

9620

REPORT  
of  
COMMITTEE ON THESIS

3

THE undersigned, acting as a committee of  
the Graduate School, have read the accompanying  
thesis submitted by Andrew J. Boe  
for the degree of Master of Arts.  
They approve it as a thesis meeting the require-  
ments of the Graduate School of the University of  
Minnesota, and recommend that it be accepted in  
partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
degree of Master of Arts.

Saml Quigley  
Chairman

A. W. Rankin

E. Dana Duane

June 2 1915

THE PROBLEM OF THE RURAL CHURCH IN MINNESOTA

A Thesis

Submitted to the  
Faculty of the Graduate School  
of the  
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of  
MASTER OF ARTS

UNIVERSITY OF  
MINNESOTA  
By  
LIBRARY

Andrew J. Boe

Minneapolis, Minnesota

1 9 1 4

Degree Granted 1915

MDM  
8 B632

## THE PROBLEM OF THE RURAL CHURCH IN MINNESOTA

The rural church problem is being recognized by both church and educational authorities, as becoming serious. Heretofore practically all attention has been paid to city conditions on account of their growing complexity.

INTRODUCTION While city conditions have demanded a more immediate solution, we cannot overlook the fact that the institutions of the home, school and church are subject to influence in the country as well as in the city.

SURVEYS OF RURAL COMMUNITIES Some very valuable work has been accomplished toward the solution of the rural problem. Much credit is due the Presbyterian Church, which has already, through its Board of Home Missions, made good surveys of several states. The International Committee of the Y. M. C. A. has also done creditable work. Others dealing with the rural church problem are Joseph K. Hart in his "Educational Resources of Village and Rural Communities," and Garland Bricker in "Solving

Page two

the Country Church Problem."

The object of this thesis is to throw a little more light upon a particular field, namely that of Minnesota. While a solution is not attempted, it is hoped that the thesis will add toward a solution of the rural church problem in Minnesota.

DEFINITION OF A RURAL COMMUNITY Many vague and conflicting conceptions as to what constitutes a rural community give rise to much confusion in the discussion of the problem. Some have thought of the rural community as a farm neighborhood or rural village; others have defined the field as everything outside of cities characterized by genuine urban conditions, that is, cities of 20,000 inhabitants and over. The census of 1900 includes in the rural community class everything outside of cities of 4000 inhabitants. For the sake of obtaining accurate statistics, and to eliminate urban conditions as much as possible, I have accepted the definition of the census board for 1910, namely, that a rural

Page three

community is everything which lies outside of centers of population of 2500 and more. This limit gives ample room to both urban and rural statistics.

Dangers IN THE TREATMENT OF THE SUBJECT      There are many fallacies to be guarded against in the treatment of a subject of this nature:

1. Sufficient data must be gathered to make possible a fair general estimate. What applies to a single community does not necessarily apply to the state as a whole.

2. I have sought to be careful in not mistaking conservatism for decadence or bareness.

3. It must not be inferred that the problem of the country church is the same as that of the city.

It is very easy in the discussion of such a problem to be dogmatic rather than scientific. In the study of the rural community, therefore, we must seek not to broaden the church so as to cover every activity of the community. The rural problem is complex and

Page four

cannot, therefore, be brought within the scope of the church, alone. There are other forces as well, which play their parts, and important ones; as the home, the school, vocations, and social life in general. The church has its own individual problem, and this is only one of the many problems of the rural community.

THE PROBLEM            My special task is to present a survey  
   of the rural church of Minnesota, with  
the object in view of shedding light on some of the  
problems arising from characteristics of the physical  
field and the population.

The question is discussed as follows:

I. A SURVEY OF THE TERRITORY OF THE RURAL CHURCH.

- a. Of the purely physical territory. Under this topic, Minnesota's rural territory is described with reference to its land surface, uncultivated lands, land in farms, average size of farms, and farm operators, with their effects on the rural population,

Page five

community and church.

- b. Of the population residing in rural territory. A statistical description is given of the characteristics of the total and strictly rural population, by counties and nationalities throughout and drawing a comparison between Minnesota and other states.

The object of the survey of the territory of the rural church is to bring to light the different problems which may arise from its characteristics. These problems will form the basis for the discussion in the second division of the thesis.

## II. FORCES WHICH INFLUENCE THE RURAL CHURCH OF MINNESOTA AS OPPORTUNITIES AND OBSTACLES

- a. Immigration. Under this head, immigration is defined as foreign and that from our sister states, each topic, with its

Page six

effects, being treated separately.

c. Migration of Minnesota's rural population and its effect upon the church. This topic divides itself naturally into three divisions:

1. Migration of the young people to cities.

2. Migration of farmers to different parts of the state.

3. Owners and tenants. This question is considered under Migration because of the tendency of tenantry to create instability within the rural population.

d. The Language Problem. This problem will naturally arise because of the strong foreign element within the state.

e. Rural Economic Conditions.

I. A SURVEY OF THE TERRITORY OF THE RURAL CHURCH

Minnesota presents a peculiar and varied field for church work. The northeastern tier of counties is dis-



Page seven

tinguished for the mining industry for which Minnesota is famous. In practically the same territory, a few counties south, lumbering is carried on quite extensively. The northwestern tier of counties, constituting the Minnesota side of the famous Red River Valley, affords a different field, where cheap and good agriculture land is abundant. Central and southern Minnesota, though more highly developed, is likewise strictly agricultural.

The mining and lumbering districts of Minnesota do not present a typical rural church problem. Their problem is more one of labor and is considered as such by the state, according to the 13th Biennial Report of the Bureau of Labor given out in Minnesota in 1911-1912. In the report mentioned, even cities with a population of 2500 and less are included. Questions of congestion, housing, labor unions, etc., which are foreign to the rural communities as a whole, are some of the problems which confront the mining and lumbering districts and therefore cannot be included in the rural church problem.

Page eight

It is almost impossible to find a strictly rural community in the mining and lumbering districts. Even their centers of population, which very often reach far beyond the 2500 mark, are not stable centers, but move from time to time with the development of the industry. Thus a center of population may today be several miles from its original location. The mining district, however, covers a comparatively small area, being limited to St. Louis and Cook counties, although the territory around Brainerd has been found to contain rich iron deposits and is being developed rapidly.

It is now noticed that every section of Minnesota, except the mining and lumbering sections, presents a rural problem, and consequently a rural church problem.

In the following discussion a detailed survey of the physical field of the rural church is presented. This will make possible a more complete study of the effect on the rural church of the nature of the territory in which it is operating.

1. LAND SURFACE The state of Minnesota comprises 86 counties

Page nine

with a total area of 51,749,120 acres of land surfaces; according to the 1910 census 27,675,823 acres are in farms, of which only 19,643,533 acres are under cultivation, representing 70% of the number of acres in farms, and 38% of the total acreage of the state. The total acreage of farm land increased during the last decade 1,427,325 acres, or 5.4%, with a corresponding increase of improved land of 1,200,948 acres.

a. UNCULTIVATED LAND

From these figures it will be seen that Minnesota has yet a large amount of land which is not in farms and consequently uncultivated. If we subtract the 27,675,823 acres already in farms from the total acreage of 51,749,120, there still remains 24,073,297 acres, of which Prof. Boss of the Minnesota State Agricultural School estimates 71% is capable of being divided into farms and cultivated. Assuming Prof. Boss's estimate as correct, it will be natural to conclude that Minnesota's rural territory is bound to face a heavy immigration within the next few years. It has been determined by the State Commission

of Immigration that the increase in farm land acreage during the last decade was almost entirely due to immigration.

b. EFFECT UPON THE RURAL CHURCH    The effect upon the rural church is significant.    The natural boundary will be the 27,675,823 acres in farms.    In this connection it must be remembered that rural territory was defined as everything outside centers of population of 2500 and more.    All these centers depend mostly upon the surrounding agricultural territory for their support, and naturally the churches in these centers and other rural territory must do the same.

It will further be noticed that the rural church as yet, by no means, covers the entire state, and that there still remains a vast territory for its future growth and operation.    Minnesota is a comparatively new state and is still in its infancy as far as development is concerned.    It has large tracts of unconquered land which bid fair for both church and economic growth.

2. LAND SURFACE IN FARMS    The Minnesota census report for 1910,

Page eleven

shows that the 27,675,823 acres in farms, are divided into 156,137 farms, an increase of 1,478 or 1% since 1900. It is a notable fact that this increase has taken place mostly in the north-western and north-eastern parts of the state, where much wild and uncultivated land is found. This is contrary to the opinion many have held, namely, that the farms throughout the state have been divided and consequently have decreased in size.

a. AVERAGE SIZE OF FARMS Together with this, another fact must be considered. Since 1900, the average size of Minnesota farms has increased from 169.7 acres to 177.3 acres. This change in size is partly due to the fact that the largest increase in the number of farms was in the class of 260 to 499 acres, with a decrease in the number of farms ranging from 20 to 174 acres. The increase in size of farms, furthermore, according to the 1910 Census, did not take place in districts where new land was purchased, nor was it caused by the increase in size of the so-called "large farm,"

Page twelve

of 1000 acres and over, as this class of farm has decreased 17.8%. It was found to have taken place in the old established communities where many farmers had added from 40 to 80 acres to their farms instead of selling off a few acres to diminish them.

MACHINERY    Concerning the above fact, Prof. Boss says:

PRODUCES

ECONOMY

"The average farmer can handle 240 acres to better advantage than he can handle 160 acres. Improved machinery has made it more economical for a farmer to operate a 200 acre farm than one of 160 acres. Farmers are compelled to make use of costly machinery owing to the cost and scarcity of labor. With the machinery, they are able to farm more land, and it is practical economy to farm more."    Furthermore, Prof. Boss said that farming can be carried on with greatest economy, assuming that the conditions are average, on farms of an area from 240 to 320 acres. According to another statement he made, he predicted that the average size of farms in Minnesota will continue to increase until an average of 200 acres is reached.

b. EFFECT UPON THE RURAL POPULATION If we judge from the facts shown above, from the 1910 Census, and incidentally from Prof. Boss' prediction, the settled parts of Minnesota's rural districts are bound to face a decrease in population unless the farmers employ a larger number of laborers. The 1910 Census shows that Minnesota's rural population really has decreased during the last decade. The 1910 census reports that 38 counties out of the total 86 have suffered a decrease in rural population, ranging from .02% in Norman County to 12.4% in Blue Earth County. The southern and central counties, which are the oldest established rural communities, report by far the largest decrease.

c. FORCES WHICH CAUSE A DECREASE IN POPULATION There are undoubtedly other forces which have been instrumental in causing the decrease, such as the fact that over half of Minnesota's farmers are foreign born, mostly around the ages 45-65 years. Although as a rule these have large families, they are at an age when their sons and daughters are grown, and have either drifted to the

cities or have migrated to other states to settle on homesteads and cheap lands. There seemed, however, to be no question in the minds of the State Commissioners of Immigration but that the increase in size of farms has had a tendency to decrease the population.

3. F A R M      The Census for 1910 reports 123,326 out  
OPERATORS      of the 156, 137 farms as operated by owners and managers, against 127,904 out of 154,659 farms in 1900. The same board reports further that in 1910 there were 32,811 farms operated by tenants against 26,755 in 1900.

It is significant that while there was an increase of 1,478 in the total number of farms during the last decade, the number operated by owners decreased 4,578, and the number operated by tenants increased 6,056. The effect of this important fact will be discussed later.

b. TOTAL      Minnesota has a total population of  
POPULATION      2,075,708, of which 1,225,414 are reported as being found in rural territory, which as stated before, includes centers of population of 2500 and less,



Page fifteen

plus all other rural territory. During the last decade, the rural population witnessed an increase of 87,615 or 7.7%. The total rural population is strikingly foreign. Of the total foreign white element in the state --urban and rural--Germany, Sweden, and Norway have contributed the largest number. Each of the following countries have contributed from 2% to 7.6%: Canada, Austria, England, Ireland, Finland, and Russia. Germany, Sweden and Norway's contributions range from 18.1 to 26.7%. The table on the next page is significant.

Table No. 1 shows that during the last decade, the proportion of native whites in the population has increased from 70% to 74%, that of native parentage from 22.8% to 26.7%, while the percentage of the foreign born population has decreased 8.9% during the same period. Practically no change is found in the percentage of those of mixed and foreign parentage.

These facts suggest two important problems which are of vital interest to the church. They are the question of foreign immigration and that of language in

Table No. 1

Class	Number		PER CENT of Total		INCREASE or DECREASE
	1910	1900	1910	1900	
Total					
Total population	1,225,414	1,163,294	100%	100%	
Native white	917,937	817,763	74%	70%	+12.25%
Native parentage	326,760	260,663	26.7%	22.6%	+26.41%
Foreign parentage	412,986		33.7%		
Mixed parentage	178,191	755,200	14.6%	>48.8%	+6.0%
Foreign born white	297,968	326,001	24.3%	28.3%	-8.9%

church services.

1. CHARACTERISTICS OF POPULATION BY COUNTRIES Every county in Minnesota has a larger native born population than foreign. The foreign born population for the state as a whole is quite equally divided between Germany, Norway and Sweden. Of those actually born in foreign countries the Norwegians are the most numerous in thirty-one counties. The German born in twenty-six counties. The Swedish born are the most numerous in twenty-five counties. Russian born in one county, namely Cottonwood, and the Danish born in the county of Lincoln. Norwegian born are the most numerous in the following counties: Becker, Beltrami, Blue Earth, Chipewa, Clay, Clearwater, Cook, Crow Wing, Dodge, Fillmore, Freeborn, Mower, Murray, Norman, Otter Tail, Polk, Pope, Roseau, Stevens, Swift, Watonwan, Wilkin, Yellow Medicine, Houston, Koochiching, and Lac qui Parle, Lyon, Mahnomen, Marshall, and Pennington. The Swedish born in Aitkin, Anoka, Cass, Bigstone, Carlton, Chisago, Douglas, Faribault, Goodhue, Mille Lacs, Nicollet, Pine, St. Louis,

Page seventeen

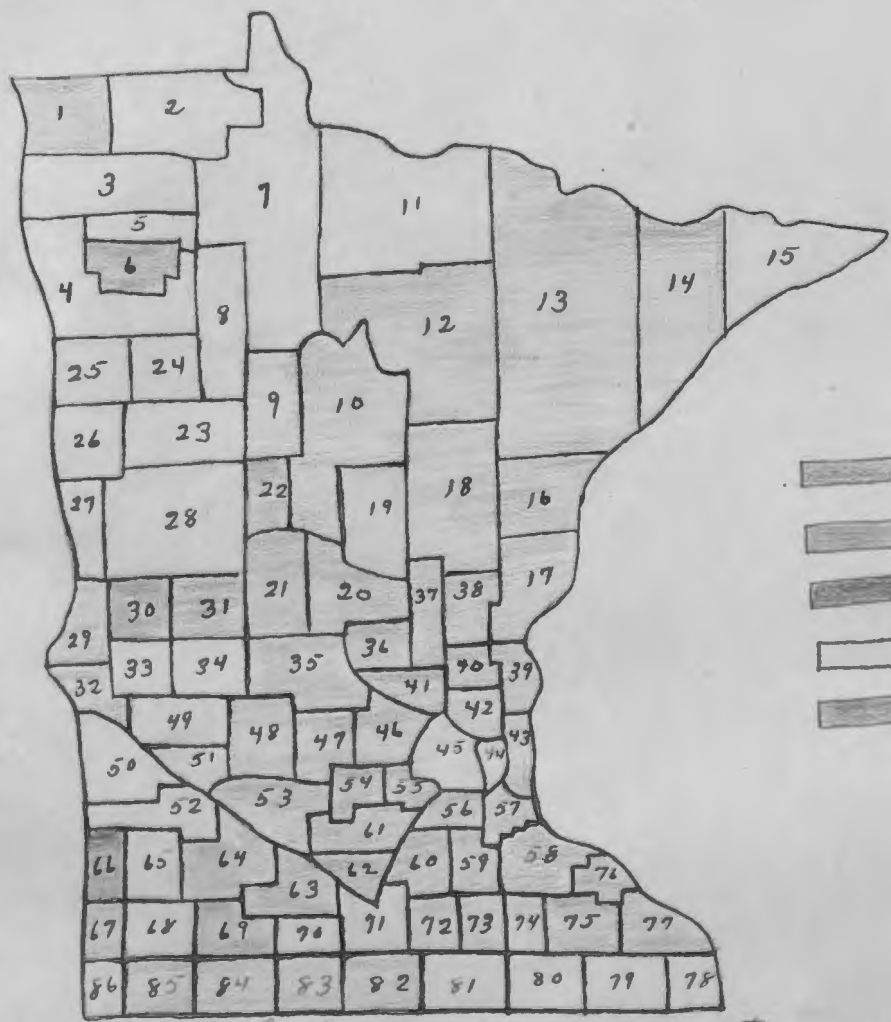
Sherburne, Traverse, Washington, Wright, Hubbard, Isanti, Itasca, Kanabec, Kandiyohi, Kittson, Lake, Meeker. The German born in Benton, Brown, Carver, Dakota, Grant, Nobles, Morrison, Olmsted, Pipestone, Red Lake, Redwood, Renville, Rice, Scott, Sibley, Stearns, Steele, Todd, Wabasha, Wadena, Waseca, Winona, Jackson, Le Sueur, McLeod, and Martin. The map on the following page will indicate the distribution.






a. COMPARISON OF NATIONALITIES It is an interesting fact that although the Swedish and German foreign born each outnumber the Norwegian foreign born, they hold the plurality in fewer counties than the Norwegian. But wherever the Swedish had the plurality, it was overwhelming, which shows them to be more clannish. Nearly half of the Swedish immigrants to this state are found to have settled in the cities, while the Norwegian and German have settled more on farms and in small villages.

In only one of the 86 counties is the percentage of foreign born whites less than 15; in 56 counties it ranges from 15 to 25; in 22 counties from 25 to 35, in

- 1 - Kittson.
- 2 - Roseau.
- 3 - Marshall.
- 4 - Polk.
- 5 - Pennington.
- 6 - Red Lake.
- 7 - Beltrami.
- 8 - Clearwater.
- 9 - Hubbard.
- 10 - Cass.
- 11 - Koochiching.
- 12 - Stasca.
- 13 - St Louis.
- 14 - Lake.
- 15 - Cook.
- 16 - Carleton.
- 17 - Pine.
- 18 - Aitkin.
- 19 - Crow Wing.
- 20 - Morrison.
- 21 - Todd.
- 22 - Itasca.
- 23 - Becker.
- 24 - Mahanomen.
- 25 - Norman.
- 26 - Clay.
- 27 - Wilkin.
- 28 - Otter Tail.
- 29 - Traverse.
- 30 - Grant.
- 31 - Douglas.
- 32 - Big Stone.
- 33 - Stevens.
- 34 - Pope.
- 35 - Stearns.
- 36 - Benton.
- 37 - Mille Lacs.
- 38 - Kanibec.
- 39 - Chisago.
- 40 - Isanti.
- 41 - Sherburne.
- 42 - Anoka.
- 43 - Washington.
- 44 - Ramsey.
- 45 - Hennepin.
- 46 - Wright.
- 47 - Melker.
- 48 - Kandiyohi.
- 49 - Swift.
- 50 - Lac Qui Parle.
- 51 - Chippewa.
- 52 - Yellow Medicine.
- 53 - Renville.

Each color represents the foreign nationality most numerous in each county.



-  Swedish.
-  German.
-  Danish.
-  Norwegian.
-  Russian.

- |                |                  |                 |
|----------------|------------------|-----------------|
| 54 - McLeod.   | 67 - Pipestone.  | 80 - Mower.     |
| 55 - Carver.   | 68 - Murray.     | 81 - Freeborn.  |
| 56 - Scott.    | 69 - Cottonwood. | 82 - Faribault. |
| 57 - Dakota.   | 70 - Watanwan.   | 83 - Martin.    |
| 58 - Goodhue.  | 71 - Blue Earth. | 84 - Lac        |
| 59 - Rice.     | 72 - Waseca.     | 85 - No         |
| 60 - Le Sueur. | 73 - Steele.     | 86 - Rice       |
| 61 - Sibley.   | 74 - Dodge.      |                 |
| 62 - Nicollet. | 75 - Elmstead.   |                 |
| 63 - Brown.    | 76 - Wabasha.    |                 |
| 64 - Red Wood. | 77 - Winona.     |                 |
| 65 - Lyon.     | 78 - Houston.    |                 |
| 66 - Lincoln.  | 79 - Fillmore.   |                 |

Page eighteen

7 counties it exceeds 35%. In 35 counties the proportion of native whites of foreign or mixed parentage exceeds one-half.

A different situation exists in Minnesota's strictly rural territory, that is, all territory outside of cities, villages and boroughs. The strictly rural territory has a population of 899,248. There are in the state 156,137 farmers, that is, operators of farms, of which 74,710 or 47.9% are native born, 81,134 or 52% are foreign born white, and 0.2% negro and non-white. Of the foreign born white farmers, the following facts are notable--See table II on the next page.

The 1910 Census Board was the first to determine the nationality of the farmers, making a comparison with former years impossible.

b. RELATIVE STRENGTH OF NATIONALITIES AMONG FARMERS      The table, however, shows the relative strength of foreign nationalities among the farmers of Minnesota. While the foreign born Germans, as an individual nationality, are the most numerous, the Swedes, Norwegians, and Danes, as a

Table No 2.

Where born	Foreign born Farm Operators	
	Total Number	Number Per cent distribution
	81,026	
Germany	22,011	27.17%
Sweden	19,760	24.39%
Norway	19,206	23.70%
Canada	3,683	4.42%
Denmark	3,432	4.21%
Austria	3,386	4.18%
Other European	9,649	11.9%

Page nineteen

class called Scandinavians, outnumber any other class of nationalities; the Scandinavian born farmers constitute over one-half the total number of foreign born farmers, and about 30% of the total number of farmers in the state.

c. MINNESOTA LEADS ALL STATES IN FOREIGN BORN OPERATORS If the proportion of the number of foreign born to the total number of farm operators in the state is figured out, it will be found that Minnesota leads all other states in having the largest proportion of foreign born farm operators. The proportion found is 52% foreign and 48% native born, while that of North Dakota which comes next, is 48% foreign and 52% native born.

CONCLUSION OF THE FIRST DIVISION This brings us to a conclusion of the first division of the thesis. In the preceding discussion an effort has been made to present a general survey of the field the rural church is to cultivate. The characteristics of the physical field as well as of the population have been brought out so as to form a basis for the second main division. In this



Page twenty

division the problems and forces which were foreshadowed and anticipated in the general survey will be discussed more fully.

For the sake of clearness, the question of immigration is considered under two headings: first, foreign immigration, which includes all who have immigrated to Minnesota's rural territory from foreign countries; and second, immigration from sister states, including under this topic those who have migrated from other states and settled in Minnesota's rural districts.

This distinction will aid in avoiding a misinterpretation of the word immigration.

## II. FORCES WHICH INFLUENCE THE RURAL CHURCH, AS OBSTACLES AND OPPORTUNITIES

It will be noticed from the different tables that the foreign immigration to Minnesota's rural districts has been very large in the past. Table No. 1 showed, however, that the foreign born constituted only 24.3% of the total population in 1910 as compared with 28.3% in 1900, while there was a correspondingly large increase

in the proportion of the native born population. The whole state, as a matter of fact, has witnessed a decrease in the proportion of foreign born. This does

A. FOREIGN IMMIGRATION not mean that Minnesota has fewer foreign born people today than ten years ago, but the rate of increase has declined considerably. It is of special interest that the rural territory has actually witnessed an absolute decrease in the number of foreign born people, the number in 1900 being 326,001 and in 1910 297,698. It is furthermore significant that in the state as a whole in 1910 36.01% of the male and 37.05% of the female foreign born whites were between the ages 46 to 64 years, these percentages being over 16% higher than for any other age. This gives added strength to the former statement showing foreign immigration to have been heavier in the past than now.

It would in fact seem peculiar if a heavy foreign immigration, as Minnesota's rural territory has experienced in the past, would not affect the rural church in some material way. The membership would naturally

Page twenty-two

be affected first of all, especially because such a large number has arrived from Protestant countries,-- Norway, Germany, and Sweden. A heavy immigration from such countries would affect both Catholic and Protestant churches.

(a) EFFECTS OF  
IMMIGRATION ON  
RURAL CHURCH

Many churches would naturally extend themselves to their financial limit in order to prepare accommodations for the foreign immigrants. This would in turn have an effect on the church debt.

It is with these thoughts in mind that the effect of foreign immigration on the church is discussed. It is found convenient to discuss the question under the two heads, the effect of foreign immigration on church membership and the effect of foreign immigration on church debt.

1. THE EFFECT OF FOREIGN IMMIGRATION ON CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

The Census report on religious bodies for 1906 reveals the fact that the church bodies not affected by foreign immigration have changed very little, if any,

Page twenty-three

in relative strength. It furthermore shows that the bodies most affected are the Roman Catholic, Lutheran, German Evangelical Synod and the Eastern Orthodox churches.

a. CATHOLIC AND LUTHERANS Two of these bodies are particularly strong in rural  
AFFECTED BY IMMIGRATION

Minnesota, namely, the Lutheran and the Roman Catholic.

This is partly due to the heavy immigration in the past.

The same Census report also shows that the Catholic church is very dependent on foreign immigration. This fact is further strengthened by statistics which show that during the period 1890-1906, rural Minnesota changed from a Catholic to a Protestant, and more particularly a Lutheran territory.

CATHOLICS LOST WHILE THE 1890 AND 1906 RELIGIOUS CEN-  
PROTESTANTS GAINED  
IN LAST DECADE sus shows the fact that the Cath-  
olic church has lost relatively in membership and strength in the state during the last 15 years, while the Protestant church has gained. The Catholic was found to have gained in the larger centers towards which there has been a strong foreign immigration, while the Protestant church

has gained in centers and communities less affected by foreign immigration. Taking the state as a whole, the Catholic church lost 2% in membership between the years 1890-1906, while the Protestant church gained 3% in membership during the same period.

In order to show the effect of the foreign element on church membership, the survey of a township in southern Minnesota, made by Mr. Thompson and Mr. Warber, is of value.

They found that the Scandinavians and Germans gave

b. EFFECT OF PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS ON CHURCH MEMBERSHIP evidence of being the strongest church members and supporters.

It was determined that 93% of the Scandinavian families were church members. It was noteworthy that the younger generation of Norwegians were not as good church members as the older generation. This fact Mr. Thompson and Mr. Warber laid to the parochial schools which served to keep up their language, customs, and faith, and which made them avoid, to a great extent, the breaking up of church connections which the Germans have witnessed. Beside the parochial schools,

it was found that the fact that the Norwegians must be confirmed and were kept in Young People's Societies, had great influence on church membership. They determined that of the total family membership in these auxiliary organizations, which was but 13% of the whole township, 70% were Norwegians.

2. INFLUENCE OF IMMIGRATION ON CHURCH DEBT.

It was determined by the Census for 1906 that the

- a. HIGHLY CENTRALIZED church bodies having the most  
CHURCH BODIES HAVE highly centralized church  
MOST ELABORATE EDIFICES government usually had the

largest congregations and the most elaborate church edifices. The church bodies which contained the most independent congregations were found to have smaller congregations and poorer edifices. This accounts to some extent for the unusually heavy debt borne by the Catholic church in Minnesota, it being per member three times as large as that of any other body. The church body reporting the lowest debt in proportion to membership was the United Norwegian Lutheran Church, the strongest rural church in the state,

330 out of its total 354 congregations lying in rural territory, that is, all territory outside of centers of population containing 2500 and more. The church body with the next smallest debt was the Norwegian Lutheran Synod.

- b. CATHOLIC CHURCH HAS LARGEST DEBT      Immigration has undoubtedly had a great deal to do with church debt.

In the case of a highly centralized church as the Catholic, more elaborate preparations have been made to receive the immigrants. They seem to build more for future needs than any other church bodies. While most church bodies build with the present conditions in view, the Catholic church builds for forty to fifty years to come. Thus, when an organization is enlarged, as by immigration, and a need is felt for a larger church edifice, an elaborate one is usually built, thus placing the congregation under a heavy debt.

The immigration that the Catholic church has received will be found to a large extent in the mining districts of the state, where they work and are paid by the day, many receiving no more than a bare living wage, to

say nothing about paying off a church debt. This has left the rural Catholic church in those districts under a heavy debt.

The Protestant bodies, and more particularly the Lutheran bodies, have received immigrants who have settled on farms and in most cases, as will be shown later, have become land owners. The Protestant bodies, it seems, draw the more thrifty and desirable immigrants from European countries.

3. BENEFITS OF FOREIGN IMMIGRATION Rural Minnesota and her church do not seem to have suffered on account of foreign immigration. Mr. Nesmith has made several statements in the "American Journal of Sociology" for May, 1913, to the effect that the rural church will not make very much progress if filled with European immigrants, who think more of their own customs and language than those of this country and its church. It is difficult to see how this statement can be applied generally. It might be true in a particular community where practically all the people are foreigners.



Page twenty-eight

The bulk of immigration to Minnesota has been, as has been shown, from Germany, Sweden and Norway. It seems to be generally admitted, especially <sup>by</sup> the Commission appointed by ex-president Roosevelt to investigate rural conditions in the United States, that the Northern European immigrant is the most desirable of all immigrants, both in intelligence and in ability to accustom themselves to our American conditions.

a. NORTH EUROPEANS AS CHURCH MEMBERS There is also another fact to be considered in this connection and one which bears more directly on the problem. The Germans, Swedes and Norwegians are noted both in their own as well as other countries for bringing their church with them to whatever place or country they may immigrate; practically all Northern Europeans have been accustomed to associating both church and state, giving their liberal support to both institutions. The church has been to them the life of their community. In fact, country life would be very monotonous if the church did not exist. That they have brought these ideas with them can be

Page twenty-nine

seen from the steady growth of the rural church in Minnesota, particularly the Protestant church.

B. EFFECT UPON THE CHURCH OF IMMIGRATION  
FROM OUR SISTER STATES.

Minnesota gained 25,000 persons by immigration from other states in 1913, according to figures prepared

1. HEAVY IMMIGRATION by Fred D. Sherman, Commissioner  
FROM OTHER STATES

of Immigration. Mr. Sherman, in making this estimate, bases it only on actual statistics which he has gathered. This he admits is far from complete, and if he were to depart from his figures, he would say that the immigration last year was at least 50,000.

a. STATISTICS GATHERED BY MR. SHERMAN More than a month ago, the Commissioner sent out 3000 letters to land dealers in Minnesota, asking them to send him names of persons to whom they had sold land in the state and who had moved here from other states to occupy farms. He received 445 replies, containing the names of 2,853 new settlers who have come from other states, purchased

Page thirty

farms, and are now actually working them. The states contributing these are chiefly Iowa, Illinois, Nebraska, South Dakota and Indiana, in the order named. But nearly every state in the Union helped to swell Minnesota's farm population.

Every county has received some new additions. Pine county seemed the most popular, getting 152 farmers, Cass 117, Swift 116, Beltrami 107, Watonwan 93, Wilkin 65, and the others from that number down to 10, the least for any county. Mr. Sherman makes the conservative estimate that if 445 replies contain 2,853 names of new families, complete returns from the 3000 letters would increase this number to 5000 families.

b. SOUTHERN AND CENTRAL MINNESOTA HAVE RECEIVED LARGEST NUMBERS

A significant feature of the report is that the southern and central parts of Minnesota have received the largest number of immigrants. This indicates, says the commissioner, that the step system is taking place. That is, the Iowa and Illinois farmers are selling their \$200 and \$300 land and buying \$100 land in Southern Minnesota,

Page thirty-one

and these men in turn are moving north and buying the cheaper land.

a. STRENGTHENS A COMMUNITY It is difficult to determine whether

or not the above conditions strengthen or weaken the rural church. It seems it ought to be of great value, as it produces a better class of farmers than Minnesota has hitherto had through immigration. Mr. Sherman says that Iowa and Illinois farmers have seen fit to sell their \$200 and \$300 farms, and move to Minnesota where cheaper land can be procured. It will naturally follow that these men will come not only new ideas of farming, but with a large amount of capital as well, which will have its effect on general community improvement.

a. CHURCH NOT ALWAYS BENEFITED It is generally thought that the church should be stronger and of greater wealth in the highly improved communities. This might be the case in a community where all belonged to the same church and where strong interest for church work is felt. But in the case of a general immigration from other states, the wealth which is brought into a community may be of immense value

Page thirty-two

to the community as a whole, while the church may see very little effect of it. In most instances the church suffers on account of immigration from other states, as it very often drives out members of one denomination, who are again replaced by men who are members of other denominations.

b. BREAKS UP CHURCH Thus the church very often suffers a breaking up and a decrease in membership. This effect is shown very strongly in northern Iowa, which of late had a similar experience. The result has been that many congregations have been forced to move their church to a nearby town in order to insure further growth of the congregation.

It is very significant that the heaviest immigration has taken place in southern and central Minnesota, where the rural church is by far the strongest. The church therefore, in all probability, will face a like experience to that of Iowa, and will remain shifty and unsteady until the population has become more firm and land has reached a more permanent valuation.

Page thirtyOthree

PROBLEM OF MIGRATION Closely related to the problem  
RELATED TO IMMIGRATION of immigration is that of mi-

gration. The rural population of Minnesota is found to be very transient, some migrating to the cities, others to different parts of the state and to other states. The question is divided under three distinct heads; migration of young people to the cities, migration of farmers from one part of the state to another, the effect of tenancy on the church.

A reason for considering the problem of owners and tenants under the head of migration is that the larger the number of tenants, the more unstable the farm population will be. If all were owners of the land they live upon, it would be more likely that at least one part of the population would remain quite steady, namely the strictly rural class, or the farmers.

#### C. MIGRATION OF MINNESTOA'S RURAL POPULATION

##### AND ITS EFFECT ON THE CHURCH.

The migration of rural people to the cities has been very great during the last decade. Comparing the

urban and rural increase for the period 1900 to 1910, we find that the urban population has increased 38.6% while the rural population has increased only 7.7%. In

1. MIGRATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE TO THE CITIES      other words, the urban population has increased over five times as much as the rural in the same length of time. The rate of urban increase was, in the last decade, about twice the rate of increase of the state as a whole, while the rural rate of increase was not quite one-half the rate of increase of the state. In connection with this fact, the 1910 Census reports a smaller proportion of children in urban than in rural territory, and a larger proportion of persons in the prime of life in the urban territory. Of the urban population in 1910, 35.8% were from 25 to 44 years of age, and of the rural, 25.9% for the same ages. It is at the same time shown that there is 11.8% less of children below the age of 19 in urban territory than in rural, but 13.7% more of people between the ages of 20 and 44 in urban than in rural territory. Above the age of 14 there is practically no

difference.

a. MIGRATION TO  
CITY CHIEFLY  
ON PART OF THOSE  
IN PRIME OF LIFE

It is now noticed that the migration to the cities from rural territory is chiefly on the part of those in the prime of life. It has been argued by many that if it is true that so many rural young people drift to the cities, the church then has its greatest problem in the cities and not in the rural territory, but to me, it seems that the church should try to determine what the cause of migration is and seek to remove the cause. The church ought not to be satisfied with these conditions but try to make itself and rural conditions so attractive to the young that they will be kept under church and home influences instead of permitting them to become subjected to city dangers and temptations. Although it is generally conceded by all community surveys, that migration to the cities is for economic purposes, still we cannot eliminate the fact that the rural church has clung tenaciously to old and foreign customs, and has kept itself aloof from the general development and uplift



of the community, thereby producing monotony both in church and community interests.

b. EFFECT UPON THE CHURCH OF MIGRATION TO THE CITIES      The effect upon the church of the migration of the young people to the cities is obvious. It saps her very strength. It causes many of the older people to sell or rent their farms to people outside the state, from foreign countries or from other communities. As Nesmith has stated in the "Journal of Sociology" for May, 1903, it causes the farmers to rent their land and move to town, thereby creating a distinctly tenant class. There are many, however, who make so much of the migration to the cities that people believe the country is being laid bare entirely. This of course is not the case, as statistics clearly show; but that the situation is alarming there seems to be no question.

c. STRONGEST CHURCH WHERE THERE IS LEAST OF MIGRATION      From general observation it seems that the communities which have lost the fewest through migration have been able to build up the strongest churches. A survey

Page thirty-seven

of 37 rural congregations in this state during the past year shows that in every instance except two, the churches are suffering from a general drift of their young people to the cities. Choirs, Young People's Societies, etc., have either been torn to pieces thereby or abandoned entirely. The two instances referred to where I found thrifty congregations and where the population is very stable, were Spring Grove and Zumbrota.

The future of the rural church naturally rests on the present young people, and if the church cannot retain them, the outlook cannot be bright.

The rural church of Minnesota has undoubtedly both lost and gained during the last decade from a general migration of its members.

2. MIGRATION OF FARMERS Mr. Sherman, Commissioner of Immigration, informs us that most of the northern Minnesota land dealers have dealt with comparatively few farmers from outside the state during the last five years. Most of their sales were to persons living in the southern and central parts of the states. On the

other hand, the southern Minnesota dealers report most of their sales to Iowa and Illinois farmers.

The facts mentioned by Mr. Sherman concerning northern Minnesota are significant to the development of that

a. EFFECT ON THE CHURCH section of the state both in church and community activities. Development and improvement will naturally take place much sooner under such conditions than if <sup>the country were</sup> settled by people from foreign countries or even from without the state.

b. TASK OF CHURCH AMONG NEW SETTLERS The church will of course in either case have the task of organizing congregations among the new settlers, but it seems but reasonable to believe that this task will be far less difficult where the settlers are old citizens of the state, and in many instances, church members of a Minnesota rural congregation. It requires a great deal of work to educate a congregation to become enlightened in church work and activities. Societies must be organized, missions and other causes must be supported, churches and halls must be built. It is necessary for the people to

Page thirty-nine

be enlightened as to these matters if they are expected to do their duty in the church.

Thus the church may expect to find many of the difficulties of pioneer church work eliminated in the future Northern Minnesota.

3. OWNERS AND TENANTS The 1910 Census reports that while there was an increase of 1,478 in the total number of farms during the last decade, the number operated by owners and managers decreased 4,578, and the number operated by tenants increased 6,056. In other words, in 1910 21 out of every 100 farms were operated by tenants. This is in part due to the following reasons:

1. Owners have become financially independent, and feel they can enjoy an easier life, in most instances moving into a nearby town.

2. The young people have left their country home, making it almost impossible to get farm help.

a. EFFECT OF TENANCY UPON THE CHURCH To the strictly rural church such a migration is disastrous. It has been the cause of what many a community has witnessed

Page forty

the last decade, namely the moving of the church from the country to the near-by town or to the town where many of its members have become citizens. I am inclined to consider this a good solution of the problem, as it makes a more up-to-date church, beside placing it above the instability of the country population.

It is an established fact that tenancy works disastrously on the general community development. All rural institutions are affected by it, some to a greater degree than others; the very fact of the tenancy itself with no regard to the personal character of the tenant, has a tendency to weaken an institution. The general interest in farming itself, the school, the church, all these are forced to labor under an idea of instability. No one knows how long a tenant may remain or when a new one may come in.

The church, very much to the same degree as the school, must look forward to a period of uncertainty. Tenancy produces a condition of uncertainty in Membership which is very detrimental to its progress. A

Page forty-one

tenant may remain, at the most, from two to five years, after which he leaves to be supplanted by another, probably of another faith or of no faith at all. Even if the new tenant should become a member, he needs, more often, two or three years to become accustomed to the new conditions. Owners, however, feel more ownership in the church and consequently are more interested and enthusiastic.

b. MOST FOREIGN BORN FARMERS ARE OWNERS      An interesting feature in this connection is the large percentage of foreign born population who are owners of land. From table No. 3, on the next page, it will be noted that the North European immigrant is very desirable as far as ownership of land is concerned. It is significant that of the 81,134 foreign born operators of farms, only 11,268 or 13.9% are tenants, while of the 74,710 native born, 21,446 or 28.7% are tenants. These figures give a good basis for the comparison of the foreign born with the native born farm operators in relation to their influence upon permanent rural institutions. More

Table No. 3

Color and Nativity	Farm Operators					
	Total Num bet	Per cent distribution	Own-ETS	Ten-ants	Man-agers	Per cent of Total
Total	156,137	100	122,104	32,811	1,222	76.2 21.0 0.8
Native white	78,710	47.9	62,427	21,446	887	70.2 28.7 1.1
Foreign born white	81,184	52.0	69,483	11,268	333	85.6 13.9 0.5

Page forty-two

permanent improvements are liable to be made where ownership exists than where tenancy prevails. A personal interest is taken in the tilling of the soil, thus producing greater efficiency of the land. Having been accustomed to farming on a small scale in their own native country, and very often under adverse circumstances, farming to the foreign born becomes more a means of making a permanent living and a permanent home than a mere speculation which is so often the case with our native born farm operators.

It has often been said that our foreign born farm operators are very slow in giving their support toward the development of the rural community. But it must be remembered that they carry with them many of their native characteristics,--slowness, and besides, figuring the community as their permanent home, they are very often slow to lend their support, either morally or financially, unless they can see a permanent gain to themselves.

If Minnesota is compared with other states in the



Page forty-three

same agricultural possibilities, it is found that she ranks very high in all lines, especially in the development of rural industries and rural institutions. Much credit must be given our foreign born farm operators who must be considered the back-bone of our farming communities.

#### D. LANGUAGE IN CHURCH SERVICES

The heavy immigration of the past has brought about a keen language problem in Minnesota's rural church.

This problem was almost unheard of before 1890. Since that year the native population has increased, and finally,

1. CREATION OF A DEMAND FOR ENGLISH during the last decade, has outnumbered the foreign born population, thereby gradually creating a stronger demand for the use of English in church services.

As we find it today, the native whites, including those of foreign parentage, outnumber the foreign born white population by 619,969. They are so much in the majority that their demand must be recognized as having a strong foundation.

A reason for the discussion of this problem is to

throw a little light upon the situation as it exists, and if possible, to draw it nearer a solution.

- a. NATIVE BORN POPULATION INCREASING From Table No. 4, on the next page it will be observed that in 1910, 24.3% of the total rural population was foreign born, while in 1900 the percentage was 28.3%, showing a decrease of 8.9% the last decade. It may be noticed further that the absolute number of persons of foreign and mixed parentage has increased only 6.0%, while that of persons of native parentage has increased 25.4% since 1900.
- b. OLDER IMMIGRATION AMONG FARMERS In the state as a whole, less than one-third of the foreign born had come in the last decade, one-seventh in the previous decade, and more than one-half earlier than 1880. There is, in other words, a very old immigration in Minnesota, and particularly in rural territory where proportionally the largest number of foreign born are found. This difference in urban and rural conditions is explained partly by the fact that the later immigrants came in response to the demand of labor in industrial communities, and

Class	Number		Per cent of total		Increase or Decrease
	1910	1900	1910	1900	
Total rural population	1,226,414	1,153,294	100%	100%	
Native white	917,937	817,763	74.9%	70.9%	+12.25%
Native parentage	326,760	260,563	26.7%	22.6%	+25.41%
Foreign parentage	412,986		33.7%		
Mixed parentage	178,191	> 557,200	14.5%	> 48.3%	+6.0%
Foreign born white	297,968	326,001	24.3%	28.3%	-5.9%

TABLE No. 4

free land.

2. ORGANIZATIONS USING FOREIGN LANGUAGE Minnesota leads all other states in the number of organizations using a foreign language. The 1906 Census reports 2793 such organizations, divided between 21 languages of which the Norwegian ranks first, Swedish second, and German third. The Census makes no reference to rural conditions in this respect except to state that the number of church organizations using a foreign language in the rural territory is far greater than for the state as a whole. It furthermore states that in the Lutheran bodies there has been a more general comprehension of the need of the mother tongue for the immigrants on their arrival, but an equally clear recognition of the temporary character of such services.

a. USE OF ENGLISH IS INCREASING The trend is towards the use, first, of English in connection with the foreign language and later to the exclusive use of English. It has been found that the problem of transition to English varies in localities and that no

Page forty-six

specific rule can be laid down to fit all cases.

It seems quite certain from the above facts that the church bodies using foreign languages must necessarily make more use of the English language in their services. It may be of value as an example to note that the United Norwegian Lutheran Church, which has 330 rural organizations, reports an increase of 0.5% in the use of the Norwegian service while the number of English services has increased 46% from 1905 to 1913.

The 1910 Census reports that there was in 1910 15.2% of males and 25.5% of females of the foreign born whites in the rural population who were unable to speak English, against 17.3% and 29.6% in 1900. This reduction does not signify a preference for English, but simply shows the growing use of English among the foreign element. If the population of the rural districts continues to decrease as it has the last decade, and if the native born rural population continues to increase as it has, it seems but reasonable to conclude that during the next ten or twenty years we shall witness a decided turn

Page forty-seven

towards the use of English in the church services.

#### E. RURAL ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IN RELATION TO THE CHURCH.

The church is closely related to the economic life of the people. It is very often the reflection of actual economic prosperity. Economic prosperity again depends on the class of farmers tilling the soil. The question may be asked, what constitutes a good farmer? Mr. L. H. Bailey in his book "The Country Life Movement" has answered this question very satisfactorily. He says:

A GOOD FARMER "The requirements of a good farmer are at least four: The ability to make a full and comfortable living from the land; to rear a family carefully and well; to be of good service to the community; to leave the farm more productive than it was when he took it." Such prosperity would mean a permanent rural population. It would, to a great extent, mean the continuance of the same people in the community, satisfied, contented and industrious. A contented, continuing population expresses its mind and organizes its permanency in the country church.

Page forty-eight

1. FARM PROFITS AND RURAL INSTITUTIONS A second economic relation between the church and farmer is one which characterizes all rural institutions. Institutions are supported, not out of borrowed money, but out of the profits of the farmer. High price of land does not indicate the farmer's prosperity nor is it due to his skill. It may come unsought and depart in spite of all the farmer can do. The value of the high price of land, however, is in the increase of his capital, against which he can borrow for the improvement of the land. This increases his prosperity and enlarges his working credit. On this credit he can purchase machinery, better stock, and fertilizer; and with it he can pay for labor, to the improvement of his land and the increase of his productive property. But he cannot, because his credit is better, pay for better institutions. The improvements of rural institutions must come solely from the profit of his farm. This is even written into the Old Testament Laws, which ordered that the farmer pay to the support of religious institutions, "as the Lord had prospered him."

Page forty-nine

The improvement and rebuilding of the church, the minister's salary, the building of church basements and halls, --all these wait for the increase of the farmer's net profit which he has in return for his work.

a. EFFECT OF RISE IN PRICE OF LAND In the light of the above, Minnesota presents a varied situation. From Table No. 5, on the next page, the effect of a rise in price of land can easily be seen. In the last decade, the average price per acre has risen from \$21.31 in 1900 to \$36.82 in 1910, an increase of 72.8%. As a result, the farmer's capital and credit has increased to the extent that the value of the buildings has increased 120.8%, implements and machinery 73.9%, domestic animals, poultry and bees 81.5%.

This increase in general improvement and equipment surely ought to increase the net profit in return for his work. The 1910 Census shows that the total value of farm crops was 67.2% higher in 1909 than in 1899. This was mainly due to higher prices, and partly due to greater efficiency in farming.



	1910	1900	INCREASE	
			Amount	PER CENT
Value of farm property				
Total	\$ 1,476,411,737	\$ 788,684,642	\$ 687,727,095	87.2%
Land	1,019,102,027	559,301,900	459,800,127	82.2%
Buildings	243,839,389	110,220,415	133,118,984	120.8%
Implements <sup>and</sup> machinery	52,329,160	30,099,230	22,229,930	73.9%
Domestic animals, etc	161,641,146	89,063,097	72,578,049	81.5%
Average value of all property per farm	\$ 9,456	\$ 6,100	\$ 4,356	85.4%
Average value of land per acre	\$ 36.82	\$ 21.31	\$ 15.61	72.8%

Table No. 5.

2. MINNESOTA'S PROSPERITY The average value of a Minnesota farm with its equipment, in 1900 was \$5100, while in 1910 it was \$9456. The average price of land rose from \$21.31 per acre in 1900 to \$36.82 in 1910. In 1910 there were 23 counties in the state with an average land value of \$10 to \$25 per acre. These counties are located entirely in the northern and western sections. Forty-nine counties are reported as having an average land value of \$25 to \$50. These include practically all the counties in the Red River Valley, and a few scattered counties in the southern section of the state. Only nine counties, all lying in the southern section, report an average land value of \$50 to \$75. Every county in the state has experienced an increase in land value and farm equipment.

The largest increase in farm product value was found in the southern part of the state. In that section corn has to a great extent been substituted for wheat. The largest increase in farm land value was also found in the southern section of the state. When it was con-

sidered that the average value of all property per farm has increased 85.4% during the last ten years, one cannot help but wonder at the tremendous prosperity Minnesota has witnessed the last decade.

a. MINNESOTA'S RURAL PROSPERITY AND THE CHURCH      The relation between the economic prosperity of rural Minnesota and the church, is difficult to determine. It must be remembered that Minnesota is a comparatively young state, and that most of her rural churches are less than 35 years old. Church property can not show improvement as quickly as that of farm property. A church and its parsonage are expected to stand at least thirty years. Minnesota's present day churches are products of her first generation's prosperity. What the generation of today will do, the future will determine. Judging from the wave of prosperity that has swept over the state during the last decade, we have a right to expect a great deal.

A pastor's income is naturally more variable and subject to improvement than church property. No accurate statistics can be obtained in respect to this ques-

tion. But it may be observed in the last annual report of the United Norwegian Lutheran Church, which is the strongest rural church in Minnesota, that the pastor's salary has increased from 10 to 20 per cent between 1900 and 1913, the increase being the largest in rural districts. This is not, however, in proportion to the increase in salary of other professions.

3. PROSPERITY IN  
RELATION TO CHARITY

It would not be fair to determine the relation between the economic conditions and the rural church only in respect to church property and minister's salary. People are too often likely to judge the church by its external appearance and its minister's salary, forgetting the cause of Missions, church extension, charity, general church funds, Sunday schools, parochial schools, etc. As an instance showing what has been done the last three years, we may point to the fact that two of the largest denominational colleges in the state, namely St. Olaf College at Northfield and Gustavus Adolphus College at St. Peter, have secured endowments to the amount of \$250,000 each.

Page fifty-three

In both cases the bulk of the money was secured from rural congregations. It is significant that out of 331 rural congregations of the United Lutheran Church, over 60 congregations donated \$2000 and more, each, to the St. Olaf endowment.

a. RURAL ORGANIZATIONS ARE LIBERAL It is further shown by statistics from the same church that during the year 1913 her rural congregations gave \$77,444.23 toward church extension, making an average of \$233.97 per congregation. In many cases the congregations are very small, being mentioned in the report only as preaching places. It was found also that her 331 rural congregations paid during the same year, 1913, \$78,425 towards pastors' salaries. In most cases a parsonage is provided and in many instances a small farm is placed at the pastor's disposal. Over 250 of the 331 congregations provided from one to three months of parochial school, paying salaries amounting to from \$30 to \$50 per month, plus board and room.

The above figures reveal to some extent the result

Page fifty-four

of Minnesota's rural prosperity. The church mentioned is only one of many, but is the largest and most representative rural church in the state.

#### A GENERAL REVIEW

The problem of the rural church may be classified as religious, economic and social; yet these should be clearly defined by workers who are capable of making rural surveys, and securing accurate, scientific information so that the country workers will know what is best to do in any given case.

The information secured in this thesis comes under the religious and economic classes. While the field is by no means completely covered, an attempt has been made to touch upon some of the fundamental problems of the field. It has become apparent that thorough survey would be of inestimable value towards a solution. In order to bring this about, much information would be gained if surveys were made by eight or ten pupils of each rural district. While a survey is no child's work, still a great deal of information could be gathered that

Page fifty-five

would be of value to those who make the survey.

A complete solution of the Rural Church Problem, can hardly be attempted by any one person. The question must be viewed from every angle before any definite conclusion can be made. It is important, therefore, that contributions be made towards a solution of the problem, by persons who have made an actual study of some phase of the question. An attempt has been made, throughout this thesis, to study the physical territory, in which the rural church is operating, and characteristics of the population residing in rural territory. No attempt has been made to solve any social questions. The discussion is confined almost entirely to problems arising from facts concerning the physical territory and immigration.

The points which are sought to make clear will be brought forth in the following summary:

I A survey of the territory of the rural Church.

A. The purely physical territory.

1. The physical field of the Church is found to

be large. It has been determined by good authority that 70% of the total uncultivated land of the state can, when settled, be brought within the scope of the Church.

2. The Church has become visibly affected by an increase in size of forms. The population has decreased in 33 counties during the last decade.

B. The population residing in rural territory.

1. The total rural population increased 72,120 the last decade. This increase was notably in the class of the native born. The foreign born population decreased over 23.5%. Of the foreign born population the Germans, Swedes and Norwegians constitute 62.2%. Over 52% of the farmers were found to be foreign born. Minnesota is found to have the largest number of foreign born farmers of any state.

II Forces which influence the rural church as obstacles and opportunities.

A. Immigration.



1. Foreign immigration has effected the rural Church (a) in membership, and (b) financially. The Catholic Church, which has depended to a great extent on foreign immigration, has lost 2% in membership since 1890. The Protestants on the other hand have gained 3% during the same time.

The Catholic Church has the largest organizations and the most elaborate Church edifices. This is partly due to the fact that it is highly centralized in character. Having suffered a decreased membership, the Catholic Church has been left with a large church debt. The Protestant Churches, on the other hand, among which less elaborate church edifices are found, are reported as having a much smaller debt.

The Protestant churches are found to be benefited by the fact that immigrants, who have become members, have settled on farms instead of becoming day laborers.

Page fifty-eight

B. Immigration from sister states has driven out many church members, who in turn have moved to another part of the state where cheaper land has been purchased. This has caused new fields for church extension.

C. Migration of Minnesota's rural population and its effect upon the Church.

1. Migration of young people to the cities has weakened the Church. It has sapped the future strength of the Church. It is chiefly among those in the prime of life that the migration takes place. It has caused a breaking up of Young People's Societies, Church choirs, etc.

2. Many farmers have migrated from one part of the state to another. This migration is caused by an immigration of farmers from Iowa, Illinois and other states. It has harmed the Church considerably, having caused a decrease in membership in the case of several organizations. On the other hand, Church extension

Page fifty-nine

work has become easier on account of it.

3. Tenancy has increased 8.01% the last decade.

This has worked disastrously on the Church. It has caused a transient rural population. Many strictly rural churches have been forced to move into a nearby town in order to avoid the instability of the strictly rural population. Of the foreign born farmers a larger proportion are owners than of the native.

D. The language problem has been caused by the heavy foreign immigration of the past. The question will naturally solve itself, as the native born population is rapidly increasing while there is a rapid decrease in foreign immigration.

E. The prosperity of the Church depends to a great extent on rural prosperity.

The future seems to have much in store for the rural Church of Minnesota. A general revolution may be expected, but not to any degree which will affect the strength of the Church. The Church has a right

Page sixty

to be optimistic as evidenced throughout the whole  
discussion.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### I THE RURAL CHURCH.

1. Bricker, G. A. "Solving the Country Church Problem."
2. Butterfield, K. L. "The Country Church and the Rural Problem."
3. Wilson, W. H. "The Church of the Open Country."
4. Y. M. C. A. "The Country Church and Rural Welfare."
5. Reports and Bulletins of the Country Church Department of the Presbyterian Church.

### II MINNESOTA'S RURAL CHURCH.

6. Reports by the Federal and State Census boards.
7. Thompson and Warber. "Survey of a Township in Southern Minnesota."
8. Reports of the State Commissioner of Immigration.
9. Information through the State Agricultural College at St. Anthony Park.
10. The "Survey."
11. "American Journal of Sociology" for May 1903.

R