth of candidates is that the rural church has been deliberately allowed to go backward. Reinvigorate the country church and you revitalize the whole Church in all of its activities; for the supply of workers comes from the country."

### STARTLING STATISTICS.

Any one who will take the trouble to look up the statistics of our own denomination for the past decade cannot fail to realize that the question of rural evangelism is a vital one. Personally I believe that the rural church problem is the supreme demand upon the Church in our day and that its solution must be the next great movement. Let there be a great "simultaneous movement" in the country and there will be infinitely less need for them in the city; but until something is done for the regions outside the walls the simultaneous movement of the city must be made a continuous performance.

Classing as "rural" all churches in places of 2,000 and under Mr. Bemis has found that in eight years ending 1901, the rural churches in the Synod of Maryland fell behind the progress of the Church as a whole by thirteen and a half per cent., and showed a net gain of only seventy-seven members in eight years! Less than ten per year for the whole synod!

One country church in Illinois, which has sent out twenty preachers and missionaries, is now dead. In the Synod of Ohio, taking a section running through the centre from north to south, including the Presbyteries of Huron, Columbus, Chillicothe and Portsmouth, the rural churches fell behind the whole Church almost nineteen and a half per cent. in eight years and showed an actual loss of 285 members; an annual decrease of 35.

### THE REMEDY.

The problem of rural evangelization does not differ essentially from the problem of city evangelization, and the two ought to have been made one. There is a cry now that every country pastor must become an evangelist and the rural district be evangelized by its own ministry. The great Presbyterian Church may not so lightly shift its responsibility nor so easily solve its most difficult problem. The country pastor can no more evangelize the country than can the city pastor evangelize the city; nor has the church a right, after robbing him of his best men and women and his financial support, to supply the ever-increasing demands of the church, to ask him to do single-handed in the country what the Church is giving a hundred of its best-equipped preachers and hundreds of thousands of dollars to aid the pastor to do in the city. Two things are essential to large evangelistic movements—men and money. For reasons patent the rural church cannot furnish the men, nor sufficiently finance such movements. The headwaters are not only falling, but by the process already described, they have become polluted. It is futile to purify the pool in the city when the spring in the country is fetid and fever-laden. Let the mighty Church, like the mighty ocean, give freely of the living waters, something of the very best she has received, back again unto the springs, the sources of her life, that the stream of healing, flowing forth from the rural church, like Ezekiel's river from under the sanctuary, may carry healing and life and purity and fertility upon its waves, and reaching even unto the great sea may "heal the waters thereof."