

Across every newspaperman's desk comes a profusion of printed and mimeographed matter. Because curiosity and a quest for knowledge in all fields is part of his stock in trade, he generally reads it for better or for worse.

Much of the stuff is disappointing. Quite often someone with an axe to grind sends out "slanted" material that is so awkwardly biased and distorted, and so poorly phrased, that no editor with a semblance of ethics will publish it in his paper.

Brightening the scene occasionally, however, is something really worth while. In this category is an attractive and comprehensive booklet that reached us this week, entitled "A Brief History of Methodism in Jones County."

Authored by the Rev. Walton N. Bass, who was pastor of the Beech Grove charge in Craven county before assuming the Trenton charge in Jones, the publication makes for pleasant and informative reading. Because it ties in with the Methodist story in New Bern and Craven county, we feel confident that any and all "sprinklers" in this area will find it enlightening.

Born in Wayne county 40 years ago, Rev. Bass was educated at Louisburg college, Wofford college and the Duke Divinity school. He was ordained and accepted into the North Carolina Conference in 1951, and prior to taking over the Beech Grove flock in 1956, was the pastor of the Rougemont charge in Durham county and the Woodington-Webb charge near Kinston in Lenoir county.

Everywhere he has served he quickly gained the confidence of young people. Instinctively, they recognize that his interest in their problems, their hopes and their dreams is rooted deep in his dedication to God. Bass is no pious acting or pompous individual. Self-effacing, he doesn't impress one at first glance, but he is so genuine that the man's inner personality inevitably breaks through.

His strong faith in today's youth is a refreshing thing. "I find the young people of this generation kind and responsive," he told us when interviewed the other day. "They are no worse, and probably not as bad, as the youngsters of earlier generations, and a great deal of the criticism hurled at them results from their tendency to not hide and cover up. Whatever their faults and failings may be, most of them are too frank and honest to be hypocrites."

Rev. Bass is a true historian at heart, and this is adequately reflected in the great pains he took to make "A Brief History of Methodism in Jones County" an accurate piece of work. He searched records exhaustively and talked at length with many oldsters before he got around to the actual business of writing what turned out to be a very readable booklet.

For his references, he delved into "The Journals and Letters of Francis Asbury" and "The Journals of the North Carolina Conference." In his acknowledgements at the front of the publication, he expresses his thanks to those with whom he conversed on past happenings, including Miss Tiny Hammond, Mrs. Pearl Hammond, Miss Bessie Whitaker, Murray Whitaker, Mrs. Blake Daniel, Mrs. Paul Huffman, Mrs. Jennie Ipock, Mrs. Mable Dixon, Mrs. Mabel Dixon, John Yates, John Hargett, Mrs. Rosa Booth, Lee Foy, Leon Simmons, Mrs. Nannie Scott, Claude Banks, Mrs. Rachel Banks, Mrs. Edgar Philyaw, Joe Becton, Burke Matlocks, Ossie Meadows and Mrs. Clellie D. Simmons.

There are five chapters in the book. The first chapter is devoted to Francis Asbury's work, the second chapter to the period from

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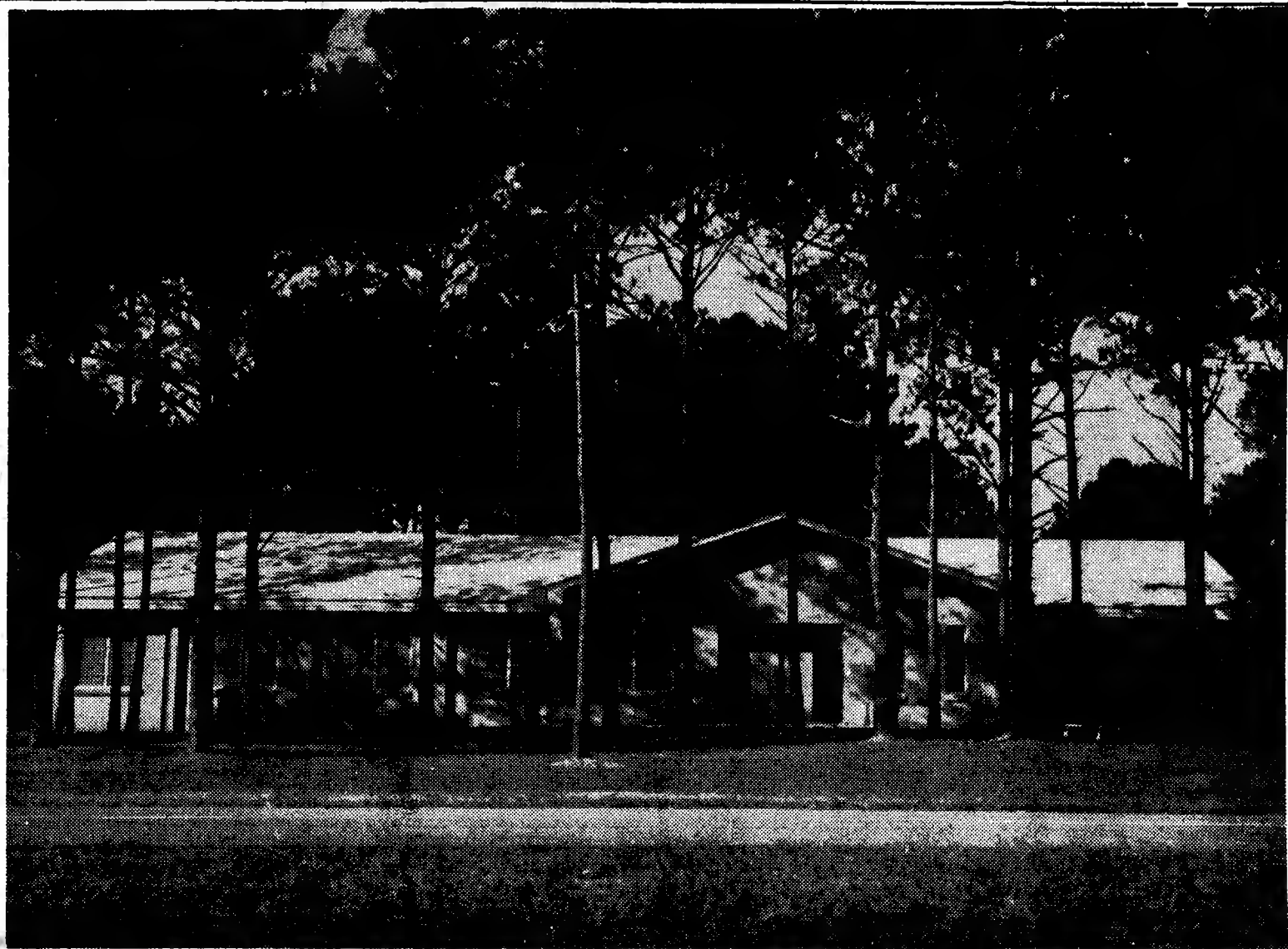
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A JOB WELL DONE—Pictured here in its serene surroundings is the New Bern Shrine Club Building. Because local members of the Shrine tackled its erection on a do-it-your-

self basis, the cost was held to a minimum.—Photo by Billy Benners.

New Bern Can Be Grateful For Its Shrine Club Building

A lot of faith, long hours of hard work, and a liberal sprinkling of unselfishness—that's what was mixed into the concrete, tile and mortar of the virtually completed New Bern Shrine club building.

If ever a local undertaking deserved the thanks of a grateful community, this one does. Erected primarily to render a service to others, rather than to fill the needs of the Shrine itself, the handsome structure will be used many times by non-Masonic organizations and groups for banquets, meetings and recreational activities.

A far-fetched dream that has become a remarkable reality, the project got its initial impetus while New Bern Shriners were attending the Southeastern Shrine convention in Memphis, Tenn., a couple of years ago.

Wearers of the fez from here were greatly impressed with the manner in which any and all clubs and fraternal bodies in the Tennessee city extended their facilities to visiting Shriners. It proved to be an eye opener, and then and there New Bernians attending the convention got a vision of what could be done back home.

Returning to the shores of the Neuse and Trent, the local Shrine club went into action. With barely enough money on hand to purchase land for the venture, members went searching for a suitable site. They found it on the Race Track road, linking old Highway 17 and new Highway 17 one mile west of the city limits.

Fortunately, included in the Shrine club are three men who owned grading concerns—Bob Johnson and Don Clement of Clement and Johnson, and James

Chance. Taking care not to disturb the stately trees, they got the property in good shape for a building that was still only a dream.

Undaunted by the utter emptiness of their depleted treasury, club members met and talked the situation over. Someone suggested that those interested could donate one hundred concrete blocks each to get things under way. Donors weren't lacking, and a rather gloomy picture became brighter by the minute.

It was going to take labor as well as concrete blocks, but the Shriners had an answer for that too. Short on money, they rolled up their sleeves and started digging ditches and pouring foundations.

Again fortune smiled on the project. Among the New Bern Shrine club's 120 members there were bricklayers, and they were willing to give their services. Additional workmen had to be hired, but those members who couldn't qualify for a skilled trade dug into their pockets and came up with money to pay for this outside help.

Among the unskilled Shrine laborers who mixed mortar and hauled blocks were some of New Bern's top professional men. Little did they ever visualize a time when they would be performing tasks of this sort, but they went at it with vim and vigor.

A familiar adage tells us that "too many cooks spoil the broth." And to infer that all was peace and harmony as the construction progressed would be a gross misinterpretation. Along with the sweat there were the usual squabbles, but those who grumbled and complained now and then worked as ardently as anyone else.

As a matter of fact, so many played an important part in the erection of the structure that it would be impossible to list them by name. In large measure, the completed building is a monument to many individuals, and they are being adequately compensated by the satisfaction of belonging to a "do-it-yourself" clan that refused to be intimidated despite what appeared to be insurmountable obstacles.

Today they can point with pride to a Shrine building that has been conservatively valued in excess of \$70,000. Only \$20,000 of the cost remains unpaid, and approximately half of this amount has been subscribed in bonds by individual members of the New Bern Shrine club.

New Bernians in general have played a part in the accomplished dream. In order to finance their efforts, the Shriners have staged huge fish fries and barbecues, and local citizens have been ready customers. One of these barbecues is scheduled for today, between the hours of 11 a.m. and 9 p.m., and yours will be delivered to your door if you can't go to the Shrine club building yourself.

Take our suggestion, and pay a personal visit. You'll be impressed, as we were by the spaciousness of a banquet hall and ballroom that is 50 feet wide and 96 feet long. Its 4,300 square feet of floor space can accommodate between 450 and 500 dinner guests.

Thinking of everything, the far-sighted Shriners saw to it that the big and modern kitchen, with its stainless steel equipment, was constructed at just the right spot to simplify service to a large group

of diners. Countless steps and needless delays will be eliminated as a result.

Overall, the structure is 50 feet wide and 132½ feet long. It has an attractive main lobby, with an adjacent cloak room. Immediately adjoining is a lounge that is ideal for meetings attended by smaller groups.

If anything, the surrounding grounds are even more attractive than the Shrine building. We've never seen greener grass than the verdant blades that make up the front lawn, and even the trees seem to extend their branches with a special sense of pride.

That local Shriners should put forth such effort to give the community a fine meeting place should surprise no one. Only the woefully uninformed among non-Shriners are unaware of the great zest for worthy causes that keeps wearers of the fez on the move.

If Shrinedom never did anything else of a commendable nature (and of course it does) the magnificent role it plays in providing hospitals for crippled children would be a star in its crown.

Countless millions of dollars have been raised among the membership to give handicapped youngsters the chance they deserve for a healthy and normal life. And by sponsoring annual Shrine football games, with vast proceeds turned into the cause, the good accomplished defies the imagination.

Time is the only thing we possess. Our success depends upon the use of our time, and its by-product, the odd moment.—Arthur Brisbane.