OPEN LETTERS TO A FARMER

By Rev. M. V. Kelly, C.S.B.

(Continued from last week)

XV.

God's Work and Man's.

When all the evidences we can gather seem to point to the undermining of religion in the city, you will probably say, "Why should it be so?" What is the explanation of it all. In the first place, it is quite possible that those of us who spend our lives in a country place fail to appreciate the wonderful lessons God is teaching us almost every hour. Perhaps we rarely advert to the great privileges afforded by ou position in comparison with those enjoyable in the city.

In the city we are in the presence of man's work, in the country in the presence of the works of God. In the development of business undertakings, vast accumulations of wealth, examples of able management, perfection of organization, leadership of masses of men, progress of inventions, adaptations of cocmplicated and powerful machinery, the city resident witnesses the excellence of man's ability and effort. His thoughts are absorbed in these, his life is one of perpetual awe, for those manifestations of human power. Successful achievements in one sphere or another, in business, in a profession, or in politics, are the constant topics of conversation; the daily papers blazon them forth with appalling headlines; their importance monopolizes the pages o the monthly magazine; in private gatherings everyone has marvels to relate of some extraordinary ability displayed by this or that well-known citizen. Their successes are held up as ideals, as aims worthy of the noblest aspirations; and as the peasant boy hears his father hope for an abundant harvest "with the blessing of God," the city youth must hope to prosper by remembering that, "what man has done man can do."

The indescribable beauty of God's creation, the immensity of His power are ever impressing themselves upon the farmer or laborer in the country. The splendid freshness of vegetation, the infinite vaiety in color and size and shape of things around him, the living streams, the forests and hills, that immense firmament overhead, the countless stars by night, the changing courses of the sun and moon, the regular return of the seasons, are all speaking to him of an Infinite Power who has created and governs all. The effect of heat and cold upon the soil he tills, the abundant rains which give vigorous growth to his crops, frost, storms and lightning, which may bring destruction to everything— in all these he recognizes a Power against whom human endeavor is helpless, he realizes how completely every interest and circumstance of life is in the hands of Him who gave it. For the farmer the elements enter into the most direct relation with his plans and undertakings. Consciously or unconsciously he observes and studies them. The everywhere controlling forces of nature claim his reverence and from them his thoughts are carried to the study and reverence of nature's God. The poet remarks:

"Earth with her thousand voices praises God."

Was it not in this relation St. Paul spoke: "For God hath manifested it unto them. For the invisible things of Him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made; His eternal power also, and divinity; so that they are inexcusable." Rom. 1: 20.

You are now spending your days in the enjoyment of all this. Is it not something worth having? Would you be anxious to leave it all?

Who Must Work on Sunday?

It is much easier to practice our religion in some occupations than in others. Never let yourself run away with the foolish notion often given expression to in words such as "everything depends on the person; if you try you can be good any place; etc., etc." Saints have lived, it is true, amid the most unfavorable surroundings and conditions; don't advise your friends to try the same. All but the rarest exception would soon give you reason to regret your advicec.

Your Sundays are free on the farm and it is very seldom anything occurs there to prevent your observing God's laws or attending to the religious practices every good Christian should be anxious to observe. In cities thousands are gradually getting away from such practices and eventually giving them up altogether through the inconveniences imposed by the necessities of their position. The street-car driver or conductor must work three Sundays out of four. The livery man or taxi driver is in demand at every hour. With railway men of every description Sunday is in no way different from the remaining days of the week. Sailors, boat hands generally, are similarly situated. Hotels, restaurants and boarding houses must look after guests with the same care Sunday and Monday. The milk man's hours Sunday are so long, church going seems to be an impossibility. Policemen cannot leave their posts. Patients must get proper attention no matter to what extent, doctors, nurses, druggists, etc., are deprived of the liberty necessary to sanctify the day.

The hours of business in many departments on Saturday make Sunday observance a matter of the greatest difficulty. The grocery clerk, for example, who has a rush of customers to wait on from early Saturday morning till late at night, feels entitled to a sleep even at the risk of not waking up in time to go to church. The barber's experience is similar, and so for a multitude of others. The delivery boy finishes his day still later.

All these go on even where Sunday is observed with the greatest strictness. At almost any point beyond the Canadian boundary line, in almost every other land, a great many things are done on Sunday which would not be tolerated here. Supply shops for meat, groceries, fruit, vegetables, etc., keep open Sunday morning. Barber shops, refreshment stands, theatres, all forms of public amusement compel large armies of attendants to be at their posts the greater part of the day.

Now, despite the best intentions at the outset, a certain length of time struggling with such circumstances lead almost invariably to neglect of religious duties. We are all creatures of habit; a vast majority of the cases of indifference and utter neglect of religion, when inquired into, are found traceable to years spent in one or other such occupations. The effort to comply with religious duties become gradually weaker month by month until at length there is not even a qualm of conscience in passing over what in the beginning would have seemed an obligation nothing on earth could excuse from.

Should you decide to live in the city, what assurance have you that none of your children or grandchildren will be engaged in any of these occupations?

To be contiuued).

At Least They're Not Lost.

She—"A man's lost without a wife."

Bachelor—"That may be, but he always knows where to find his clean collars and shirts."

Ten-Mile Skyrocket.

An American scientist, Dr. Robert H. Goddard, who four years ago announced his scheme to fire a rocket to the moon, 239,000 miles away, will make a preliminary test this summer with a rocket that may ascend ten miles.

"The contrivance will be about five feet high and six inches in diameter," said Dr. Goddard. "It will be loaded with a series of explosive charges which will be ignited at predetermined intervals in the flight of the projectile, each giving a powerful 'kick' to accelerate the rushing motion through the air.

"On the success of the experimental projectile may depend my effort to reach the moon."

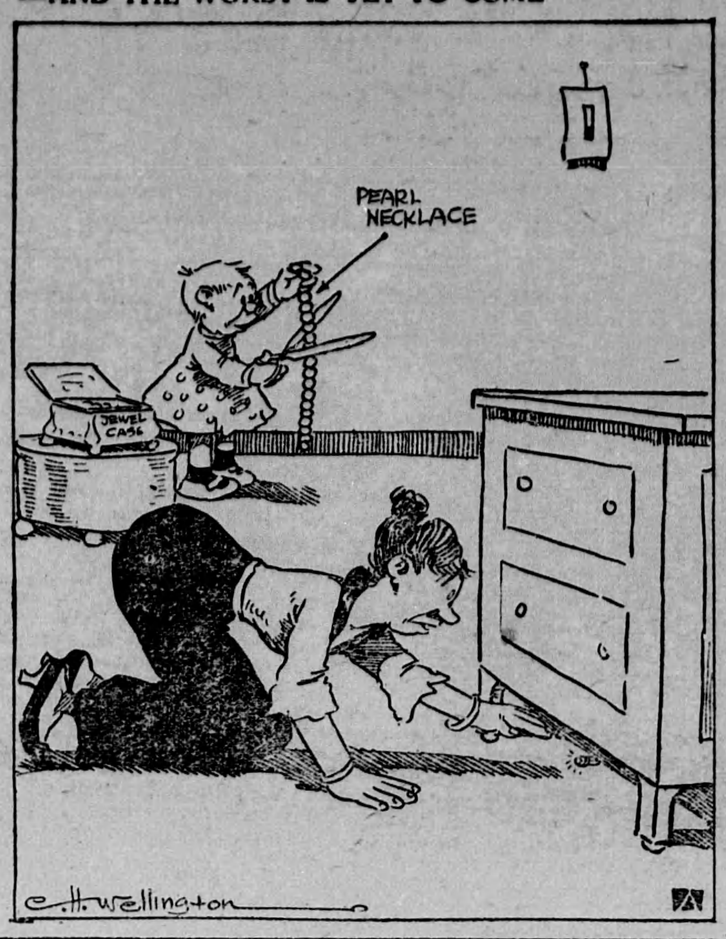
The Best-Liked Sports.

For the first time in the history of New Zealand a census has been taken of the principal national sports. The result shows rugby football, New Zealand's national game, as having 40,000 players, with nearly 700 clubs. Tennis comes next with half the football figures; then horse-racing, bowling, golf, and cricket in that order.

When Crystal is Heated.

A quartz crystal when heated expands faster sidewise than lengthwise.

—AND THE WORST IS YET TO COME



Tuning In With God.

Some years ago when Alexander Bell constructed his first telephone people regarded it as a marvel of human ingenuity. But the principle of it was simple enough. Mr. Bell was a teacher of vocal physiology; he believed that the vibrating of the vocal chords are responsible for the sound of the human voice. One day he succeeded in making an electric current communicate the vibration through a wire, and that day the telephone was born.

To-day we are told there are some sixty octaves of vibration known to science—an octave is the range of notes in which the vibration of the highest is twice that of the lowest. Man can hear only in the first few octaves; above those few the sounds are too fine for the ear to detect. Our modern radio transmitters "step up" the voice to higher octaves that we cannot hear and send it forth through the air. It is received on an aerial and by means of a delicate instrument is graduated down again to the level of the human ear. We may sit in our comfortable chair and thrill to wonderful messages floating down to us from thousands of miles away.

In order to receive those messages, however, we must "tune in" with the distant stations from which we wish to hear. Anyone who has tried it knows that tuning in is not always easy. Sometimes it can be done only after long and careful adjustment. Sometimes it cannot be done at all. Why? Because the air is full of innumerable noises and electrical forces that constitute "interference" and make receiving difficult.

Why should not God's children always remember that the first essential to receiving his message is to get in tune with him? It is not always easy. In a world of sin and discord there is likely to be a great deal of "interference"—so much indeed that sometimes his message is never heard of at all. We cannot pray with hatred or sin in our heart. The fault is not with God, however, if we fail to receive his blessings. The fault is with us who do not get in tune to receive them.

Remembering that truth, perhaps we shall understand more clearly why the first thing the Master said to his disciples when they asked him to teach them to pray was, "Enter into thy closet and . . . shut the door." Get away from the world. There is too much tumult and confusion there. The closed door is the first step to hearing wonderful things. God's admonition for all of us: "Be still and know that I am God."

Quick Justice.

Two years ago the Legislature of California established a new court, which has since been one of the busiest in the State.

It is the Small Claims Court, and its object is to give justice to poor people who cannot afford the customary legal procedure.

There are no lawyers, and no amount in dispute may exceed three hundred dollars. The judge simply hears the arguments, gives his decision, and that ends the matter. The court is largely used for collecting small debts, and less than one per cent. of its rulings have been appealed against.

Over five thousand cases have already been handled.

Partly Accurate.

People who make positive statements seldom enjoy being corrected. Lucky they who, like the father of a family in Punch, know how to rebuke the corrector. The father was taking his family through the natural-history museum. They all stopped before a great stuffed ostrich, and papa said:

"This 'ere is the hostrich, now extinct."

"But, dear," interrupted his wife, "surely the hostrich ain't extinct?"

"Well," declared the father tenaciously, "this one is."

Why Not Hit the Speaker?

A speaker had already talked too long and was still talking. The chairman was waving his gavel in a vain effort to stop him. Next to the chairman, on a lower level, sat a bald-headed man, who suddenly received the full effect of the warning gavel on his head.

Sinking into his chair, he muttered a prolonged "O-h-h," and then revived long enough to say, "Hit me again; I can still hear him."

Stevenson's Dramatic Announcement.

Stevenson loved to be dramatic. The attitude seemed to fit in nicely with his picturesque life. When Mr. Lloyd Osbourne was a small boy the author startled him one day with an announcement that, coming to the boy as if out of a clear sky, fairly struck him dumb.

I was taking a walk with Stevenson, says Mr. Osbourne. He was silent and absorbed; I might not have been there at all for any attention he paid me. Ordinarily a walk with him was a great treat and a richly imaginative affair, for at a moment's notice I might find myself a pirate or a redskin or a young naval officer with secret despatches for a famous spy, or in some other similar and tingling masquerade. But this walk had been thoroughly dull; we had remained ourselves, and not a breath of romance had touched us; and moreover Stevenson's pace had been so fast that my little legs were tired. All at once he spoke, and here again was this strange, new intonation, so colorless and yet so troubling, that had recently ajected the speech of all my elders.

"I want to tell you something," he said. "You may not like it, but I hope you will. I am going to marry your mother."

I could not have uttered a word to save my life: I was stricken dumb. The question whether I were pleased or not did not enter my mind at all. I walked on in a kind of stupefaction with an uncontrollable impulse to cry—yet I did not cry—and was possessed of an agonizing feeling that I ought to speak, but I did not know how or what. All I know is that at last my hand crept into Stevenson's, and in that mutual pressure a rapturous sense of tenderness and contentment came flooding over me.

It was thus we returned, still silent, still hand in hand, still giving each other little squeezes, and passed under the roses into the house.

Natural Resources Bulletin.

The Natural Resources Intelligence Service of the Department of the Interior at Ottawa says:

The British Association for the Advancement of Science is meeting in Canada this year, and this fact alone should direct attention to the debt which the people of this country owe to the scientist. Canada has been most generously endowed with natural resources, but how to make use of these has been largely a problem whcih the scientists have had to solve.

We have large areas of pulpwood, but of what use would it be in the manufacturer of paper had not the scientist provided the means? The making of paper is largely a chemical problem, but mechanics also has an important bearing. Taking wood-pulp in one end of a machine and making it into paper at the rate of up to 1,100 feet per minute requires engineering ability of the highest order.

Development of our water-powers also represents a very high degree of scientific and engineering ability. Harnessing our falls and rapids and converting the power thus created into electric energy to provide our lighting and power requirements is an engineering problem of a high order, while the use of this same energy for electro-chemical processes, such as extracting nitrogen from the air for the manufacture of artificial fertilizers, represents the results of research over many years by some of the world's brightest minds.

In our metallurgical industries, many of our most useful and valuable minerals are the result of science developing processes for their extraction.

There are practically no lines of industry in which the effects of scientific discoveries are not felt, and this is particularly the case in connection with the development of the natural resources of Canada.

H. Grindell Mathews, British inventor of the "death ray," is shown on his arrival in New York. "It is expected he will negotiate with the U.S. War Department authorities for the sale of his idea," says a report from across the border.

A Warning.

Doctor—"You are slightly morbid, my dear lady. You should look about you and marry again."

Widow—"Oh, doctor, is this a proposal?"

"Allow me to remind you, madam, that a doctor prescribes medicine, but he doesn't take it."

Richest Iron Ore Field.

The richest iron ore in the world is found in Sweden, where the average iron content of the ore is 60 per cent.

Dramatic Talent.

Little Eddie—"I made a lotta nice mud pies, Mrs. Filmfan, and your boy Charlie threw 'em all at the iceman."

Mrs. Filmfan—"Dear me! Isn't it laughable? He's such a charming little comedian."

World's Smallest Navy.

Which is the smallest navy in the world?

The man who replied "the Swiss Navy" would probably be laughed at, for Switzerland is an inland country. It has a navy, however—a flotilla of motor-boats which patrol the lakes.

Monaco also has a navy of sorts, consisting chiefly of motor yachts and launches. Jugo-Slavia, however, is possibly the country with the smallest navy. It had no seaboard before the War, and only possesses a few monitors for service on the Danube.

Too True.

"Look here!" exclaimed the prospective car purchaser, bursting into the repair shop. "Beatum tells me he has run his car for three years and hasn't paid out one cent for repairs. I can't believe it."

"It's right," affirmed the mechanic sadly. "I did his repair work."

Coils in a Toaster.

The coils in a high-grade electric toaster are made of nickel and chromium.

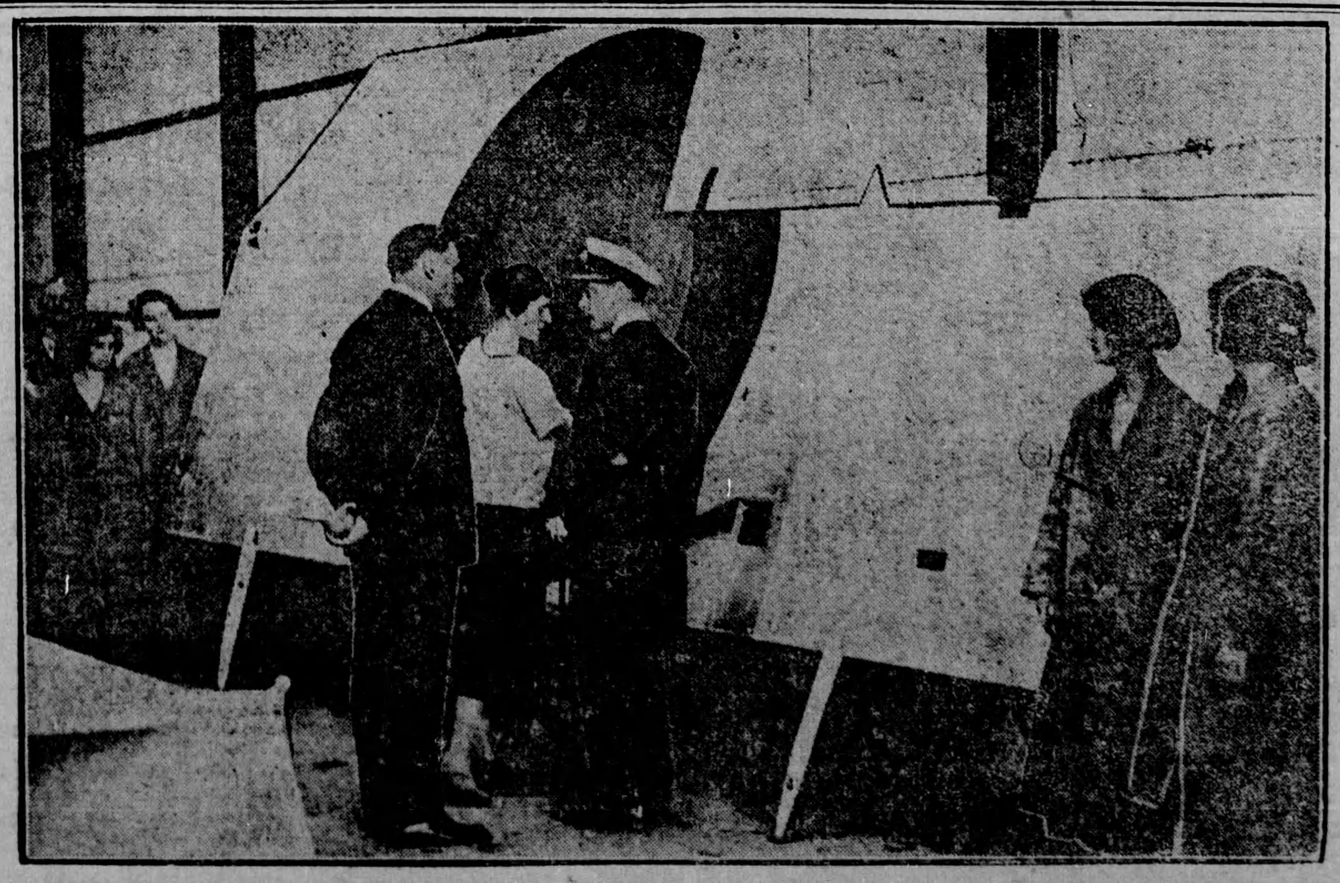
Its Constituents.

"What is contained in sea water?" inquired the chemistry teacher in a high school.

"Chloride of sodium, and er—and ——"

"Well, what else?"

"Fish!"



The Prince of Wales, photographed while inspecting partly-made aeroplane wings at the aviation works at Woolston during his recent visit to Southampton, where he officially opened the largest floating dock in the world.