

I was thinking of one of her facts the other day — she has so many — but one I had noticed very plainly: the man who lives close to her is an optimist.

Let the farmer fail year after year, and still he plants, hoping. Let the merchant fall behind one year and he is shaken; another year, and he quits. One season of deep water-hauling sends the fisherman home to his fields. When the wild game vanishes the pioneer hunter becomes the pioneer farmer. The merchant, the lawyer, the doctor, — there never was one who did not dream, sometimes, over his books, that he would yet live to retire and till his acres.

Every failure in life goes back to the soil for a new start.

That is the fact; now for the rule. It is this: God intended that man should be, first of all, a soil-worker. And tilling the soil includes not only planting, but bringing all growing and living things thereon to strength.

Rearing things on the soil is man's natural vocation, since neither drought, nor flood, nor failure, can shut out from his heart that instinct of hope which has come down through so many centuries of soil-loving ancestors. The hoping instinct has been housed in him so long that it is part of his heredity.

Maritime nations found empires, but not religions. Religions come from the soil. Men, living in the open, watching their flocks by night, find