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OUR WORK AND WORKERS.

OUR CORRESPONDING SECRETARY IS HOPEFUL OF THE EAST.

Rev. Livingston Johnson, Raleigh.

Eastern North Carolina is a great section of our State. The people are intelligent and thrifty. The land is very fertile and can be improved so as to be still more productive. Because of the anti-mission sentiment in that section of the State, it is right hard for the missionaries to show great results from their work, but we believe that the time will come when the fruit will be visible and when we shall have reason to rejoice for every dollar we have expended in State Mission Work in Eastern North Carolina. It was in that section that our principles first took root, and from the East the Baptists moved onward toward the mountain peaks of the West. It is the earnest desire of the Board to go back and strengthen "the things which remain" in Eastern North Carolina.

MISSIONARY PREACHERS NEEDED.

Rev. J. F. Love, Wadesboro, N. C.

With personal knowledge of religious and Baptist destitution in several Eastern counties the situation appears to me sorrowful. The people are there; they are a worthy kind; they are accessible; they are tractable; when fed on wholesome doctrine they develop strong religious characters. Yet the present force is not reaching half of them and cannot reach them. There is immediate and supreme need of more strong missionary preachers to enter this promising and deserving field. The results which such men can produce will justify sending them.

PASTORAL CHANGES TOO FREQUENT.

Bro. Rufus Ford, Bennettsville, S. C.

I read with much pleasure the MESSENGER. It does seem to me that there is progress being made in Eastern Carolina. My one regret is the constant changes in the pastors. I do wish they would stay longer. "A man full of faith and the Holy Ghost," with the wisdom of a serpent and the harmlessness of the dove, with a good degree of patience, and a still better degree of perseverance, ought to remain more than a year or two on a field.

I have served my present field seven years, once and again they have changed my wages, but we love each other now better than ever before.

EVANGELIZATION THE CHIEF NEED.

Rev. J. D. Moore, Barnwell, S. C.

An absence of more than seven years from the Atlantic Association renders it impossible for me to speak of its conditions otherwise than briefly and in a general way. I judge that the chief need is evangelization, from our standpoint. The people in the bounds of the Atlantic Association are religiously disposed, as much so as any people I know of. This is a source of danger as well as hopefulness, of danger, if error gets first on the field, of hopefulness, if the truth of God is presented in its simplicity and power. But

the actual presence of error, which I suppose exists in various forms in some sections of the Association, need not endanger the element of hopefulness in the situation; for the man who will accept a truth with an admixture of error, and does so in sincerity, will not despise the pure truth when it is rightly and patiently presented to him.

And I assure the noble corps of workers in the Atlantic Association, many of whom are my personal friends, of my hearty best wishes for their success in the Lord's cause.

THE FIELD WHITE UNTO HARVEST.

Rev. C. W. Blanchard, Cary.

From the view point of the fields condition, great advantage has been gained in Eastern North Carolina to the Baptists. A good school each for the Atlantic and Neuse Associations, under good and successful management, largely patronized and supported by universal sympathy, means much in creating a larger sympathy for all else that we peculiarly stand for.

Again, the field itself seems readier for our entrance to serve. Isms that have attracted the attention of the people of this section for several years are on the wane. It is true that a larger part of our population has never taken up with these objectionable innovations, but they have had their blighting effect upon the cause generally. Places where strong opposition was raised to our entrance and work five years ago are now open to us with an earnest sympathy for our cause. Everywhere our meetings have been attended with great spiritual power.

From the stand point of workers on the field we are suffering in some places. The pity is that a good work should start up in a section and lose its shepherd and be without for a length of time to come to nothing. If only strong men could be led to this section to take up their abode to stay the field would soon be ours. The people are not an ignorant people. They are well up with the average in intelligence and are the most prosperous of any section of the State. When once they have been converted and enlisted in the work they will constitute the stronghold of the denomination in the State.

We do not need controversial preaching nor faction stirrers here. We need evangelical gospel preaching. There are some good and hopeful fields open now to such men. In every way there is much to encourage our Baptist workers in Eastern North Carolina.

ROOM IN THE TAR RIVER TERRITORY FOR MEN AND CHURCHES.

Rev. R. D. Carroll, Elm City.

DEAR BRO. MOORE: I have intended all the year to give the MESSENGER some notes from this section. I have been in Elm City a year and have learned a good deal about Baptist affairs in Wilson county. I am in the Tar River Association, and a large scope of its territory justly belongs to the destitution of the East. There are about 23,000 people in Wilson county with three Churches, and about 450 Baptists. The Baptist interest in Elm City is rather weak. We have about 30 members in the town and the Church

membership is 95. We have been preaching two Sundays in the month.

New Hope is an old church of forty or fifty years standing and is about seven miles West of this town with a membership of about 35. I preach for the people there one Sunday in each month. The congregations are growing and the interest deepening. The only other Baptist church in the county is in the town of Wilson, and lives largely by its self and for its self. Of late it has not sent any delegates to the sessions of the Association or Union Meetings. The membership of these three churches with their pastors constitute the Baptist force in Wilson. About 50 members were received into these churches during the past year. West of Elm City is a scope of destitution in which a man ought to spend at least three fourths of his time. East of here there is no Baptist work being done, (except at Crisp in Edgecombe county 16 miles from Elm City) till you reach the M. P. Davis field in Greene county, and the work at Winterville and Greenville. This territory includes part of four counties and a population of perhaps 25,000 people. Striking a line from Wilson to Winterville this scope of country is bounded on the East, North and West, back to Wilson by the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad, and includes something like 2,000 square miles with one little Baptist church at Crisp (not far from the center) with a service one Sunday in each month, and a membership of 30 souls. There is a good house of worship at this point. The house at New Hope is not worth much. At Elm City we have just got to build or quit house-keeping. But we have already begun to get ready to build. This is the situation.

DIFFICULTIES AND NEEDS.

Rev. Geo. N. Cowan, Kinston.

I began the pastorate of Kinston Baptist Church last June. Prior to that time my knowledge of Eastern North Carolina as a mission field was very meager. I had read about the work for some years but had never been on the field. My knowledge of existing conditions in this section is yet limited, but I have been, in some measure, a student of the situation now confronting us.

1. In the first place we must not fail to take into account the difficulties of the work. We will not attempt to mention but a few. Every work for the Lord has its difficulties. It is well that we meet these difficulties. God never intended his people to pass through this world on flowery beds of ease. Peculiar circumstances give rise to peculiar difficulties. The Christian worker meets difficulties in the East not found in the West; some greater some less.

One difficulty, it seems to me, is that of a comparatively weak force badly scattered. To enlist the Lord's people for service anywhere is a problem of no small importance. In the section under consideration, Baptist churches are few and, as a rule far between, Missionary Baptists, like stray sheep, can be found here and there; some with no church connection and some beyond the reach of the church to which they belong. Thus, we see, there are many who are not connected in any vital way with the work we are trying to do. It was the pleasure of the writer

to conduct a week's meeting with one of our beloved missionaries not long since. In all that territory, comprising half of one of the counties of the Neuse Association, can, doubtless, be found a dozen Missionary Baptists, but so scattered, we are able to find only three or four. In some parts it is impossible to get beyond the reach of a Missionary Baptist church, but in this eastern section it is exceedingly easy to land where there is no Baptist church. Therefore is it not true, that enlisting forces here is more difficult than in other sections of the State.

A lack of religious enthusiasm is another difficulty with which we have to contend. There are two conditions under which a church stands in danger; the first is when a church is very strong numerically and financially; the second, is when a church is very weak in both these particulars. In the first instance people are apt to be contented and indifferent. This kills enthusiasm. In the second instance people are apt to be discouraged. This also, destroys enthusiasm. A weak, struggling church overshadowed by a stronger, not interested in any sympathetic way with the weaker, the tendency on the part of the weaker is to discouragement. The causes of the lack of enthusiasm, may be many. A lack of a wholesome enthusiasm for the things of God may obtain anywhere, but in the weak places especially. The weak are apt to feel that there is but little they can do. Whenever any people or church feels that they can do but little, they are in danger of doing nothing. Also in the weak struggling mission points progress has been so slow, it seems like no progress at all. A pastor in charge of one of the best churches in this section reports a gain of but one member. There were more added to the church, but the loss kept pace with the additions.

Again, there is a difficulty, growing out of a misunderstanding of denominational differences. Here are several sects to which the name Baptist is applied. What have they in common, if anything, and what is it that differentiates them? This is a question well worth consideration. By the word misunderstanding I mean a failure to comprehend some very fundamental truths by which the one is distinguished from the other. This failure leads many to treat differences as a matter of no significance, while others are led to emphasize these differences in a way that is hurtful. The appellation Missionary Baptist cannot be a name having no significance. That which differentiates a Missionary Baptist from any other body of believers, even though that body be one of the several to which the term Baptist is applied, must be worthy of consideration. Those who treat these distinctions lightly are not apt to have a strong grasp upon the fundamental limits of their own denomination. Then those dwelling in the midst of a multiplicity of denominations—in the church as well as out—having something in common and much that is not in common are likely to be confused in their religious conception. This is true of many. Under such circumstances, progress is slow, sinners are hard to reach.

2. What about the needs of the field in the first place. I remark that there must be faithful preaching of the great truths so long

held and fostered by the Missionary Baptists. This must be done in the spirit of love. I believe our doctrines can be preached in such manner that people will be won. We do not need these porcupine preachers in Eastern Carolina. We need men consecrated, strong men, men of sympathy, men who know how to preach our great doctrines in a spirit of love.

Education as well as evangelization must be emphasized as part of our work. Many have stressed education for the West and evangelization in the East, until some no doubt, have concluded that the sole need of the Western part of our State is education, and the sole need of the Eastern section is evangelization. This is the truth, but it is not all the truth. Evangelization should be emphasized as a great need in this section, but the educational need should likewise have consideration. I do not know that we need more schools. I am not acquainted with the field as a whole, but my limited knowledge of existing conditions has led me to see clearly what good schools, controlled by the Baptists will do to strengthen our cause in the East as well as the West. Evangelization should have the pre-eminence. The evangelization of the world is our business. But no thinking man will deny that Winterville School, as well as others I might mention, are meeting a deep felt need long existing in the East.

Another need is a broader missionary conception. Alas, this is true everywhere. But my short experience in and about Kinston has taught me that many of our people are Missionary Baptists in name only. If we stand for what our name implies this country will be ours some day, if we do not we had as well vacate the field. The only immunity from the law of death and decay is "going." A going church will grow. Many years ago our Association in a certain State divided on missions. The many were opposed to missions, the few favored it. A small band withdrew from those who did not believe in missions. They organized standing upon the great Commission. This past August, the anti-missionary Association met to breathe its last. They had dwindled to 110 members. About the same time the Missionary Baptist Association met having a membership of many thousand. One believed in "going" the other did not. One gloriously lives, the other is dead. The true missionary spirit means much for our cause in these Eastern counties. It means life and growth.

3. The outlook is hopeful. Notwithstanding the difficulties, there is much for which to be thankful. The labors of the Missionaries have been in some measure blessed. I know many of the Missionaries who are now laboring in the Neuse and Atlantic Associations. They are true men, they are men of God. God has and will bless the labors of such men.

Eastern Carolina is not a place for the pessimist. I mean we do not need them. We have found some of these calamity howlers in Kinston. They do not help our cause here. There is an optimism that does harm; everybody is good and on the way to glory. We do not need the calamity howler. We do not need the extravagant Optimist. We need men who can see difficulties and dangers, but, at the same time men who can see things in the brightness of God's promise.