

**THE COUNTRY CHURCH:
THE DECLINE
OF ITS INFLUENCE AND
THE REMEDY**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649556984

The Country Church: The Decline of Its Influence and the Remedy by Charles Otis Gill & Gifford Pinchot

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

CHARLES OTIS GILL & GIFFORD PINCHOT

**THE COUNTRY CHURCH:
THE DECLINE
OF ITS INFLUENCE AND
THE REMEDY**



THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

NEW YORK · BOSTON · CHICAGO · DALLAS
ATLANTA · SAN FRANCISCO

MACMILLAN & CO., LIMITED

LONDON · BOMBAY · CALCUTTA
MELBOURNE

THE MACMILLAN CO. OF CANADA, LTD.
TORONTO

THE COUNTRY CHURCH

THE DECLINE OF ITS INFLUENCE AND
THE REMEDY

BY
CHARLES OTIS GILL
AND
GIFFORD PINCHOT

PUBLISHED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE
FEDERAL COUNCIL OF THE CHURCHES
OF CHRIST IN AMERICA

New York
THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

1913

All rights reserved



COPYRIGHT, 1913,
By THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
Set up and electrotyped. Published June, 1913.

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

INTRODUCTION

The investigation whose results are here set forth had its origin in the work of the Commission on Country Life. The study of rural conditions conducted by the commission emphasized the importance of the country church as nothing else has done, and led at once to the inquiry whether in size and power it is growing or declining, and whether it is doing effectually the work which belongs to it. That inquiry could not be answered merely by collecting opinions. Many men whose conclusions were entitled to respect were found to believe that the country church was losing its hold upon the people and failing to fill the place it ought to occupy. Others whose judgment was equally entitled to consideration maintained that far from failing to perform its mission, the country church was as prosperous and efficient in rural communities as the city church in the towns, and that no extraordinary or unusual need could be shown for its improvement.

There is no single factor in the advancement of righteousness and civilization which can be more influential and effective than the country church. Therefore the

sharp divergence of opinion as to its working condition, among men who ought to know, called for prompt and serious attention, and all the more because these differences often concerned the same States, the same counties, and even the same rural communities. Since authorities disagreed it was obvious that the first step toward solving the problem of the country church must be to learn the facts about its past and present condition, its needs, and the needs of the people whom it serves.

Only a little study of existing records was required to show that these facts had never been brought together and that an investigation was badly needed. Accordingly, the present study of the country church was planned during a series of conferences between Charles Otis Gill and the writer of this preface, beginning in the summer of 1909. It was based on the evident proposition that the first step is to establish the facts, and that the remedy cannot be found until the true nature of the difficulty has been disclosed, and it proceeds on the theory that exact results are more important than generalizations less firmly established.

In order to be thorough the investigation was thus undertaken within an area no larger than two counties, one in Vermont, the other in New York. The facts it