

RURAL CHURCHES IN BAD PLIGHT, REPORTS SHOW

Many Dying in East, While Vast Regions in West Are Without Any Pastors.

EXPERTS STUDYING HOW TO OVERCOME DANGER.

Baptist State Conventions Plan Vigorous Action—Will Try Out Community Centers to Increase Efficiency.

How to meet the problem of the rural churches is a task which is attracting the concern of the General Board of Promotion of the Northern Baptist Convention. Surveys recently made by representatives of the convention reveal that in some sections many of these churches are gradually dying. It was also shown that the outlook for others is far from promising. This is particularly true in the East. In the Western states the need is for the establishment of churches in the hundreds of new communities which are springing up.

The seriousness of the problem becomes more apparent when a glance at the United States census report shows that in 1910 the number of persons on the farm was 43,348,883 as against 42,023,283 persons living in cities. This is further emphasized by the figures revealed in 1917—that the number of persons engaged in agricultural pursuits and in animal husbandry was 10,070,843.

"The rural churches," says the report, "have long been the fountains of our life. We cannot afford to let the springs dry up. Our churches are the fireplaces of the Christian family . . . the schoolrooms where the Church educates its people and leads them into all the truth. . . . Our buildings ought to be an adequate reflection of the life and strength of the churches. A small church with meager resources may of necessity be compelled to do with an inadequate plant. But a church of strength and power ought to have a home that will reflect its life."

And to help the state conventions which supervise the work in their own states men are being employed to give their whole time, effort and study to help solve the problem. Other measures planned to help meet the need are increases in ministers' salaries, the establishment of community centers and the use of community churches when other means are inadvisable.

Excerpts from the plans of the state conventions show how urgent some of these bodies regard the plight of the rural church. A few of these follow: New Hampshire—"Strengthen rural churches." Connecticut—"Work out federation or community church plans to meet the desperate country church situation." New Jersey—"Establish two or three rural parish centers as experiments for solving the rural problem and six or seven foreign community centers." Wisconsin—"Develop the rural churches, making them vital factors in community life." Ohio—"Employ two new district missionaries." Indiana—"Employ an expert on rural work . . . erect at least seven churches and community buildings for the new Americans." Illinois—"Develop rural work." West Virginia—"Strengthen the missionary work at many points and enter new fields." Minnesota—"Develop two or three rural centers." North Dakota—"Raise standards of salaries of missionary pastors." Montana—"Appoint two pastors at large, a general evangelist and several rural experts, Sunday school director and association missionaries." Idaho—"Open several stations in the new irrigation tract." Utah—"Employ two new missionaries." Eastern Washington—"Increase missionary staff 33 per cent, increase salaries and occupy many destitute fields." Oregon—"Inaugurate at once new work in many fields now opening up. Great districts with hundreds of people have no church nor missionary. Employ several general missionaries and a superintendent of evangelism."

Great Britain is using American Baptist missionaries in promoting education in Burma, missionaries conducting 854 schools under government direction.

Women in Burma are being educated to an extent not rivaled anywhere in the Orient, women's schools being conducted by American Baptists at Moulmein, Rangoon and Mandalay.

Based on the 1910 census, there is one doctor for every 600 persons in continental United States. In Burma there are four American Baptist missionary physicians, who give medical attention to more than 10,000.

Twenty-five automobiles are to be sent to Burma by the American Baptist Foreign Missionary Society. The result will be to triple the work of the 40 American missionaries there, as the British government has excellent roads.

One of the biggest publishing plants in the Orient is the Baptist Mission Press at Rangoon, Burma, which is quite modern and self-supporting. As 28 per cent of the people of Burma can read, the plant is a valuable aid to the mission workers.



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BROAD STAND ON FARMER BY WOOD

HE TELLS HIS OPINION OF AGRICULTURE'S NEEDS AT THIS TIME.

Chicago, Ill.—In an answer to a query from one of the leaders of agriculturists of the county, Leonard Wood, Republican candidate for presidential nomination, yesterday gave one of the most candid statements of his position toward the farmer that has ever been published by a political candidate.

After declaring that the decline of agriculture is one of the greatest dangers the country faces, and that the farmer, as the backbone of the nation, is entitled to every administrative encouragement and a square deal all around, Wood gave as the salient points in his agricultural beliefs:

"1. The farmer sacrificed much during the war. We owe him a debt of gratitude we never can repay for his staunch loyalty.

"2. Education for farm children should be as easily accessible and on as high a plane as that of city children, with vocational training to the last degree, in a broad, consolidated school system.

"3. We must give the rural districts good roads, for commerce and relations.

"4. There must be a department of agriculture in full and intelligent cooperation with the farmer and the great farm organizations.

"5. I believe in a far closer connection between producers and consumers of food. Too small a portion of the consumer's cost gets back to the farmer.

"6. Hoarding of food supplies should be rigorously suppressed.

"7. Secure provision should be made to enable farmers to get adequate credit to extend farming interests.

"8. There should be bigger supplies of fertilizer available at cheaper rates.

"9. I believe that the treatment of co-operative organizations of farmers should be with the same consideration as to other organizations under similar circumstances.

"10. I believe in the gradual abolition of farm tenancy and encouragement of ownership of land by the individual farmer.

"11. I believe in a wide extension of the farm bureau system which seems well fitted to solve many of the economic questions which confront the farmer—problems of production and distribution."

CUBAN STRONG FOR WOOD

Sentiment in 'Island' for Him, Says Menocal, in Recalling His Great Work.

Chicago, March.—A strong endorsement for Leonard Wood in his candidacy for the presidential nomination has been made by General Mario G. Menocal, president of the Republic of Cuba.

President Menocal in his endorsement speaks of the active work accomplished by General Wood when he was governor-general of Cuba. He classifies it as the most glorious achievement made by America in that island.

"General Wood practically demonstrated that real democracy is not incompatible with the principle of authority or with a strong government of powerful initiative," Menocal declares. "It will be found that without such a government democracy degenerates into anarchy and licentiousness.

"General Wood left in Cuba a friendly people who remember with admiration his admirable qualities and work, and who will always be grateful to the United States for all that he contributed to the welfare of the Cuban people.

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WOOD STRONG IN INDIANA

Joss and Hogan Say He Will Carry State at Primary—Ohio for Him, Glenn Says.

Chicago, March.—Frederick A. Joss, vice chairman of the Leonard Wood campaign committee, who has just returned from a trip to Indiana and Missouri, and Harry G. Hogan, chairman of the Indiana state campaign, write in a statement in which they declare that Indiana will vote for Wood in the primary by a large majority.

E. F. Glenn, a Wood worker, who is assisting John T. Price, Ohio state chairman, makes the same prediction for his state.

WOOD HATES PRUSSIANISM

Brookings, South Dakota, March.—Gifford Pinchott, former chief of the forestry service under Theodore Roosevelt, was cheered for several minutes when he spoke of Leonard Wood's hatred of militarism.

"If the American people want a man in the White House who knows and hates militarism; who is hated by every militaristic soldier in America, who has suffered bitterly from their opposition and jealousy; who was loved by the soldiers he trained because he was human, let them take Leonard Wood," Mr. Pinchott said.

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