

play around them, and the beams of the Sun of Righteousness fall upon them, 'this year also.' Fain will we trust this kind pleading may be exercised and heard on our behalf.

"And if it bear fruit, well; if not"—ah, then, what is to be done? "After that"—what can we expect friends, after all the patient, love, long-suffering, forbearance and tender mercy, upon which we have reflected—if all these be graciously renewed to us "this year also," and still no fruit is borne, no response to God's love is given, no yielding to His mercy, no repentance as the result of His forbearance—what can we expect after that?

Are there, indeed, those among us against whom the Lord must pronounce the dread sentence? So barren, so unfruitful, so truly "cumberers of the ground? Oh, may the Divine Spirit reach our hearts this year! The word has reached our ears often enough—may our hearts respond to the call of the Spirit now, and "this year" we shall live and bear fruit.

None can gainsay the culture already bestowed upon us in this day of salvation in which we live, nor the reasonableness of the expectation that such culture should be rewarded with fruit—Sabbath privileges, gospel teachings, sacred counsels, divine influences, all have been dealt out to us with bounteous loving hand, and now the gracious Master waits, waits "this year also," but it may be this year only—oh that He may not wait in vain.

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A Year in North Carolina.

The People.

BY REV. JOHN LEWIS.

IN THE CHURCHES. (CONTINUED.)

It is said that in this State there are about fifty different denominations. In point of numbers how do we compare with other denominations? The late Dr. Denham, Secretary of the Convention, said in 1891, "Never, in my opinion, among any people, since the days of the apostles on earth, has any mission work been more successful in giving the gospel to the people and in building up self-sustaining churches and widening the opportunities of a denomination for good." Bro. John E. White, the present Secretary, wrote in 1897: "Almost miraculous it seems to us now that Baptists in the early history of North Carolina managed to exist at all, so fierce and so powerful were the forces with which they contended. What rash prophet, looking at the mere handful of men and women who were all there were of us then, would have predicted that the day would come when the Baptists would in North Carolina nearly outnumber all other denominations combined? The latest statistics published by the Government gives as the sum total of all church members in the State 673,795; of these 326,971 are Baptists. According to the last census the missionary Baptists in Wake County alone, outnumber by 167 members all the Episcopalians, Catholics and Jews in the whole State of North Carolina. The regular or missionary Baptists of the whole State are more than twenty-four times as numerous as the anti-mission Baptists, more than thirty-five times as many as the Episcopalians, eight times as many as all sorts of Presbyterians and 16,962 more than all sorts of Methodist, white and colored. Now with these facts before us let us look back just 60 years. In 1830 there were only 15,000 Baptists in the State. In 60 years we have increased over 300,000 souls in membership." There were stray Baptists in the State in 1690, but the first Baptist church was not organized till 1727, and after that there were very severe trials and some persecutions. The first organized effort for mission work was in 1803, but it was not until 1830 the State Convention was organized. The Constitution has practically remained the same till the present time. In 1833 The Baptist Interpreter, which was changed to The Biblical Recorder in 1834, was started. This has been the organ of the denomination ever since. In 1834 Wake Forest College was opened. In 1848 the Chowan Female Seminary was founded. It is owned by the Baptists of Chowan Associations and located at Murfreesboro. The Female University is about to be opened in Raleigh. Since 1885 we have had an orphanage at Thomasville owning about 400 acres of land and taking care of about two hundred orphan children in sixteen buildings. It has a paper called Charity and Children, which is used by very many Sunday Schools. Since 1845 the Baptists of several counties beyond the Blue Ridge had a Convention of their own but this year it was dissolved and at Greenville, the birthplace of our own Convention, the re-union has just taken place. In the future there will be but one Convention for the white Baptists of the whole State. There are fifty-five Associations co-operating with the Convention. Some of your readers may be glad to get a brief description of the work of the State Convention. The Associations and Convention are, as it were, parts of the great Southern Baptist Convention. They co-operate with it and are represented in it. It carries on mission and Sunday School work throughout the South, in Oklahoma, Indian Territory and Cuba; in China, Africa, Italy, Mexico, Brazil and Japan. Our Convention meets once a year and appoints a Board of Missions and Sunday Schools, composed of men selected by the Convention itself and others selected by the different Associations. Each Association also has its Board of Missions co-operating with this State Board. The member appointed by the Association for the State

Board is generally, if not always, a member of the Associational Board. Thus there is understanding and consultation and co-operation between the Associations and Conventions. In a more informal way the Union meetings, corresponding to your District meetings, which are held on the fifth Sundays, discuss the condition of the fields and mission work and have a bearing on the decisions of the Convention Board. This Board has headquarters in Raleigh, controls the Baptist Book Store, manages the Colportage work, employs a Sunday School missionary and expects to collect and expend during the present year \$20,000 on Mission work throughout the State. There are about 115 missionaries employed. The treasurer, as well as the secretary and Sunday School missionary has his office in the same building. He receives and disburses the contributions for the Home and Foreign Mission work of the Southern Convention and for other purposes. The Book Store yielded a profit of \$500 for State Mission work last year.

The Convention also appoints a Board of Education, of Ministerial Relief and an Orphanage Board. These do not have their headquarters in Raleigh.

There were about 300 delegates at the Convention this year. Thus far entertainment has been provided. There is very little that is "cut and dried" about the meetings. I have no doubt that most of the brethren that speak have thought much over the subjects, but they pride themselves on the free-and-easy, off-hand speaking. They keep the same moderator for a number of years. This year J. Marsh was elected the eighth time. Dr. Hufham the Baptist historian of North Carolina, is a familiar figure. It is hard to say how the Convention can get along without him. He is now advancing in years and I hear that he is working very hard endeavoring to put in writing what he knows about the history of our denomination.

Dr. Carter of Raleigh is a powerful platform speaker. Secretary White is a comparatively young man of great energy and enthusiasm, and Editor Bailey, of the Recorder, is younger still. Bro. N. B. Broughton, Recording Secretary, is one of our most enthusiastic workers and influential laymen, especially in the Sunday School work. Bro. John T. Pullen is not as prominent in the Convention as many, but hardly any one has a more interesting history, and they tell me that if he dies in Raleigh, it is very doubtful if anyone ever had a larger funeral than he will have.

I was told that when he was younger, he had been somewhat wild. The church had taken hold to discipline. He did not intend to attend the conference when his conduct was to be under consideration, but his pastor prevailed on him. He broke down and promised to do better. He immediately went to work in a destitute part of the city and now near Shaw University, you will find a neat church building, built through the efforts of Bro. Pullen and largely with his means. On the tower is inscribed "God is love" and inside worship the poorer people. Until about a year ago Bro. Pullen was their only pastor, but his health gave way and he was obliged to give up some of his work. "There is no joy like it" he said to me in referring to Christian work. "Business is nothing compared with it." In the early morning before going into his office in the bank he can be seen on the streets with tracts, gospels, psalms or alms. In the afternoon, after bank hours, he visits the homes of those who are sick or in need, or he is among the young men seeking to reclaim the wandering. If he leaves home he is accompanied with Bibles and Testaments and tracts, and is ever like his Master quietly seeking to do good. He knows the Authorized Version of the Bible thoroughly, but very little about the Revised. Matthew Henry, Spurgeon on Psalms and such books he delights in, but even McLaren on the Psalms, by its new translation, puzzled him, and he soon gave it to a friend. He can thrill any audience with his talk on personal work for souls. Recently a stenographer, without his knowledge, got this address as he delivered it and it was printed in the Recorder. It is noted for the number of quotations from the Bible, made apparently without the least effort.

He has never been ordained yet, like Spurgeon, he has been administering the ordinance in that city church for years. Southern Baptists lay great emphasis on the qualifications of the administrator, but such is the respect for Bro. Pullen, that no one troubles him, but many workers in the city delight to help him and honor him.

Again, women keep silence in the churches here. They speak and pray in their own meetings, but never in mixed congregations except it be during revival services. They are not appointed as delegates except to represent the ladies missionary societies at the meetings of the ladies. But the lady teachers from Shaw, and it may be others, relate their experiences at the prayer meetings in Bro. Pullen's church. Apart from the fact that the women do not speak in meetings here, a Southern prayer meeting appears rather "tame" to a Canadian or a Northerner. A family from Wisconsin in this church, often spoke of it to me, and not long ago the Methodist minister spoke of a family in his former charge that feel just the same way. A number of the brethren will pray but few will speak in meeting. Our conference meetings

are mere business meetings, and not covenant or experience meetings like yours. I have heard that in some country churches the pastor preaches on some theme of practical importance to church members.

The Baptists are strongest in the country, and it is our boast that we preach the gospel to the poor. So though we outnumber other denominations, some of them may be wealthier and more influential.

Our country churches are not as well grouped as yours and pastors and people are laying too much stress on the independence of the churches, and too little on their inter-dependence. In some cases a pastor will cross the territory of a whole Association to minister to his flock, and another pastor will travel in the opposite direction. This may be good for the railways, but can be good neither for the churches nor for their pastors.

Too many of the country churches are satisfied with services one Sunday in each month. Pastors salaries are smaller than in Nova Scotia even. This church has a membership of about two hundred, and the salary is only \$500 and parsonage. They have hard work to make that up. The people are poorer and it costs a little less to live here on account of the climate, but some articles of diet are higher here than they are with you and clothing is more expensive. But the salary is good here compared with that of many places; even in the eastern section of the State. I attended a meeting of the Mission Board last year and I was astonished at the small salaries many of the brethren were receiving. What they had to live on in addition I cannot say, but here is an item concerning a brother in the mountains, but within the territory that was occupied by the State Convention:

"Bro. J. C. Sorrels, McDowell Co., has ten appointments or preaching places, and it will take from two to four days to fill an appointment. He must face all extremes of weather, the dangers of mountain roads and torrents and sometimes sleep in cabins which shelter the pigs, fowls, etc., as well as the family. He travels on horse-back and in a buggy about seven thousand miles, and preaches between two hundred and three hundred sermons a year. The strain is so great that his buggy gives out in two and his horse in three years. He must meet these expenses. For a year's work under such conditions, he receives from you and from me—the 165,000 Baptists of North Carolina—the pitiful salary of \$300. We are proud of our mighty host and what it has done, but we should blush with the deepest shame when we see what we have left undone. How long shall we continue to rob God?"

There were about 20,000 Baptists in the Western Convention, and since that is the region around Asheville, and the health resorts in the mountains, I will quote a few sentences from a description by Dr. Felix: This "Baptist Empire" is not made up from an original stock of Baptists. "And this becomes all the more remarkable when we remember, that this victory was not won by scholarly and educated preachers, but by men of meager attainments. They have been however, men of fine native minds, of devotion to the cause, of great zeal and willing to endure hardness, as good soldiers of Jesus Christ." "There is very little destitution so far as gospel privileges are concerned, but the field is undeveloped, and is a field of the richest promise. As I write I can only call to mind six churches, of the two hundred and forty, that have preaching every Sabbath. The people are kind, sensible, noble-hearted, they are uneducated as a whole, but not ignorant. He who comes among them to pity and rule will be despised, but the man who comes to identify himself with them and lovingly co-operate with them for better things will be joyously welcomed. They see their needs and want you to help them. Our greatest need is a leader who will come in this spirit, and have patience to wait."

"Educationally we are in a bad condition. We have noble brethren who have good high schools, but they are hampered in many ways. We need better schools and more of them. And especially do we need a school of commanding grade, with the very best equipments. Oh, how these mountain boys and girls do want an education! And what bright folks they are! The Presbyterians with scarcely a corporal's guard in membership, have five or six schools of the finest kind in this mountain country, and they are filled with Baptist boys and girls. How long can we stand this? The Baptists of North Carolina and the South, should look to their danger."

The North Carolina Baptist said last week: "There is a great future for that section. The forests and mines of the west mean far more to North Carolina than do the cotton farms. The climate is the best; much of the soil is very fertile, and the people a vigorous people in mind and body." It is only fair to add however, that illicit whisky distilling, which is all too prevalent throughout the State, is at its worst in the mountains, and that even the churches are not free from its effects. License is the rule throughout the State; the dispensary system is being tried with good results in a town or two; in this town and many others there is local option. The Sand Belt has developed wonderfully as a health resort. How is it religiously? The Old North State is well represented on the foreign field. The life of Yates has recently been written by President Taylor and published by the Sunday School Board, of Nashville. If any of your readers should reach Raleigh towards the end of the week, the teacher's meeting and the Sunday school at the Tabernacle are well worth visiting. There is an excellent primary department, but I hear that "Joe" Weather and his wife who have become known throughout the State as successful teachers of children are leaving for another State. Here I found a Miss Read, from Ontario, working among the women. She came from Moody's school in Chicago. She had become acquainted with Bro. W. W. Weeks, in Ontario. As a rule people here know very little indeed about Canada, and it was refreshing to meet even one that did.

Morehead City, N. C.