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THIRD NATIONAL BANK BUILDING, ATLANTA, GA.

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The Home Field



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give important aid to the pastors.



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SEPTEMBER, 1912

No. 2

"Elicit, Combine, Direct"

OLIVER F. GREGORY, D.D., Staunton, Virginia

HAVE read with deepest interest the account of the recent "Great Home Board Meeting," and congratulate the Board on the wisdom of its new and progressive policy.

The recommendation that a Department of Enlistment and Co-operation should be established "for the purpose of helping in the training and enlisting of the unenlisted churches," is in strict accordance with the purpose of the Southern Baptist Convention as set forth in the preamble to its constitution.

One of my hobbies has long been that our churches, both those that are already enlisted and those not yet reached for the organized work of the Convention, need a protracted meeting not so much for the bringing in of new members as for the training and development of those already enrolled.

It is a grand idea for our Home Board to undertake this important work, and I believe will bring forth wonderful results. It may not pay in dollars and cents in the beginning of the enterprise, for it will take time and study of the situation before the work can be systematically and thoroughly done, but the results will soon appear in a more intelligent conception of the privileges and responsibilities of church membership, in awakened interest in the great work committed to Southern Baptists, and then as the outcome of increased intelligence and fairnful teaching there will come enlarged contributions.

The ren-contributing churches and church

members are largely so because they have not been taught differently. Given the love of God in the heart of a redeemed man, and there is no telling to what development he may not be led if the privilege and duty is



O. F. Gregory, D.D.

clearly set before him. Our weak churches, like many of our members, need not so much reproach and fault finding for not doing their duty, as they need encouragement to do the little that they can heartly as to the Lord.

God bless the Home Board and give it wisdom in carrying out this program.



W. D. POWELL, D.D., Kentucky State Secretary, Louisville



T WAS a wise move when the Home Board determined to render hereic assistance to the 17,500 country churches in our Southland, where such assistance is needed. The active, progressive members of our once flourishing country churches are moving to the cities and larger

towns for social, educational and financial reasons; leaving the home church depleted in numbers, dispirited and weakened financially. The places of once prosperous farmers are taken to a large extent by tenants who are not stable in their residence, and are lacking in leadership and initiative.

For the reasons above stated, many of our churches and associations report such decrease in membership from year to year that the matter has become alarming. The Home Board has resolved, in co-operation with the State Boards, to render aid in strengthening the weak points, restoring courage and energy, bringing back lost vitality, and putting those churches on the road toward prosperity.

Churches That Were Strengthened by Timely Teaching.

I HAD SOME personal experience with many of these conditions when I was State Evangelist in Kentucky. I went to aid in a meeting at a church where some of our most noted men had been pastors for full time in other days; a seminary student now preached for them twice a month, and things were going from bad to worse.

I was soon informed by one of the leading members that they had simply sent for me to preach for them for two weeks; that there were only eight unsaved people in the congregation.

I proposed to canvass, and we found a goodly number of unsaved people, but they said to me: "These are renters—they are not of our set."

I replied that they had souls and that God would hold them accountable if they did not put forth earnest effort to lead them to the foot of the cross.

Eventually they joined in the work with great heartiness and the pastor's heart was made glad by the conversion and baptism of forty-eight. Since then the church has been on the high road to prosperity, and for some years has had a pastor settled in their midst.

The past month our State Board sent a man to hold a meeting with a church which was once the pride of that section and for which the association was named. The church, thoroughly discouraged by removals and the prevalence of the anti-missionary spirit in the association had reached the point where often they failed to pay the fifty cents per month which they had promised to the pastor to meet his car fare, this being the only remuneration he received. Eventually he was compelled to pay for the oil that was used in the lamps, and finally gave up in despair.

A strong man, missionary of our State Board, went to them, and for two weeks he preached "money" from every angle, and urged upon them all the activities of church life in a kind but vigorous manner. Eventually a revival spirit was manifested, and the people saw their duty as they had not realized it before. A good sum was

paid the visiting brother and \$100 was raised for the support of a pastor, and they are proposing to give to all of our denominational interests.

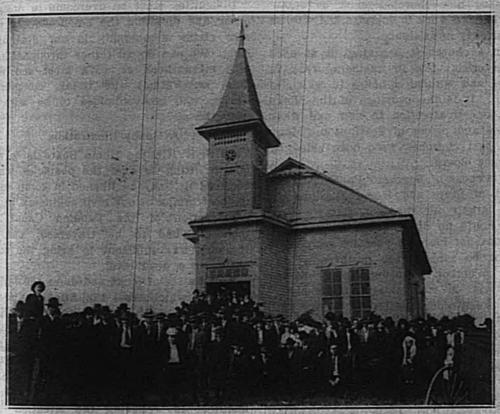
An Illustration of the Great Work to Be Done.

FIVE YEARS ago the churches in the bounds of one of our oldest associations in the State of Kentucky were in a general state of decadence. Sixteen of the churches were pastorless and some had been in that

This week I attended their annual meeting—and what a joy! With two exceptions every church had an active pastor on the ground; the association reported a net increase of 101; every church had a Sunday-school, save one; W. M. U.'s were reported in a prosperous condition, and the churches have entered on a spirit of giving in excess of what they did in their palmiest days.

A Stupendous Task.

WE HAVE 11,000 churches in the South



Indian Creek Church, Freedom Association, in the mountains of East Kentucky, two days journey from the railway. The first Missionary Baptist Church in a whole county dedicated by Secretary Powell.

condition for years. Many of them thought that nothing but disintegration and ultimately the necessity of disbanding stared them in the face. In one of their district board meetings I urged upon them the looking to a brighter and better day, with a promise of substantial help.

Aid was extended to certain churches that were unable to meet the demands until they became self-supporting. A strong man was located for a year in the association whose duty, it was to build up the weak churches and to aid in securing and locating pastors.

bearing the name of "Missionary," and doing nothing. It is a stupendous task. Nearly fifty per cent. of our churches wholly
undeveloped! Scarcely any State in the
South is able to cope with the situation
unaided by the Home Board, and it was
a great day when the Home Board proposed to join hands in a work which is today doing so much in caring for the lost and
in developing strength in the weak.

We have in the Southland as many unsaved souls as we had in population in 1860. The increase in population in the past thirty years has been phenomenal.

Today we have a population greater than that of the entire United States when the Civil War began. Only seventy-five million of our six hundred million acres of land have been occupied. There is every indication that the increase during the next thirty years will be such that we may more than double our present population.

Outside of the cities and large towns we average one church for every seventy-five square miles! It can be readily seen that many new churches must be organized, while we work to energize and vitalize those already in existence.

When a church is organized it at once faces a crisis; few in numbers, weak in finances and without a house in which to worship. It is the province of the Home Board to call attention to new and weak churches and places of destitution. Many of our best churches were once aided by our Home Board.

The fairness of Southern Baptists to the support of State and Home Missions accounts largely for the fact that we have in the South no State where the membership does not increase year by year. This can not be said of the brethren at the North. Whether our country churches are to increase in membership and efficiency or disintegrate depends largely on the ablity with which the Home Board will be able to grapple with the situation. Our non-resident members must be cared for. We must reach them and put them to work. More than one-seventh of our membership is non-resident.

Converting Latent Forces Into Living Forces.

OUR LATENT forces must be converted into living forces. Each member must be led to render some personal service. The diversity in the work to be done is sufficiently varied to suit the tastes and conditions of all. Too many of our members, like the pipes of many organs, are simply an imitation, and give forth no note of praise.

Every member should be a contributor. We owe it to God to give proportionately as he gives to us. In this way we can enter into partnership with him. The only way to give proportionately is to give a definite per cent. One would be ashamed not to

pay his landlord his rent, and we ought to be afraid not to give to God as he has prospered us.

Each member should first be a disciple or learner, sitting at the feet of Jesus, and after that he should go forth to teach. Every church should be missionary to the core. The membership should be composed, not of figure-heads, but of men and women who are alive to the duties their Master has made incumbent upon them.

Difficulties must be overcome in enlightening and enlisting the non-producers who now claim membership in our denomination. We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us. We must see with John on Patmos the living, conquering Christ, who has promised to be with us unto the end.

A Happy Illustration.

THE SERVICE the Home Board is to render in lifting us over the obstacles which confront us, may be likened in some sense to the triumph of our civil engineers in the construction of the Panama Canal. A mountain had to be traversed, and no treasury was sufficient to bring the excavation to a dead level.

So by a set of locks and dams the largest steamers which cross the Atlantic and Pacific oceans will be let into a lock and then lifted up to a higher plane, and after traversing a small sea of water will again enter another lock and be lifted higher and then let down by a similar process. So the Home Board's strong arm must be made manifest in relieving the situation and solving the problems which concern our country churches, in the way of strengthening and developing, grouping and providing them with pastors and pastors homes.

"BE STRONG.

We are not to play, to dream, to drift; We have hard work to do and loads to lift. Shun not the struggle, face it; 'tis God's gift,

Be strong.

"Say not, the days are evil, who's to blame? And fold the hands and acquiesce—oh, shame!

Stand up, speak out, and bravely in God's name,

Be strong.



CHARLES L. GREAVES, Hawkinsville, Ga

EDITORIAL NOTE: The writer of the following article is unusually well equipped to write on the needs of the country churches. He has recently had a very valuable series of articles on the subject in the Progressive Farmer, a farmers' paper of very large circulation in the South. In the following Dr. Greaves addresses his main attention to the pastor as the determinative factor in country church development. It is hard to overestimate the importance of capable pastors in any scheme that has as its object the development of the country churches, and yet we are confident that the popular emphasis has been relatively too large on this point. In other words, writers and speakers on the topic have frequently dismissed the whole subject by holding forth on the preacher as if he was wholly responsible for the situation. Brother Greaves is not a writer of this class; in his admirable articles in the Progressive Farmer, where he had room to set forth his ideals on the whole subject in their true perspective, he very rightly shows that there are a number of essential things in any adequate plan for country church growth besides capable pastors.



E ARE at last discussing the country church problem. For a long time we did not suspect that there was a problem; we were accustomed to the country church for examples of eminent plety and old time religion. Now we are

realizing that many country churches are not only undeveloped, but that they are dying. It is a hopeful sign that we have set down the country church in our list of problems.

It is one of our simplest problems. For instance, compare it with the complex city problem; city commercialism, city slums, city foreign population, city corrupt political machinery. Give us strong men, financial resources and the favor of God, together with the present educational and industrial awakening, and we believe that we can solve the country problem. But in our cities we see strong men, and institutions ad quately sustained, failing in many instances to make any marked impression on the whirl and ungodliness about them

Gratification From Embarrassment.

ONE OF OUR embarrassments in the country is a source of profound gratification. The old methods of work, the old parsimoniousness in expenditure, the old-time illiterate preacher, are all perplexing features of our problem, because, though they are still with us, they do not meet the requirements of the situation. And the reason they fail is highly satisfactory, the people are beginning to be too well educated and informed to follow any institution or person who lags fifty years behind the time. Progressiveism, religious as well as political, is in the air:

The writer has been intimately associated with country churches all his life. He does not hesitate to say that the indispensible human factor in the country church problem is the country preacher. He is the man we wish to discuss in this article.

Efficient and Inefficient Preachers.

THERE ARE HUNDREDS of enlightened, educated and consecrated country preachers. Where they labor there is no country

church problem, or if there is, they are equal to it, and are managing it with satisfaction and success. Let the reader make note of this statement, that the writer be not misjudged in what is to follow.

As for the less efficient ministers nothing is to be gained by being impatient with them, and we must not despair of them. Some are impervious to suggestion and prejudiced against progress, it is true, but others are laboring nobly, trying with their meager ability and resources to lead people, many of whom are better informed and more talented than themselves. These men are the best that the churches can get at this time, and they deserve our sympathy and earnest efforts to help.

If we are to make advances or even hold our own in the country, there are two things we must do: We must help increase the supply of capable pastors, we must help those we already have to a greater degree of proficiency.

Country Preachers Classified.

IN SOME SECTIONS the country preacher is not as strong a man as was his predecessor of thirty years ago. The cities call

for and generally get the very flower of the trained ministry, and the supply is exhausted before even the city churches are supplied.

To state the situation frankly, there are four classes of preachers in the country today. First, a small class of seminarytrained and competent preachers who have refused the call of the city.

Second, a class of trained but mentally and spiritually incompetent men who have been rejected by the city churches, the culls of the seminaries and colleges, who know a little Greek and Hebrew, but who have not the prophet's gift and energy.

Third, we have a class of ministers not seminary-trained, but possessing literary education and splendid ability as teachers and leaders. These men have entered the ministry from various walks of life, the school-room, the law office, the store, the farm.

Fourthly, we have the uneducated and untrained preachers, a very great many of them. Many of these, because of superior consecration, native ability and great diligence, are doing a successful work in the churches; but the others are only employed

by the churches as cheap makeshifts, and being half the time without work they become sour and disgruntled, many of them hating the very words education and progress.

The Men Who Are Needed.

OF THE CLASSES of men mentioned it is the first and third who are the hope of the country situation. If these two classes can be sufficiently increased unworthy members of the other two will be guradually retired by the churches. How can we increase these two classes, the efficiently-educated and the theologically-trained preacher, and the efficient but the theologically-untrained preacher?

This writer does not see any prospect of immediately getting a sufficient supply of strong men from the seminaries for the country churches. The two theological seminaries in the South, by



Spiritual Guide: Do not preach, if you can keep from it, boys,"

most liberal estimate, turn loose every year about two hundred ministers who have been undergoing training for periods varying from one to four years. These men do not all belong to the second, and in spite of all their training will be practical failures.

By the time you shift out the inefficient men, the man whom the cities will get, and the men who go to the foreign field, not many strong men are left for the country places.

We must evidently look to the other class of men, noted for recruits for the country ministry, with the hope that they may some day find time for at least a short course of technical training in some theological school These men make infinitely better pastors than the trained failures, who go to the country just because they can not find openings in the cities.

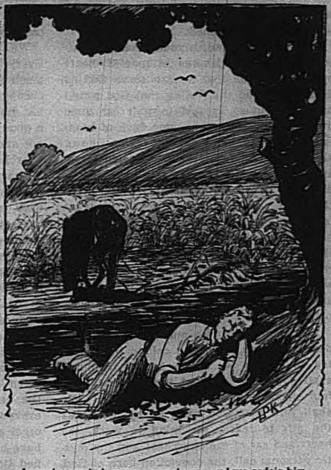
"Hardshells" As to the Call to Preach.

HOW. THEN, can we increase the number of ministerial recruits from the educated and informed classes from teachers' desks, lawyers' offices, commercial establishments and educated countrymen from the farms?

Here we are met by the objection that it is not our business to increase the number of ministerial recruits at all; that God calls whom he will, and it is none of our business. This writer believes with all his heart in a divine call to the ministry, but desires to state pointedly two convictions of his: First, that we have been "hard-shells" too long as regards the call to the ministry, and secondly, that we have too greatly magnified the mystic side of the call to the ministry.

Predestinarianism says: "Do not call men to repentance and faith, that is God's business not yours," but we register our emphatic protest and persuade men everywhere to repent, convinced that God's spirit calls sinners to salvation through our preaching.

However, when it comes to the call to the ministry many of us become rank predestinarians and even tell young converts: "Do not preach if you can keep from it, if God wants you to preach you can not help



An unlettered plowman nes a dream, and we ordain him.

preaching, no matter how hard you try."
In other words, we say in substance "Disobey God if you possibly can." Nearly every young preacher at his ordination tells of his long struggle, trying to keep out of the ministry. Doubtless there are hundreds of men in secular walks today whom God would have been pleased to have in the ministry. It is quite as possible for some man to fail to enter the ministry because no one had ever laid its claims on his heart, as it is for a sinner to fail to come to repentance because no one has never preached to him the gospel.

The Practical and Mystical in the Call.

WE DO NOT emphasize the mystic side of a call to the ministry too much, when we emphasize it properly, but we ought not to emphasize it to the exclusion of the practical side. An unlettered plowman of forty has a dream and thinks he hears a voice, and we ordain him, spoiling a good plowman to make an incompetent exhorter who could have exhorted to his heart's content without being ordained.

On the other hand, a young man, educated and eloquent, with naught upon his heart but a conviction that he can serve God as a preacher, and the feeling that God would have him do so, is told to wait for some overpowering sensation, some flash of heavenly light. He sees churches going down all around him for lack of competent leadership, but is told that he must keep silent until he has some marvelous token from the Lord. He really does not know what to expect, and no one seems able to tell him. There is only one safe thing to do, that is to wait, lest he ascend the pulpit with unsanctified tread; and so he waits, waits until the fire in his bones is quenched and the commercial world has found a snug place for him.

We need nothing so much as a clear understanding as to what a call to the ministry is. When we arrive at the truth we shall doubtless find that there are at least four elements in a call, instead of one. We shall find that God calls us by giving us the gift to teach, the mind to work, the heart and ear of the churches; and the mystic personal call, the conviction born of God, not of disordered dreams.

In this connection it is necessary to heed the admonition of the Master and pray that the Lord will thrust forth more laborers into the harvest. This point is of first importance, and is not more fully emphasized here because it is more often treated by other writers.

Making Too Much or Too Little of Special Training.

PASSING from the call to the ministry to what constitutes fitness for the ministry, this much is to be said: Just as the ignorant classes make too little of special trainin; the more enlightened classes make too much of it.

Thus the ignorant hand on the farm does not hesitate to rush into the ministry, but the competent high school or college graduate does hesitate, because his domestic or financial situation makes a seminary career seem impossible. A decently educated man with the gift to preach, and the call from God, with an English Bible in his hand, and with the splendid literary helps which

he can get to aid him in its interpretation, can preach and ought to preach.

We can only forget this at our peril. Every denomination that has exalted too much the seminary curriculum has failed to occupy the country places. Mark you, it has failed not because the seminary is not a good thing, but because the seminary can not and does not equip enough men for the churches. West Point is a very important military school, but can never turn out enough soldiers to defend our country, not even enough officers, for in the event of a great war, hundreds of competent officers would rise from the ranks of the common soldiers.

Let all of us who are pastors encourage those who have preaching gifts to use them, to use them as laymen. The men whom God calls to preach as pastors and evangelists are nearly always men who are already preachers; not because they have been called in any unique and pronounced way, but because they believe that it is the universal privilege of believers to go everywhere preaching the Word, with no other authority or credentials than that they have been washed in the blood of the Crucified One. Fill the churches with preaching laymen and God will fill the pastorates with called pastors. Many of these will later take some seminary training, when they understand how much it will add to their usefulness.

An Obligation of the Whole Denomination.

NOT ONLY must we encourage, in a proper way, the entrance of suitable men into the ministry, for the sake of the country churches; but as a denomination we owe it to our meagerly equipped brethren to give them greater assistance in their efforts to make acceptable pastors. Much can be done in the way of holding Bible conferences, training schools, institutes, etc. Many brethren can be persuaded and assisted to take at least a short seminary course. There is one very simple way to help almost every minister who is willing to be helped. It is a way which this writer has never as yet heard suggested by any of our denominational leaders. Our Sunday School Board or some other denominational agency ought to furnish published helps in the form of periodicals for average preachers. The writer has entered the homes of many untrained preachers and found there treasured copies of various sermon magazines, assorted "skeletons" of sermons, that were skeletons indeed, and other stuff, mostly trash but bearing testimony to the straits the preacher found himself in to grasp proper subjects and to treat them in a logical and systematic way.

Published "Helps" For Preachers Advocated

THERE is a pronounced prejudice against "helps" for preachers. They are called props, crutches, encouragers of laxiness, and their use is sometimes characterized as dishonest. A Sunday-school teacher with a college diploma in his possession may use all the helps he pleases, may clip, cull and plagarize as much as he will; and his diligence along that line is applauded. The trained preacher may also use helps, provided they are bound volumes of commentaries with liberal admixtures of Greek and Hebrew words. But the honest, untrained, country preacher must not lean on a help in preparing a sermon, not even if he can preach a hundred per cent. better thereby.

It is all wrong; he needs the help and he ought to have it, prepared by the most competent and experienced of his brethren, and served fresh to him periodically. He ought to be encouraged to use such simple helps as he can use, not as a substitute for work, but as incentives to more satisfactory work and as models for his own independent efforts.

After a quarter of a century's trial no one would think of taking away from our Sunday-school teachers their valuable helps. They have made for efficiency and progress and are considered indispensable. Why should preachers' helps not work out the same way? Why deluge our Sunday-school teachers with lesson helps, but compel our most important teachers, the pastors, to use clap-trap gathered from outside sources?

Of course such a publication as has been suggested would have to be more than an assortment of "sermon skeletons." It ought to contain real Bible studies prepared from a homiletic standpoint, it ought to contain real teaching on pastoral theology, it ought to abound in what preachers especially need to know on missions, benevolence and other interests of the kingdom. It would be a valuable bulletin to all of our various Boards. It ought to be sent to every one of our Southern Baptist preachers, even to those who can not or will not pay for it.

The Backward Church and Its Uplift

J. H. THAYER, Ridge Spring, South Carolina



ITH about four-fifths of our churches in the country and rural villages the majority of these in the backward column, with 5,000 of the churches in larger cities, and the percentages of these that can be called backward unknown, it will

be seen that the problem of their uplift is denominational in its scope. Secretary W. D. Powell, of Kentucky, tells us that of the 1,827 churches in his State, 1,376 have preaching only once a month, while 911 give nothing to missions. This is only one State taken at random, but if this is true in Kentucky, with its hustling and efficient secretary, what must be the condition elsewhere? In other words, when one casts his eye over the entire territory, he finds that this prob-

lem is not one that is vexing a few sections only, but that it is as broad as the whole Convention territory.

A study of the problem has led the writer to believe that it is at the bottom spiritual in its character. Of course, you say, that is conceded. But is it? One would think, sometimes, by the way we are multiplying societies, that we thought that the character of this problem was largely one of organization, and of machinery. We hear it said, and said constantly: We Baptists have evangelized, but we have not trained. We have taken this statement, and have believed it. But, is it true? Have we evangelized? Yes, some. But not all that we thought that we had. In other words, the writer would raise the question as to whether we have done as well as we thought that we had, the evangelical work that had been, committed to us.

In other words, the matter with these backward churches is that we have taken into them too many people that have never known what an experience of grace was, and now that we have them on our hands, we do not know what to do with them. I hear some good brother say. "We know that that is true, but you ought not to tell the public." Yes, it is time that we got waked up to this thing. Get any group of pastors together, and if you will give them a chance they will at once begin to bemoan the fact that we have too many unconverted people in our churches.

This is all to say that the problem of the backward church, as of others, is spiritual in its nature. That if we are to frame any policy, then we must take into account the spiritual character of the problem.

What can we do about it? Much in every way. As has already been pointed out, the scope of the problem is denominational, while its character is spiritual. This much we know, and knowing this much, we might make a few suggestions as to how it might be solved.

In the first place, being denominational in its scope, it must be met by a policy that is as broad. In other words, no policy that is merely local in its character will ever solve this problem. It is wider than any State or group of States. The logical place to look for the formulation, and the carrying into effect of such a policy is our Home Mission Board.

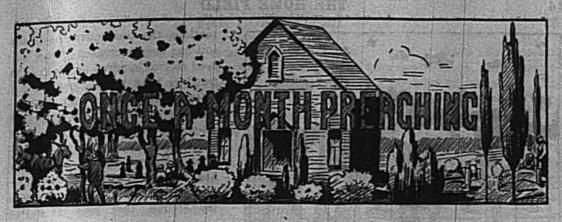
But before it can frame a policy that will be adequate to meet the needs, it must have the facts in hand. In other words, he who would frame intelligently a policy to meet the situation that we now face, must have before him all the facts that are to be obtainable. He must eliminate all that is merely local in its character. From the general facts that remain he must formulate the policy to be adopted by the Board in its uplift of these churches.

When we come to study the character of the policy that will have to be framed by our Board, we find that, as the problem is largely spiritual in its character, so also must be the policy. Our Board has already begun to work at this problem through the medium of its evangelistic force. This is putting the emphasis in the right place, while our Sunday School Board is emphasizing the internal spiritual work by stressing teacher training. No one denies that we need the training of our teachers. But do we not need in the solution of this problem a revision of our evangelistic methods? I am not speaking of the methods used in the great city-wide evangelistic efforts. But I refer to what are commonly called the methods in vogue in our protracted meetings. Do we not need stricter entrance examinations for our churches? The time has come when the solution for the problem is to be found at the front door and not the back door of the church. We have been pulling people into the churches and then trying to train unspiritual material. Half of the trouble with all of our churches lies in the fact that we have allowed too many people to come in, without satisfying ourselves that they were fit subjects for church membership.

If the problem of the uplift of the backward church is ever to be solved, it must be done by a policy that is as wide as the denomination and that is spiritual in character.

When we shall have eliminated from our churches, as far as possible, the unspiritual elements, then it will be our task to make out of each church a splendid fighting machine for the Kingdom of God. This can be done in no other way than by training. Trained men will begin intelligently and earnestly to apply the methods urged by our Boards to the solution of their individual problem. Each worker in the training of his flock will feel that he has a place in the bringing up to a higher state of efficiency a vast body of churches.

Mo.



LIVINGS FON JOHNSON, North Carolina State Mission Secretary, Raleigh



QUARTER of a century ago, there was an industrial awakening in the South, but in the rural districts there was great depression. Farm products were selling at a price below the cost of production, and there was a sad depreciation in the value of farm lands.

As might have been expected, a strong tide set in from the country to these industrial centers.

In the exodus from country to town, nothing suffered quite so much, perhaps, as the country church. Its membership was reduced, and much of its financial strength was lost. Its pastor, who formerly lived among his people, and whose broad acres solved the bread and meat question by affording ample support for himself and family, is no more. Very few of the Baptist preachers of the South are land owners, or owners of anything else of a material nature.

During the period of depression through which the rural sections of the South passed, it required from four to eight country churches to give to a pastor a salary which was not more than half enough for a meager support. The pastor was forced to engage in secular employment six days in the week, in order "to keep the wolf from the door." The churches gave nothing, or next to nothing, to benevolent objects of any kind. Is it any wonder that we have eleven thousand Baptist churches in the South on the non-contributing list?

It is easy to berate the country pastor, and say that he is responsible for the sad condition of our country churches. It would be rather interesting to see how a city pastor would succed in developing churches under the same conditions that surround the average country pastor. Our country brother may not have done his full duty (what pastor has?) but he hasn't had half a chance. It will be time enough for severe criticism when he falls after having had an opportunity to succeed. I want to enter a plea for the country pastor, and beg that he be given a chance.

Conditions in the country have improved marvelously during the last decade. Farm products have been commanding better



Dr. Livingston Johnson

prices than ever before and farm lands have quadrupled in value. Intensive methods of farming have been introduced and in many



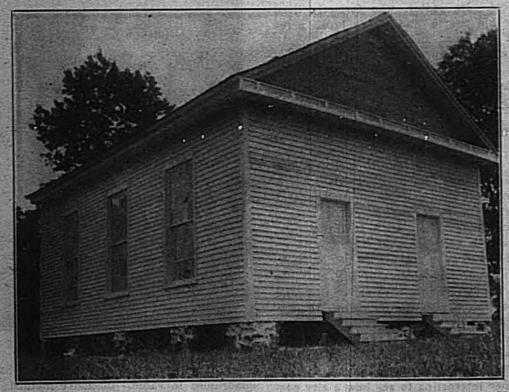
What right have you to demand great things of the paster of a country church, where the whole church does not put as much value on his services as —

sections the productiveness of the soil has been increased from a hundred to two hundred per cent. The trend is back to the country.

Rural life is becoming very attractive. Country people now have telephone lines, daily mails, good schools, good roads and automobiles. Everything in the country has an air of progress and prosperity—everthing except the country church, that goes on at the same poor dying rate, with onceamonth preaching, and it pays its pastor for the service he renders less than one member of that church pays for one field hand.

Men and brethren, what right have you to demand great things of the pastor of a country church, when the whole church, with a membership of from one hundred to five hundred, does not put as much value on his services as one member does on a field hand, and that field hand an ignorant Negro?

There might have been some excuse for such treatment of a pastor twenty-five years ago, for a



A Country Church in Middle North Carolina

farm hand did not receive more than half as much then as he does now. The wage of the Negro has doubled, while the salary of the country pastor remains practically the same.

There are thousands of country-churches in the South that could easily employ a pastor for two Sundays in the month, and two of these churches, by forming a field, would find no trouble in providing a com-

fortable support for the pastor.
There are hundreds and hundreds
of country churches in the South
that could easily support a pastor
for his whole time.

Some may say that it is easy to make assertions, but quite another thing to prove them. The best proof that a thing can be done is to produce concrete examples showing that it has been done. Many such examples could be given. In my own State there are several country fields comprising two churches with a pastor, living between them who gives his whole time to the ministry. These pastors are put down as "progressives" and these churches stand with the town churches in the work of the Kingdom.

I know another small country church with only 132 members, fifty-five males and seventy-seven females, which has preaching every Sunday. They give their pastor a comfortable support, furnish him a house in which to live, have presented him with a horse and buggy, and pay his way to the Conventions.

Since they began having preaching every Sunday they have more than doubled their contributions and are now giving more to benevolent objects than they expend on themselves. They are raising their finances now with more ease than they did one-fourth the present amount when they had preaching only once a month. These people do not put their pastor on a plane with a corn field hand; they regard him as the parson, which means the parson, in the community.

There are, no doubt, in all the Southern States, a few fields of the kind mentioned

above. The pastors of these churches are wide-awake, progressive men, who are developing their churches; but there are hundreds of country pastors in the South who would be as efficient as these, if they had equal opportunities.

 In years gone by the country churches were the source of our strength. It was upon them that the new town church drew; it was from them that our preachers came.



as one member does on a field hand, and he

The country church must still hold an important place in our denominational life, if we measure up to our possibilities.

Country churches must still be the plant bed for preachers. Country preachers preach the gospel and nothing but the gospel, because their people would be satisfied with nothing else. Country churches, as a rule, stand more uncompromisingly for our distinctive doctrines than town churches do. Most country churches are more rigid in the exercise of discipline than town churches, thus keeping our ideals of the Christian life toned up. Into the fellow-

ship of our country churches many more are being baptized than in our own town churches. But when it comes to contributions for the advancement of the Kingdom, the country church is lamentably far behind.

If the country church is to measure up to its responsibilities and fill the important place in our denominational life for which it is peculiarly fitted it must be brought up to a point of much greater efficiency, and this can never be done with once-a-month preaching. Our country churches should, as speedily as possible, double up on the matter of preaching, those which have preaching once a month going to twice a month, and those having twice-a-month preaching going to full time.

The point may be made here, that in the "good old days before the war" when the South was in the zenith of its glory, the country churches had preaching but once a month. That is true, but everything has changed very much since then. Intensive methods prevail now in everything. In those days a bale of cotton to the acre was

considered a good crop, but now we are raising from one to two bales per acre. We have improved machinery, and are leaving behind the primitive methods of cultivating.

Before the war people were satisfied with little one-room school houses, in which the mere rudiments of education were given. Now we have excellent school buildings well equipped and are doing high school work in the country schools.

If we are not satisfied with the methods of farming, and the way our educational institutions were conducted in the antebellum days, why should we be content to go on with our religious work as they did then? We are doing great injustice to ourselves and to our children by neglecting our church work, while we prosecute with vigor and earnestness our secular business.

We need not be surprised if our children are indifferent to religion, and if we fail to impress a gainsaying world with its importance, so long as a whole community will pay no more to the support of a pastor, than one corn field Negro receives for his work!

Rural Church Experts

CHARLES KING, Louisians, Missouri

EDITORIAL NOTE: The following article is one of a series of pronouncements by the author, first delivered as lectures on the Country Church before the Missouri Baptist Assembly, at Arcadia Heights, Missouri, Aug. 1912, and then published in a booklet. Brother King has added substantially to the discussion of this old but newly discovered topic. Those Baptists who have read most of the published utterances about the country church needs will be the most ready to appreciate the force of the utterances here of Brother King. The most nervous workers in the realm of discovering problems in Zion, and prescribing cures therefor, are the inter-and un-denominational profagonists, the Y. W. A. holding the torch for their advance. It is not at all unnatural, however unwise not to say foolish it may be, for these writers to find in the killing of of denominational loyalty one of the prerequisites to saving everything and everybody from going into the decadence of innocuous desuetude. The following article throws light for guidance along here.



ANY of our denominational bodies are making careful investigation of rural church conditions, as are also some of our denominational leaders.

Practically without excep-

tion, it is insisted that the rehabilitation of rural life

must precede the salvation of the rural church. The call is for "better farming, better business and better living." The consolidation of rural schools and the amalgamation of rural communities, with one central church made up of the several competing churches in the neighborhood, is proposed as the only practical solution of the church problem. This great central church is to be undenominational in character, exercising all the rights and privileges of any New Testament church. This is the climax and the goal in the much heralded scheme of church federation.

It is also proposed that social, recreational and educational functions be included in the program of the church's activities; that the church provide entertainment for the entire community, that it employ the Y. M. C. A. program of recreation; and that it provide instruction in scientific agriculture, domestic science, sanitation, and other subjects of rural life betterment. Much emphasis is placed on brotherhoods, boys clubs, and other kindred organizations. The program includes also evangelism, Bible study, missions, benevolences and other essential activities, but they are accorded second place and are given but scant mention in the program.

It appears to me that, almost without exception these experts have lost sight of the primary and essential functions of the New Testament church, and have substituted that which is purely secondary and incidental.

Without qualification, I insist that the rural church shall find its salvation, not in supplying the material, but rather in supplying the spiritual needs of the people whom it seeks to serve.

There is an increasing liberalism among some denominational leaders which promises for the church, not prosperity, but certain apostasy or extinction. History shows that decay in orthodoxy brings decadence of faith.

The rehabilitation of rural life with attendant prosperity will not surely bring religious prosperity. In fact, religious decline often goes hand in hand with economic weal.

However, better farming, better business and better living ought and may be made to contribute to the glory of God. Material prosperity with the fear of God would bring the millenium in one generation, but material prosperity without the fear of God invites disaster.

Many of our rural church experts seem to take it for granted that most rural communities are over-churched. This is true of some communities, but it is not true of many. But even if some communities are over-churched, federation or consolidation would not necessarily bring relief, for many rural churches which have no competition are also in sore distress.

in my judgment the amalgamation of ru-

ral communities is an idle dream. Except in occasional instances it cannot be accomplished at all. Many obstacles stand in the way of its realization and they are racial, geographical, topographical, social, religious, economic and sentimental. Any practical solution of the rural church problem must take account of the present distribution of rural centers and church organizations. Through the operation of the law of the "survival of the fittest" some churches will ultimately and happily disappear.

A great central undenominational church will not solve the rural church problem nor will it meet the needs of the present rural population. In some notable examples of successful institutions of this kind it is easily apparent that the "loaves and the fishes" constitute not alone the point of contact, but also the ground of appeal for recognition; and when this ideal obtains it must ultimately supercede spiritual aspirations and religious zeal. I do not consider them patterns for Baptist churches to follow.

An undenominational church is not likely to be a New Testament church, and without fidelity to the Scriptures it cannot enjoy the favor of God. Outward evidences of prosperity are not certain evidence of a New Testament church. The spiritual extinction of the church may go hand in hand with its physical extension. It may easily enlarge its territory without making conquest. Observation shows that the undenominational church is in greatest favor where vital religion is in greatest eclipse. In the U. P. Survey in Illinois (p. 13), the report has this significant statement, "All union churches are dead."

It is not the business of the church to promote scientific farming, athletics and entertainment, although the church may properly encourage all of these in due season and proportion. Some recognition of the social, recreational and educational needs of the community is absolutely essential in a full gospel, but they are of secondary concern, and must not be allowed to supplant spiritual aspirations and religious endeavors. Some of our counsellors understand neither the rural situation nor the rural mind. The rural church must keep close to the gospel and close to the ground if it would fill the mission for which it was designed.

At a District Association

V. L. M.



HE SALUDA ASSOCIATION in Anderson County, South Carolina, covers the territory in which all of my early days were spent, and the membership of its churches is made up in no small part of my relatives and the friends of

my childhood and youth.

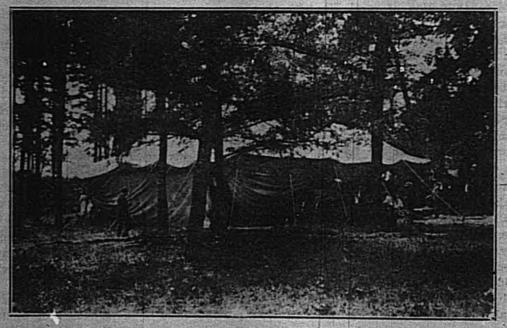
Besides, the Saluda Association is one of the most historic bodies of its class to be found anywhere. It is perhaps the largest in South Carolina and the wealthlest. It was organized more than one hundred years ago. It now has forty-eight churches, with more than 9,000 members. For many reasons I was delighted to be one of the many who foregathered this year with the old and honored body.

This celebrated organization dates back to the early pioneer period of the Piedmont belt in South Carolina, and did much to shape the ideals of that period. From the time when the memory of no man runneth to the contrary the Saluda Association has met about the first of August and the meeting has been the signal for the coming together of a great throng of stalwart and goodly people from a large region thereshout

August in the rural districts in this section of the South spells fried chicken, mutton, beef, cakes and ples, vegetables and fruits—all of these and more in greatest profusion and abundance. On this fat of the land the Association people feed the throngs of thousands during the three days in which the meeting progresses. At night the delegates are taken to the homes of the members of the entertaining church, but the midday meal is served as a lunch on the grounds where the meeting is held.

This picule dinner at the country Association is everywhere in the South a climax of good will and fellowship among the people, and these amiable tokens of esteem and hospitality, cultivated by and under the patronage of the religious life of the people, reach their fullest expression at the old Saluda Association.

Probably 3,000 persons were present during the recent meeting, which was held July 30-August 1, at Barkers Creek church, in the lower part of Anderson County. Half of these were seated under the large tent, purchased some years ago as a meeting place of the body on account of the rural church buildings all being too small to seat the people. The other half of the people



The large tent purchased years ago on account of the rural churches being too small to seat the Association throng.

either stood about the tent sides within the range of the voice of the speaker on the platform, or were engaged in decorous social mingling in different places over the grounds.

At least five acres of the woodland contiguous to the tent and church was throngbrella that in the earlier times held forth in glory as the badge of the country religious assembly.

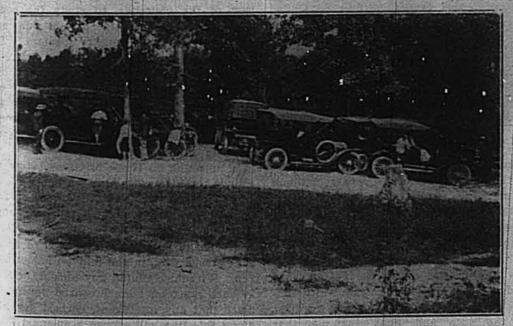
Apparently even the modern black-topped buggles are doomed to be driven from their place of honor, for even now the honk of the automobile and the smell of its gaso-



Five acres of the woodland contiguous to the tent and church was thronged with top buggies.

ed with top buggies and tethered horses. The top buggy has for the past ten or fifteen years become the sign manual and token of an Associational assemblage, and displaced from this position the big buggy um-

line is everywhere evident where the brethren foregather for the religious meetings in the country. Even now the larger brigade of the top buggy spends much of its time halted by the wayside, holding the



Even now the honk of the automobile is everywhere evident where the brethren foregather for religious meetings.

restive animals, with the wheels on one side of the buggy down the ditch, while the impertinent and fleet and also devouring self-propelled vehicle hurries by. There were more than one hundred handsome automobiles gathered on the ground at this old Association, and these vehicles were very largely the belongings of country peo-

Rev. Mike McGev, honored pioneer of the cross, ple and not of the brethren from Anderson and the other towns of the associational

territory.

If the order of this present day was not too fleet for anything like an apostrophe to the things that are departing, one could wish to offer an apostrophe to the old top buggy and to the still older vehicle that waved aloft as its banner the white umbrelia. But, la, there is no time; we must catch the "auto" and "honk" that man that looks like a speck in the road, he is so

far away, to get out of the road instantly. It seems like everybody is prejudiced against an automobile having any rights!

The moderator of the Association is Rev. D. Weston Hiott and the clerk is Rev. W. W. Leathers. Both of these brethren are honored country pastors. Very interesting indeed is the personality of the honored ex-moderator, Rev. Mike McGee, whose picture is shown herewith, who for many years presided over this body, who has been a pastor for about fifty years, who is now more than three score years and ten, who last year preached to five country churches and who was the first minister besides his own grandfather that this writer ever knew. Blessings upon this faithful servant of God.

It was very refreshing to hear the reports from the churches. These reports indicated general progress in benevolent work, in the number of converts and in the number of churches that are improving their houses of worship or putting up new ones.

The Saluda is only one of nearly 850 Associations that have met or will meet during the latter half of the present year. I was much interested in it and am taking space here for some description of it for the reason that the Associations are the finest places in the Baptist polity for getting in touch with our churches. And for the further reason that the Association is the best place, outside of personal visitation of the churches, to study the conditions that are confronted now by our country churches and country pastors. The readers of The Home Field are aware of my belief in the surpassing importance of a program of vitalization, enlistment and training for our rural churches. There will be a good opportunity to study the conditions and needs in this large sphere at the meeting of the Associations.

In speaking on Home Missions before the Saluda brethren I addressed most of my time to describing the needs of the country churches and what might be done to supply them. I am glad to report that there seemed to be no doubt that this kind of speaking "struck fire" in the minds of the brethren. Without claiming any unusual wisdom in such matters, I am prepared now to declare that any intelligent, earnest speaking along this line will arouse a splendid interest anywhere in our District Associations.



VALUABLE COUNTRY CHURCH DISCUSSION



HE WELFARE of the country church very much needs to be kept in the thoughts of our brethren, and we are glad to contribute to to that end by presenting this month a number of admirable articles on the subject.

Dr. Charles L. Greaves tells us of the importance of capable pastors in country churches, and speaks with wisdom on how their number may be increased. Especially forceful is his declaration against "hard-shellism" in the matter of a call to the ministry. We this note might be sounded from every pulpit in the South and

wish that this note might be sounded from every pulpit in the South and then acted upon by the whole denomination.

Dr. W. D. Powell Secretary of the State Mission Board in Kentucky, tells of splendid results which have come under his actual observation in cases where some such effort has been put forth for the stimulation of country churches and Associations as is contemplated in the Home Board Department of Enlistment and Co-operation.

Dr. Livingston Johnson writes with compelling force on the inadequacy of the once-a-month preaching program, which obtains in the large majority of the rural churches. There is probably not a State in the Southern Baptist Convention in which so large a proportion of the population is rural that has the country churches better enlisted than our churches are in North Carolina. And yet, out of 1,953 Baptist churches in the Tarheel State 1,701 met for worship only once a month during the year 1911.

The comparison instituted by Dr. Johnson between the salary paid by the average country church to its pastor and the wages paid by a single member of that church to the cornfield hand, goes very near the center of the whole distressing situation. For many, many years we have heard people, on the one hand, say: If we had stronger preachers the churches would be built up and they would give a living salary to their pastors. On the other hand, we have heard men say: If the churches will pay the preachers better they will get better preachers.

Thus we have reasoned in a circle, getting nowhere. One thing that is sought by the State Mission Board, that now desire to institute a work to aid in the vitalization of backward churches, and by the Home Mission Board in its Department of Enlistment and Co-operation, is to bring a new and inspirational element into the situation, giving comfort and help to faithful ministers of Christ and inspiring the churches to bigger things. We must help the churches to do something that will enable them to get out of the eternal rut of reasoning in a circle, somewhat like we have indicated above.

Dr. Oliver F. Gregory, one of the honored Secretaries of the Southern Baptist Convention, calls to our attention that the new Department of Enlistment and Co-operation instituted by the Home Mission Board, is really the logical outgrowth of the words found in the preamble to the Constitution of the Southern Baptist Convention: "Elicit, combine and direct." There is no gain-saying the truth of Dr. Gregory's contention, albeit it has been a long time between the first pronouncement of those words in this notable Baptist

document and their working out into the dignity of a formal activity of the entire denomination.

Brother J. H. Thayer declares that there is a question prior to that of training and enlisting church members. This is the question of being careful about taking in church members. Brother Thayer would amend the statement that we Baptists have evangelized and baptized but have not taught, so that it would read that we have not evangelized as carefully as we ought and therefore the troubles of untrained membership are precipitated.

Our brother calls attention to the necessity of guarding the front door of our churches as well as the back door. We would, however, declare that there is a great deal to be done for the children of light between the front door and the back door of the churches. Our beloved correspondent would agree with us on this point. But that is the whole point of our contention. There has been too much neglect between the front door and the back door, and we want to see it remedied.

The new Home Board Department of Enlistment and Co-operation, like other new efforts, will have to feel its way carefully, making haste slowly at the same time making haste. We feel that it would be unwise for us to try to map out in detail the probable work of this Department. As we remarked last month, there is a great work to be done and we can and must find a Baptist way to do it.

But of one thing we are sure, in this new work of Enlistment and Cooperation, the Satte Boards and the Home Board will not allow themselves to be drawn away from the main question. Their whole attitude toward the country pastors will be sympathetic and helpful, not only because that is good policy, but far more because before God it is right, and because these servants of the Lord have been as faithful according to their opportunities as any other class of men among us.

The new Department will not allow itself to be drawn into becoming nothing more than a collecting agency. Without presuming to speak with authority on the matter, our own idea is that the chief business of this Department as it relates to collecting money will be to train the people so that they will give. In other words, it is a Department for enlistment and training; but the enlistment will follow the training when the training is done in the right way. In the work of this Department it is going to be necessary to spend money for the development of efficiency and not simply to support men to go out and get more money and get it quick. Any less concept than this would lower the plane and purpose of the great work which is contemplated.

There may be a lot of things connected with our country churches that could be improved. We have no doubt that the Department of Enlistment and Co-operation will help toward the solving of these problems. We have no doubt that it could be of aid in helping the churches to be duly careful about taking in new members, though we are not certain that country churches are less careful than urban churches in this respect. Some strong arguments could be put up to the contrary. This Department would no doubt, while it sought to strengthen every country pastor so that he might do better work on a more adequate salary, also look to turning more trained young meninto the country pastorate.

These and many other things will be found helpful. But we must hold to the main issue, namely that this Department is a department for training and enlisting, enlisting very largely through proper training. It is to be an effort on the part of the whole denominational body to give heed to the words of the Savior: "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."

We hope there will be much discussion elicited and we have no doubt there will be within the next few years, and this discussion will be helpful and educative, but it will be helpful to keep on the main line while we are at it and not to linger much on side tracks.

CHMBSBC

FINDING THE FACTS

ROM time to time we have offered some more or less startling statements on the country church situation. We have reason to believe these state ments have challenged the attention of the brethren, and this was largely what we desired.

But some of our statements may be challenged themselves. Partly on account of this and also to be absolutely sure of our facts we are as rapidly as possible working over the ground on which the first statements were based. The statements to which we refer are like the following:

That eighty per cent, of the population in the Southern Baptist Convention lives in the open country or in the small towns, while twenty per cent, resides in the cities and large towns.

That not fewer than 19,000 of our 24,000 churches are either in the open country or in towns of 2,500 or less—that is, in towns small enough to be essentially rural in character.

That scarcely more than one per cent, of the country churches have a pastor's home.

That from two-thirds to three-fourths of our country churches meet for worship only once a month.

That less than ten per cent. of the country churches have a pastor who lives in the community of any one of the churches that he serves.

That there are between 10,000 and 11,000 churches in the Southern Baptist Convention, practically all of them in the rural districts, that are unenlisted in either Home or Foreign Missions.

We have not made these statements without careful estimates. Several of them have been proven out by actual calculation. For instance, the statement as to the proportion of the population in the Southern Baptist Convention that is urban and rural.

Some others of the statements are confessedly approximations. For instance, the statement that from two-thirds to three-fourths of our country churches meet for worship only once a month. But the approximation was made only after finding out the actual figures in two representative States and finding that the figures in these cases showed that the percentage of rural churches open for worship more than once a month is much less than that allowed in our approximation. The States for which we have the figures are North and South Carolina.

We are right now reworking as far as possible, State by State, the figures that will show what per cent. of our Southern Baptist churches are unenlisted in mission work. There are five or six States in the Convention from which we are unable to get the figures for this estimate, but the figures are shown in the State Convention Minutes in most of the States and anybody may work these figures out for himself.

We may announce the result of our new estimate elsewhere in this number, if we can finish it in time. We will say here that there seems to have been an improvement since the last estimate was made about four years ago. We are hoping that the figures will show that approximately sixty per cent. of our Southern Baptist churches are giving something to missions. This will be

considerably better than the showing made in the last estimate. But we are fearful that it will be shown that fifty per cent. of the churches either give nothing to missions or less than \$5 for the whole church.

In general we would like to impress upon brethren the fact that we try to do faithful work when we undertake to work out the facts about a given situation. There is a great deal of this work to be done and it will be advantageous to have it done. We hope that we may find time to do a great deal more of it than we have been able to do. Our object in every effort of this character is to find the facts, and not to bolster any theory or predilection that we may have.

CHMBS &C

COUNTRY CHURCHES IN PICTURES

THE COVER DESIGN this month shows a country church building and its environs. It is the historic Shiloh Baptist Church in Camden county, North Carolina. The picture is a good specimen of the country church buildings and their surroundings in the coastal plain regions of the South Atlantic and the Gulf.

For pictorial effect the churchyard, the trees, or other local landscape features, are very essential in presenting country churches. There are thousands of our readers who will thrill with pleasure and forthwith turn to wholesome reminiscent cogitation as they look upon the quaint well bucket and the pine forest in the background of the cover design picture.

There is another characteristic landscape setting for the country church among the hills of the Piedmont region, and another for the mountains and the Western plains. We will still hope to be able to interpret pictorially for our readers these country church types, that are so dear to our Baptist heart, so laden with wholesome and precious memories. We confess that these simple houses of worship of the open country, whose beauty is gathered largely from yard and tree and forestside and gravestone, mean more to us than do the architectural wonders of expensive and imposing church buildings on city streets.

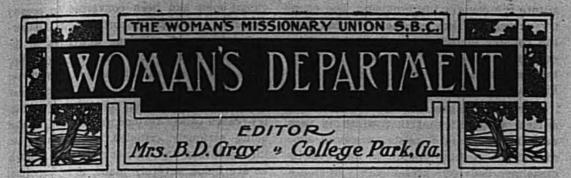
We have in these columns presented several requests for good pictures of country churches. The responses have been disappointingly meagre. After reading this, if some sympathetic souls shall grasp our thought, and send along good pictures of their rural churches, we shall be very glad.

CHMBSBC

ATTRACTIVE PREMIUMS FOR CLUBS

H OPING to increase the zest with which some of our friends work to increase the circulation of The Home Field by injecting an interesting and helpful personal consideration, we offer the following attractive premiums for clubs of subscribers to our monthly:

In order to secure these premiums it is necessary to ask for them in the letter in which the club of subscribers is sent. We will gladly furnish club getters with free sample copies on request.



Union Headquarters: 15 West Franklin Street, Baltimore, Md.

MISS FANNIE E. S. HECK, PRESIDENT, RALEIGH, N. C. MISS KATHLEEN MALLORY.

COR. SEC., BALTIMORE, MD.

September Program: THE COUNTRY CHURCH

Bible Readings: "Serve the Lord with gladness."—Psalm 100:2.

"Praise him with the whole heart."— Psalm 91.

"Whosoever is of a willing heart bring an offering."—Exodus 35:5.

"With a perfect heart and with a willing mind,"—1 Chron. 28:9.

"Rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer."—Acts 5:41.

"If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted."—2 Cor. 8:12.

"God loveth a cheerful giver."-2 Cor. 9:7.

The Country Church.

In some great day
The country church.
Will find its voice
And it will say:

"I stand in the fields

Where the wide earth yields

Her bounties of fruit and of grain;

Where the furrows turn

Till the plowshares burn

As they circle again and again;

Where the workers pray

With their tools all day

In sunshine and shadow and rain.

"And i bid them tell
Of the crops they sell
And speak of the work they have done;
I speed every man
In his hope and plan

And follow his day with the sun;
And grasses and trees,
The birds and the bees
I know and I feel every one.

"And out of it all
As the seasons fall
I build my great temple alway;
I point to the skies
But my footstone lies
In commonplace work of the day;

In commonplace work of the day; For I preach the worth Of the native earth—

To love and to work is to pray."

—Liberty H. Bailey.

"Rural American citizenship will largely decide our future issues. Three-fourths of the people live in small towns or on farms and the proportion will not be likely now to decrease.

"Vast changes are on the horizon and it is essential that Christian ethics shall rule political ideals of the future. Ultimate America will be worked out in the town and village in a large measure."

So writes Charles Roads on "Rural Christendom."

Hear our own Dr. V. I. Masters on the country church:

"In the open country, as well as elsewhere, under the impulse of our industrial civilization old things are passing away and all things becoming new. This transition and the readjustments that it necessitates con-

stitute the country life problem. The country church problem consist in finding how the country churches may be so strengthened that it shall be able to elevate and inspire the lives of country people with high and spiritual purpose and idealism.

"Perhaps it is because it is difficult to get a right perspective of that which is very near that Southern Baptists have been slow to add the country church to and ever-increasing list of present-day problems. Certain it is that country church efficiency is a larger concern with us than with any other Christian body in America, for we have a much larger number of country churches than any other denomination. Of the 24,000 Southern Baptist churches not fewer than 19,000 are out among the fields and forests or on the plains, or else in towns and hamlets so small as to be essentially rural in character.

"Our supreme duty is to project a great movement throughout the churches in the South for their betterment and proper enlistment, training them in the principles and practices of the gospel until they shall be made effective for missions at home and abroad."

"Dr. Wm. E. Hatcher, of Virginia, says: 'It is at least as essential to save what we already have as to save that which we lost.'

"Dr. Geo. W. Truett, of Texas, says: 'We may not hope ever to approximate our duty to the heathen world, as long as our people on the home fields are untaught and undeveloped. No conception of missions is complete that does not contemplate missions to weak and undeveloped churches, as well as missions where the gospel has never been preached.'

Country Churches Furnish Strength for Citles.

"We should keep in mind that the ministerial supply and the strength of our urban churches depend very largely upon an adequate religious program in the country. A large part of the membership of the city churches comes from the country. In one city it was found that eighty-five per cent of the lawyers, doctors and other profes-

the participation of the state of

sional men had been converted in country churches. A large proportion of the officers and lenders of religious activities in the city are country-born and received their early religious training in country homes and churches. There is hardly an urban church anywhere that could lose its country-reared and -trained members without being seriously crippled. In a day when the resources and efficiency of such churches are being severely taxed, it is important to maintain in vigor and strength their chief source of supply for recruits.

"Relatively very few preachers have come from the cities. In 1903, with 25,000 res! dent members in the Presbyterian churches of Chicago, there was only one Presbyterian ministerial student from that city. During forty years of its history it is said that the First Baptist Church, Rochester, New York, sent forth one ministerial student, but he had been converted in the country. Probably ninety-five per cent. of the Southern Baptist ministers out of every hundred were reared in a country home and grew up in a country church. To weaken the character or cripple the sources of this blessed supply would be seriously to weaken the the whole Baptist body.

"The country church has blessed us. Good enough to teach us, good enough to heap favors upon us, good enough to receive our dead into the near by soil over which the wind sings a requiem and betimes there echo sweetly the voice of sacred song and the praise of new-born souls glorifying God, is not this mother who in the hour of her need to receive from us the best of which we are capable in thought and loving helpfulness? Her call to us is not to prepare the weak and the infirm for the declining days before the sunset of life. Her call is that we shall aid her in renewing her youth and so invigorating her powers that she may serve as capably the more difficult needs of today as she did the less difficult ones of yesterday. In her renewed vigor there shall be power to nurture the children of these later years for posts of honor and large usefulness in the days that are yet to come."

Sunbeam Exchange

THE LETTERS are pouring in and we are happy. This one from dear Mrs. Westbrook, of Lorena, Texas, comes by courtesy of my dear friend, Mrs. F. S. Davis, President Texas B. W. M. U.

Mrs. Westbrook has long been an enthusiastic advocate of Sunbeams. She goes in the class with Mrs. Elsom of Virginia.

Read what she says:

Lorena, July 17.—Dear Mrs. Davis: have just received your card relative to the first Sunbeam organization that I have any knowledge of. In 1880 the children's band of this vicinity was called Sunbeams, previous to that time it was known as "Little Reapers," and was organized in 1866. We met at a private home. Children from three years old to seven were taught in a separate room. I made my own programs, told them Bible stories, taught them to sing, sew, etc. When I went to the Orient I sent the secretary's book to the leader, and it has been misplaced, or I could give you the names of the officers. I feel so thankful that this foundation work of our denomination is beginning to command the interest it deserves. I endorsed every word of Miss Heck's speech, and have written her a letter trying to tell her how much I appreciated it. I received several copies and will send them where I think they will accomplish the most

I have organized a Sunbeam Band in almost every church in Waco Association, but I do not believe that half of the churches realize their great responsibility. Interest must begin with the parents and pastors before we ever accomplish anything worth while. Pardon me, my old heart is so full of this Sunbeam work, that I let my zeal run away with my judgment. I am sending you a copy of the talk which I made at Bartlett. It expresses my sentiments, and, oh, here I pray that I may live to see a Sunbeam Band in every church in Texas. It can be, and by God's help it will be done.

I am very busy, but if I can serve you in any we command me. I love and admire you desire than I can tell you on paper.

Sincerely,

MRS. C. A. WESTBROOK.

And this from Texas corroborates Mrs. McGarrity's letter from Belton, on July 12:

Belton, Texas, July 11.—Dear Mrs. Davis: My Standard has just come and as usual I read the B. W. M. U. page first, and I think I will write you something about our Sunbeam work. In 1885 we had a Sunbeam Band, organized by Miss Maria Brown, now living in San Angelo. We called it the "Mina Everitt Society," and Miss Mina says it was the first Sunbeam Band in the South. The children made and sold articles and paid dues, their money going toward Miss Mina's support while she was in Brazil, through Gen. Hawthorn. After Miss Mins came from Brazil we called it the Annie Luther Society. In 1893 we organized our Woman's Mission Society, and changed the name of the children's to "Sunbeam Band." Hoping this information may be of some help to you or Miss Amos, I remain,

> Lovingly yours, MRS. M. V. SMITH.

This letter from the Sunbeam Superintendent of Tennessee is most refreshing. Mrs. Fred L. Smith, of Clarksville, Tenn., goes in the class with Mrs. Elsom, of Virginia, and Mrs. Westbrook, of Texas. All living! May they all go to St. Louis in May, 1913.

214 S. 7th St., Clarksville, Tenn.,

August 12, 1912.

Mrs. B. D. Gray, College Park, Ga.

Dear Mrs. Gray: I have read with much interest your department for Sunbeams and Royal Ambassadors in The Home Field, particularly that part referring to Pioneer Sunbeam Bands.

I have been making an effort to secure information relative to the early history of our Tennessee Sunbeams, but as yet have accomplished but little. I think, however, our Clarksville Sunbeams are as old as any Band in the State.

The date of this organization cannot be given with exactness, as the early records have been lost; but it was a thriving Mission Hand when the Sunbeams were organized by Dr. Taylor in 1886. Mrs. Fred L. Smith, at that time teacher of the Primary

Class in the Clarksville Baptist Sundayschool, realizing the importance of training
the children in missions, organized a missionary society from among the members of
her class, with other children in the school.
The name "Bright Stars" was adopted by
this band, who retained same until the general organization of the "Sunbeams," when
they changed to "Sunbeams" also. This organization has continued without interruption until the present date, and has made
a splendid record. For three years it has
enjoyed the distinction of being the "Banner" Sunbeam Band of Tennessee.

During all these years there have been but three or four leaders of the Clarksville Sunbeams. The writer has had the privilege of being directly connected with the Band (with the exception of a very few years) since she was a Sunbeam herself. Mrs. Smith, the organizer, though seventy-three years of age, is still a great friend of Sunbeams, and is a teacher in the Sunday-school, though not of the Primary Class.

Trusting other Pioneer Bands from Tennessee will report to you, I am,

Very sincerely,

SALLIE A. FOX.

This letter from a first Sunbeam leade in Mississippi, is gladly welcome. She wa then Miss Mary Reed. Now Mrs. Pegue and still a worker:

Tupelo, Miss., Aug. 12, 1912. Mrs. B. D. Gray, Atlanta, Ga.

Dear Mrs. Gray: I think the children of Pontotoc were among the first to organize a band of "Sunbeams." Some of those first members have been and still are doing excellent work along the same-lines in that church and other places where they have located. I do not know that they still report at "Sunbeams," but I do know under the leadership of Miss Minnie Brown they

When I came to Tupelo I also had a small band of workers. Mrs. C. P. Long and others have kept it up till the past year, they have not been meeting.

are still being trained.

I have not the record of the work in Pontotoc, and having been away from there twenty-three years it probably cannot be found.

If in any way I can be of service in getting up the information you wish, I will be glad to do it. Very truly yours,

MRS. MARY REED PEGUES.

IN MEMORIAM

This tribute to my dear personal friend, Mrs. Leake, from the pen of Mrs. A. M. Gwathmey, another cherished friend of Richmond, does fuller justice to the subject than I can. My own heart is sad. Only recently she wrote me, "May every blessing attend you and your work and make you an even greater blessing to us all, if that be possible. I am looking forward already to seeing you in May. With sincere love,

"Yours in Him,

"VERDIE FRENCH LEAKE."

Who doubts that she abides in Him and with Him forevermore?

Mrs. W. S. Leake, after a brief illness, departed this life on Tuesday, July 23d. Only the week before she was at the Encampment at Virginia Beach in apparently good health, so that this announcement has come as a great shock to all of her friends and

co-workers. The Woman's Missionary Union has sustained a great and serious loss and her place will be hard to fill. In December, 1902, Mrs. Leake was elected to be the Corresponding Secretary of the Woman's Missionary Union of Virginia, and right nobly did she fill her office until May, 1906, when her husband, having accepted the pastorate of a church in Danville, Va., she resigned that position and went with him to work in the church of which he was pastor. Coming back to Richmond in a short time, she was elected to fill a place on the Executive Board of the Woman's Missionary Union of Virginia, and a valuable member she has been. The work for young girls by the W. M. U. having been proposed on her coming back into the Executive Board, she was given charge of the Y. W. A., and later on, when there was

PAGES MISSING