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WEALTH IN CHURCH PROPERTY

CAROLINA CHURCH WEALTH

In two and a half centuries we have been willing to invest 28 million 600 thousand dollars in church buildings and parsonages in North Carolina. So read the figures in the 1916 Census of Religious Bodies.

But in ten years we have invested 100 million dollars in automobiles. We are now buying new cars at the rate of 60 million dollars a year. What we spend for motor cars in a single year is more than double the wealth we have accumulated in church properties since William Drummond's day.

It cost a little over 6 million dollars to keep our 10,000 churches in commission in 1916, while we are now spending around 20 million dollars a year to keep our 110,000 cars in commission.

It costs almost exactly as much to support our churches year by year as it does to support our state government. We support the church about as well as we support the state, and we starve them both.

Our investment in church property in 1916 was \$26.50 per member, while our investment in motor cars is now \$44 per inhabitant, counting men, women, and children of both races.

Where a man's treasure is, there his heart will be also. And it is true, the other way around.

Denominational Wealth

There are 50 different religious bodies in North Carolina. In 1916 they had 9735 organizations or congregations, 1210 of which had no Sunday schools; 9135 church buildings worth \$25,523,323; 1322 parsonages worth \$3,077,203; and 1,080,723 church members who own most of the billions on our tax books.

Church members are 62 percent of our population 10 years old and over. The people of these ages not on the rolls of any church of any name, sect, or sort, number 648,250. Which is to say, nearly two of every five people of responsible ages in North Carolina are outside the church—within the curtilage of the church, to be sure, but not on the church rolls. See the University News Letter, Vol. V, Nos. 14, 15, 21, and 24.

Only four states of the Union had a larger number of church organizations in 1916—New York, Georgia, Pennsylvania, and Texas, in the order named. Only 18 states had more money invested in church property, three of these being Southern states—Georgia, Virginia, and Texas.

Almost exactly half of all the church members of the state are Baptists of various sorts, white and colored, 540,013 in number, but they own a little less than a third of the church property, \$8,041,448. The Methodists of various sorts are a little less than a third of the total church membership of the state, 343,866 all told, but they own more than a third of the property in church buildings, \$8,936,998.

Rank in Church Property

Arranged in the order of wealth in church buildings, the leading denominations ranked as follows in 1916:

- 1 Methodist bodies: eight kinds, white and colored \$8,936,998
- 2 Baptist bodies: seven kinds, white and col... 8,041,448
- 3 Presbyterian bodies: four kinds... 4,050,065
- 4 Protestant Episcopal church... 1,406,400
- 5 Lutheran bodies: three kinds... 812,865
- 6 Roman Catholic church... 397,310
- 7 Disciples of Christ... 339,900
- 8 Christian church... 321,826
- 9 Moravian church... 210,200
- All other denominations: 23 in all, with 33,123 mem-

bers all told... 1,006,311

Total... \$25,523,323

Church Wealth Per Member

But the order changes when these figures are reduced to per-member wealth in church buildings, as follows:

- 1 Roman Catholic church... \$79
- 2 Protestant Episcopal church... 76
- 3 Presbyterian churches... 54
- 4 Moravian church... 46
- 5 Reformed church in the U. S... 40
- 6 Lutheran churches... 35
- 7 Methodist churches, white... 26
- 8 Christian church... 18
- 8 Baptist churches, white... 18
- 10 Disciples of Christ... 17
- 11 Negro churches, seven bodies... 15

Average, total membership, white and colored... 23

The per-member investment in church buildings in North Carolina is small—only \$23. Twenty-three dollars will barely furnish the most modest bed-room in the homes of church members. It would not begin to pay for the furniture in anybody's parlor. The fact is, it will barely buy a single tire for a Ford car. The averages range from \$15 for the negro church members—about what a half acre of corn will produce, to \$79 for the Roman Catholics—which is less than the price of a tire for a fine automobile. Clearly we are not laying up any great amount of treasure in church tabernacles on earth.

Parsonage Property

The nearly 10 thousand congregations in North Carolina reported only 1322 church homes for ministers—parsonages, pastoriums, manses, rectories, as they are variously called. They were worth all told \$3,077,263.

Arranged in the order of wealth in parsonages, the leading denominations appear as follows.

- 1 Methodists, white and colored, 695 parsonages, 544 white, 151 colored... \$1,323,144
- 2 Presbyterians, 192 parsonages... 616,050
- 3 Baptists, white and colored, 181 parsonages, 153 white, 28 colored... 487,275
- 4 Episcopalians, 99 parsonages 282,750
- 5 Lutherans, 71 parsonages... 153,900
- 6 Roman Catholics, 15 parsonages... 54,400
- 7 Reformed church, 25 parsonages... 53,500
- 8 Moravians, 7 parsonages... 31,000
- 9 Disciples, 5 parsonages... 14,200
- 10 Christians, 1 parsonage... 3,500
- All other religious bodies, 22 in number, with 31 parsonages... 52,484

Total \$3,077,203

Per-Member Investment

But when these figures of parsonage wealth are reduced to a per-member basis, the order changes; and they serve to indicate the relative concern of the various religious bodies about the comfort of ministers and their families.

- 1 Episcopalians... \$15.24
- 2 Roman Catholics... 10.81
- 3 Reformed Church... 8.76
- 4 Presbyterians... 8.30
- 5 Moravians... 6.85
- 6 Lutherans... 6.72
- 7 Methodists, white... 4.40
- 8 Baptists, white... 1.35
- 9 Disciples of Christ... .70
- 10 Christians... .20
- Negro church bodies, seven in number... .65
- Average, all denominations, white and colored... 2.84

Most of the church homes of the state are located in the towns and cities. There are very few in the country regions. We have never been able to find but 27 country church homes in North Carolina—most of them in the Scotch-Irish and German-Lutheran sections of the state.

The preachers who serve our country churches, with once-a-month sermons as a rule, usually live in towns, commonly in homes of their own or in rented houses. They are absentee preachers, not resident pastors or shepherds of their country flocks.

The fate of our churches, especially our country churches, is directly related

UNIVERSITY FREEDOM

President H. W. Chase

It is the faith of this University that, with men of your years and attainments, character develops best in an atmosphere of freedom. But the freedom in which the University believes is not freedom to do what one likes; it is the freedom to do what is right; to do it not because one is compelled to do it, but because one chooses to do it.

Such a faith does not do away with responsibility; it puts the responsibility where it belongs, squarely on the man himself. It expects him to want to conduct himself as a fine citizen in a free community; if he lacks this desire it holds him unworthy of membership in the company of Carolina men.

Remember that individual freedom means individual responsibility; that you have no right to accept the one and defy the other. Remember that your voice helps to form public opinion on the campus; be certain that it is heard speaking for the right. From this moment on, align yourself with nothing that might, however faintly, smirch the honor of this place; align yourself with every thing that makes for a greater and finer Carolina.

I have so strong a faith in the soundness and justice of the public opinion of this campus that I have come to this conclusion: A man who lives as the opinion of this campus holds that a Carolina man ought to live is exhibiting and developing precisely those moral qualities, precisely the sort of character, that the world outside this campus stands most in need of.—Extract from address of Welcome, University of North Carolina, September 23, 1920.

to living conditions and living salaries for ministers. Hence the foundational importance of comfortable church homes in larger numbers.

Two dollars and 84 cents per church member, invested in parsonages, is not creditable. Three of our leading denominations drop below this average. The negro churches outrank one of these and nearly equal another.

It is pertinent to add that \$2.84 falls far short of paying for a single bushel of Irish potatoes, now-a-days.

A commodious, comfortably furnished church home with ample space for a garden, poultry ranges, and pasture for a cow, goes far to reconcile a minister to a small salary. Without such a rent-free church home he is forced to 'look after the affairs of his own household', in Saint Paul's phrase, and to get out of the ministry or be 'worse than an infidel'.

Average Church Salaries

Speaking of ministerial salaries, the denominational averages in 1916 are appalling. These are doubtless greatly increased during the last four years. If not, our preachers are grazing on mighty short commons, because the cost of living has more than doubled since 1913. As a matter of fact a dollar will buy no more existence necessities today than 45 cents would buy ten years ago. It is well for church members to remember that even the preacher is worthy of his hire.

The average salary of preachers in 13 religious bodies in 1916 follows:

- 1 Episcopalian... \$1632
- 2 Presbyterian, Southern... 1351
- 3 Disciples... 1251
- 4 Baptist, Southern... 1072
- 5 Methodist Episcopal South... 1037
- 6 Lutherans, United Synod... 932
- 7 Roman Catholic... 838
- 8 Methodist Protestant... 832
- 9 Christian... 776
- 10 Friends... 681
- 11 Negro Baptist, National Con-

COUNTRY HOME CONVENIENCES

LETTER SERIES No. 30

BANISH BLUE MONDAY—IV

One of the best stories told by Aunt Jane of Kentucky is about how a farmer's wife rebelled against cooking a Sunday dinner for the preacher.

"I got up early," says the farmer's wife, "and dressed the children and fed my chickens and strained the milk and washed up the milk things and got breakfast, washed the dishes, cleaned up the house and gathered the vegetables for dinner and washed the children's hands and faces and put their Sunday clothes on 'em, and just as I was startin' to get myself ready for church," says she, "I happened to think that I hadn't skimmed the milk for next day's churnin'. So I went down to the spring house and did the skimmin', and jest as I picked up the cream jar to put it on the shelf my foot slipped," says she, "and down I came and skinned my elbow on the rock step, and broke the jar all to smash and spilled the cream all over the creation.

"However," says she, "I picked up the pieces and washed up the muss, and then I went to the house to git myself ready for church, and I heard Sam hollerin' for me to come and sew a button on his shirt. The children had been playin' with my work basket and I couldn't find a needle," and, to make a long story short, she ran the needle into her finger and when she was dressed the children were dirty from playing in the mud and she had to dress them again. Then she rubbed her own dress against the black grease of the wagon hub.

No wonder that, as she says: "The nearer I got to church the madder I got." No wonder that she refused to join in singing the hymn: Welcome, Sweet Day of Rest.

A Lesson for Husbands

No wonder that in telling of it afterward she said: "I ain't seen any day of

rest since the day I married Sam, and I don't expect to see any till the day I die. If Parson Page wants that hymn sung I'll let him get up a choir of old maids and old bachelors, for they're the only people that see any rest Sunday or any other day."

No wonder that when Sam took the preacher home with him to dinner she rebelled against cooking a big meal, and gave him the "left over cold vittles".

But Parson Page's heart was in the right place and he said: "I'd rather eat a cold dinner any time than have a woman toiling over a hot stove for me." And then she, just like a woman, cooked him a whaling big supper, yellow-legged chickens and cream gravy.

There's a lesson in that story for every husband of a toil-worn wife. As Aunt Jane says in another of her charming stories: "The discouragin' thing about woman's work is that there's no end to it, and no day of rest. If a woman had to see all the dishes that she has to wash before she died piled before her in one pile, she'd lie down and die right then and there. When I'm dead and gone there ain't nobody goin' to think of the floors I've scrubbed and the old clothes I've patched and the socks I've darned. That'll be forgotten when I'm gone."

But the most discouraging thing to a woman is that her work is generally forgotten while she is living and doing it. And the poor tired woman is expected to do more work on Sunday than any other day in the week and go to church to boot and sing Sweet Day of Rest.

O Land of Rest for Thee I Sigh, would voice her sentiments better.—Billy Sunday in the Country Gentleman.

- vention... 572
- 12 African Methodist Zion... 502
- 13 African Methodist Episcopal... 478

Negro Churches

The Negroes of North Carolina are almost exactly a fourth of our total population, but their church buildings are more than a third of all the church buildings of the state and the membership of the seven negro denominations is 322,165, which is nearly a full third of the total.

In a half century or so they have built 2591 churches worth \$4,917,613 and 179 parsonages worth \$211,281. It is a remarkable showing. It is largely due to the interest with which they support their church organizations and church purposes. For instance, we found in Orange county in 1916 that the per-member contributions of the negroes to their churches was \$2.05, which was exactly the figure for the white church membership of the county. It appears that out of their little they give much, and that out of our much we give little for church buildings and church purposes.

The 1916 Church Census

These facts are worked out of the two quarto volumes of the Federal Census of Religious Bodies in 1916. These volumes can be had free of charge by applying at once to your Congressman.

They are a mine of exact information about church properties, personnel, activities, and results, and they ought to be in the private library of every church statesman and intelligent local leader in church circles.

COUNTRY TOWN WISDOM

The country town is a part of the country. It is one of the encouraging signs of the times that country town business men are coming to realize this.

It has not been so long ago that every little town thought that its business was to grow into a city just as soon as possible. Some towns and many town people still think so. Many small town people, too, still think that their chief relations and interests are with the cities rather than the country. The most farseeing business men have come to know better. They are seeing more and more clearly that the town, the small city, is an integral

part of the country, that it prospers only as the country prospers, and that it has its place in the scheme of things to be the life center of the country about it.

The town merchant who opposes cooperative buying or selling by the farmers of his territory, the town banker who would hinder the establishment of farm loan associations in his county, the town editor who neglects the interests of the back-country districts, is becoming more and more out of date.

Best of all, town folks are coming to see that they are out of date. Not until the country and the country town learn that they are yoke-fellows and must pull together can either make the progress it should. And both are learning.—Southern Agriculturist.

TEN MILLIONS FOR NEGROES

A recent statement from high Catholic authority estimates the number of Negroes without church ties at 6,000,000; and the archbishops of Baltimore, New York and Philadelphia are calling for large sums for work among this group.

A writer in *America*, a leading Catholic publication, urges the assumption of this task by the Knights of Columbus. This order, with its membership of 600,000, could, it is claimed, easily raise in two years the \$10,000,000 needed to finance the work along both community and religious lines. The card-indexing of all Negro non-church members is urged as a preparation for propaganda. Each city or town, it is said, could be districted, and put under the charge of K. of C. district committees. The Knights, we are told, could go even further. They could seek out, get acquainted with, and in numerous ways show interest in, the welfare of these people.

One thing friends and enemies of Catholicism are agreed upon; it is a church which takes up big problems on a big scale, and notably where those problems concern the poor, the suffering, and similar handicapped folk. The proposed movement will be watched with interest by many outside the church immediately concerned.—Southern Publicity Committee.