





The Changing South and the Presbyterian Church in the United States...

ERNEST TRICE THOMPSON



The Changing South *and*
the Presbyterian Church *℣*
in the United States *℣ ℣*

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Foreword

IN NOVEMBER, 1948, as Educational Secretary for Assembly's Home Missions, I requested Dr. Ernest Trice Thompson to rewrite his book on Presbyterian Missions in the Southern United States. The correspondence and conversations which followed that request developed a mutual and greater interest in a book which would deal with the social and economic factors of life in the Southern States and how these affect the Church. This book presents that subject with clarity and force.

One of the characteristics of a competent workman is his concern about the details of his work. Such care is one of the features of this book. Not all of the particular details included here will be of equal interest to those who read, yet every part of the story is important, and the book is one which will be read again by an increasing number of people who are concerned that the Presbyterian Church shall accept its rightful responsibility in this day of privilege and opportunity. To apply the "unchanging Gospel" to the changeless needs of an ever-changing society requires that we know the Gospel and the people to whom it is offered. This book will furnish invaluable aid to knowing the people — who they are, where they live, and what they do.

There are many exacting claims made on Dr. Thompson's time and interest. When he was asked to undertake this work he gave up a needed vacation in order to devote his time to

writing. This writer acknowledges a personal debt of gratitude for the help thus given. The Church will be indebted to Dr. Thompson for a readable and challenging presentation of factors which must have a large influence on our immediate plans and long-range policies.

S. B. LAPSLEY

Cedar Springs Manse
Knoxville, Tennessee.

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INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I The South

THE SOUTH in which we are interested includes the sixteen states in which the Presbyterian Church in the United States is now at work. It is a territory which contains about 30 per cent of the land area of the nation and almost a third of its population, approximately forty-five million people.

The Land

To the geographer this region presents many divergencies. For the purposes of this study, however, we need to bear in mind only the more important features. If one would travel down the coast around the outer edges of the South and were very farsighted indeed, he would see a series of terraces rising from the Atlantic, the Gulf of Mexico, and the Mississippi River to the Appalachian Mountains in the east and the Ozark-Ouchita Mountains in the west.

East of the Mississippi he would distinguish three main tiers. The first of these, partly encircling the other two, is the coastal plain, which borders both the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico (including all of Florida) and extends northward as the flood basin of the Mississippi. On the east this coastal plain extends some hundred to two hundred miles inland until it reaches the fall line of the various rivers, which sets a barrier of rough and shallow channels against further navigation. The altitude at this point is approximately five hundred feet.

The second tier, which bends in turn around the mountains, is a region of high, hilly ground, called in the east the Piedmont plateau, and in the west by a variety of names de-

scriptive of its more varied topography. Encircled by the plateaus, as these are by the coastal plains, is the third and loftiest tier, the Appalachian Mountains, whose crest in the Blue Ridge and Carolina Mountains occasionally reaches 6,000 feet. The Appalachians themselves are cleft by the great valley which curves its way through the Blue Ridge on the east and the Allegheny-Cumberland belt on the west, and which, under a variety of names, continues as a great trough through the entire Southern highlands from northern Virginia into northern Alabama and Georgia.

West of the Mississippi the Ozark-Ouchita highlands furnish a smaller and less rugged replica of the Appalachians. Oklahoma and Texas together form a great inclined tableland sloping from the Gulf upward to a maximum of over four thousand feet in the Texas Panhandle. The 98th meridian, passing a little west of Austin, the state capital, and coinciding with the Balcones escarpment, marks a transition line of great importance. To the east of this line is some of the most fertile land in the South — the Black Waxy — watered with an abundant rainfall; to the west there are little patches of cleared land in the valleys, and beyond them the great plains where rain is scarce and where it is said, "One can look farther and see less, possessed of more rivers and less water, more cows and less milk," than in any other region of the nation!

The People

The people who live in this varied region are predominantly native-born and of old American stock, descendants of the earliest settlers — English, Scottish, Scotch-Irish, German, and French. There are more than a hundred thousand Indians,

most of them in Oklahoma. Negroes came almost as early as the white settlers, though not voluntarily, and have multiplied until now they form almost one-fourth of the total population. Mexicans have crossed the border in considerable numbers in the Southwest. In 1940 there were 625,132 foreign-born whites scattered through the South, chiefly in the cities, and including representatives from nearly every European country; but the percentage of population with American-born parents was higher here than anywhere else in the nation.

Most Southerners have not only a similar ancestry, but also a body of common traditions, together with common economic interests. Except in Southern Louisiana and along the Mexican border they are overwhelmingly Protestant. Their background and history has given them greater unity, probably, than is found in any other region of the United States.

Yet today, this erstwhile "solid South," sometimes disparagingly termed the Bible belt, is changing, slowly in some respects, rapidly, even radically, in others. The Church, particularly the Presbyterian Church for whom these pages are written, must take cognizance of these changes and adapt its program to meet them, if it is not to fail in its task.

In the pages that follow we shall attempt to describe some of these changes and to consider their significance for the Church.

Population Movements

One of the most important of these developments, so far as the work of the Church is concerned, is the increasing mobility of the Southern population.

There have been three great movements of the Southern people, three great migrations, we might say, which have pro-

foundly influenced or will influence their whole subsequent history. One was the original settlement of the Southern colonies, when English, Scots, Scotch-Irish, and French settled along the Atlantic seaboard, and the Germans and Scotch-Irish moved down the great Valley of Virginia and through the river valleys into the Carolina Piedmont. The second was the westward expansion of the Cotton Kingdom, which began in 1793 with the invention of the cotton gin and, stimulated by soil exhaustion in the east and the lure of new land in the west, carried "King" Cotton through the deep South until it finally reached the Panhandle of Western Texas.

The third of these great Southern migrations and, numerically, the greatest of them all is primarily a migration from the rural areas of the South. It began in a small way shortly after the close of the War Between the States and has gained in momentum almost steadily till the present time. At the outset this current Southern migration was directed mainly to the industrial areas of the North. From 1870 to 1930 the net loss of the Southeast in native white population increased each decade from 0.4 per cent to 7.5 per cent. The total loss during this sixty-year period was three and a third million whites, one million of these being lost in the final decade.

The second branch of the stream flowing from the rural areas of the South led to the rapidly growing towns and cities of its own region. In the decade of the 1920's the flow to the South was about three-fourths of that to the North. In this ten-year period 6,300,000 people moved away from Southern farms, 2,900,000 of these moving to the Southern cities, and 3,800,000 moving out of the region altogether.

The Great Depression brought the Northern migration to a temporary halt. During the period 1930-40, the net loss of

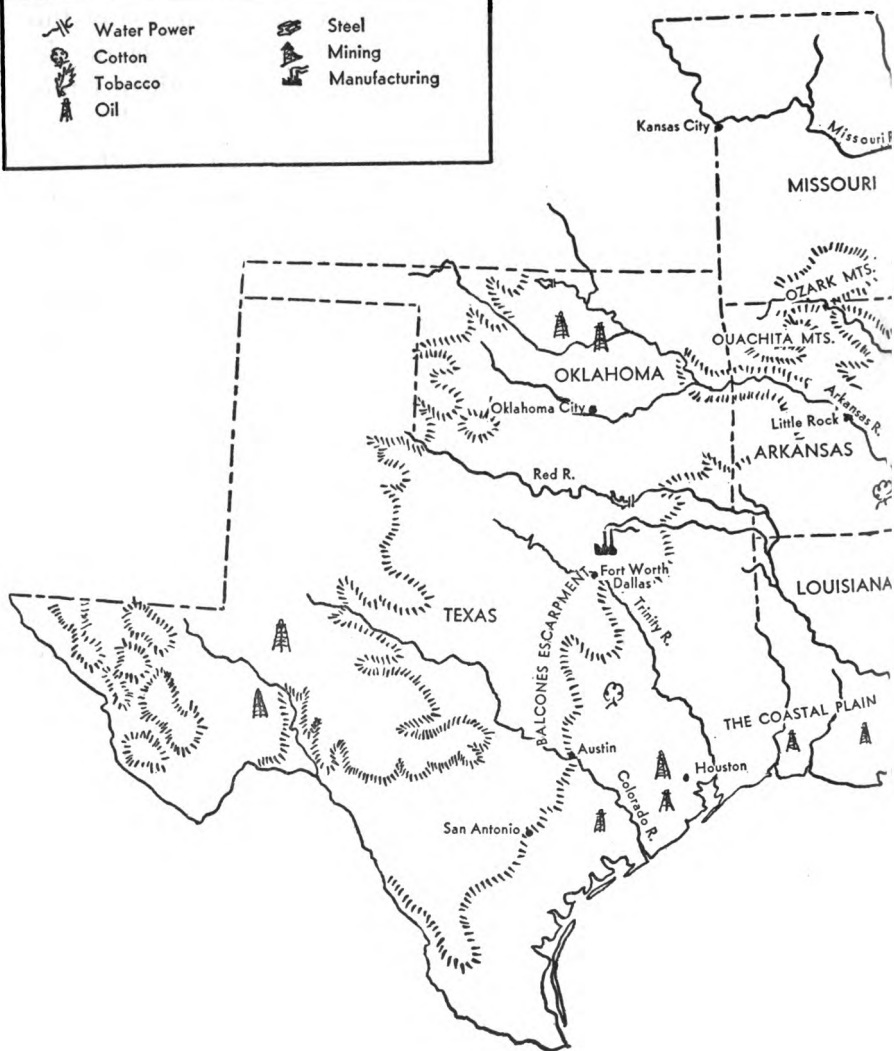
the Southeast to the North was only 426,000, and the heavy migration of the Negroes accounted for all but 868 of this loss. During this same period, however, in spite of the depression, two and a quarter million left the Southern farms, most of these being attracted to the cities of the South.

Since 1940 more families have been on the move than in any prior period, not only in the South but throughout the nation. A United States census report indicates that in 1947 less than half of the families in the nation lived in the same house which they had occupied seven years earlier. Of the seventy million who had moved during this time nearly 40 per cent had moved out of their original county. A census release for January, 1949, reported that "one out of every five persons in April, 1948, was living in a different house from the one he lived in a year earlier." Twenty-nine million people had moved their residence within this single year, nine million of these going into another county or state.

Three major population shifts are involved in this amazing change of residence. The first is the one we have just described — the movement from rural to urban areas, especially from the rural areas of the South, a movement which is again accelerating. During the war years 1940-45, 3,203,000 moved from Southern farms compared to only 1,876,000 from those in the rest of the nation. The second population shift, one which we shall consider later, is that from the cities of the North and East to those of the South, the Southwest, and the West. Urban communities in these latter regions are now growing more rapidly than those in the former. The third population shift, equally as important, as we shall see, and one which the Church can by no means ignore, is the movement from the center of the city out toward the circumference.

LEGEND

- | | | | |
|---|-------------|---|---------------|
|  | Water Power |  | Steel |
|  | Cotton |  | Mining |
|  | Tobacco |  | Manufacturing |
|  | Oil | | |





Questions for the Church

What is the cause of this large-scale population movement, the most gigantic our country has ever faced? Who are the people who are moving? Are they churchd or non-churchd, young or old, advantagd or disadvantagd? Where do they go when they leave their homes? To the cities, increasingly to cities in the South and West, yes, but to small cities or large ones, to nearby cities or to those which are far away, and to what areas within the city?

Is the Church, the Presbyterian Church in particular, following them with the Gospel? What about the churches in the country? Most of them were founded in a period when the community from which they drew their membership was strictly limited to what may be termed a team haul, before the days of the automobile, before the days of the good road. What are they to do now, in a day when rural communities are enlarging, when rural isolation is becoming a thing of the past, when rural population is declining, when the consequences of rural overchurching are becoming more apparent, when the older and more mature denominations are beginning to lose their hold on important elements of the rural population, and the newer emotional sects, some with a very questionable message, are rising to fill the void?

What about the Church in the city, particularly the Presbyterian Church? Can it hope to gather in any significant proportion of those who are crowding into the cities, or shall it remain content to minister, as heretofore (with significant exceptions), to those who move into the better residential sections? What sort of strategy has been developed or can be developed for adequately churching a city which is con-

stantly growing, expanding, sending out its long tentacles far into the country round about, whose neighborhoods are constantly changing, some growing, some declining, some radically altering in the character of their population? And what about the future? Will present trends continue? Can the Church afford to ignore them or wait until it is forced to take them into account, or should it have immediate plans and also long-range ones for the future?

These are primary questions which the Church cannot safely ignore. To answer them adequately we must take into account the significant changes now taking place in the rural South, in the industrial South, and in the urban South. But before we look at these important developments, we should look a little closer at the Southern Churches, and particularly at the Presbyterian Church in the United States, with which we are chiefly concerned.

CHAPTER 2 The Churches of the South

18th Century: Presbyterians and Baptists

AT THE END of the 17th century the largest churches in America were those of the Congregationalists, the Anglicans, and the Friends. The Congregationalists were concentrated in New England. Quakers or Friends were most numerous in Pennsylvania, Delaware, and New Jersey. The Anglican Church, later to become the Protestant Episcopal Church, was the established church in New York, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and later Georgia. Though it enjoyed governmental support it had not succeeded in enlisting the masses of the people. In Virginia, for example, where it enjoyed a practical monopoly, there were in 1724 not more than 8,000 communicants out of a total white population of 90,000.

The Presbyterians at this time were only an insignificant minority. They formed their first organization, a Presbytery, with seven ministers, in 1706. By the end of the century they had become the second largest denomination in the nation. This rapid growth of the Presbyterians was a result, first, of the extensive Scotch-Irish immigration which set in about 1725 and continued until the eve of the Revolution; and, second, of the revival known as the Great Awakening, which was the most significant religious event in our whole colonial history.

In New England the chief beneficiaries of this great revival were the Congregationalists; in the Middle colonies they

were the Presbyterians, who were also the first to bring the revival into the South. Because of the latter fact, because the great mass of Southern people had not yet been reached by any church, and because the Scotch-Irish (with Presbyterian background) were streaming down the great Valley, Presbyterians had the opportunity to become the largest communion numerically in the South. As a matter of fact, the Presbyterian revival was confined almost entirely to the Scotch-Irish immigrants pressing down the Valley. The one exception was in Eastern Virginia where a spontaneous revival begun under lay leadership fell into their laps, and even here it was comparatively short-lived. The Presbyterians did not succeed any too well in establishing churches even among their own people. In 1760 there were between thirty and forty thousand Scotch-Irish in North Carolina, but no more than twenty organized congregations. Ten years later there were less than four thousand Presbyterians in the entire colony.

The failure of the Presbyterians to win a larger following in the South was due largely to two facts: first, to a lack of ministers, a consequence of the high educational standards required of these ministers; and second, to the inability of the educated Presbyterian ministers to appeal to the mass of the people. As W. M. Gewehr, historian of the Great Awakening in Virginia, has pointed out: "Presbyterianism, 'with its intellectual demands of an elaborate creed' and its high standards of education for its ministry, was at best restricted in its appeal. It was never able to reach and to stir the common folk as the Baptists did."¹

At the beginning of the century these latter were as insignificant numerically as the Presbyterians. Their own historians estimate that in the year 1740 there were no more

than five hundred Baptists in all the colonies, and there was no appreciable Baptist immigration from Europe. They brought the evangelical Gospel into the South after the Presbyterian revival had spent its force, and within a generation or two had laid the basis for that numerical preponderance which they have retained in the South from that day to this.

There are several facts to be noted about this Baptist revival. First, they had no educational standards for their ministers. Anyone could preach the Gospel who had a passion for souls. As a result their ministers far outnumbered those of the Presbyterians.

Second, the uneducated Baptist ministers were able to adapt their message to the common folk, including the underprivileged and the uneducated, who had not been reached by either Episcopalians or Presbyterians. As Gewehr has said:

"The Separate Baptists (i.e., the Revival wing of the Baptists) occupied in the popular mind a very definite social status. They had the reputation of being the meanest of the mean — a poor, illiterate, ignorant and awkward set of enthusiasts. Fristoe [writing in the early 19th century] tells us that they were generally 'of the mediocrity, or poorer sort among the people . . . The [popular byword] was that they are an ignorant, illiterate set, and of the poor and contemptible class of people.'"²

The revival carried on by the Baptists under these conditions was accompanied by emotional excesses, similar to those seen among some of our modern sects. The Separate Baptists, as John Leland tells us, "were the most zealous, and the work among them was very noisy. The people would cry out, fall down, and for a time lose the use of their limbs, which exercise made the bystanders marvel. Some thought they were

deceitful; others that they were bewitched, and many being convinced of all would report that God was with them of a truth."³ The revival among this group was accompanied by various phenomena, both motor and sensory, such as the muscular contortions known as the jerks, aggressive trembling, falling, rolling on the ground, crying, and barking like dogs.

The Baptists faced the ridicule and scorn of the cultured and educated classes; they suffered opposition and persecution on the part of the colonial authorities; but they continued to grow. "As the masses continued to assert themselves," writes Gewehr, "they gained recognition, became more and more like other people, and won respect in the eyes of the world. Along with this process they threw off odd and disgusting mannerisms, paid attention to education, became more rational and conservative, and gained recruits from the well-to-do classes."⁴

Today the Baptists are our largest Protestant denomination. They are increasingly a church of the middle class, but they still have their roots among the mass of the people, that element of the population which has the highest birth rate in America. Their educational institutions are much better endowed than those of our own communion, and as a denomination they are growing four times as fast.

19th Century: Presbyterians and Methodists

After the Revolution a heavy migration set in over the Allegheny Mountains, the migration which led to the settlement of the Mississippi Valley. It was one of the greatest movements of population in all of history, and one of the most significant for the future of civilization. It was clear then, as it is clear now, that the denominations which were

the most successful in following these emigrants with the Gospel of Christ would become the popular churches of America. The three most successful were the Presbyterian, the Baptist, and the Methodist, and the subsequent role which these three churches have played in our national life is due in large part to their accomplishments in this important period of our national history.

At the beginning of this period the Presbyterians seemed to hold the strategic advantage. For one thing they were now the second largest denomination in America. In addition they had formed a Plan of Union with the Congregationalists (the largest denomination) in which these two churches agreed to pool their resources for the winning of the West. Because the Presbyterians had the superior organization, it turned out that practically all the churches founded in the middle tier of colonies by both Presbyterian and Congregational missionaries and composed of either Scotch-Irish or Puritan stock came into the Presbyterian Church. In addition, when the great migration began, the Scotch-Irish occupied the strategic areas on the frontier. As Theodore Roosevelt has pointed out in his *Winning of the West*: They were "the first and the last set of immigrants to plunge into the wilderness — all others having merely followed in the wake of their predecessors. As a result they put the stamp of their strong moral and religious convictions on a wider range of colonial possessions than any other element in the population. They were the pioneers of our people in the march westward, the vanguard of the army of fighting settlers who with expert axe and rifle won their way from the Alleghenies to the Rio Grande and the Pacific."³

Because the Scotch-Irish led the rush into the West, the Presbyterian Church was among the first to send out mission-

aries to follow them with the Gospel. Presbyterian and Congregational missionaries, laboring together, laid the foundation of Presbyterian strength found today in Kentucky and Tennessee, in Western New York, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. But though Presbyterians drew ahead of Congregationalists, Episcopalians, and Quakers in occupying the West for Christ, they fell far behind both the Baptists and Methodists.

To illustrate: In 1820, Kentucky, the first state to be admitted from west of the mountains, and one which had been settled largely by Scotch-Irish with Presbyterian background, had a total population of 563,317. The church population for this same year was 46,730, which is less than one in twelve. Of this number the Baptists and Methodists had 21,000 each, while the Presbyterians had only 3,700, not one-fifth the number of the other two, and a thousand of these were Cumberland Presbyterians.

Dr. R. E. Thompson, in his standard history of the Presbyterians, says that this comparative failure of the Presbyterians was due first, to "the scholastic shape in which the doctrines of the church were presented in its confession and catechisms, and the influence of these upon preaching and teaching"; and second, to "the rigidity of her polity in the matter of ministerial education."⁶

In spite of the pressing demand for ministers on the frontier, the Presbyterian Church refused to lower its educational qualifications for the ministry. As a result the number of Presbyterian ministers was altogether inadequate for the demands, and they were outnumbered by Baptists and Methodists ten or twelve to one.

But there is something else which Dr. Thompson barely suggests, and which is even more important for our present

theme. The classically educated Presbyterian ministers, though they did more for the education and culture of the West than any other group, were not able to reach the masses of the people, most of whom had little education, and were not much interested in culture. The eminent Church historian, Dr. W. W. Sweet, himself a Methodist, says: "It was perhaps unfortunate that the churches with the best-trained ministry were the least able to meet the needs of the common man. This left to the churches of the poor (i.e., the Baptist and Methodist) the great task of following the population westward with the refining and uplifting influence of the Christian gospel."⁷

Bishop Tanner of the A.M.E. Church has put it in more popular fashion: Presbyterianism "strove to lift up without coming down, and while the good Presbyterian parson was writing his discourse, rounding off the sentences, the Methodist itinerant had traveled forty miles with his horse and saddle bags; while the parson was adjusting his spectacles to read his manuscript, the itinerant had given hell and damnation to his unrepentant hearer; while the disciple of Calvin was waiting to have his church completed, the disciple of Wesley took to the woods and made them re-echo with the voice of free grace, believing with Bryant, that 'the groves were God's first temples.'"⁸

The Church which was most successful in meeting the challenge of the West was the Methodist. The first of their preachers came to America just ten years before the Revolution. Many of them, naturally, were loyal to the mother country, so that the entire group were suspected of disloyalty. They could not rely on the migration of their own people across the mountains to build up their church as did the Pres-

byterians and Baptists. They started at the bottom. And yet in a generation or two they had laid the basis for that numerical predominance among white Americans which they have continued to hold until the present time.

There are several factors in this Methodist revival which have particular bearing upon our theme.

First, the Methodists had no educational standards for their ministers. Anyone could become an itinerant in this connection, if he had a consuming passion to preach the Gospel. As a result, Methodist preachers were far more numerous than Presbyterian ones. In addition, the Methodist system provided for lay preachers, while Presbyterians did not permit their ruling elders to preach.

Second, the Methodist itinerants carried their Gospel to the populace generally, while Presbyterians confined their efforts almost altogether to their own people who had been gathered into congregations. The Methodist congregations included the underprivileged, the uneducated, and uncultured, to whom the Presbyterian minister made little or no appeal.

Third, the Methodist revival carried on under these circumstances was accompanied by emotional excesses not very different from what we see today in the so-called "holy roller" sects.

These emotional accompaniments reached their climax in the revival that developed on the frontier, particularly in Kentucky and Tennessee.

"Preachers and penitents alike were stampeded into a species of mesmerisms or hypnotisms at the height of the epidemic furor. Involuntary twitchings, known as the 'jerks,' would rack the body. The head would twist from side to side faster and faster till it spun the rest of the palsied frame. Rend-

ing cries burst from the lips of the 'jerkers,' screams of anguish, shrieks of terror. Some howled and some, down on all fours, even barked like dogs. They leaped as if jabbed. They whirled like dervishes, rolled, wormed, hopped like frogs. And finally they plunged headlong, groveling on the ground till they collapsed in cataleptic rigidity."⁹

This revival in the western country originated under the preaching of Presbyterians, but these soon withdrew because of the emotional accompaniments, and the camp meetings were taken over by Baptists and Methodists, who reaped most of the fruit.

Today, the Methodist denomination is the second largest in America, the largest among white Americans, and the best distributed throughout the land. It has become increasingly a church of the middle class, but it still has its roots among the poorer classes which have the highest birth rate in America. Methodists are increasing more than twice as rapidly as Presbyterians. They are gradually raising the educational standards of their ministers, and their colleges are much better endowed than our own.

The 20th Century: Presbyterians and the Newer Religious Movements

The Presbyterian Church is now the fourth largest denomination in America. It trails far behind the Baptists and Methodists in numbers, but presses closely on the heels of the Lutherans, who have grown through immigration from Germany and Scandinavia.

The membership of the Presbyterian Church is drawn largely from the middle and upper classes, so far as income is

concerned, families whose birth rate is constantly dropping and which can no longer maintain themselves. The Presbyterian Church has a higher percentage of college graduates in its membership than any other major denomination, except the Episcopalian, and a higher percentage of professional men, who are predominantly intellectuals, than any other church including the Episcopalian.

The significant *Religious Education Re-Study*, recently completed by our denomination, calls attention to the fact that the Presbyterian Church U. S. is "predominantly an urban church in an area where the population is predominantly rural." In 1926, the Southern Baptists were 27.1 per cent urban; the Southern Methodist Church 36.1 per cent; and the Southern Presbyterian Church 60.1 per cent (in 1936 it was 66 per cent). These figures are significant because the churches in the city live only at the expense of the churches in the country. But the great majority of church members who come to the cities of the South from the country are Baptist or Methodist. The Re-Study Report continues: "We are a church with less than our share of the young in a land with more than its share of young. We are a church predominantly composed of females in a population where males slightly predominate. We are a church prevailingly composed of people in relatively comfortable circumstances, surrounded by persons who are relatively underprivileged."¹⁰

Surveys made under the auspices of the Re-Study Committee indicate that our Church is "to a considerable extent a 'middle class' church, lacking a vital relation to the community life around it. It appears rather complacently unaware of the religious needs and interests of large numbers of laboring people who are rapidly drifting entirely away from

any church, or are being swept upon tides of excessive emotionalism into the various new types of religion that have sprung up in the South, in recent years . . ."¹¹

Finally let us note that the Presbyterian rate of growth has been decreasing almost steadily since the War Between the States, and in recent years has been less than that of other major denominations. Thus, in the period 1926-1942, Presbyterians, throughout the nation, increased 8.8 per cent; Methodists, 19 per cent; Roman Catholics, 23 per cent; and Baptists, 35.1 per cent. In the decade 1926-1936 (the date of the last U. S. religious census), the Presbyterian Church U. S. grew 4.5 per cent. The rate of growth of other denominations in its territory during the same period was as follows: Methodist Episcopal, 8.6; Cumberland Presbyterian, 10.7; Disciples of Christ, 11.6; Associate Reformed Presbyterian, 14.1; Southern Baptists, 21.6 per cent.

Meanwhile a number of newer sects have come upon the scene; many of them are unknown to the most of us. Few church members, for example, have ever heard of the Apostolic Overcoming Holy Church of God, the Church of God and Saints of Christ, the Church of Daniel's Band, the Pillar of Fire, the Church Triumphant, or the Church of the Living God, the Pillar and Ground of Truth.

Some of these new religious movements hold very curious views. Thus the Church Triumphant teaches that the world is a hollow ball on the inside of which the people live; the Church of the Living God, Christian Workers for Fellowship, believes that Jesus Christ was a Negro, because His ancestor, David, wrote in the 119th Psalm, "I am become like a bottle in the smoke"; members of the Christian Church of God fondle rattlesnakes and allow blow torches to play over their

faces to prove that they have received the gift of the Holy Spirit; Christian Science teaches that there is no such thing as matter, sin, sickness, or death; Unity promises not only health, but also material prosperity to all of its adherents, each of whom is considered potentially divine in the same sense that Jesus was divine.

Some of these marginal groups, whose very names suggest fervor and evangelistic zeal, increased over one hundred per cent during the period 1926-42 (while Presbyterians were growing 8.8 per cent). The Zion Reformed Union Apostolic Church, for example, grew 164 per cent; the Apostolic Overcoming Holy Church of God, 664 per cent; and the Christian Congregation Evangelistic Association, 2,033 per cent.

Much more significant is the fact that some of these newer sects now rank among the major denominations of America, and that they, too, are growing much more rapidly than the old-line churches. Thus during the same period 1926-42, Christian Science grew 33 per cent; the Mormons, whose membership now touches a million, and whose missionaries are increasingly aggressive throughout the South, grew 50.6 per cent; the Seventh Day Adventists, 68 per cent; the Church of God — Anderson, 119.2 per cent; the Church of God — Cleveland, whose members speak in tongues and sometimes lose control of their limbs, 254.7 per cent; the Assemblies of God, another "Pentecostal" group, 364.5 per cent. Other religious movements for which we have no figures, but which have reached considerable size — some with a million or more adherents — are Jehovah's Witnesses (who claim that all churches with a paid ministry are agencies of the Devil); the Peace Mission of Father Divine (a short, thick Negro, regarded by his followers as Jehovah God Himself); the Unity

School of Christianity, and Psychiana (a mail order religion which derides the fundamental doctrines of our faith).

The growth of these newer sects has gathered momentum since 1900 (many of them were born in the 1880's) and has been especially rapid in the last two decades. It shows as yet no sign of diminution. Marcus Bach, who has made a special study of America's divergent religious groups, estimates that twenty million people have identified themselves with non-Protestant denominations since the turn of the century.

The rise of these new religious sects has some marked similarities with the great evangelical revivals of the 18th and 19th centuries which gave rise to the Baptist and Methodist Churches.

Many of these sects rely on perfervid evangelism as did these latter two denominations a century and a half ago; there are in some cases emotional excesses and physical manifestations which are distasteful to the cultured, but they are reaching the poor, the ignorant, the emotionally starved, the culturally deficient — the same classes reached originally by the Baptists and the Methodists; the groups which have the highest birthrate in America, and the groups which in our Presbyterian churches are conspicuous by their absence. Other religious movements, like Christian Science, Unity, and Psychiana are reaching the same cultural and economic groups to which the Presbyterian Church is accustomed to appeal.

The growth of these newer churches is not wholly dependent on evangelism. An examination of the census reports shows that a number of them have a far larger proportion of Sunday-school students in proportion to their membership than older Churches with a slower rate of growth. To illustrate, for each 100 members, the following churches had a

year or two ago the following number of pupils in the Sunday school: Episcopal, 25; Presbyterian, 64; Methodist, 71; Salvation Army, 119; Christian Missionary Alliance, 135; Nazarene, 166; Pentecostal Holiness, 198.

If history repeats itself, if present tendencies continue, if the newer sects follow a normal evolution, some will in time become respectable churches of the middle class, growing more rapidly, however, than older churches which do not have the same roots among sections of the population with higher birth rates. As they grow staid and respectable new sects will spring up to minister to the poor who no longer feel at home in them.

Meanwhile there are tendencies in these newer sects which are not altogether wholesome, errors in belief which lead to more or less serious maladjustment of life. While many of the sects are ultra-fundamentalist in their theology, others are Christian only in name, and hardly that.

There are other factors to give us pause. In his recent book, *Can Protestantism Win America?*, Charles Clayton Morrison points out that "three major forces are now bidding for ascendancy in the cultural and spiritual life of America." These three, he claims, are Protestantism, Roman Catholicism, and Secularism. "Secularism," he adds, "has made great strides in the past century in capturing large areas of the American mind . . . Likewise, Roman Catholicism has greatly extended its influence and is integrating its forces and gathering strength for still further gains."¹² What about Protestantism? There was a time when it was dominant in American culture. But that time has definitely passed. In the estimation of Dr. Morrison (and many others), Protestantism today is losing ground

to both of its rivals and will continue to do so until some tendencies now in operation are checked.

In Conclusion

In the 18th century, churches in the South faced a great opportunity and a great responsibility. The Baptist Church met that challenge the most adequately and became the largest church numerically in the South.

In the 19th century, the churches west of the Alleghenies faced a second great challenge. The Methodist Church met that challenge the most adequately and took its place alongside the Baptist Church as one of wide popular appeal.

Now, in the 20th century, the churches of the South face a new challenge — the greatest population movement in all of its history. An unprecedented number of people, many of whom have little or no connection with the church, are tearing up their roots and moving to a new environment, which is increasingly secular in its total impact.

The churches which meet this challenge the most adequately will become inevitably the churches of tomorrow.

To understand this challenge more clearly we shall look first at some of the important changes which are now taking place in the rural areas of the South.

Part I
CHANGES IN THE RURAL SOUTH

CHAPTER 3 The Rural South Today

THE SOUTH has always been primarily agricultural. That was true in the colonial period, before the War Between the States, and subsequently.

The South is not only primarily rural; it has been in the past, is now, and presumably will remain the most intensely rural area in the nation. In 1949, according to United States census estimates, 53.1 per cent of the Southern population lived in the country, compared to 43.5 per cent for the nation as a whole. Outside of the South the population of the United States is now prevailingly urban; in the South it remains predominantly rural.

This rural population of the South includes more than sixteen million who live on farms (more than half the total for the United States) and about ten million, classified as rural non-farm, who live in villages of less than 2,500 or in the outskirts of the towns in which they work.

Much Poor Soil

The South has abundant sunshine, a heavy rainfall — the best in the nation, and a longer growing season than any other section, a fact which gives it certain marked advantages over the states farther north.

It has a belt of good soil which curves irregularly through the Shenandoah Valley, Piedmont and coastal plain, rounds the southern tip of the Appalachians, joins another belt between the mountains and the Mississippi, and crosses the

river into Eastern Texas and Oklahoma. But only a very small part of its land, 1.53 per cent of the whole, is reckoned as grade one, 10.4 per cent is classified as grade two, 28.20 per cent as grade three, 32.8 per cent as grade four, and 27.79 per cent as grade five. The last two grades, which include three fifths of the total, are practically worthless for farming.

This unfavorable rating of the Southern soil is due in part to the heavy rainfall, which robs the soil of its precious minerals and makes it difficult to hold a sufficient amount of the chemicals which are necessary for plant life. It is due in part to poor farming methods which have continued through many generations and left millions of acres exhausted, some almost beyond recovery.

"As we drive through the country," writes Rupert B. Vance, "we see fields cut into gullies by rain, acres bare because the top soil has been wasted away, poor crops on poor soils, empty farmhouses, idle farms, land which has been farmed till it is useless and the people have moved away."¹ Erosion, he estimates, has damaged almost 100,000,000 acres of land in the South, which is about two thirds of the seriously eroded land in the nation as a whole. Unfortunately, while fertility can be restored to soil which has been bereft of its minerals, the soil itself, once it has blown away, or been washed off by the water, is lost forever.

The Smallest Farms

The South, which has more than its share of the poor soil, has also the smallest farms, the fewest farmers who own their own land, and the lowest average farm income in the nation.

Three fourth of the farms in the South contain less than one hundred acres, and the average for all is only 81 acres.

Experts agree that this small acreage does not allow the most efficient agricultural methods. One consequence is that thousands of farmers overcrop their lands and when the soil is exhausted, move on to another stand.

The Most Tenants

In 1930, 68 per cent of all farms in the region were operated by tenants (compared with 42 per cent in the nation as a whole). This is a group which "owns no property, moves often, is highly illiterate, and forms few and tenuous connections with church and school,"² and among whom is found the most abject rural poverty in America.

The Lowest Income

Practically every Southern state falls below the national average in net income received from agriculture. The only exceptions are Florida, which ranks 10th in the list; Texas, which ranks 22nd; and North Carolina, which ranks 24th. Of the twelve states which stand at the very bottom three are from New England and the other nine are from the South. The U. S. Census for 1940 revealed that there were 2,955,294 farms in the South. Of these, four tenths of one per cent (0.4) had an income of over \$10,000 per farm per year, while 82 per cent had an income of less than \$1,000, 59 per cent an income of less than \$600, and approximately 40 per cent an income of less than \$400. In each case these figures include the estimated value of what was used off the farm.

The Poorest Health Facilities

The low income of rural people in the South explains the low rank of this region in medical care. In spite of their dense

population practically all Southern states stand at or near the bottom in the number of physicians and hospital facilities that are available. It is not surprising under these circumstances that all Southern states, except Arkansas and Missouri, have infant mortality rates higher than the national average.

The Least Educational Advantages

For the same reason, lack of income and not lack of effort, the Southern states remain almost solidly at the bottom of the educational ladder. Southern states spend a larger proportion of their income on education than do the Northern states, but because they have less per capita income, a larger school population, and a double educational system, their schools, particularly in the rural areas, do not equal those in the North.

In 1944-45, for example, New Jersey expended \$198.33 for each child in its public schools, while Mississippi spent no more than \$44.80. The amount spent for each child in New York was \$194.47 while in Arkansas it was only \$60.26. And yet Arkansas spent a greater percentage of its income for its schools than did New York. And Mississippi, with the lowest per capita income in the nation, spent a greater percentage of its income for such purposes than New Jersey. The South spends the least money per capita for the education of its children, it has the smallest proportion of its children in school, and it gives them the fewest years of formal education. The 1940 census revealed that about 6 per cent of the Southern people 25 years of age and over had not completed the first grade; an additional 20 per cent had completed only the fourth grade; all of which means that a quarter of the adult population of the South in 1940 had received less than a fifth-grade education.

The Highest Birth Rate

The South, which has the poorest health facilities and gives its children the least education of any region in the United States, has also the highest birth rate and naturally, therefore, the largest families and the largest proportion of young people. To understand the significance of this fact it is important to note that rural dwellers in this section are much more prolific than city dwellers, those in poor areas than those in well-to-do areas, and whites than Negroes. This is not due primarily to the greater frequency of marriage or to the younger age of marriage but once again to poverty, lack of education, and low standards of living. Large families abound where they are an economic asset, as on the old frontier, and where standards of living are so low that it does not seem to matter. As the standard of living improves, as the economic motive comes into play, the size of the family drops. Large families in the Southern states are found, on the whole, among groups for whom ordinary prudential controls have little weight. When socially isolated mountain people, rural Negroes, and white farm tenants move to the city they limit their families as do other city folk. The birth rate in the South is declining and declining rather sharply, but not so sharply as in the rest of the nation. Because of this high birth rate compared to the rest of the nation, the South is rightly called the "seedbed" of the nation. More than one third of all the children in the United States up to the age of fourteen are found in this region, and three fourths of these are found in the country.

The largest proportion of these children are found in the less privileged areas of the region. According to Henry W.

McLaughlin, "There are about six million people in the South engaged in agriculture who might be termed among the privileged. They live mainly in communities where there are good schools, churches, and proper medical care. From this six million comes the leadership of the rural South; but the ten million underprivileged (including five million white tenants and about the same number of white small land-owning people, whose economic condition, medical care, educational opportunities, and religious principles are not a great deal better than those of the tenant people) are the most prolific and here are the largest families and, of course, the largest per cent of children and youth."³

It is from these less privileged areas that the bulk of the Southern migration, which, since the passage of the restricted immigration laws, has swelled the Northern industrial areas and more recently those of the South, has come.

To gain a better understanding of what this means to the Church, let us consider a little more closely certain aspects of the South's agricultural history.

CHAPTER 4 ☞ The Development of Southern Agriculture

TOBACCO was the first staple cash crop in the South and remained its most productive source of income until the end of the 18th century, when it was replaced by cotton.

Cotton Becomes King

This latter crop was raised at first only for domestic use. Women spun it into thread and wove it into the cloth needed for their own families. Shortly after the Revolution a series of mechanical inventions opened what seemed an inexhaustible market for the Southern product. Cotton goods which had been scarce and expensive could now be produced in quantities and at a price which gave them a large and expanding market. But the amount of cotton which the South could produce was limited by the exhausting labor required to pick the seed out of the lint. One person could clean at best only four to five pounds a day. Then Eli Whitney invented a cotton gin which could clean fifty pounds a day, and later models, operated by water power, cleaned as much as a thousand pounds a day.

The cotton acreage expanded rapidly thereafter. By 1830 the South was growing twice as much cotton as it had a decade earlier; by 1840 the amount raised had doubled again, and before the War Between the States still again.

Tobacco was still raised in the upper South, which was not suitable for cotton culture; but elsewhere in the South cotton was "king"; other crops had been crowded to the wall; the

cotton empire had taken over the Mississippi Valley, moved into the Gulf States, and was pushing still further west into the eastern part of Texas. Cotton had become the one great crop of the South because it brought by far the largest cash returns and because it was a crop on which the South had a virtual monopoly. In the ante-bellum period the wealth of the South compared favorably with that of the North and it was a wealth created primarily by the production of cotton.

Tobacco and cotton, the two major crops of the South, had some characteristics in common. Both required a great deal of hand culture under a broiling sun, and both could be produced more efficiently when the labor was employed on a large scale. As a consequence slave labor and large plantations became the characteristic institutions of the South. The farmer who labored with his own hands and without the help of slaves was pushed out of the best lands on to the Piedmont or into the Appalachians. Tobacco and cotton both tended to exhaust the land on which they were raised, and the fertile top soil was washed away by the heavy rains to which the South is subject. As a result much of the older land in the South, on which flourishing plantations once were to be found, lost its fertility. Some counties in Virginia support a smaller population today than they did before the Revolutionary War.

Rise of the Tenant System

The War Between the States freed the slaves and made it impossible to maintain the great plantations. The Southern planters had land but lacked money to hire the necessary labor. The Negroes were unable to buy land for themselves and had nothing to offer but their brawn. Finally a solution was found

that worked to the mutual advantage of both. Some few Negroes rented a small portion of land from the owner and paid for it in cash; others paid partly in cash and partly by a portion of the crop; others paid no cash but wholly in crops (these last were the sharecroppers). Some owned their own work animals and tools. But others received land, homes, animals, tools — all — from the owners.

But something more was needed — seed for the crops, fertilizer to insure a yield, clothing and food to maintain the family until the crops were raised. Money for this purpose was generally furnished by the new merchant class emerging in the villages after the collapse of the old plantation system. To secure their loan these merchants took a lien upon the anticipated crop. Because the risks were great, the interest charged was correspondingly high. And the merchants customarily insisted that cotton or tobacco should be raised. These were the two Southern crops which could always count on a cash return. Both had other advantages possessed by no other Southern crop. For example, their value was high in comparison with their bulk, and both could be conveniently stored. As a result the one crop system — the raising of a single crop that wasted the land and furnished inadequate diet for the family — was fastened more securely upon the South than it had been under the old plantation system.

The new tenant, sharecropper, tax lien system attracted not only the Negroes but also the poor white farmers who, hitherto, had lived very precariously on the outer fringes of the cotton kingdom. Gradually the white tenants came to outnumber the black (by two to one in 1940), and the number and proportion of both increased year after year, decade after decade. In 1880 thirty per cent of all Southern farmers

were tenants, working the land of others. By 1930 the ratio had risen to 68 per cent, and among farmers who raised cotton it was 73 per cent. In recent years there has been a slight decrease, but on the whole the tenant system remains, more firmly rooted in the South, particularly in the cotton country, than anywhere else in the nation.

Effects of the Tenant System

This new agricultural system which developed in the South after the War Between the States helped both whites and Negroes to rebuild their stricken economy, but unfortunately what began as a temporary expedient has become what seems an almost unbreakable system. Theoretically it should be possible for an industrious tenant to escape from the crop lien system and ultimately to own his own land. Practically, however, this rarely happened. So the number of tenants and sharecroppers increased steadily until the agricultural depression of the 1930's forced thousands of them to flee from the land to the cities.

One of the most serious effects of the tenant system was an increasing number of run-down farms and more and more depleted soil. Tenants could not afford the necessary time and money, or were not sufficiently interested or informed to keep up a place which they did not own. It became the custom, and still continues, for the tenant farmer and sharecropper to remain on the land for a year or two and then to move on in the eternal search for some land better than the last. The blame for the "whole miserable panorama of unpainted shacks, rain-gullied fields, straggling fences, rattletrap Fords, dirt, poverty, disease, drudgery, and monotony that stretches for a thousand miles across the Cotton Belt"¹ cannot

be placed wholly on the traits of the Negro. It is found among the white croppers and tenants as well and is due not only to the frailties of human nature but also to a system which feeds on itself — a system for which no one was to blame, and from which for long there seemed no escape.

In his recent book, *The South — Old and New*, Professor F. B. Simkins points out that many of the white tenants "were as improvident and as impoverished as the Negroes. They were the victims of the credit system, large families, lack of moral stamina, and physical disabilities often arising from improper diet and poor sanitation. They especially suffered from malaria, hookworm, and pellagra. Neither books nor physical comforts lightened the discomforts of their overcrowded homes. Unlike Negroes in the same economic status, they had no social life other than a journey to church in a springless wagon; their overworked womenfolk usually led hermit-like existences, cut off from contact with anyone except their numerous broods."²

A study carried out by the U. S. Department of Agriculture into the living conditions of white cotton farmers in a Piedmont county in Georgia (1924-26) revealed that the average family of five lived on a farm valued at less than \$2,000, received a cash income of \$424, consumed for family living goods valued at \$687.14, lived in unscreened houses, built in many cases out of a single thickness of lumber, spent only \$24 a year on books, magazines, recreation, amusements, and religion combined, and \$15 a year for snuff and tobacco, their only luxury, and attended churches whose ministers were farmers like themselves and served practically without remuneration.

The Religion of Southern Tenants

What about the religion of these tenants and sharecroppers? Originally it was the Baptist and Methodist Churches which appealed to the poorer classes in the rural South. In recent years the newer emotional sects, some stressing the gift of tongues, some shouting and rolling on the floor, have begun to replace both as the churches of the poor.

In a very thoughtful article entitled "Shall the Holy Rollers Win the Farmers?" Thomas Alfred Tripp points out the serious dilemma faced by our older denominations in the rural areas. "On the one hand," he says, "the traditional churches are not winning the masses of farmers and village folk and, on the other, they obviously cannot continue to exist indefinitely unless they do.

"In broad outline, the more mature Protestant churches are not proving very effective in holding poor farmers, low income renters, sharecroppers, rural relief clients and village 'slum' dwellers. Meanwhile, the newer 'holy roller' sects are springing up and growing rapidly among these disadvantaged folk everywhere. There are, of course, notable exceptions to this general picture, but in the main it is a correct one. . . .

"Practically everywhere . . . pastors of town and country are earnestly asking what they should do about the accelerated rise of the erratic sects. These questions increase in frequency in those areas where loss of farms and the existence of tenancy are the most serious and of longest standing."

Mr. Tripp concludes that it is cultural degeneracy which creates the barrier between the rural masses and older Protestantism.

"When asked to give a reason for turning from the older church to the sect individuals will usually give some such answer as 'We do not have clothes good enough to wear to that church,' but often they bluntly state that there is 'no religion' in the mature church, meaning that they are incapable of appreciating what they find there.

"Hence, tenancy, poverty and other forms of social mal-adjustment are gradually making it culturally impossible or very difficult for millions of rural Americans to share in the life and work of the mature churches. If people live 'across the track,' so to speak, in village and country life, they are potential candidates for the variant religious groups, and when a considerable number of such persons exist in a given area these sects are quick to take advantage of the situation.

"It becomes, therefore, not so much an issue of the rural *unreached* about which we have always heard, but rather a problem of the rural *unreachables*. When disadvantaged farmers and village dwellers join the 'holy rollers' it is usually due to the fact that they cannot do better because of a cultural level which limits their appreciations and religious capacities."³

Expansion and Decline of the Cotton Kingdom

Though cotton never recovered the national and international prestige it had enjoyed before the War Between the States, it continued to be the South's major occupation. Indeed it dominated the lives of even a larger section of the South than heretofore. Fifteen years after the close of the war, the South was producing 5,475,000 bales of cotton — as much, indeed, a little more than it had before the war began. The acreage devoted to cotton and the number of bales produced

increased steadily from that time until in recent years governmental restrictions were brought into effect.

This increase in cotton production was due primarily to the continued westward expansion of the cotton kingdom. After 1845 farmers poured rapidly into Texas, and by the outbreak of the war East Texas had become an important part of the cotton belt. By 1869 the Lone Star State ranked fifth in production and by 1890 it had taken the lead, a position which it has continued to retain. About 1910 it was discovered that cotton could be grown in the great plains of Western Texas and Oklahoma, and in recent years this has been the area of greatest expansion. In 1930 Texas grew from 30-40 per cent of the nation's cotton supply, and half her population of nearly six million depended directly or indirectly on this crop for its livelihood.

Western Texas offers the first promise of a real break from the old system of cotton culture — small farms tended by tenants. Here ranchers had acquired huge holdings of land, under the impression that the semi-arid plains were suitable only for the grazing of cattle. It has been discovered, however, that the high altitude coupled with the dry climate keeps the boll weevil in check; that the troublesome weeds of the moister climates are not present; that the fertilizer required in such large measure in the rain-soaked South is not necessary; and that the wide and level plains lend themselves to mechanization, to a riding machine type of cultivation that is not possible to the same extent in the East. As a result cotton can be produced more cheaply in west Texas than in many parts of the East, and the cotton acreage here will continue, probably, to increase at the expense of the older lands across the Mississippi.

Today the Southern cotton belt starts in the Southeast corner of Virginia, misses Kentucky almost completely, takes in part of Tennessee, passes through North Carolina, covers South Carolina and Georgia, dips into Northern Florida, extends through Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Arkansas, and spreads out over a great part of Texas and Oklahoma. It is a belt 1,600 miles in length and from 125 to 500 miles in breadth, which includes almost 300,000,000 acres.

As Dr. Vance points out, "Natural and economic forces have made the South dependent on cotton." It can be grown under certain climatic conditions which restrict it to the South, while grain and forage crops can be grown on the whole more favorably in other parts of the United States. In addition the "South has a denser agricultural population and cheaper labor than other parts of the United States, both of which circumstances favor the production of cotton, as it requires a large amount of hand labor and yields high returns per acre."⁴

But though cotton remains the great cash crop of the South on which most of its farmers are dependent for their living (the 1949 crop of approximately fifteen million bales was the largest since 1937), cotton alone can no longer meet the needs of the South or of the cotton farmers of the South. There was a time when cotton was "king," but that time is definitely passed. In his recent book, *Exploring the South*, Vance explains why this is so.

For one thing it costs more to raise cotton than it once did. Many fields have lost their old fertility and it requires more and more fertilizer to produce the same yield, particularly in comparison with the newer lands of the West.

Again, textile mills no longer want all the cotton they can get. Artificial fibres have been developed, some of which are stronger and better than cotton fibres. Nylon, rayon, aralac, and others can now be used instead of cotton. Technology has also discovered how paper can be used instead of cotton in the manufacture of towels, tissues, napkins, window shades, curtains, twine, bags for sugar, flour, fertilizer, cement, and many other products.

In the third place, more foreign cotton is being raised, and sometimes it is sold more cheaply than the American product.

In the early 30's the South produced so much cotton that millions of bales could not be sold, and many farmers did not get enough money to repay their loans. In one year, the value of the cotton crop dropped 70 per cent in value, from an annual average of \$1,400,000,000 during the decade 1921-31 to \$465,000,000 in 1932.

The Exodus from the Farms

It was during this period of mounting agricultural depression, which only reached its climax in the 30's, that the great Southern migration began, as previously described, first to the industrial areas of the North and more recently to those of the South. Migration from the farms to the cities is certainly no new thing in America. It was estimated by President Hoover's Research Committee on Recent Social Trends that at least half of the rural-born children went to the cities in the half century prior to 1920. But in recent years it has been on a larger scale and has involved families as well as individuals.

This migration has drawn from all classes alike. But the bulk of the moving population has been furnished by the less

privileged farmers of the South, especially tenant farmers, sharecroppers, and wage hands. Poor whites and Negroes, who do not live much above the subsistence level in normal times, had during the depression years, and have continued to have since, a real impulsion on the one hand and a growing opportunity on the other to better their lot, first in the Northern industrial centers, no longer fed by the influx of immigrants from the older lands of Europe, and now in the rapidly expanding industries of the South.

The Road to Recovery

The plight of the American farmer, by no means confined to the South, though it was here that its effects were most keenly felt, led finally to the intervention of the Federal Government. The various agricultural acts attempt to do through law enforcement what the Southern farmer had for generations been told to do for himself but had been unable or unwilling to accomplish. Among other things they have reduced the cotton acreage, required the surplus land to be used for other purposes (e.g., for soil-conserving crops), encouraged the rotation of crops and contour plowing, which in turn have greatly reduced the erosion to which Southern farms are naturally subject, begun to restore some of the lost fertility to the land, and guaranteed a fair price level for the cotton actually raised. The same principle is followed in regard to other agricultural products of the South.

As a consequence Southern agriculture has begun to recover from its fatal sickness, income and living conditions have been improved among the economically depressed families, and other Southern farmers have found a greater measure of prosperity than seemed possible a generation or so ago.

Cotton remains and will always remain a valuable cash crop in the South. Agricultural Experiment Stations and research laboratories are helping the Southern farmer to raise a better crop and are continually discovering additional uses for its by-products. But the South has come to realize that it can no longer live on cotton alone.

Expansion of Tobacco Acreage

Tobacco, the second distinctive crop of the South, has followed a course which in some respects is similar to that of its great rival. Like cotton it requires many hours of back-breaking labor, and like cotton it also puts a premium on family labor — women and children as well as men. After the War Between the States, sharecroppers and the tax lien system became a fixture here, as with cotton. Because tobacco also was a valuable cash crop, and because much labor was required on little land, it, too, tended to become a one-crop system, hard on human life and hard also on the land. Here, too, production declined during the period of the War Between the States, but by 1900 the amount produced was almost twice that of the prewar period. The rapid expansion of the tobacco acreage since that time has been due to the much higher per capita consumption of tobacco products, particularly cigarettes, both at home and abroad. Tobacco is today the third most valuable crop in the Southeast. Planted on less than 5 per cent of the land, it produces 15 per cent of the value of the crops of that area. The chief tobacco states are now North Carolina, Kentucky, Virginia, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Georgia. Unlike cotton and many other crops, tobacco does not lend itself to mechanized farming.

Corn remains the most widely distributed Southern crop. In 1930 every Southeastern state gave to it at least one fourth of its cultivated acreage. The legumes — soybeans, velvet beans, peanuts, and cowpeas — were distributed almost as widely.

Increase in Livestock

Cattle and dairy products were long an important lack in the agricultural economy of the South. This was due not only to the one-crop system but also to the fact that, in the South generally, grasses, which thrive best in cool, moist climates, have been "neither strong nor abundant enough to support dairy herds in full production or fill out grass-fed beef cattle."⁵ Now Southern farmers are discovering the value of grass and also how to grow it in winter as well as in summer. New varieties, better suited for the Southern climate, have been introduced. Kudzu, a fast-growing Oriental vine, which fattens livestock and improves the soil, is revitalizing an increasing number of gutted cotton farms. Thriving beef and dairy industries are developing, even in the black soil belt of Alabama and Mississippi, which were once the exclusive domain of King Cotton. Paul W. Chapman, Dean of the College of Agriculture of the University of Georgia, predicts that during the next decade the dairying industry will grow at a rate exceeding that of any other major phase of agriculture. All of this means not only a better balanced agricultural economy but also a more adequate diet for the South as a whole.

Growth of the Trucking Industry

One of the most important of the recent developments in Southern agriculture is the rapid expansion of the trucking

industry. The South has always possessed an important advantage in the raising of fruits and vegetables — a longer growing season, which means that its crops mature earlier than those farther north and can be rushed to the great urban markets at a time when they bring the maximum prices. The first Southern produce was shipped to New York from the deep South the year following the War Between the States; the first refrigerator car (carrying strawberries) reached Chicago from the lower Mississippi valley in 1872. The number of these cars increased rapidly after the introduction of artificial refrigeration (about 1890), and by 1900 more than 60,000 were in operation. The market for fresh fruits and vegetables from the South has increased every year since.

Two types of land are devoted to these crops: first, disconnected areas in the interior, including areas around the growing cities of the South; second, and more important, the narrow coastal strip along the shore of Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and the states bordering on the Gulf, particularly Florida and Texas. The trucking season lasts approximately six months, moving slowly up the Atlantic coast. The harvesting of these crops is dependent on migrants, who follow the crops with their wives and children, living in the crude camps which have been constructed for them, and only recently, and still very inadequately, receiving any religious ministrations.

The most important trucking state is Florida, which stands in a class to itself. Its great orchards produce a large part of the citrus fruits consumed by the nation. In recent years something of a rival center has developed in the lower Rio Grande Valley. As late as 1912 this area was largely devoted to grazing. Since that time irrigation has developed rich farming

areas and small thriving towns, whose fruits and vegetables, grown during the mild winter, reach early markets for the season's highest values.

Value of Southern Agriculture

Despite the amazing growth of Southern industry, of which we shall speak later, agriculture continues to hold the greatest importance for the Southern producer. As Simkins reminds us, no other section of the United States exceeds it in variety and value of its agricultural products. With less than one third of the land area, it produces almost half of the value of farm crops. It possesses a virtual monopoly of the country's cotton, tobacco, peanuts, and rice; it trails the rest of the country in the wheat, oats, and hay, but produces a fair share of the corn. Florida yields to Southern California in oranges, but both Florida and the lower Rio Grande surpass their Western rival in grapefruit. California leads in peaches, but the Piedmont leads in apples, and peaches are not far behind. The commercial truck crop of the South, valued at \$65,000,000, provides the American table with a large proportion of its fresh vegetables and fruit.

Current Trends

Recent developments, including those which we have just sketched, are altering the pattern of Southern agriculture and must profoundly affect the future strategy of the Church.

1. One of the most important of these developments is the break from the one-crop system, cotton or tobacco, to livestock, general farming, and specialty crops, which came after 1930 as a result of the great depression and government controls. In the estimation of Rupert B. Vance, one of our most

eminent sociologists, this marks the most drastic change in Southern agriculture since the abolition of slavery.

2. A second trend, and one which represents another major revolution in Southern agriculture, is the growth of mechanization. Until recent times the farmers of the nation depended on work animals — horses and mules — to supplement the labor of their hands. Tractors were introduced about 1918 and have multiplied with increasing rapidity since that time; in 1947 there were three million in operation throughout the United States. Horses and mules had decreased in the same period by more than 50 per cent.

In this as in other respects the South has lagged behind the rest of the nation. In 1940 only 4 per cent of the farmers of the Southeast made use of tractors. In the next five years the number almost doubled, but the region still had only approximately one half the proportion found in the rest of the nation. Florida was the only state in this section to exceed the national average, and only Virginia and North Carolina even approached the average. The Southwestern states, Texas and Oklahoma, on the other hand stood high among the states moving toward mechanization. All Southern states with the exception of Texas, Oklahoma, Missouri, and Florida have tractors on less than 10 per cent of their farms. It is the Eastern cotton belt (except in the Mississippi Delta) that has moved the most slowly, due in part at least to the more difficult terrain. In the delta country of Mississippi, Louisiana, and Arkansas, however, and in the Great Plain areas of Texas and Oklahoma, the land is flat. Here cotton can be raised by large-scale methods impossible in many other parts of the South. Where the crop is raised by hand, one farmer generally plants about fifteen acres and must have the aid of his

children and wife. On the Western plains a farmer with a tractor can tend a hundred acres. New machines are being developed: cultivators, flame throwers to burn the weeds, mechanical pickers, and the like. An acre of cotton can now be planted with mechanized equipment in ten minutes, compared with the seven and a half hours required by a man and a mule. A man with a hoe will need more than thirteen hours to do what a flame cultivator can accomplish in fifteen minutes. All of this means a continuing displacement of rural labor, and on a widespread scale.

The 1945 census of Agriculture reported 100,000 fewer farms in the South than in 1940. Some of these farms may have been unable to face the competition and retired therefore from cultivation; but mechanization also means larger farms tended by fewer men. In either case men now laboring on farms must find employment elsewhere.

3. A third development whose effects must be considered is the steady improvement in many aspects of rural life.

Mechanization, which decreases the number of laborers who are required, also lessens the burden on those who remain. It lightens the load in the home as well as in the barns and in the fields. In 1930 one farm in eight had electric power; today it is two in three, though the ratio for the South is far less. "Automobiles, trucks, and buses, operating on vastly improved highways, have enlarged the boundaries of rural communities, made the rural village the capital of rural America, enabled schools to consolidate, multiplied many-fold the contacts of farmers with the outside world, increased greatly the number of group meetings and organizations and, along with the radio, all but banished the isolation of rural life . . . Hand in hand with mechanization [has gone] the increasing

application of science to agriculture. Improved methods of tillage and soil conservation, improved seed, hybrid corn, rust-resistant wheat, and wholly new crops like soya beans [have been] developed and adopted by hundreds of thousands of farmers."⁶ The new technology has increased the total yields of American farms by 50 per cent an acre during the past twenty years. Its gains during the next decade are expected to be even more spectacular.

The last two decades have also seen, for the first time in the history of the United States, the development of a national agricultural policy in answer to the catastrophic depression. The new government program means that farmers are assured of something like parity prices for their products; it means a better balanced diet for millions of rural families; it means that erosion will be checked and that much wasted land will be reclaimed.

As a result of these and other developments American agriculture and farm management have been something quite different from 1933 on than they had ever been before.

Southern agriculture offers today slight prospects to the unpropertied of either race. But for those who can bring capital, skill, and science to the task it offers challenge and opportunity. Fewer farmers will be required henceforth in the South, but those who remain will be more substantial citizens and better able to support all institutions that promote the general welfare, including the church.

4. A fourth trend in Southern agriculture is the migration of the surplus population from the rural areas of the South to the cities of both North and South.

In recent years, the rural *farm* population has actually declined, not only in the South but throughout the nation, so

that today fewer people live on farms than at any time since 1880. In 1910 32,077,000 persons lived on farms throughout the United States, while 59,895,000 lived in cities, towns, or villages. Now 27,776,000 live on farms (4,301,000 fewer than before World War I), while 119,673,000 live in cities, towns, and villages (59,778,000 more than in 1910). The off-farm population has doubled during the last thirty years, while farm population has fallen off.

In the South, the trek from farms set in after the War Between the States, reached major proportions in the decade of the 20's, declined during the 30's because of the great depression, rose to a new and unprecedented height during the war years (between 1940 and 1945 the Southern farm population fell by 3,203,000, as compared with a decrease of only 1,876,000 for the rest of the nation) and has continued since the war. The latest census estimates indicate that the total rural population, including both farm and non-farm, dropped 12 per cent during the period 1940-49 in the Southeast, 10 per cent during the same period in the East South Central, and 12 per cent in the West South Central states.

Small Southern farmers, tenants, sharecroppers, hands who have been working in the cotton fields, and particularly their sons and daughters, will continue to be displaced by the advent of the machine, by the passing of the one-crop system through the Southeast, and by the trend toward larger and more efficient units. Experts agree that it is not merely a case of individual displacements here and there, but rather "wholesale dislocations of semi-resident sharecropping and tenant-farming families" that are threatened. The United States Department of Agriculture estimates that about 1,600,000 persons will be so affected by 1956.

Where will these displaced rural workers go? That is a question in which the Church is vitally interested.

Some will join the great uprooted army, now composed of two and a half million or more individuals known as migrants, who move from place to place, particularly in the trucking areas of the South, with no settled homes, and who have been only partially touched by the church. According to the best estimates the Church has never come in contact with more than one in five of this growing army of migrants.

The larger number of displaced rural workers will continue to move toward the cities. Many of them who have had religious connections in the country will suffer them to be broken in their new environment, others who had had no religious training whatsoever — and these are now in the majority in rural areas — will swell the ranks of the unchurched, from which come the majority of our broken homes, delinquents, and other social problems.

Negroes, more than whites, tend to leave the South for the North. According to some estimates more than three million of them, almost one third of the total Negro population, have moved out of the South since 1940.

Some rural workers, unable to earn their living on the farm, will continue to live in the country, working however full or part time in the factory located in a neighboring town. Others, who work in the city, will move out to the country to live, thus swelling the non-farm population now growing so rapidly on the fringes of the city.

All of these population movements bring problems to the rural church, and also to the urban church.

CHAPTER 5 The Status of the Rural Church

WE ARE READY now to consider the status of the rural church and some of the problems faced by the Presbyterian Church in the United States, in the light of the significant developments we have sketched in the previous chapters.

Comparative Weakness

We recall at the outset that the Presbyterian Church U. S. has strong rural churches in sections originally settled by the Scots and Scotch-Irish — Lexington and Montgomery Presbyteries in Virginia; Fayetteville, Concord, and Mecklenburg in North Carolina, for example. But in most other areas it is comparatively weak, and in numerous counties it is almost totally unrepresented. A recent survey revealed that in Carroll County, Georgia, one of the most prosperous rural counties in the state and only a short distance from Atlanta, which is one of our strongest urban centers, there were 112 churches representing nine different denominations, of which only two were Presbyterian, and these were located in the two largest towns. In Carteret County, located in eastern North Carolina, one of the oldest settled areas in the South, there are only two small Presbyterian churches, one a town church, founded twenty years ago, the other a country church, organized just fifty years ago. In Page County, Virginia, which is not far from our denomination's strong rural churches in the prosperous Valley of Virginia, there is not a single Pres-

byterian Church. Such instances could be multiplied almost indefinitely.

Approximately two thirds of all our churches are located in the country, but many of these are very small. For example, among our 3,561 churches there are 1,141, almost a third, with less than 50 members! Not all of these weak and struggling churches are in the country, it is true, but the most of them are.

In 1940 three out of every five individuals in the South (62 per cent) lived in the country, yet two out of every three Presbyterians lived in the city (66 per cent). In other words, in 1940 the Presbyterian Church U. S. had approximately 180,940 rural church members out of a total rural population of about 26 million. Not one person out of a hundred, hardly one person out of a hundred and fifty, in the rural areas of the South is a member of the Presbyterian Church.

We should recall in this connection that the city population, where Presbyterianism now finds its strength, does not reproduce itself but depends on the country for its very life. Today the rural population of the South is on the move in unprecedented numbers, and they are moving to the cities. But relatively few of these migrants are Presbyterians. Unless somehow the Presbyterian Church can win a goodly proportion of those who are unchurched before they come to the city, which is preferable, or afterwards, its relative strength and influence will slowly decline.

A Class Church

The Presbyterian Church has not succeeded in reaching and, generally speaking, seems not to have tried to reach the lowest income groups among the rural folk, the tenants, share-

croppers, and wage hands, who are the most rapidly growing element in the population, and the most mobile. In all fairness it should be pointed out that it is difficult, if not impossible, except in rare cases, to include people of different social, cultural, and economic levels in the same congregation. It is not that well-to-do farmers are not willing to have sharecroppers and migrant laborers worship in the same building, though sometimes this may be the case, but that the latter do not feel at home in the churches of those who have superior economic advantages. The mode of religious expression which appeals to one group does not appeal to the other. The difference in the cultural level raises a barrier which is not easily overcome.

Many Unchurched

There are fewer church members in proportion to population in the country than in the city, and less interest is taken in the affairs of the church by those who are members. No doubt this varies from community to community, but by and large this is the picture which emerges from the numerous studies which have been made of rural communities in recent years. The largest proportion of the unchurched are found among those with the lowest incomes — particularly among the tenants, who are constantly on the move and seldom put down their roots in any community in which they are sojourning for the moment. This is hardly surprising. As Mark A. Dawber says: "Anyone familiar with the facts and experience of farm tenantry will tell you that tenants as a general rule do not make good church members. One-third of all tenant farmers in America move on to a new farm every year, and few of them expect to stay in one community more

than two or three years at the longest. There is no incentive under these conditions to community interest and spiritual welfare. These farmers have no security of tenure, no rootage in the soil, nothing to bind them to the community and its institutions. Under such conditions, tenant families can hardly be expected to take any vital interest in their community, its schools or its churches."¹

There are some areas of particular need. S. B. Lapsley writes to the author, "I wish I could give vivid impressions of Eastern Kentucky, teeming with people, most of whom have a fine Anglo-Saxon background, and most of whom are simply without any real knowledge of Christ." The area covered by Guerrant Presbytery has a population of approximately 420,000, only 44,000 of whom, barely a tenth, are members of any church.

But needy pockets are often uncovered in close proximity to old and established churches. There are probably few localities, in fact, where some outpost could not be profitably established.

In 1946 the Virginia Council of Churches was sponsoring weekday religious education in connection with the public schools in communities widely scattered through the state, most of which were rural or small town. Ninety-six per cent of the children in these various schools elected the courses offered on the Bible, and 48 per cent of these received no other religious instruction. Presumably the same proportion of children receiving no religious education would hold for the state as a whole and for other states in the South.

Studies reveal that over the country generally a constantly decreasing percentage of the rural population belongs to the churches and that church attendance has declined both in the

open country and in the villages of the nation. Study after study reveals that the older churches as a whole are failing to reach new comers into rural communities, especially those on the lower income level.

Loss of Rural Population

The rural population, whose surplus members have been drawn in recent decades in such large numbers to the cities of both North and South, will continue to lose in strength, and this for the reasons, among others, which have been set forth. The newer crops do not require as much labor as cotton and tobacco. Mechanization will increase at an accelerated pace. Fewer farmers will be needed to grow the food supply of the nation. Many sharecroppers and tenants, as well as farmers on the poorer lands, will be unable to earn a livelihood for themselves on the land. Well-to-do farm families, the type more likely to be found in a Presbyterian church, are limiting their families just as urban families are doing.

One of the oldest and strongest rural Presbyterian churches is the well-known New Providence Church in the Shenandoah Valley. Its membership reached its peak — 770 — some years ago and has dropped now to around 610. A report to the Religious Education Re-Study Committee states that the gradual decrease is due to the fact that no additional homes are being built in the community (since there are no new jobs); that practically all homes have fewer children than a generation ago; and that the trek from the farms to the towns and cities has been pronounced. New Providence maintains a strong and vigorous program because it still has a considerable membership, but weaker churches have found it difficult to survive, and in fact thousands of rural churches in recent

years have succumbed. This is especially true of small open-country churches, planted close together, as was natural in the horse-and-buggy days. Many communities in which studies have been made report that there is a tendency for members of the younger generation to leave the community — particularly from the highest and lowest income groups. They leave from the highest income group, presumably because they have the advantages of education and training and wish to enter some one of the many doors which are open to them. The city's gain is the country's loss, for this is the group which furnishes the highest proportion of leaders for both city and country church. They leave from the lowest income group, because economic pressure leaves them no alternative.

It should not be forgotten, however, that the tendency to decline may be checked in some areas by the tendency, which we shall discuss later, for a decentralizing industry to locate its units in small towns and draw a portion of its labor from the surrounding country.

In addition some rural churches are being drawn into the orbits of the expanding cities. They are finding a new opportunity and a new challenge in a growing rural non-farm population which desires to live in the country while earning its living in the city.

Enlarging Communities

Many rural churches are located in sites appropriate for the horse-and-buggy days and for a rising rural population, but not in a situation where they can take best advantage of modern methods of transportation, and where population is

declining. Good roads, all-weather roads, hard-surfaced roads, have multiplied rapidly in recent years and will continue to do so in the years that lie ahead. These roads, together with the ubiquitous motor car, have greatly extended the limits of the farmer's community, have proved the advantage of consolidated schools, and have made it increasingly difficult, if not impossible, for many rural churches to flourish in their original location.

The author preached recently on one Sunday in three churches out of a group of five with a total membership of only three hundred members, and all within a radius of nine or ten miles on good hard-surfaced roads from the central church in the town which was the natural center of the community in which they lived. One of the churches attended by a small handful was only five miles away — ten minutes of conservative driving — from another small church, both of which together hardly afforded a good-sized congregation. This situation is by no means unusual.

One of the outstanding trends in rural church life is the tendency of open-country church people to attend the village-centered churches. As modern transportation, shopping, recreational, and educational facilities continue to make the village the actual center of the rural area, this tendency will undoubtedly increase. Churches which hold their location in what was once a self-contained rural neighborhood will find it increasingly difficult to survive. The old site may appeal to the older members because of its sentimental values, but the younger folk will be more and more attracted to the village or the town — the larger community in which they find the most of their associations.

Overchurched Communities

Many rural areas are badly overchurched. This overchurching may be due to the intense denominational rivalry of other days, which is not dead yet by any means; it may be due to the fact that population has declined or ceased to grow according to expectations; it may be due to the fact that churches are able to draw now from a larger area. In any case it is a fact which almost any reader can illustrate from his own experience.

A study of conditions in the Southern Appalachians carried out by the U. S. Department of Agriculture in 1935 revealed that 70 per cent of 1,000 churches in the counties surveyed were one-room buildings; three fourths had absentee ministers; only one church out of fifty had a full-time minister; and few indeed had services every Sunday.

A town in Virginia has five churches serving a total population of 192. Another with a population of 180 has three churches, none of which has a resident minister.

With the gradual and at times almost rapid decline in sectarian interest, particularly among the younger generation, it will be increasingly difficult to maintain a struggling, inefficient church in any area in which it does not meet an actual need.

Increased Competition

S. H. Hobbs, Jr., reminds us that "the church [in the country] is now faced with competition from many other agencies for the time and interest of the people. A generation or more ago the church was the outstanding institution of the rural community and had a virtual monopoly as an institu-

tion."² Today it has to contend with consolidated schools which increasingly monopolize the activities of the young people and become the center of their life, with Scouts, 4H Clubs, numerous farm organizations, motion picture theatres, and the lure of the city. In any progressive community the church is now "but one of the groups or constellation of groups competing with each other for the time of the participating families of the community."³ The small country church, with little organizational life for its young people, finds it increasingly difficult, also, to compete with a larger church nearby which has a more adequate program.

Lack of Adaptation

The rural church — there are exceptions, of course — has not adapted its program to meet the rapidly changing environmental conditions. This is the judgment of the experienced and interested observers who collaborated in studying the rural communities of the South for our Religious Education Re-Study Committee, as it had been the earlier judgment of President Hoover's Research Committee on Social Trends.

"Rural life conditions have undergone tremendous changes in the United States in the last few decades," says S. H. Hobbs, Jr. "Perhaps no institution has changed as little as the country church. Improved roads, the automobile, and other means of communication and transportation have annihilated distance. The mechanization of agriculture and agricultural education have transformed farming. The farm population has declined by approximately one-sixth since 1910. Rural needs have given us a type of community heretofore unknown, namely, the village which is the service

station to the farmer. The individualism of the American farmer has largely given way to cooperative effort. The consolidated school has largely replaced the one-teacher school. Everywhere in rural America horizons are enlarging. This applies to everything except the country church."⁴

The typical country church, he proceeds to point out, has one or two rooms, a slowly declining constituency, a non-resident minister, a weak organization competing for new members with several other churches, some, if not all, aided in the struggle by home mission grants. "This describes the average situation," says Mr. Hobbs, "which practically all of the denominations cling to tenaciously and under which there can be no real religious progress."⁵ The rural church seemingly finds it hard to change any of its ways, despite the many changes which make the old ways increasingly difficult.

Professor Hobbs and his associates doubt whether the rural church will ever really succeed until there are resident ministers in practically all rural churches.

The importance of a pastor's living on the field was revealed by a study made some years ago of 1,200 churches in Ohio, whose rural churches were in general decline at the time. This study showed that 60 per cent of all such churches with a full-time minister were growing; 39 per cent of those with one minister to two churches were growing; 35 per cent of those which had one minister serving three churches; 26 per cent of those which had one minister serving four churches; and only one in ten of those which had no pastor at all.

Tendency Toward Divisiveness

In many communities the church divides rather than unites the people. This is one of the disturbing facts which has

emerged from the study of numerous rural communities in the South. At times this is due to petty jealousies, at times to active quarrels, at times to denominational exclusiveness, and at times to deeper social cleavages. "One of the most disrupting influences in the American community," states Arthur Morgan, "has been the competition for loyalty of different religious groups. Each has tried to create dominant loyalty to itself, somewhat regardless of loyalty to general community interests. Community possibilities cannot be fully realized so long as any group or groups claim a monopoly of truth or wisdom."⁶ In other words, the church is tempted to become an end in itself, rather than a means to an end.

Importance of the Rural Church

These same studies reveal that in most rural communities of the South the church remains the most important social institution. In progressive communities it tends to lose leadership to the school, to the business or professional classes. But it still touches the life of more individuals and groups than any other institution, and constitutes a dominant factor in the life of many. In other words, the rural church in the South has not yet thrown away its great opportunity to meet the spiritual needs of, and give moral leadership to, the most rapidly growing element in our American population. It is all the more important, therefore, that it adapt itself to the changing situation while there is time.

The importance of the rural church for the denomination as a whole is more plainly evident. Studies now being made by our Department of Town and Country Church reveal that the spiritual birth rate of our town and country churches, despite the large proportion of vacant pulpits, is around 60

to 70 per cent higher than for our urban churches. Our country churches, including the numerous small churches which cannot maintain themselves without home mission aid, send a steady stream of young men and women into the city churches; in addition, they are "seedbeds" from which come a surprisingly large proportion of our ministers, missionaries, officers, and leaders.

CHAPTER 6 ☞ What Then Shall We Do?

WHEN WE compare the revolutionary changes now taking place in Southern agriculture with the present status of the rural church, particularly in our own denomination, the question inevitably arises, What then shall we do?

1. Survey

It is always easier to prescribe a remedy if there has been a proper diagnosis. Each rural church, therefore, should study its program in the light of its own neighborhood and need. Once an accurate picture has been gained of the church and its community, relating church membership and attendance to the movement of population within the community, the church can begin to plan intelligently for the future.

Ideally there should be a careful survey of the community, its churches and their programs, carried out under the direction of some qualified expert.

An illustration of the kind of information which a survey of this sort may provide is given us in *Protestantism in Carroll County (Georgia)*, an interdenominational study by Richard A. Myers, carried out under the auspices of the Committee for Cooperative Field Research, and claimed to be the first study of the total religious program of a rural county in the South. We can mention only a few of the findings, by way of example.

Carroll County, Georgia, is located 50 miles southwest of Atlanta, a rolling red hill county with all grades of soil from

the best to the poorest. The largest city in the county is Carrollton, the county seat, with a population of 9,500. All other towns have a population of less than 2,500.

Sixty-seven per cent of the population live on farms, and half of these are operated by tenants. The average size of the farms is only 69.9 acres. In recent years there has been a trend toward larger farms. Mechanization has made it possible for a single operator to take care of a larger acreage, and the lack of opportunity for younger people on the farm has driven many of them to the cities and led to the ultimate sale of farms to those who remain.

Until recently Carroll County has been on the cotton economy. It still ranks among the four top cotton counties in Georgia, but grain crops are increasing rapidly, and there has been a parallel development in dairying and poultry. In recent years there has also been an increase of income from other than farm products, with 51.5 per cent of the county income from the farm in 1943 and only 37.3 per cent in 1946. Fifty-five industries scattered over the county provide work opportunities for some 4,300 workmen.

In the five-year period 1940-45 the county lost five hundred farm operators 35 years of age and under, the age group naturally attracted from the farms by industries. This is the age group, too, which has the most young children. The loss of these five hundred families from the country will have added significance ten years from now for the churches as well as for the schools. The white school enrollment has decreased by more than 2,000 students since 1928.

Studies reveal that there were 4,000 fewer persons in the rural areas of Carroll County in 1947 than in 1940 and 6,000 fewer than in 1920, when the county had reached its popu-

lation peak of 34,754. During this same period Carrollton, the county seat, gained 1,000 in population. Most of this population loss in the rural area has occurred in poor soil areas. "The present picture seems to be that farms on good soils are not changing hands. Farmers who own farms on better soil of the county are men who have owned these farms for many years, sometimes even inheriting the farm from their parents. This means, then, that Carroll County has two groups within its population. One an old, stable group — farm families who have lived in the county for many years and own [sic] or lived on good soil. The other group is composed of people who have come into the county more recently, buying whatever land was for sale at the time, and they form a newer group who live on poorer soils."¹ The population that is leaving the land is the surplus labor population, the population that with improved farming methods, soil conservation, mechanization, and the like, is no longer needed on the land. As the modern cotton cultivating machinery comes into use there will be additional surplus labor and additional population loss. This does not mean that one should become pessimistic about the future of rural life in America, says Mr. Myers. As the necessary crops are raised by improved methods with less labor, the economic condition of those who remain will be improved. "With our industrial centers needing workers this makes it possible for our nation to provide a better living standard for everyone by this balance between farm and industry. In Carroll County the process can be seen in operation by the fact that a large number of persons living on the farm drive to centers of industry even in this county or other counties to supplement the farm income with their earnings from industry."²

The mechanization of Carroll County has been rather slow, but the use of tractors is rapidly increasing and will undoubtedly continue, thus continuing the trend toward larger farms and releasing additional laborers from the farms.

There are 112 churches in the county, serving a total population of 31,200. In addition there are an undetermined number of Holiness and Pentecostal churches — mainly in the area of poor soil. The Methodists and Baptists have 60 of the 80 white churches in the county; the Presbyterians have only two, one in the county seat, and one in the next larger town.

The population trends in the county have been reversed since 1920. Till then there was a population increase each decade; since that year there has been a decline, at first slow, but more rapid since 1940. This means fewer people for the church to work with, and indicates that the subconscious slogan, "bigger and better," should be replaced by another, "more intensive and better."

This population loss has meant particularly a loss of young adults through emigration and, therefore, the loss of children. The study reveals that the churches are attracting persons who have lived in the county for many years, those who own the more prosperous farms, and especially those over 35 years of age, families whose own children have grown up and left the county for other work. It is not attracting in like measure newcomers to the community, sharecroppers, tenants, those who farm the poorer soils, the more mobile group in the county who are constantly moving to better their economic condition (the churches that are most successful here seem to be the newer emotional sects which are not included in this study).

The churches are not attracting a sufficient number of young people and young adults (men and women between the ages of 20-30, and men between the ages of 35-44) to maintain their present level of membership over a period of time. "The failure of the churches to attract persons of this age points toward either a failure of the Sunday School to provide religious education in keeping with the experience of these persons or a lack of youth program to attract those age groups."³

As industry comes into the county, life becomes more stabilized; many of the farm population, who otherwise would have left the county, take work in the industrial plants and return to the farms in the evening. As this process continues migration from the rural areas will diminish, except as it is influenced by the increased use of machinery.

It is significant that trends among the Negro churches parallel those among the whites, except that there is even a greater dearth of young people in the Negro churches, especially among those who attend high school, most of whom leave the county in search of better opportunities, and some of whom "discover inconsistencies between what schools and churches teach." There is also a much greater disproportion between males and females in the Negro church (30 per cent male, 70 per cent female). All of this does not auger well for the leadership of the Negro churches in the years to come.

So much for the Carroll County Survey.

The situation would be different, of course, in other rural counties of the South, but some of the same factors would repeat themselves. The point is that no church or group of churches can plan adequately to meet their needs unless they know exactly what those needs are. A survey of this nature

affords the best means of obtaining the data on which a careful program should be based.

But though each church and each community needs to work out its program in the light of its own needs, there are some things which need to be done in every church and in every community.

2. *Evangelize*

We will agree to begin with that there is need for more intensive evangelization.

Plans and methods, developed by Dr. H. H. Thompson, director of the new Department of Evangelism in the Board of Church Extension, and whose value has been abundantly illustrated in the experience of both rural and urban churches, are available now for any church which has the desire and the will to put them into effect.

We need to recall in this connection that there are more unchurched in the country than there are in the city and that the attendance is much more irregular. Surveys made in rural districts show that often some particular age group has not been effectively reached by the church. It may be the young people, it may be young adults, it may be mature men and women of a certain age. Whatever group is not adequately represented should excite the concern of the church, and a program adapted for this particular age level should be inaugurated.

Often opportunities for outposts or missions will be discovered, either nearby or in an adjoining county. Sallie M. Thrower, while engaged in Sunday School Extension work for the Synod of South Carolina, reported that all churches in this Synod with a membership of over 400, except two,

were doing outpost work, and many with a membership as low as 65. As a result 25 chapels and churches had been erected in the Synod in the last three years. The fact that Sunday School Extension has been made a function of the newly founded Board of Church Extension augers well for the future. For Sunday School Extension can now be integrated more fully into the whole program of advance.

The groups most conspicuous by their absence in the average Presbyterian church are those who have less economic advantages, including newcomers into the community who are seeking to farm the poorer land. The rural church must discover more effective methods of reaching the landless farmer, cropper, and migrant. If they cannot be brought into the established church, and often this will prove to be the case, then a church or mission chapel should be established for this particular group. The services here will probably have to be conducted on slightly different lines — less formal, and with more emotional appeal. The one essential is a sincere interest in and liking for the people for whom the Sunday school or chapel has been erected.

3. *Adapt*

We will agree again that the church must adapt itself to the changing rural situation.

Such adaptation may be required by any one of the factors which have been enumerated above: a declining population, an enlarging community, a changing neighborhood, a lack of appeal to any particular group in the community (any age group, or any social group), or by the increase of what is called the rural non-farm population — families who earn their living in the city, in industry it may be, or in white collar jobs,

but who prefer to live beyond the city. This rural non-farm population is now the most rapidly growing element in the nation and, in the estimation of many, one of the least adequately churched. Not always, but at times, this is due to the fact that some old country church with noble traditions is too conservative to make the necessary changes that would enable it to minister adequately to all who have moved within its bounds.

In some cases proper adaptation will lead the church to relocate in a more advantageous situation. A church that is awake to the need of men and to the call of its Lord will not allow sentimental attachment to memories of the past or of beloved dead in the Lord to outweigh opportunities for future growth, if not for survival itself. Often it will prove wise to locate the church in the natural shopping center, village or town, of the community in which the church finds itself, thus making the parish large enough to support the church's enterprises.

In some cases adaptation will require consolidation of existing churches. In other cases it may be preferable to adopt a "larger parish" plan. There is no attempt here to change the number of existing churches, but the attempt rather to get them to work together in a larger program for the whole community. As described by Dwight Sanderson, "The churches of a larger parish elect representatives to a council which meets from time to time to pass upon general policies and a program of work for the whole parish. It employs any members of the staff who are employed by the larger parish. The salaried ministers and special workers form a staff which meets frequently to plan the immediate program."⁴

In January, 1947, Old Providence Rural Parish of West Hanover Presbytery was organized for the benefit of four small home mission churches which over a period of years had maintained their struggling Sunday schools and church organizations with the greatest difficulty. A pastor (Rev. R. G. Hutcheson) was secured to reside on the field and to supervise a full-time program in which he would be assisted by students from Union Theological Seminary. A parish council, composed of the resident minister and his student associates together with three elected representatives of each congregation, elected according to the rotary system, meets quarterly for fellowship, inspiration, and the formulation of parish-wide goals. A parish paper is published quarterly and carries news of each church and of the parish as a whole into every home. A parish Men of the Church organization meets quarterly and a parish Young People's Fellowship meets once a month on Sunday afternoon.

The parish churches responded so rapidly to the fuller program of service that other churches began to seek admittance. By the end of the second year the number of churches had increased to eight, after which no other churches were admitted. Beginning with a membership of 122, many of whom were inactive, the parish now has an active membership of 477. One of the original churches has graduated from the parish plan to a full-time pastorate, and another weaker church has taken her place in the parish family.

Three churches which formerly felt that it was impossible to maintain a Sunday school have reorganized and are steadily growing in both enrollment and interest. Three churches which had disbanded their Women of the Church have reorganized and gone forward with enthusiasm. The Parish

Men's Work, though still young, is lusty and promises well for the future. Youth activities are increasingly purposeful and strong. The earlier spirit of defeat and dissolution has been replaced by a spirit of optimism for the future.

The churches of Old Providence Parish will never be numerically strong churches. They will continue to feed their members into the cities and industrial centers. And that, in the estimation of their pastor, is "the ordained purpose of many small rural churches, namely the development and training of rural boys and girls, who must of necessity find vocations and employment elsewhere, in a Christian faith and character which will enrich the life of the larger churches which will eventually receive them."

The plan of the Old Providence Rural Parish was modeled on the earlier pioneer work of the Todd-Dickey Parish in Indiana under the direction of Dr. C. Morton Hanna of Louisville Theological Seminary. Similar parishes are now under operation in Potomac Presbytery and in East Hanover Presbytery, both in the Synod of Virginia, and in Athens Presbytery in the Synod of Georgia, this latter using students from Columbia Theological Seminary.

Inspired by the success of these examples of the larger parish plan, a Presbyterian Conference on Church Cooperation was formed early in 1949 by representatives of all the Presbyterian churches (nine U.S. and six U.S.A.) in and around Tupelo, Mississippi. Each church is represented in this Conference by its minister and two elders. The plan calls for a meeting of the staff (ministers and professional workers) each week; of the executive committee once a month; and of the entire conference once a quarter. Projects under consideration include co-operative daily vacation Bible schools,

itineraries of special speakers, leadership training courses, programs of fellowship, the cultivation of church music, co-operation among the youth organizations, the joint purchase of mechanical and visual aids, establishment of a library, and the employment of ministers or other workers with special skills and training (in religious education and music, for example) who will direct particular programs for the entire group. This is the sort of thing which needs to be done and which can be done in many other localities.

A church needs to revise its program continuously in the light of its shifting population, in relation to its own membership or lack of membership and their needs. But there are some constants which need to be kept in mind, and which every church, as far as possible, should seek to realize.

"Some years ago," writes S. H. Hobbs, "the Institute of Social and Religious Research . . . selected forty successful country churches out of 700 which had been suggested and made a detailed investigation of them. . . . In these churches the time-honored circuit rider had been succeeded by the resident minister with a comfortable parsonage. In seven out of every eight churches space had been provided somewhere in the church plan for social and recreational purposes, and in two-thirds of these churches there was recreational equipment. Separate rooms for graded classes in religious education were the rule. Most of these churches had moving picture machines. Half of the church schools insisted on teaching their teachers instead of trusting to their good will and an old-fashioned Sunday School Quarterly. Evangelism remained but it was of a variety that undergirded the emotional appeal with definite instruction in Christian faith and practices. Well-developed beginnings had taken place in weekday re-

ligious instruction and in daily vacation Bible schools. Finances were on a budget basis and not dependent upon oyster suppers. The ministers were paid a living wage. The successful churches were thoroughly democratic and in general served all occupational classes. Without exception they were found to include community service as a part of their program and to co-operate freely with other churches, if there were any in their communities . . . That these churches appealed to the people is shown by the fact that the average growth in membership was 400 per cent above the national average. The per capita contributions were considerably above the national average and the time given to the church by the members averaged from three to six times the average for the nation.

"Successful country churches," Mr. Hobbs adds, "have been written up world without end and almost always the same conditions are found."⁵

4. *Serve*

In addition to improving its distinctly religious program the rural church must also be concerned with an increased community outreach — with the improvement of family life, with Christian recreation, with co-operative enterprises for economic betterment, and with other forms of group activity. As the most important social institution among rural people, and the only one which touches all segments of the population, the church has a responsibility here which it cannot evade. In addition its own welfare is bound up with the welfare of the community. It should, therefore, emphasize the need for a better social and economic life for the community through better farming, soil conservation, and improved recreation facilities. It should cultivate concern for farm labor, interest

itself in the needs of marginal people, promote a better balance of family and community life, oppose disintegrating forces, and attempt in every way possible to spiritualize rural culture.

It is right and proper that the church should inculcate the stewardship of money, on which its benevolent program depends; it is no less essential that it should stress stewardship of the soil, on which we and our children's children must depend for our daily bread.

It is not the function of the church, of course, to teach any agricultural method; it is its responsibility to teach that man is but a trustee of the land he tills, and that he cannot discharge this responsibility adequately unless he follows proper methods of soil conservation, as taught, for example, by the various farm agencies. This is but an illustration. As the church grows in its understanding of Christian stewardship it will necessarily apply its Gospel to ever-widening areas of rural life.

If the church is willing to work, or to inspire its members to work, with secular agencies such as the Farm Extension Service, on so-called secular matters, it can furnish "the nucleus of a community leadership which should be able to make any community a much better place in which to live — a real *community* where individuals and groups find a wealth of opportunity for self-expression and the development of activities and programs of value to all."⁶

One of our most successful country churches declared recently that, "New Providence Church cannot hope to hold its place . . . unless it sees to it that its community is a progressive, live, wide-awake place in which to live." What is true of New Providence Church is true of all rural churches.

5. *Co-operate*

We will agree, in the last place, that the problem of the rural church is a problem which affects the whole church, urban as well as rural, the denomination as well as the local congregation.

The urban church has a stake in the welfare of the rural church, because the former survives and grows only at the expense of the latter. The Carroll County report, to which we previously referred, recommends that "strong churches in the towns should share both their ministerial and lay leadership with churches located in poor soil areas of the county. This will make for a stronger religious program in these areas." Co-operation between rural and urban areas should go much further. Progressive counties recognize that urban and rural people must be knit together in closer understanding and fellowship for the mutual benefit of both, and newspapers and service clubs in many Southern regions are promoting such a program. One of the advantages of the Tupelo plan described above is that it joins urban and rural churches in a co-operative effort that will work to their common benefit.

The ministers of Carroll and Haralson Counties in Georgia have formed the Carroll-Haralson Ministers Association, an organization for fellowship and mutual help, including both town and country ministers. In addition the Carroll Service Council includes what is called a Panel of Religion, with a full-time director, which provides for the county much the same type of service that a city council of churches, with paid director, renders to a great city. This is the direction in which many rural counties should move.

Such a Council or Panel should seek in time to develop some principles of comity along the lines recommended by the Home Missions Council of North America. In the estimation of this interdenominational body a rural field "shall be regarded as adequately occupied when for each 1,000 population, potentially homogeneous and reasonably accessible from a given point, there is present one church, meeting at least the following minimum standard of service and equipment: resident pastor devoting full time to work of the ministry; public worship every Sabbath; Sunday school meeting regularly; vacation church school annually; adequate program of community service; reasonably adequate edifice."

When a community is overchurched the denominations concerned should confer at once to determine what adjustment should be made. It may be "the unconditional withdrawal of one denomination in favor of the other, or the withdrawal of both in favor of a third not now present, or the formation of a federated church, a denominationally related community church, a larger parish, or other types of co-operative organizations."

In communities where it is not yet possible to form an interdenominational council of churches and where principles of comity cannot yet be agreed upon, it may be wise to begin with a Presbyterian Council along the lines developed in the Tupelo area.

We must realize finally that the problem of the rural church is one in which the denomination as a whole is concerned.

The Roman Catholic Church realizes its fundamental weakness in being predominantly an urban church and is making great efforts to find a more secure rootage in the country, even to the extent of financing Roman Catholic

families who wish to settle in the country. The Lutheran Church is making a similar effort. And the Methodist Church has become increasingly active.

It is a hopeful fact that our own Church has revived its Country Church Department and recently elected a full-time director to carry on the work which Dr. Henry W. McLaughlin so ably began. It was a definite step forward when our General Assembly placed this new department in the heart of the new Board of Church Extension and stated that its Department of Town and Country Church will concern itself not only with weak and struggling churches, so-called "home mission" churches, but with the problems, the needs, and the opportunities of the rural church as a whole.

Working together, urban churches and rural churches, local congregations and denominational agencies, we may make progress in winning the countryside for Christ, a long step and a necessary one if we are finally to win the nation for Christ.

Part II
CHANGES IN THE INDUSTRIAL SOUTH

The Industrial Revolution

NO RECENT Southern phenomenon has attracted such nationwide attention as the amazing growth of Southern industry, and none has greater ultimate significance for the Church.

At the outbreak of the War Between the States the South was distinctly rural and agricultural. Life centered about the plantations and their needs. Towns existed mainly to serve the countryside. There were some industries, of course. But the South lagged far behind the North in industrial development and was almost entirely dependent on other regions for the tools and machines needed to maintain industrial production. The number of workmen employed by manufacturing firms in the North was six times the number employed in the South, and the value of what they produced was five and a half times as great.

After 1861

The outcome of the war convinced some Southern leaders that they must develop a different type of economy, that their region could no longer live "by cotton alone." Many of the South's manufacturing plants had been destroyed by the holocaust of war, and there was little capital with which to rebuild. For some time it was hoped that financial aid and also a supply of skilled labor might be forthcoming from the North, but neither of these hopes materialized. Without much aid from the outside the South gradually rebuilt the plants destroyed by the war; but industry in the North, mean-

while, had developed by leaps and bounds, and, comparatively, the former was farther behind than before.

By 1880 some Southern capital had been accumulated, and a group of able leaders had arisen, merchants, editors, political leaders, and even ministers, who were convinced that the South could recover its prosperity only through the development of industry. The movement came to have all the enthusiasm and drive of a great political revolution, the fervor of a religious revival. The necessary capital was contributed in the beginning largely by the Southern people themselves and included the small investments of hundreds and thousands of individuals.

This industrial revival developed most rapidly in the Piedmont, where some cotton mills had been erected before the war, and where water power was easily accessible. The South has the nation's most abundant rainfall, well distributed through the year, and this water rushes down the Appalachian Mountains toward the sea. There are many natural reservoirs and waterfalls in the Piedmont and in numerous other places where dams can be easily built. Before the War Between the States it was the power of falling water which cut the lumber, ground the grain, and spun the yarn for the South. The earliest factories were built at spots where the numerous rivers in Virginia, the Carolinas, Georgia, and Alabama dropped from one level to the other. After the war water power was succeeded by steam as the prime source of energy, and most of the old water mills fell into disuse. Steam continued to turn the wheels of the Piedmont factories until about 1900, when a new use was discovered for the rapidly falling streams of the Southeast. Before this time electricity had been generated by steam based on coal, and much of it has continued to be made

by this method. But about 1900 it was discovered that electricity could be manufactured more simply and economically by water power. Electricity produced in this way is called hydroelectricity, from the Greek word "hydro" (water). Power houses for generating such electricity now arose by the streams, but the giant water wheels were replaced by water turbines, which were vastly more efficient.

The Hydroelectric Empire

The first hydroelectric power zone to emerge in the Southern Piedmont was in the Catawba Valley of North and South Carolina. Here is found the maximum water power capacity of the Southeast, a capacity exceeded only by that of the Tennessee Valley system on the western slope of the Appalachians. With its source on the flanks of Mount Mitchell, which rears its crest 6,684 feet above sea level and is the highest peak east of the Mississippi, the Catawba River drops to the easy flow of the coastal plains in less than 200 miles. In 1900 the valley had no plants operated by electricity, compared with three per cent for the rest of the state. Four years later the Southern Power Company was organized (since replaced by the Duke Power Company), and from 1905 to the present the great Catawba Valley, including fifteen industrial counties of the two Carolinas, has led the region in electrification and, therefore, in industrialization. At the present time dams are so carefully placed along the course of this stream that only 304 out of a total fall of 1,056 feet are not utilized for the production of electrical energy.

But the Catawba-Wateree is only one river system in the Piedmont whose potentialities have been developed. Other full-length river systems utilized for the generation of hydro-

electricity in this area are the Dan-Roanoke, the Yadkin-Pee Dee, the Santee, the Savannah, and the Chattahoochee-Appalachicola. The potentialities of these various river systems have been so carefully developed that "at many places the tail-race of one pond flows practically into the head of the next storage basin down the river."¹

It was along these river systems that the power empire of the South developed, and that the first real break with the agrarian tradition occurred. This great industrial area of the new South "stretches in crescent from its southernmost tip at Birmingham, Alabama, to its northern end near Danville, Virginia. It passes through Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia. For its southern and eastern boundary it hugs the fall line, for its northern and western boundary it encroaches on the southern highlands. Its total area may be estimated at 50,000 square miles."²

Though it was water power which determined the general area in which Southern industry took its rise, hydroelectric power can be transmitted along high tension wires for a considerable distance from its source (from 200 to 300 miles), and as the various power systems have become more closely integrated electric power can be delivered at practically any point where the convergence of labor, raw materials, and markets makes the construction of a factory advantageous. In 1930 these high voltage lines stretched for over 3,500 miles and served an area of 120,000 square miles, more than double the territory included in the Piedmont. As a result the industry of the Piedmont from the very beginning was decentralized — not thickly clustered in some unattractive metropolis as in the older cities of the Northeast, but spread out through the countryside and distributed among a number of

smaller towns. It is a striking fact that in the whole Piedmont crescent, where most Southern industry is still concentrated, there are no large cities except Atlanta and Birmingham, for whose growth there are other explanations. But there is an unusually large number of thriving towns (in 1930 there were 160 industrial communities in the Carolinas alone, besides many isolated mills and factories), linked together, particularly in North Carolina, by a superb system of modern highways, so that in recent times one community almost merges into the next.

The Textile Industry

The first industry to rise in the Southern Piedmont was the textile industry. Its roots, as we have seen, stretch back into the ante-bellum period. But while some mills below the dams along the streams wove the cotton into cloth, most of the South's great crop was shipped either to England or to New England, and the enhanced value of its manufactured product passed into other hands. By 1870 the South had rebuilt the mills destroyed by the war, but these mills for the most part carried out only the more elementary processes, while the yarn, which was their chief product, continued to be sent to New England to be woven into the finished article.

In 1880 textile mills began to multiply rapidly through the Piedmont, and by 1900 cotton spindles in the South numbered 4.4 million, 22.9 per cent of the nation's total; in 1910 there were 11.1 million, or 39.4 per cent of the whole; in 1923 the number of Southern spindles for the first time exceeded those of New England; in 1948 the South had 16.9 million spindles, or 79 per cent of the whole. The leading states in this year were North Carolina with 231,904 persons

employed; South Carolina with 129,949; and Georgia with 110,264. Altogether about 700,000 persons were employed, which was more than half the people with factory jobs in all the South.

Though the textile industry includes many far-flung units and is a village — even countryside — industry as compared to many others, most of the cotton mills are still bunched compactly in the Piedmont crescent. About three fourths of all of them are in the two Carolinas.

The mills which were built at the beginning of the industrial revolution were financed largely, as we have seen, by Southern capital, and were eagerly sought by local communities and by needy whites who wanted jobs. In the second stage large corporations in the North established branch mills in the South, where the primary operations were carried out, the finished product being completed in the North. In the third stage, mills in New England were dismantled and reopened in the South. They were drawn to this region not merely by their proximity to the source of supply (most of the cotton now comes from the Mississippi Delta and Western Texas), but also by special tax inducements, encouragement by railroads and communities, by the abundance of fuel and water supply, generating hydroelectric power, and also by a cheap and plentiful labor.

The Textile Workers

This labor supply was drawn at the outset from the poor whites on the neighboring farms and the nearby mountains, and was seemingly inexhaustible. As Simkins says: "These folk eagerly sought industrial employment as a means of improving their low economic status. The hiring of women and

children was hailed as a boon not only by the mill owners but by those to whom it gave a livelihood."³ A mill at Salisbury owed its existence to the preaching of an evangelist, who asserted that it would give work to those whom idleness had made vicious.

At first, naturally, there was inadequate protection, especially for the women and children who worked in the mills, but by 1930 federal and state intervention and the growing social consciousness of the South itself brought wages and hours on a par with those in the North. Yet work in the textile mills requires little training or skill, and there is a superabundance of man power (and woman power as well) in the South, which any industry able to use unskilled labor may tap. As Vance wrote (in 1932): "A family wage of \$30.00 or more a week affords returns sufficient to call from the farm thousands of small owners whose vicissitudes with cotton, tobacco, or highland farming have left them on the verge of failure."⁴ As we have seen, the shift from cotton to general farming and the growing mechanization of Southern farms will make it imperative for increasing numbers of rural folk to take advantage of any industrial opportunities which are open to them. It seems likely, therefore, that the Southern labor supply will exceed demand, even though that demand is increasing, for some time to come.

The workers in the mills came to live for the most part in "mill villages" — in homes furnished by the mill owners and in villages which they controlled. These homes were better, no doubt, than those to which the majority of the workers had been accustomed, and they preferred the social contacts of the village to the isolation of backward rural communities; still, the mill villages were drab, and the mill people came to

regard themselves and to be regarded by others as a people apart. "Some mill owners," Simkins reminds us, "assumed a patriarchal attitude toward their workers, contributing to the support of schools and providing libraries, parks, and recreational and social diversions. Even the most backward among them encouraged community churches. Attempts to better conditions through the initiative of the mill operatives themselves were less successful, for they were inherently 'the eternal poor whites' — improvident, slovenly, migratory."⁵ So at least it seemed. But as time has gone on and hours and wages have improved, and Southern workers have become better adjusted to industrial life and developed a greater sense of pride, many of the villages and many of the homes have begun to take on a different aspect.

Timber and Its Products

Industries, it has been pointed out, tend to concentrate in certain regions in typical clusters. So the textile industry was only the entering wedge for many other industries, first to enter the Catawba Valley and then to scatter through the Piedmont.

One of the most important of these industries is timber and its products. The quantity of timber taken from the Southern forests more than doubled between 1880 and 1890, giving the South the first rank as the source of the nation's lumber. By 1929 the South was producing 47 per cent of the total supply. Though the region has wasted many of its timber lands (through failure to replant), it still has the nation's largest forest reserves (stretching from Maryland to Texas), and these are much nearer the great markets than the vast tracts of Canada, Alaska, and the West.

In addition the South has one asset which no other region possesses. It can replace its forests, especially its pines, useful for paper pulp, at a much more rapid rate than any other section. The production of wood pulp requires from 60 to 80 years in Canada; in the South from 9 to 20 years will suffice.

Greater attention is now being given to forest conservation, and the South is beginning to realize that with proper care its pine forests can replenish themselves indefinitely. In 1949 the United States expected to plant 368 million trees, 216 million of which were in the South. All signs indicate that there will be an expanding market for Southern trees in the years ahead. The industry as a whole now employs over 400,000 persons, 72 per cent of whom are found in saw and planing mills, many shifting here and there as areas are temporarily exhausted and new ones are opened up.

The South now produces and, doubtless, will continue to produce a good proportion of the nation's paper, one of the products of wood. In 1921 there were 49 small plants in the South producing about 1,790 tons of paper a day. Now, smoke is pouring from almost 100 mills, and they are turning out about 20,000 tons of paper a day, almost eleven times the 1921 rate. Soft tissues, newsprint, the strong and sturdy kraft paper, and hardboard are all made out of Southern wood.

Furniture, the most important of the many products of wood, began to be manufactured at High Point, North Carolina, in 1888 and has spread into other communities of that state and also into Virginia and Tennessee. High Point, which has ninety or more furniture factories of various sizes, remains the center of the industry in the South and is second only to Grand Rapids, Michigan. Thirty-eight per cent of

the nation's bedroom furniture and 40 per cent of its dining room suites are made within one hundred and twenty-five miles of this North Carolina town.

The same general area has come to possess also a great many hosiery mills, a good illustration of how one industry is apt to attract another. The furniture and hosiery mills supplement one another admirably, for furniture requires male operatives and hosiery female operatives. So work is available for the whole family.

Tobacco Manufacture

Tobacco, cotton's great rival as a cash crop, has come to have even greater value for the South as a manufactured product. In the 1880's, when the textile mills were springing up so rapidly through the Piedmont, tobacco factories were also doubling their productive capacities. Tobacco had been smoked in pipes from the beginning; plug tobacco for chewing reached the height of its popularity in the 1890's; cigars reached their highest point of favor between 1870 and 1905. The cigarette was introduced into America about 1860 and became popular in the South as a result of the War Between the States. Their manufacture in unlimited quantities became possible in 1884, when James Duke acquired the rights to the first cigarette machine. Six years later Duke consolidated the five largest companies into the powerful American Tobacco Company, which was dissolved in 1911 into its component parts. Since then the manufacture of cigarettes has increased at a rapid rate — twentyfold between 1900 and 1924. The First World War made the use of cigarettes almost universal among the male population, and more recently their use by women has become almost as common. It was the

tobacco industry which produced the first great fortunes in the South.

Durham and Winston-Salem in North Carolina, Richmond, Virginia, and Louisville, Kentucky, became the centers of the new industry, which is almost a Southern monopoly, but factories are processing tobacco in one way or another (cigars, pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco, snuff, or cigarettes) in almost every Southern state. North Carolina, which ranks first here among the Southern states, manufactures one third of the total tobacco products of the nation. Richmond, with 10,000 workers, produces one third of all the cigarettes made in America, an output valued at about \$600,000,000 a year, and is the cigarette capital of the world. Tampa, Florida, remains the center of the cigar industry.

Rayon

The rayon industry, regarded originally as an appendage of cotton textiles, has now become a giant in its own right and continues to expand. The first rayon mill in the South was opened in Roanoke, Virginia, in 1917; by 1940 two thirds of the rayon in the nation was manufactured in the South. The rayon industry is being drawn to this region by some of the same factors that have drawn other industries — cheap land, an abundant labor supply, large supplies of soft water, the proximity of other textile industries, the availability of cotton and other fibres to mix with the artificial silk. Many rayon mills choose by preference the smaller town and draw their labor supply partly from the town and partly from the surrounding countryside.

Iron and Steel

All of the industries which we have mentioned to this point are found in greatest strength in or near the Piedmont crescent which curves about the Appalachian Highlands. At the southern tip of this industrial crescent, where the hills slope gradually to the level of the coastal plain of Alabama, coal and iron, on which the heavy industry of America depends, are found in great abundance and easily accessible, and along with them the dolomite and the limestone needed for the fluxing of the iron. It is here, therefore, in the lower tip of the Piedmont, that the Southern iron and steel industry is centered. Birmingham, the site of a cotton field in 1869, became shortly thereafter one of the largest cities of the South. Lake Superior now furnishes the most of the iron ore produced in the United States; Birmingham ranks second and is thought to have reserves equally as large. More money is now invested in industry here than in any other locality in the South, and it gives employment to a larger number of industrial workers than any other city in the region.

Coal

One of the great advantages which the South possesses for the further development of its industries is the possession of the nation's richest fuel reserves, particularly coal and oil.

It was in the 1880's, that critical decade in which Southern industry first began to expand, that modern methods of exploitation were first applied to the Southern coal fields. The output increased from six million tons in 1880 to 26 million tons in 1890, to twice that amount in 1900 (54 million tons), and to almost four times this latter amount in 1930. The in-

dustry is now centered in West Virginia, which produces 27 per cent of the nation's bituminous coal, with extensions into Tennessee, Virginia, and Kentucky, and in Alabama.

The typical mining community consists of a few superintendents and several hundred miners and their families. Mining towns are not the most attractive communities in the South. It is more nearly the reverse. In some of these communities, where surveys have been made, not more than a fifth of the population are attached to the church.

Aluminum

During the past quarter century the aluminum industry has experienced a phenomenal growth. The Aluminum Company of America (ALCOA), which is a pioneer in this industry, recognized early the many natural advantages of the Southeast and carries on today extensive operations in this section, including ore purification works at Mobile, Alabama, aluminum works at Badin, North Carolina, and Alcoa, Tennessee, and hydroelectric facilities in North Carolina and Tennessee. Construction of a 50-million-dollar plant was begun in 1949 at Port Lavaca, Texas.

By-Products of Cotton

Two new industries have developed recently to make use of the once rejected cotton seed. Oil pressed from the seed is used as a substitute for lard and olive oil and as one of the most important ingredients in oleomargarine. The cake or meal from which the oil is pressed is valued as fertilizer and food for cattle. Mills for the extraction of this oil are scattered through the cotton country, but chiefly in Texas, and produce goods valued at \$212,000,000. Other by-products go to mat-

tress makers for stuffing or to rayon producers for cellulose. Out of each 2,000 pounds of cottonseed bought by the Southern Cotton Oil Company of New Orleans, only 145 pounds, mostly sand and trash, is waste.

The TVA

In 1933, the Tennessee Valley Authority was created for the sections of Virginia, Kentucky, North Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi through which the Tennessee River and its tributaries flow, an area which presented "some of the worst examples of eroded soil and handicapped humanity in the United States." Its threefold object was (1) to improve farming through the manufacture and distribution of cheap fertilizers, through the prevention of soil erosion, and through the teaching of crop diversification; (2) to provide electric energy at a fair rate to some communities and one which would serve as a "yardstick" for others; (3) to foster the development of flood control, navigation, and electric power facilities in order to attract industries to the Tennessee Valley and raise the standard of living among its inhabitants.

Fifteen years later the per capita income in the Tennessee Valley had risen from 40 per cent to 70 per cent of the national average; land long ago abandoned had been made again fruitful through TVA-directed farming practices; more than one half of the valley farms were electrified, compared with 3.5 per cent in 1933; industries of various types were growing faster there than in the nation as a whole; employment had increased 123 per cent, compared with 73 per cent for the nation; the Tennessee River, navigable as far as Knoxville, carried 350,000,000 ton miles of traffic and was virtually flood

free; the incidence of malaria in affected areas along the river had been reduced from 25 per cent of the population in 1934 to 1 per cent; and what had been one of the problem areas of the nation had become a magnet and an inspiration to visitors from all over the world.

Petroleum

So far we have spoken almost entirely of the Southeast. The recent spectacular development, industrially, of the Southwest centers about petroleum.

Oil was discovered in Pennsylvania in 1859, and by 1883 was flowing in West Virginia, Kentucky, and Tennessee. In 1901 the famed Spindle Top Pool near Beaumont, Texas, blew in with a ten-day gusher that opened the great Gulf field, which has remained one of the richest producing fields from that day to this. Five years later a wildcatter discovered the Glenn field near Tulsa, Oklahoma, and opened the immense Mid-Continent field for the Southwest. Tulsa, which had been a small trading post, became a great city, with 100,000 people, almost within a decade. One boom succeeded another in rapid succession. Towns grew up almost overnight in the sparsely settled areas of Texas and Oklahoma. By 1939 the Southwest was producing 61.2 per cent of the nation's total output of oil. With three fifths of the nation's proved reserves in oil, and with the great tidal oil lands off the coast still to be developed, the industrial future of this region seems to be assured.

Though one oil pool follows another, sometimes with startling rapidity, the general field does not shift, and the great metropolitan areas which serve these interconnected fields as centers of refining, distributing, and export are fixed. With

more wide open space than any other state in the Union, Texas has become one of the most highly urbanized states in the South. Her billion-dollar crops are now exceeded by her manufactured products, most of them related in some way to petroleum. It is in the Gulf Port area that these industries are centered. "Connected by railroads, highways, and pipe lines with the hinterland of oil, there has developed on the strip of coast between Corpus Christi and the Louisiana line one of the great refining and export areas of world commerce. Only the New York port area exceeds in volume and value the exports originating in the Gulf Port region of Texas."⁶

The Chemical Industry

Today the Southwest and particularly the Gulf Port area, centering about Houston, is the fastest growing industrial territory in the nation. The great oil companies are principally engaged now in building chemical plants, which in most cases will be operated alongside their refineries. Attracted by the abundance of natural gas (the Southwest produces more than half the nation's total), petroleum, salt, sulphur (Texas produces 95 per cent of the world's supply), lime, and other raw materials for making synthetic chemicals, manufacturers are investing huge sums in this area. Along the Gulf Coast within a radius of two hundred miles chemical plants have been built, some entirely new, others migrations from the Eastern seaboard. Houston, with 27 chemical plants, has become the most rapidly growing center of chemical production in the world. The Houston Ship Canal, 50 miles long, is lined for half its length with large new chemical enterprises. The availability and cheapness of chemicals made in this region are expected to prove a magnet for many other industries.

But the South is rich in other basic ingredients for the chemical industry — not only petroleum, but also coal, fats and oil, nitrate, sulphur, and salt. Chemicals now constitute the South's third most valuable industry, ranking next to food and textile manufacture. The value of chemical products increased from a billion dollars annually in 1938 to two and a half billion in 1947. The leading states are Tennessee with 41,000 employees, Virginia with 34,000, Texas with 25,000, and West Virginia with 22,000.

Southern Paradox

By 1900 the South had 764,860 workers in industry; thirty years later the figure had more than doubled (1,895,565). During this period the total increase of gainful workers in manufacturing and mechanical industries was 99.1 per cent for the United States as a whole and 147.8 per cent for the Southeast; in the next decade (1930-40), period of the great depression, the number of wage earners increased 3 per cent in the Southeast, while in the nation as a whole there was a loss of 10.8 per cent. In the twenty-year period, 1909-1929, the South's share of the industrial output rose from 12 to 14 per cent; the values of this output increased from \$2,637,100,000 to \$9,993,600,000. In 1900 the total wealth of the South was only 17 billion dollars; in 1922 it was 70 billion.

In spite of this encouraging increase the South was still industrially retarded. As Simkins remarks, the South had seemingly passed out of the vale of poverty caused by the War Between the States, and yet it continued to be the poorest section of the nation — "the most glaring illustration of Henry George's paradox of poverty existing amid progress."⁷

In the 1938 report of the National Emergency Council to President Roosevelt on *Economic Conditions of the South*, this region was designated as "the nation's economic problem number one." Figures and facts were presented to sustain this conclusion. As summarized by Simkins: "In 1929 the South, with approximately the same population as the states of the Northeast, had less than half the gross wealth of that group of commonwealths. In per capita wealth certain Southern states ranged between one and two thousand dollars as compared with four to six thousand dollars in favored Northern states . . . Average cash farm incomes of many Southern states were under \$1,000 as opposed to California's average of \$4,000. The Southeastern states, with 13.2 per cent of the wage earners in the nation's factories, received only 8.4 per cent of the wages, or \$844.00 per person, as against \$1,364 for the Northeast . . . These material deficiencies were inevitably reflected in living conditions. The South was no exception to the universal rule that poverty breeds ignorance and slovenliness, indicated by an unintelligent use of meager resources. The depressing slums of all Southern cities seemed practically unlimited . . . Either from necessity or choice, millions of Southerners continued to subsist on the three M's — meal, meat, and molasses. Human happiness and life itself were needlessly sacrificed to pellagra, tuberculosis, rickets, anemia, and other diseases resulting from dietary deficiencies. The death rate, especially from malaria, typhoid fever, childbirth, and pellagra, was much higher among Southern whites than among Northerners, and still more appalling among the Negroes."⁸

In spite of its great forward strides, the Southeast produced only 6 per cent of the nation's industrial output, compared

with 42 per cent for the Northeast and 36 per cent for the Middle states (and much of this industry was owned by Northern capital, which drained off its profits). Her per capita income for the decade 1930-40 was still less than half that of the North (\$276 compared with \$567).

It was this great disparity between the industrial opportunities in the North and South which led the Southern states to lose nearly three and a half million of their population to the North between 1900 and 1930. "Southern states spent more than \$2,000 to nurture each of its young people only to have millions of them, upon reaching maturity, move elsewhere to expand their productive energies and take along their inheritances."⁹ Sociologists estimated that in this process the South lost from five to ten billions of dollars. Losses in intellectual, moral, and spiritual resources would be more difficult to estimate.

In the next chapter we shall consider the encouraging developments of recent years, and the still more encouraging picture for the future, both of which are rich in meaning for the Church.

World War II and After

WHILE THE SOUTH made impressive industrial gains during the recent war, its growth since that time has been truly phenomenal and is much more significant because it has a more solid basis and seems likely to continue.

In February, 1947, *The Manufacturers Record* pointed out that the industrial progress made in the South during the preceding ten years exceeded the progress made during the previous half century and was twice as great as that for the nation as a whole.

Four of the five states which led the nation in industrial construction in 1946 were in the South — these four in order being Texas, Georgia, Tennessee, and Virginia. The five U.S. cities which experienced the greatest industrial growth in the period 1929-1947 were Houston, Fort Worth, Dallas, Atlanta, and Richmond — all in the South. Four of the six states which showed the largest manufacturing increase during this same period were also in the South — these four being South Carolina, Mississippi, Arkansas, and Kentucky. Arkansas, North Carolina, and Alabama had seventeen factories in 1947 for every ten which they had in 1939. Texas had nearly two factory production workers in this latter year for every one in 1939. Kentucky and Mississippi were not far behind. In 1948 the industrial output of the nation increased 201 per cent, for the South 228 per cent. More than a thousand new factories, a hundred new warehouses, and three hundred substantial additions to existing plants sprang

up alongside the tracks of the Southern Railway system alone during the years 1946-1948, an average of one a day for these three postwar years.

Practically all segments of the manufacturing industry have shared in this amazing advance, and the new industries which are arising are of many kinds. They include mines, oil wells and refineries, pulp mills, steel mills, chemical plants, rayon plants, automobile assembly units, food-processing industries, and electric power systems.

"More and more, Dixie is converting its own raw materials into manufactured goods instead of shipping them north and buying them back as finished products," writes William H. Nicholas in a recent issue of the *National Geographic Magazine*. "More and more, Southern factories are selling their output in other sections of the United States and abroad. These giant strides of the South in balancing its economy spell increased prosperity everywhere below Mason and Dixon's Line."¹

Mary Heaton Vorse, a Northern journalist, who has often visited the South, had an article in a recent number of *Harper's Magazine* entitled "The South Has Changed." "After an absence of nearly five years," she wrote, "I recently made a two-month's trip through half a dozen states. I encountered a new South. You need only your eyes and a point of comparison to tell you what has happened . . . Everywhere gardens and shrubs have replaced weedy, rundown yards. Houses, barns, and fences are repainted. And the statistics are there, should you want them. Although still the poorest section, the South is forging ahead the fastest. Its per capita income gain is higher than any other part of the Union . . . In contrast to the cold and static cities of the Midwest, the South is alive

with a welter of activities — slum clearance, better race relations, soil conservation, farm improvement, rural electrification. Besides the new projects, there is a changed point of view.”²

The South truly is changing, changing rapidly, and largely because of its amazing industrial progress, which is now accelerating and seems likely to continue. *Life* describes the revolution which is now remaking the land of cotton into the New South as “the most dramatic regional transformation since the opening of the West (or since the War Between the States).”³

A recent study made by the National Planning Association reveals that there are three main reasons why industry is now moving south and why it will almost certainly continue to do so.⁴

The Lure of Southern Markets

The first and most important of these is the Southern market. The South has the most rapidly growing population in the nation and is gaining in per capita wealth more rapidly than any other section. This means that each year there are a larger number of people in the South with more money to buy an increased amount of goods.

There are three occasions when it is profitable for manufacturers to locate their plants near the ultimate consumer: (1) when the product spoils quickly; (2) when there is need for quick service; and (3) when the cost of transporting the finished product from the factory to the market is greater than the expense of shipping the raw materials to the factory. Automobile manufacturers find it cheaper to ship automobile parts to the center of some particular area and assemble them near where people are buying cars than to assemble them all in

Detroit and ship the completed product all over the United States.

American industry is now undergoing a process of decentralization because, among other reasons, it has discovered that decentralization is more economical. The South has gained industrially by this policy and will continue to do so. One reason why the synthetic fiber industry is expanding its facilities so rapidly in the South, for example, is because of the growing demand for the product of these plants in the region itself.

In 1925 fewer than 30,000 farms in the Southwest, or about 3 per cent of the total in these four states, were equipped with tractors. By 1945, 222,208 farms in these states, or 25 per cent of the total, were operating 279,943 tractors. Despite these impressive gains, surveys show that the South is still the largest section of the country remaining to be mechanized. Such facts explain why farm equipment manufacturers are expanding rapidly in the South, why the automobile industry once concentrated in Detroit now has several large assembly plants in the South, why consumers' goods industries are beginning to spring up in the South for the production of refrigerators, furniture, and other products. The movement of industry to central distribution points naturally calls for the location of warehouses or other installations in the larger centers of population, and this calls for an increase in other types of servicing, and so the movement grows, something like a snowball rolling down a hill.

The Availability of Southern Materials

The second reason why industry is now moving south, as discovered by the National Planning Association, is found in

the availability of Southern materials. If it is more costly to ship materials to the factory than it is to move the completed item to the market, then naturally it pays to build the factory where the materials are to be found. "Most of the companies that expanded into the South to get materials and energy supplies," the report discloses, "wanted to be close to the local sources of agricultural products, forest resources, minerals, natural gas, petroleum, and electric power (in all of which the South is rich) in order to keep down transportation costs and also to simplify handling problems."⁵

It was the increasing milk supply of certain Southern states that led Kraft Foods Company to open up one of the nation's largest cheese factories at Bentonville, Arkansas. So meat packing plants are becoming more common now, not only in Texas and Oklahoma, but also in Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, and other Southern states. Before the war Southern states got most of their meat from outside packing houses; now these packing houses are moving south. Dennison, Texas, with a population of 25,000, has a mattress factory, which uses home-grown cotton, a large peanut oil mill, with raw products coming from the famous Red River Valley peanut producing area, poultry and packing plants, feed mills, and one of the largest cheese manufacturing plants in the nation, all drawing from the produce of the country round about. Similar factories are now arising all through the South.

The expansion of industries using forest products in recent years has been tremendous and for a very sound reason — more than two fifths of the South is in forests, and the slash pine used for paper pulp grows more rapidly in the South than anywhere else. New plants in the pulp and paper industry have been located or existing plants expanded recently in

Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas.

Chemical plants using natural gas, or non-ferrous metal plants using low cost electric power in large quantities, usually consider only areas where these supplies are already available. So the chemical industry will continue to develop in West Virginia's Kanawha Valley and the Gulf Port region of Texas.

The Attraction of Southern Labor

The third reason why industry is now moving south and will continue to do so is because the South has the largest potential supply of labor in the nation. For a long time the Northern factories depended on the millions of immigrants swarming into America from the older lands of Europe for their labor supplies. For a generation now — since the passage of our present restricted immigration laws — that source of supply has been stopped. In recent years workers have been hard to find in the highly industrialized areas of the North. But the South has a large labor surplus and will continue to have because of its high birth rate, its depressed rural classes, the shift from cotton to general farming, and the growing mechanization of its farms.

An illustration of what has occurred is found in the southern trend of the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company. For many years this huge concern had drawn its labor from the nations of southeastern Europe. In 1919, after the First World War, some 30,000 men from the farms and smaller towns of the South came to Akron, Ohio, to take jobs in the rubber industry. Some years later the president of the company, traveling through the South, was impressed by the large families of fine American stock available for labor in a section

provided with good transportation facilities and with plenty of water and of water power. The thought naturally occurred — why not establish manufacturing plants where the man power is to be found. Today, as a result, Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company has 40 million dollars invested in factory facilities south of the Mason-Dixon Line — including the largest tire factory in the United States, outside of Akron, at Gadsden, Alabama, and four big cotton mills making fabrics for all of its tires, at Cedartown, Cartersville, Rockmart, and Decatur, Alabama.

Industries now moving South because of the labor supply include those which produce textiles, clothing, shoes, and machinery. As the chief producer of coarser and cheaper items of clothing, the South has witnessed in recent years an upsurge of apparel plants in many of its smaller towns — chosen because there is less competition here for workers.

Other factors besides markets, materials, and labor, which, according to the National Planning Association, are attracting industries to the South, are transportation facilities, climate, taxes, suitable sites, and community living conditions. Petroleum refining and chemical companies recognize, for example, that they will save not only on construction costs but also on heating expenses because of the milder winters found in the South.

National defense considerations also play a part. The National Security Resources Board is stimulating industry to spread out as a defense measure against strategic bombing in case of war. The recent decision of the Chance-Vought Division of the United Aircraft Corporation to move its navy aircraft plant from Stratford, Connecticut, to Dallas, Texas, at the suggestion of the defense authorities is an illustration.

The removal of this huge plant, including 1,500 families and 50,000,000 pounds of machinery, is one of the largest industrial migrations in history. It has moved to Texas, in part, because of this state's superior climate for flying purposes and, in part, because its geographical location, far from the highly industrialized areas of the Northeast, is thought to be more advantageous from the standpoint of national defense.

As a recent writer in *The Manufacturers Record* points out, never before have there been so many factors at one time favoring the economic development of a region as those which now favor the South. Primarily, however, Southern industry is growing more rapidly than in other parts of the nation because its markets are growing faster, because its supply of available raw materials is greater, and because its labor supply is more plentiful and, in the estimation of some, more satisfactory than that in other parts of the country. All of this means that Southern industry and, therefore, the industrial population of the South will continue to grow — to grow until there is a better balance between industry and agriculture in the South, until there is a more even distribution of industry throughout the nation, and, indeed, until the industrial system of America itself ceases to expand.

The Trend to Smaller Towns

One very striking aspect of this current development in the South is the growing tendency for plants to locate in the smaller towns.

In New England the textile industry was highly concentrated in metropolitan areas; in the South from the beginning the mills were widely dispersed, some in the smaller towns, and some in the open country. The Carolinas still have no

great city, but except for sporadic gaps there is a continuous line of townships along the Southern Railroad from Greensboro to Greenville.

A large part of the industrial population of the Carolinas, therefore, lives in the small cities, towns, and even countryside. In 1930 the 24 counties of the Catawba power area had over a million and a third people, of whom 37.5 per cent were classified as urban. Of the rural population 43 per cent were classified as non-farm; i.e., as people who lived in the country but did not earn their living on farms. A large proportion of these labored in the various industries of the Catawba Valley, scattered through the smaller villages of the region. As factories were built in the area, farmers and farmers' sons got jobs in the industry but maintained their residence in the country; other industrial workers purchased homes in the country; some work part time in the factories and part time on the farm.

The same pattern is now being followed by other industries as a matter of deliberate policy. Industries which expect to employ a large number of workers usually prefer a large city, because there are more skills here on which they can draw. They will locate outside the city proper, probably, but still within the metropolitan area. But industries employing a smaller number of workers often prefer a smaller town, where they can find a plentiful supply of labor and be assured of better labor relations.

Front Royal, Virginia, is a beautifully located town in northern Virginia, a tourist center, strategically located at the northern terminus of the Skyline Drive. The one real industry in this town of 10,000 population is the great plant of the Viscose American Corporation, which employs about

3,000 men. Forty per cent of these live in Front Royal, the rest commute from farms and villages within a fifty-mile radius.

A rayon plant recently opened near Morristown, Tennessee, by the American Enka Corporation has arranged a system of staggered shifts and rotating crews so that employees can have spare time to farm, operate a part-time business, or indulge in sports and various types of recreation. Workers are selected from a twenty-mile radius and are encouraged to continue work on their farms or gardens.

This is the new pattern which is developing all over the South. *The Manufacturers Record* of June, 1948, disclosed, for example, that rural Georgia is now expanding industrially at a more rapid rate than the larger metropolitan areas. Of the total new industries established in Georgia in 1947, 50 per cent settled in communities of fewer than 10,000 persons and 39 per cent in towns of under 5,000. More than 71,000 plants throughout the United States are now located in towns of 25,000 and under, and 21 per cent of all American industries, including many plants of leading manufacturers, are found in towns of under 2,500.

Effects of the Industrial Revolution

The growth of industry in the South means that its population will continue to flow from the farms to the cities, not so largely to Northern cities as in the three decades 1900-1930, but, as at present, to cities in the South and West; and not only to the larger cities but also to the smaller ones. Southern population will remain concentrated, as at present, around the more important industrial centers. Workmen cluster today around the coal fields of West Virginia, Virginia, and

Kentucky, the chemical plants in the Kanawha Valley, the iron ore deposits near Birmingham, the hydroelectric empire of Virginia and the Carolinas; near Atlanta's processing plants and transportation outlets, the oil fields and refineries of Texas and Oklahoma, and the great port cities of New Orleans, Houston, and Norfolk. They will be found tomorrow in the new industrial areas of the South, wherever that may be.

The surplus farm population of the South will find employment not only in the new and expanded factories but also in the trade and service establishments which inevitably grow up around them.

Workers may be classified roughly under three general categories — farming, manufacturing, and services. Manufacturing includes both management and labor, skilled and unskilled. The services include (1) transportation and communication — e.g. truck drivers, bus drivers, railroad engineers; (2) trade, including clerks, shopkeepers, managers, and buyers; (3) clerical services, such as bookkeepers, stenographers, secretaries, and clerks; (4) personal services, such as barbers, hairdressers, and cooks; and (5) professional services, including teachers, lawyers, doctors, ministers, scientists, actors, and newspapermen.

In 1900 Southern workers were distributed among these three groups as follows: farming, 5,051,959; services, 2,265,340; manufacturing, 775,099. In 1940 it was farming 4,551,226; services 5,112,131; manufacturing 2,231,571.

These trends are likely to continue. In other words, there will be a continued decline in the number of farmers; a continued increase in the services and in manufacture.

The Presbyterian Church U. S. has been more successful in reaching some of these groups for Christ than others. And

that raises a question. Does this church have a mission to all of the Southern population or only to certain elements of it?

Surveys show that the rural sections of industrialized areas are more likely to grow, or at least to hold their own, than the more isolated rural sections. Rural areas adjacent to an industrial center are likely to attract three groups of folk: (1) people who come in from the marginal areas to farm lands closer to a local market; (2) people who operate truck farms while some members of the family work in the nearby industrial center; and (3) people who move out of the city to the adjacent rural areas but return to the city to earn their livelihood.

The development of manufacturing centers always causes an increase in population, and this population increase may lead to other advantages, such as better roads, transportation, school systems, health facilities, larger and better operated churches, more adequate recreational facilities and social life, and more co-operative enterprises. Such communities are much more likely to hold their young people than others which lack these advantages.

But with the advantages there will also be problems. The growth of industry means the growth of industrial populations, of industrial communities, of industrial towns and cities. The changing population brings changing neighborhoods, which raise serious problems for the church, some of which we shall consider in the following section. There comes to be a need for additional recreational facilities, for more adequate housing and the like, which in turn affects juvenile delinquency and the interest of the younger generation in the church.

Labor unions are coming with industry into the South. They are welcomed in some communities, but bitterly opposed in others. In times of depression, with labor more strongly organized, there are likely to be periods of labor unrest, and in this, too, the church has a stake.

As Walter Lippmann wrote recently: "From now on the South . . . will be called upon to guide a radical alteration in agricultural life. She will be confronted with the rise of great industries. She will have to solve the problems which industrial progress now brings in its train, the problems of the great city, of congestion, of health, of education, of relations between employer and employee, of the relations between town and countryside . . . Everything that was ever possible for civilized man is possible here. If the South fails she will have only herself to blame, and if she succeeds she will have only herself to thank."⁶

CHAPTER 9 Industry and the Church

IN THE TWO preceding chapters we have attempted to describe the rise of Southern industry, a movement which began a decade and more after the War Between the States, and which has assumed vast proportions, particularly since the close of World War II.

Some who have read thus far may wonder what all this has to do with the Church. Much in every way, as only a little reflection will indicate.

Some of the Problems

1. The rise of Southern industry means that the Church generally, and the Southern Presbyterian Church in particular, will have to adapt itself to a changing rural situation — a problem which we attempted to discuss in the preceding section.

2. It means that the Church generally, and the Southern Presbyterian Church in particular, will have to adapt itself to a changing urban situation — a problem which we shall discuss in the section following.

3. It means that social issues will arise, have arisen indeed, with which organized religion is necessarily concerned, and by which its future growth is, in part, conditioned. This is one reason, no doubt, why the General Assembly of 1949 set up the Department of Christian Relations as a constituent part of its new Board of Church Extension.

4. It insures the rise of an industrial population and of other social groups to which the Presbyterian Church has ministered none too successfully in the past and which it cannot now safely ignore.

As Seen in Gaston County, N. C.

Probably the most careful study ever made of the growth of an industrial community in the South and its relation to organized religion is found in *Millhands and Preachers*, by Liston Pope,¹ a study of religion and labor in Gaston County, North Carolina, which is the most heavily industrialized county of the Textile Piedmont.

Before 1880 Gaston County was almost exclusively agricultural. By 1939 (when the study was made) it was more thickly dotted with textile plants than any other county in the United States and was manufacturing 80 per cent of the fine combed yarn of the nation. Gastonia, the county seat, had more looms and spindles within a radius of 100 miles than any other Southern city, approximately 600 textile plants and more than 10 million spindles. Before 1905 the labor supply for these mills was drawn from farms in the surrounding counties; after this date recruits came in increasing numbers from the impoverished farms of the mountain areas of North Carolina, Georgia, and Tennessee.

As the population of the county increased, the churches grew in numbers and in material resources (although the ratio of church members to total population was not quite as high in this highly industrialized area as it was in the Southeast as a whole). Almost without exception the mills aided in the erection of the churches serving the mill people, and the mill owners and their high-salaried employees contributed gen-

erously to the erection of the more expensive churches uptown. The mills also contributed to the upkeep of the mill churches and in many cases subsidized their ministers.

Emergence of Social Classes

As mill villages arose, and urban population increased, and agriculture ceased to be the prevailing mode of life, there emerged three distinct social classes, clearly separated by geographic, economic, and cultural factors, all of which was a new phenomenon for Gaston County. The first class included small farmers, tenants, and sharecroppers, a group who were fundamentally dependent on agriculture for their livelihood. The second class included the mill workers, who had come originally out of an agricultural environment but now formed a distinct cultural class, neither rural nor urban. The third class Dr. Pope classified as "uptown" in occupation and general culture. The white population of Gaston County was generally estimated to be divided as follows — farm families, 16 per cent; mill families, 66 per cent; uptown families, 18 per cent.

As the population increased, the number of professional men, public employees, merchants, real estate and insurance agents, schoolteachers and the like, all increased. Other industries employing highly skilled labor were attracted. In each of the rising towns of the county a new class arose to manage the operation of the industries and the distribution of credit, service, and goods. The mill owners and their managers became the dominant group in this new social class — the uptown people, according to Pope's classification.

And of Class Churches

It was not long before the churches in Gaston County began to reflect these various social differences. After 1900, when separate churches for mill workers began to be built, individual churches were almost exclusively rural (i.e., attended principally by farmers), mill, or uptown in character. In 1939, only nine churches in the county, out of 145 in all, failed to have a membership in which at least two thirds of the total was composed of one social type, and most of the churches were overwhelmingly affiliated with one particular group. This was more nearly true in Gastonia than in the smaller towns, suggesting that social distinctions tend to increase with the size of the town.

The rise of the mill churches was not due to the desire of rural or uptown churches to exclude the mill hands, Professor Pope discovered; nor, as a general thing, to the distance of the mill workers from other churches. In the opinion of the older residents of Gastonia, it was a matter of cultural differentiation — the fact that the mill workers did not feel at home in the established churches, or that their natural leaders desired to exercise leadership in churches of their own. In the estimation of Dr. Pope, denominational zeal also played a large part. The Presbyterians made little effort to reach the mill workers as such, but the Baptists and Methodists, the churches from which the mill workers had originally come, vied with one another in establishing churches among the mills.

As uptown and mill churches grew, the rural churches declined, along with the rural population. The two former grew at the latter's expense. "Otherwise," Pope states, "rural churches are much the same now as in 1880, remaining

relatively unchanged in type of service, methods of conducting business, congregational organization, and the like. . . . Many . . . still find it necessary to share their minister with other churches, in order to insure him adequate support. By and large, the rural churches are regarded as training grounds for young, inexperienced ministers, or else as convenient shelves on which to place old men who have passed the peak of energy and usefulness . . . Rural churches," he concluded, "have failed [since 1880] to keep pace, in terms of any significant index, with uptown and mill churches."²

The mill churches, on the other hand, Pope found, had developed their own characteristic features in response to their own particular environment. Because the mill worker changes his job so frequently, it is difficult to interest him in a long-range program for the future; he is more interested in immediate results — in a revival meeting, for example, than in an extended program of religious education. The services are more informal, more emotional, and more personal. There is more congregational participation; the music is more rhythmic and appeals to the feet more than to the head. The sins most frequently denounced are uptown worldly amusements, such as cards, dancing, drinking, and mixed bathing.

"All ministers acknowledge that mill workers need a strong emotional outlet because of the damming up of self-expression by the conditions amid which they live," writes Dr. Pope. "The company-village system pre-empts nearly all their fundamental choices, and jobs in the mills are highly mechanical and routine in character. When his day in the mill is over, the worker frequently feels the need of a vigorous emotional massage; he finds it in hair-raising movies and emotional religious services, among other outlets. Newer sects, indulging

in ecstatic religious emotion, thrive in the villages. Revival meetings have retained their popularity, and the tents of roving evangelists dot the mill hills during the summer months . . . 'Special music' nearly always includes undisguised appeal to the simpler emotions of the hearers . . . All parts of the revival service are designed to induce the high emotional crisis of 'being saved' — saved to a personal security that transcends the troubles of the world."³

Corinne Pressman, writing on *Southern Revival*, presents a familiar contrast: "Recently I visited two church services in a typical small Southern town. Comfortably secure in the valley was a church of stone and stained glass, an old church with a conservative history. Inside the church the merchants, textile mill executives, and their families sang hymns softly, worshipped quietly, and abided with dignity the gentle message of their pastor.

"Up on the hill, looking down on the town, was the plain frame building of the Church of God. Inside there was standing room only, and the building shook with the din of rebirth as the mill hands and the sharecroppers shouted in the 'unknown' tongues. Meanwhile, the less active of the participants sang hymns and clapped their hands rhythmically. As they became reborn, converts crowded into the aisles, weeping as they danced, moaning as they lay on the floor. The smaller children became frightened and cried; the older children, as used to this as they are to fatback for breakfast, stared with mild interest or fell asleep."⁴

The uptown churches were the ones which had gained most from the industrialization of Gaston County — so far as wealth, number, and influence are concerned. "By 1900," says Pope, they "had become the dominating churches in their

respective denominations in the county, and they increasingly set the standards and formulated the policies for all their sister churches. Their rise to wealth and influence during the first two decades of the industrial revolution was phenomenal . . . If religion in the mill villages is largely an escape from economic conditions," Dr. Pope continues, "religion in the uptown churches is to a considerable degree a sanction of prevailing economic arrangements."⁵ To belong to the church is often a mark of respectability. Major sins are a breach of economic virtues more than personal ones. Religion must not interfere too much with private life. Ministers preach on theological subjects rather than ethical. "Gastonia prefers . . . 'good talkers' in the pulpit, 'good fellows' on the street, and sympathetic comforters in time of trouble. In a sermon, personality is more important than brains, and delivery than content . . . The preacher must speak with assurance of those 'eternal verities' which everybody believes — or at least was taught in childhood to believe."⁶ Thus it appeared to Liston Pope.

Denominational Patterns

His study reveals, further, that denominations as well as individual congregations were affected by industrialization in Gaston County. Each denomination tended to become identified with one, or at the most two, of the three social groups that emerged. The older denominations in the county — Episcopal, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Methodist, and Baptist — did not prove sufficiently adaptable to meet the needs of the mill workers, and new sects finally arose to fill the gap. The Episcopal and Presbyterian churches, Pope found, could be classified as predominantly uptown in membership; the Lutheran as uptown and rural; the Methodist as uptown and

mill; the Baptist as mill (with a church membership more nearly representative of each of the three groups than any other); the newer churches, of the perfectionist and pentecostal type, were identified completely with the mill population.

As the mill towns grew, most of the established denominations endeavored to minister to their spiritual needs, the Methodists and the Baptists being the most active and, in the beginning, by far the most successful. The Lutherans and Episcopalians labored with little success. Only five churches organized by the Presbyterians managed to survive, and only one of these was organized in the twenty years preceding Professor Pope's study. The Methodists did better, but they, in turn, fell far behind the Baptists, who established more churches than any other religious group between 1890 and 1930. After 1930, however, Baptists began to lose out to the newer sects. Between 1931 and 1939 (the date of the study), these latter organized 21 mill churches, the Baptists only three, and the other denominations none at all.

The disproportionate success of the Methodists, Baptists, and the newer sects in reaching the mill people cannot be explained by any initial advantages. In 1880, when the first mills were erected, Lutherans, Presbyterians, Methodists, and Baptists were about equal in numbers, and the two former had far greater material resources. The Baptists, in particular, lacked social prestige. But, as Pope points out, this worked to their advantage. "Methodists and Baptists tended to be 'plain folks,' whereas Presbyterians and Lutherans were mill owners, merchants, professional men, and independent farmers."⁷ The mill workers regarded the members of these latter churches as "highfalutin," cold, and stuck-up. It is true that most of the mill workers had a Methodist or Baptist back-

ground, but that it was not denominationalism as such that determined the issue is suggested by the fact that an occasional Presbyterian minister had labored among the mill people with considerable success.

The policy followed by Lutherans and Presbyterians militated against any large results. The Baptists and Methodists began early to establish churches in the mill villages, recognizing that the mill workers would not worship in the uptown churches; the Presbyterians adopted this policy only tardily and never pushed it with vigor; the Lutherans had never adopted it, and consequently had scarcely any members among the mill workers.

The Key to Success

Professor Pope found the ultimate explanation of the varying success achieved by the different denominations among the mill people in the training and attitude of the ministers. "In general," he points out, "the influence and extension of a denomination over the masses of the people in Gaston County have tended to vary inversely with the degree of professional education required of its ministers . . . The more highly educated preachers have not attracted the mill workers, who have come to comprise two thirds of the total population."⁸

Lutherans, Episcopalians, and Presbyterians, all of whom had had little success among the mill people, had high educational qualifications for their ministers; a college and seminary degree was the rule. Methodists, who ran far ahead of Presbyterians but fell more and more behind the Baptists in the winning of the mill workers, had gradually raised their educational standards, though in 1939 half of their ministers did not possess a seminary training. In 1903 few Baptist

preachers in the county had even a high school education, and college men were almost unknown. In 1939 slightly more than half of the Baptist ministers had a college education, but less than one in five had attended a theological seminary. Ministers of the newer sects had little formal education of any sort.

The educational standards required of the ministers affected the situation in at least two ways. For one thing, the churches with higher educational qualifications did not have a sufficient number of ministers to supply the mill churches, especially when thousands of rural folk were flocking into the mill villages. But there is another consideration which is even more important. "The higher educational status of Presbyterian and Lutheran ministers tended to isolate them from the less-educated masses . . . High educational training made it more difficult to live at the level of the mill population or to think and speak in terms attractive to mill workers. As a consequence mill villagers felt less at home in Presbyterian and Lutheran churches than in those presided over by less-tutored Methodist and Baptist ministers, who were more nearly of the people themselves in standard of living, thought, and speech. Insistence on an educated ministry also resulted in strengthening the denominational cultus as such, making it less flexible to meet new conditions and new demands brought by economic transformation. Ministers trained in seminaries were often more concerned with preserving religious traditions than with adapting them. Presbyterian and Lutheran churches carried on in their accustomed ways, under the leadership of pastors carefully schooled in those ways, and were little influenced in ritual, organization, or ideas by the industrial revolution."⁹

As Methodists, more rapidly, and the Baptists, more slowly,

raised the educational qualifications of their ministers they began to be outdistanced, in roughly the same proportions, by the uneducated ministers of the newer emotional sects. "To the degree to which mill ministers of any denomination lack insight into the special needs of the mill class and the capacity to identify themselves with those needs, a denomination fails to enlist or retain the support of mill workers," Dr. Pope concludes. "In contrast, preachers who 'side with the people' and reveal genuine enthusiasm for their work are rewarded with an increasing number of adherents. So Methodist and Baptist ministers defeated their Lutheran and Presbyterian rivals four decades ago, but in turn are being slowly vanquished at present by 'ignorant and disreputable' preachers of the newer sects, who are of the people and manifest an unfeigned enthusiasm for service to the people."¹⁰

The new sects which are replacing the Methodists and Baptists in the affections of the mill people began to invade Gaston County about 1900 and have gained every decade since, especially, we might add, in the ten years since Pope made his study. They "thrive in nearly every town in the county," wrote Pope in 1939, "attesting to the fact that churches of the older denominations are not affording adequate satisfaction to large numbers of the people."¹¹

They are still growing much more rapidly than the older denominations throughout the United States and especially, as recent studies have revealed, in the new industrial areas of the South. Their concentration spots, as discovered in 1940 by Dr. John B. Holt of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, were: (1) the vicinity of the large industrial centers — Birmingham, Chattanooga, Knoxville, and Nashville; (2) parts of small manufacturing cities and towns, most conspicu-

ously in the upper Piedmont region (including Gastonia), less conspicuously in the lower coastal plain of North Carolina and the "fall line" cities of Columbus, Macon, Augusta, Columbia, Raleigh, Richmond, etc.; also the manufacturing towns in northeast Alabama and northwest Georgia, and in the southern end of the Valley of Virginia; (3) the coal fields of Alabama, Tennessee, and Kentucky; (4) the mountains of western North Carolina; (5) the citrus section of central Florida, the new agricultural areas in southern Georgia, northern Florida, and northern Alabama; and (6) the winter playgrounds around Tampa. Dr. Holt concluded that the growth of these sects is associated with industry, manufacturing, developing agriculture, and low cost recreational areas. In other words, with the very areas into which so many of the South's surplus rural populations are now moving. Dr. Pope's own conclusion is, that "such groups thrive wherever a considerable portion of the population exists on the periphery of culture as organized, whether the index used be that of education, economic status, possibilities for psychological satisfaction, or religious organization. Members of the newer religions do not belong anywhere — and so they belong, and wholeheartedly, to the one type of institution which deigns to notice them."¹²

We have summarized Liston Pope's important study at some length because it reveals some of the problems which the rise of Southern industry brings to the Church, and leads to the question, What then shall we do?

What Then Shall We Do?

As we have seen, there have been three great migrations of the Southern people, one in the colonial period, one in the post-Revolutionary period, and one in the present day.

The Presbyterian Church was the first denomination to bring the Gospel to the masses of the people unreached by the Established (Episcopal) Church in the colonial period and to the Scotch-Irish immigrants pushing through the Valley of Virginia and into the Piedmont of the Carolinas. It failed to measure up to its opportunity, and the Baptists, succeeding where the Presbyterians had failed, laid the foundation for that numerical preponderance in the South which they have retained ever since and are likely to retain for some time to come.

The Presbyterian Church held the strategic advantage as the pioneers pushed over the Alleghenies into the great Mississippi Valley, but, despite their considerable achievements, they fell behind the Baptists and the Methodists in reaching the masses of the people, and the latter took their place alongside the Baptists as the second most influential denomination in America.

Today there is a third great movement of the Southern people, from the rural areas to the new industrial areas, and many of them to the cities and towns of the South. Presbyterians no longer hold the strategic advantage which once was theirs. But they face a decision which will determine their future as surely as did their decisions in the two earlier periods.

The question is, Shall we become increasingly a church of the comfortable middle class, appealing to business men, professional men, and independent farmers (in a few restricted areas), to executives and engineers and white collar workers, or shall we seek to win also those in the lower income brackets, sharecroppers as well as independent farmers, laborers as well as industrialists, the less privileged as well as the more privi-

leged, those who labor with their hands as well as those who labor with their minds?

Ideally we shall agree, no doubt, that a local church should include all classes in the particular neighborhood in which it is located. Practically it is difficult, if not impossible, for one church — i.e., one local congregation — to serve two diverse economic, cultural, or social groups, not primarily because those on the higher income level do not welcome those with less, but chiefly because those on one social level do not feel at home in a church which ministers to those on a different level. They prefer a church of their own, a type of service which appeals to their particular needs, a church in which they do not feel that they are at a disadvantage, a church in which they can develop their own leadership. While every local congregation should seek to include within its membership all types of people who are living in their neighborhood, experience seems to indicate that we shall not succeed on any large scale until we build churches in the mill villages, in the mining camps, in the industrial areas, in the less privileged sections of the city, until we adapt our services to the people to whom we minister, until we meet their felt needs, until ministers and people are really concerned to carry the Gospel to all classes and conditions of men, until people in every walk of life are sure that we really care for them and not merely for their "souls."

Can Presbyterians reach industrial workers for Christ? Of course they can. A number of successful instances can be cited, one of the most widely publicized being the experience of "Dick" Smith, an honor graduate of Princeton Seminary and a minister in the Presbyterian Church U.S.A., laboring in the coal fields of West Virginia; another being the highly

successful labors of William E. Hill, Jr., in Hopewell, Virginia. Mr. Smith is convinced that if the church is to succeed in such areas it must begin where the workers are, that it must show how religion is able to meet felt needs in community life — that it must be, in other words, an institutional church emphasizing community service. Some ministers give themselves wholly to churches serving an industrial population. Others, who serve uptown churches in the morning and mission churches in the evening, adapt themselves successfully to the quite different demands. But these are only the exceptions which prove the rule. As a general thing Presbyterians are not reaching the growing industrial population of the South.

Why should we seek to do so? A town of 10,000 population finds its prosperity dependent in large measure on a great textile plant employing three thousand workers. Why should the Presbyterian church in this town not be content if the manager of the mill and some of his top executives and engineers are enrolled among its members? Why should we not be satisfied if the Presbyterian churches in the better residential sections of our great cities are growing in numbers, in wealth, and in prestige — as they are, whether or not we are making much progress in the areas where rents are low and where the industrial population is centered — as generally we are not? Why not leave these latter groups to the denominations which have ministered to them in the past or to the newer sects which are beginning to replace them in the affections of the people?

Because here, too, there are souls to be won and service to be rendered. Because there is everywhere a tendency for the industrial population to be alienated from the Church, for

the labor union to supplant the Church in their affections, because there are many in this group whose needs are not being met and will never be met by the newer emotional sects, because the Presbyterian Church has something to offer those who labor with their hands and something also to learn from them, because labor is now the most dynamic element in our population and the Church which is not growing here faces a precarious future.

A recent article by Clair M. Cook points out that nearly a hundred Catholic labor schools, conducted by "labor priests" with specialized training, are in operation throughout the nation. This is only one of numerous bits of evidence that indicate that the Roman Catholic Church understands the vital significance that the labor movement holds for the Church and for the nation. There is no such evidence that the Protestant Churches are awake as yet to the multiplied significance and challenge of this movement. "Today labor's organized membership is 10 per cent of the nation, a full one-fourth of its 60 million workers," says Mr. Cook. "It is the dynamic new force stirring at the very roots of our society, whose leadership is moulding the shape of many things to come. If it is to have a Christian dynamic in any pervasive sense, if it is to maintain that idealism of brotherhood in which it draws nearest to the idealism of the churches, we must arouse ourselves to more vital concern."¹³

The Presbyterian Church U. S. is today a middle-class church (what some designate a "quality" church), heavily weighted on the side of business and the professions. We are grateful that our Church appeals to these elements in our population, to so many of the "influential" and "responsible" men and women of every community into which it enters. But

our Church needs to be better balanced that it may be strong to apprehend with all the saints. (Ephesians 3:18.) If that balance cannot be achieved in the local congregation, then it should be achieved in the denomination as a whole and bear its fruit in our various conferences and courts.

We cannot ignore the rising industrial population of the South if we are to do our part in winning the rapidly changing South to Christ. We cannot shirk our responsibility to any element in the population if we are to carry out the great and final commission of our Lord.

Part III
CHANGES IN THE URBAN SOUTH

The Growth of Southern Cities

A MAJOR CONSEQUENCE of the South's increasing industrialism, one which brings to the Church its greatest opportunity and also its greatest challenge, is the growth of its cities.

For more than two centuries America was essentially rural. The earliest U. S. census, in 1790, revealed that only five out of a hundred lived in communities which had a population of more than 2,500. In 1860, it was 20 per cent; in 1890, 34 per cent; in 1920, 51 per cent; and in 1949, an estimated 59 per cent. In other words, in the last one hundred and fifty years the urban population of America has increased from one in twenty to approximately twelve out of twenty. In our own generation the United States has ceased to be predominantly an agricultural nation and has become predominantly an urban one. In the estimation of some eminent sociologists this concentration of our nation's population in cities is the most significant social phenomenon that has taken place in America in the last one hundred years.

In the South the growth of cities has been more tardy, but the trend is definitely in the same direction. Thus in 1790 only one and a fraction individuals (1.2 per cent) out of every one hundred lived in communities with a population of 2,500 and over. In 1860 it was 5 per cent; in 1890, 10 per cent; in 1940, 38 per cent; and in 1949, according to U. S. census estimates, over 46 per cent, almost one out of every two.

The urban pattern which is now developing in the South is similar to that developed earlier in the North, but with some significant variations.

Before 1861

A hundred and fifty years ago, all cities in the South with more than 8,000 population were seaports, "where vessels engaged in the foreign and coasting trade picked up goods that had been brought from the neighboring islands or from up-river farms and plantations."¹ Baltimore had 62,738 inhabitants and was the third largest city in the nation. Next in size were New Orleans (27,176), Charleston (24,780), Washington (13,247), Richmond (12,067), Norfolk (8,478), and Alexandria (8,218).

Some cities arose at the fall line of the rivers, where water power was most readily available, or where river travel was interrupted by rapids: for example, Fredericksburg, Richmond, and Petersburg in Virginia; Raleigh, Camden, and Columbia in the Carolinas; Augusta, Macon, and Columbus in Georgia; Wetumpka, Montgomery, and Tuscaloosa in Alabama.

Other cities began as port towns on the Mississippi or its tributaries: Memphis, Vicksburg, Natchez, and Baton Rouge on the Father of Waters; Louisville and Paducah on the Ohio; Knoxville on the Tennessee; Nashville on the Cumberland; Little Rock and Pine Bluff on the Arkansas, are examples.

But most of these towns, at the outbreak of the War Between the States, were still little more than overgrown villages, "mere depots on the road to the markets of the world, mere adjuncts to the plantation, [rather] than living entities in their own right, after the fashion of Boston and New York and Philadelphia."² The real community centers in the South were "the rural or village store, the county seat, and the church."

In the Industrial Piedmont

Urban growth in this region was stimulated by the industrial revolution, which began to develop around 1880.

The cotton mills, rising so rapidly in the Piedmont, produced no large cities but stimulated the growth of a number of small towns, particularly in the Carolinas, about which the mill villages were clustered as their natural centers. Within the 17 counties of the North Carolina Piedmont there were by 1945 some 88 cities, towns, and villages, closely knit together by the South's first system of modern highways. The most important of these Piedmont towns were Winston-Salem, Greensboro, and Charlotte in North Carolina; Greenville and Spartanburg in South Carolina.

High Point, North Carolina, illustrates the way in which industrial centers arise and the relation they bear to the surrounding countryside. Originally this town was a small trading center for the rural areas round about. In the late 1880's it became the center of an expanding furniture industry and then of the seamless hose industry, which, from the standpoint of labor supply, was its natural complement. By 1940 its population was over 38,000, and more than half a million people lived within a forty-mile radius, 60 per cent of whom were rural. Thomasville, another furniture town, with a population of 11,000, is seven miles away, and small textile mills are scattered around in every direction. While much of its own trade is drawn to larger cities like Winston-Salem and Greensboro, High Point serves in turn as a commercial center and source of employment for smaller villages and towns and rural hinterland. About three thousand of its ten thousand wage earners live outside the city. In recent years

many of its laborers have begun to move into the country and to engage in part-time farming.

The rising tobacco industry brought some towns to birth and stimulated the growth of others. Winston-Salem and Durham in North Carolina; Richmond, Virginia; and Louisville, Kentucky, became centers of the new cigarette industry. Tampa, Florida, with its large Latin quarter, Ybor City, remains the center of the cigar industry.

Birmingham, at the southern tip of the Piedmont, site of a cotton field in 1869, became the South's largest purely industrial city, because the availability of coal, iron ore, and limestone made it a natural center for the production of pig iron. About it have grown up a number of important industrial suburbs.

In the Southern Appalachians

Population increases in the Southern Appalachians in the opening decades of the present century were chiefly in counties where coal mining and manufacturing were expanding. Population decreases occurred for the most part in counties where such industrial development was not taking place.

In recent years, as we have seen, chemical industries have been attracted to the Kanawha Valley, and Charleston and Huntington have become the centers of a triangle of thickly clustered industrial communities.

In the past 30 years Kingsport, in Eastern Tennessee, has grown from a pasture and a few farmhouses to a unique industrial community. It was planned and created as a model town by large financial interests and has been co-operatively managed by a group of industrial plants with an eye on the resources of the area — the timber, minerals, and native rural

people from whom the labor supply has been drawn. In 1930 the population of Kingsport was 11,914; in 1940 it was 14,404; in 1949 it is nearer 40,000. Other towns in this fast-growing industrial area are Bristol, Johnson City (the commercial hub), Elizabethton, Greeneville, Jonesboro, and Erwin. About 40 per cent of the workers in Kingsport live in the surrounding country and farm their hills in their spare time. Knoxville and Chattanooga, farther west, are much larger cities, whose growth in recent years has been stimulated by the TVA.

In the Broad Southwest

The petroleum industry, as we have seen, has given rise to many boom towns in the great Southwest. Oklahoma City, for example, had a population of 4,000 in 1890 and in 1930 of 185,000, an increase of more than four thousand a year for forty years. Tulsa, meanwhile, had grown from a mere 1,400 inhabitants to a city one hundred times as large.

Two of the newest towns in this area are Midland and Odessa, twin Texas cities, situated about halfway between Fort Worth and El Paso in what used to be considered part of the great American desert, an immense, sparsely inhabited land of sand and cactus. Today, as a writer in a popular magazine has put it, they are bustling like fury, building skyscrapers, hotels, churches, schools, night clubs, and honky-tonks, and have become the capital cities of a vast new empire, almost seven times the size of Massachusetts, which contains one of the world's richest and most recently discovered deposits of oil. Midland, with a population of 25,000, is the administrative center of the Permian oil basin, and with its modern office buildings and substantial homes, mostly all new,

is one of the most attractive towns in the Southwest. Odessa, on the other hand, is a crowded workingman's town, the labor and supply center of the oil fields, and much rougher and tougher than Midland. Gambling joints and churches are vying for the support of the people.

In 1912 irrigation began to transform the lower Rio Grande Valley until today it has become one of the richest agricultural sections in the United States. More recently food-processing plants have been established and chemurgy has developed. The port of Brownsville, first opened in 1937, has become one of the seven busiest in Texas; McAllen leads the valley and perhaps Texas in the manufacture of food-processing machinery and is said to be the leading combined fruit and canning point in the country south of St. Louis; Harlingen, on the verge of the greatest era of industrial and commercial expansion it has ever known, has become the leading financial center of the lower Rio Grande.

The most rapidly growing industrial area in the nation, at the present time, is along the Gulf coast of Texas, where a great chemical industry has developed especially about petroleum and its products. Houston, at the center of this industrial development, is also one of the nation's busiest ports. From it are shipped the greater part of the petroleum products of the whole Southwest and most of its vast cotton crop. As a result the population of this city has grown in recent years by leaps and bounds, from 78,000 in 1910 to 292,000 in 1930, 384,514 in 1940, and 495,000 in 1948. This means more than 400,000 newcomers for the churches of Houston to reach and assimilate in less than forty years, an average of approximately 10,000 a year.

Centers of Trade

As industry has grown and agricultural products have increased, important trade centers have developed. Some of these are inland cities where important railroads connect or great trucking routes converge, like Memphis, Louisville, Richmond, and Charlotte. In the Southwest there is Dallas, which is now the second largest city in Texas (population 294,734) and the commercial and financial center of the Lone Star State; San Antonio, an industrial center and tourist winter resort; Fort Worth, a processing and commercial center for the Western cattle area; and El Paso, which is the only city of any size in Western Texas and which draws the trade from an immense area round about.

One of the fastest growing cities in this category is Atlanta. Through its network of railroads this city, following the War Between the States, became the chief distributing center of the Southeast, "the wrist of a hand whose fingers reach the five principal ports of the Gulf and the Atlantic coast," as General William T. Sherman put it. Between 1880 and 1890 its population increased from 37,000 to 65,000; it has grown decade by decade since that time until in 1940 it topped three hundred thousand. Today it is the wholesale center of the Southeast (more than 1,300 corporations doing a nation-wide business have branch offices here) and a major point in the region's transportation network.

Memphis, Tennessee, another important distribution center, grew during the last census decade even more rapidly than Atlanta, from 253,143 to 292,942.

New Orleans, the largest wholly Southern city (St. Louis, Baltimore, and Washington have larger populations, but are

border cities, only partially Southern), is also the most important port in the South and the second largest in the nation. It is the steamship and airplane center for the growing travel and trade with the Central and South American countries. It added more than 35,000 to its population in the decade 1930-40, and approximately 75,000 between 1900 and 1948 (almost ten thousand a year).

The Norfolk-Portsmouth-Newport News area in Virginia gained 200,000 in population between 1900 and 1943, approximately 5,000 a year. The population of Norfolk alone was 129,710 in 1930, 144,000 in 1940, and an estimated 237,000 in 1948. This tremendous growth is due in part to the importance of the war effort, to the increasing Army and Navy facilities in the area, but also to the growing importance of Hampton Roads as a port. During the first eight months of 1947 the exports of dry cargo through Norfolk and Newport News increased 284 per cent over the same period in 1946 — the greatest forward stride made by any port in the country.

Another rapidly growing area in recent years has been Washington, D. C., and its environs. The population of Washington proper grew from 486,869 in 1930 to 663,091 in 1940, giving Washington the largest relative gain of any large city in America. During this same period the metropolitan area of Washington jumped from 621,059 to 907,816, an average of more than 28,000 a year. The 1950 population of this same area, judging from the number of building permits issued, is no less than 1,400,000, an increase of more than 50 per cent during the present decade. From January 1, 1940, through July 31, 1949, 98,753 housing units were erected in greater Washington. Growth here has been due not merely

to the recent war effort, but to the continuing expansion of the functions of our national government.

In greater Baltimore, which, like Washington, lies within the bounds of Potomac Presbytery, an average of 35 families are moving into newly completed apartment units or dwellings every day. Ten thousand new living units were opened in this area in 1948, 10,000 more in 1949, and approximately the same number are being planned, at this writing, for 1950. All of this means that more than a hundred thousand persons will move into the Baltimore area during the current three-year period.

Sunshine and Climate

Industry accounts for the growth of many of the Southern cities; trade and government for others. But the state which now has the largest percentage of urban population in the South and some of the fastest-growing urban areas in the nation is Florida, and the attraction here is mainly sunshine and climate.

Semitropical Florida increased in population from 752,619 in 1910 to 1,265,549 in 1925. Miami, during this same period, rose from 5,471 to 69,654. The bursting of the speculation bubble in this same year did not slow up the population movement for long. By 1930 the population of Miami was 110,632, and ten years later it was 172,172. The gain in the suburbs about Miami, meanwhile, were even greater, an almost unbelievable 263.6 per cent, so that in 1940 the population of metropolitan Miami was reckoned at 250,537.

In recent years, particularly since World War II introduced so many to the advantages of its climate, migration to Florida has speeded up. From 1930 to 1940 the population within the

territory of St. John's Presbytery, including the 32 counties in Southern Florida, increased by 30 per cent; from 1940 to 1945 it increased another 36 per cent, which is equivalent to a 72 per cent increase over a ten-year period. The cities which grew the most during this period were Miami Beach, 331.4 per cent (the largest increase in the entire nation), Fort Lauderdale, 107.7 per cent, Miami, 55.6 per cent (jumping from 78th to 48th place in the nation), and St. Petersburg, 50.4 per cent. Approximately 200,000 people a year move into this rapidly developing area. These are not the tourists, who come to Florida by the millions during the winter and, in increasing numbers, in the summer as well, but permanent residents, some, young veterans who liked what they saw of Florida during the war; many, middle-aged or older men and women who find it a good place to live out their days. As Dr. Larrick, Executive Secretary for St. John's Presbytery, wrote in 1946: "There is not a community in Southern Florida that is not experiencing the most unprecedented growth ever dreamed. Houses by the hundreds are rising almost overnight. Areas that today are bare of development tomorrow begin to blossom into thriving communities."

Since 1900, cities in the South have grown more rapidly on the whole than those in other parts of the nation. The ones which have lagged behind have been chiefly the South Atlantic ports of Wilmington, Charleston, and Savannah, and such interior places as Lynchburg, Petersburg, Danville, Fayetteville, Augusta, Natchez, and Lexington (Kentucky). The primary causes in all these cases has been diversion of trade to other centers by railroads.

In recent years some of these also have begun to grow. The port at Charleston, South Carolina, for example, which was

almost deserted of shipping at the end of World War II, has since been rebuilt and revitalized and is now loading ships from all parts of the world. At the beginning of 1947 not a single steamship line operated sailings to and from this port in coastwise, intercoastal, or foreign service. Twelve months later there were a dozen such lines with regular sailings. From four to ten ships were calling at the port each day and spending an average of \$25,000 on supplies. As cause or effect of this renewed port activity 75 new manufacturing plants and a hundred non-industrial firms opened in Charleston in 1948 and the first six months of 1949. The next census will undoubtedly reflect a corresponding increase in population.

The fact that industry is now growing more rapidly in the South than elsewhere indicates that the cities in this region will probably continue to grow more rapidly than those in the nation as a whole.

The Growth of the Smaller Cities

There are new trends in urban development, however, which must be taken into account by anyone interested in the strategy of the Church. One of these is the sustained growth of the smaller cities.

As Murray H. Leiffer points out: "For more than a century, prior to 1930, the large American cities grew at a faster pace than rural communities or small municipalities. Within the decade of the 1930's the pattern changed, and for the first time in the nation's history the major cities grew more slowly than the nation as a whole."³ Some of these cities barely held their own, and others — like St. Louis — actually lost in population. The larger cities of the South, as a whole, did not share in this relative decline, but a careful study of the situation

suggests that in the end these cities will be affected as surely as the older cities of the North and East.

The smaller cities of America are growing now more rapidly than the large ones. This trend may be accounted for in part by the new policy of decentralization recently adopted by American industry and by the fact that our largest industries are now tending increasingly to build their plants in the smaller cities, where the rents are cheaper and where more satisfactory labor relations can be established.

In his excellent book on *The Effective City Church*, Professor Leiffer calls attention to a number of factors which operate to restrict the growth of the larger cities, and then adds: "While these factors retard the rate of growth of the largest cities, they do not noticeably affect those of smaller size, particularly those under 100,000 population. As a matter of fact, the disadvantages of the great city are an indirect stimulus to the growth of its smaller and satellite urban centers. The long-term trend will continue; America will be increasingly urban. However, the major growth will be in the medium-sized and smaller cities, especially in the South and West."⁴

The Growth of Metropolitan Districts

The present trend of city growth is not only toward the smaller cities (with less than 100,000 population) but also toward the growth of suburbs and a rural non-farm population on the outskirts of the larger cities, toward the growth of what is now officially called a metropolitan district. As defined by the Census Bureau, a metropolitan district is not a political entity, but a region which contains at least one city with a population of 50,000 or more and adjacent civil divisions or

incorporated places with a population of 150 or more per square mile. Roughly defined, a metropolitan area is a city of at least 50,000 population and all its adjacent thickly settled shopping area.

The U. S. Census Bureau in 1930 recognized 96 such districts (fifteen of which were in the South), and 140 (thirty of which were in the South) in 1940. One half of the entire population of the United States now lives within such metropolitan districts.

Since 1920 the population of these smaller communities surrounding the central cities has been growing at a faster rate than the cities themselves. During the ten-year period covered by the last census (1930-40) the population around the metropolitan cities grew more than twice as fast as the population within those cities and more than three times as fast as the rest of the population. This trend held for the South as well as for the North.

The relative growth, for example, of first the city and then the same city's metropolitan area during the last census decade was as follows: Tampa, Florida, 6 and 12 per cent; Charleston, West Virginia, 12 and 24 per cent; Winston-Salem, North Carolina, 6 and 36.4 per cent; Dallas, Texas, 13.2 and 66.3 per cent; Miami, Florida, 55 and 97 per cent. The population of Washington, D. C., increased by an estimated 35 per cent during the period 1940-48; the population of Arlington County, Virginia, which is in the Washington area, increased during this same period by more than 100 per cent.

During the decade 1930-40 central cities in the Southeast increased 15.5 per cent, compared to 6.1 per cent for the nation as a whole, and the outside districts 42.2 per cent, compared to 16.9 per cent for the nation as a whole.

All the evidence indicates that this trend has continued since 1940, with the lion's share of America's postwar development taking place on the fringes of the large and medium-sized cities of the country.

While the larger cities of the South, therefore, are growing more rapidly than cities of the same size in the North, their surrounding communities are growing more rapidly still. Here, too, just as in the North, the growth of the city center is slowing down and that of the areas outside the central city is speeding up.

The reasons for this trend are readily perceived. A large city has its advantages, but many who earn their living there prefer to raise their families elsewhere. Automobiles, good roads, and modern transportation systems make this possible. So for the last twenty or thirty years the urbanite has been gradually becoming a suburbanite. All urban sociologists are agreed that this trend will continue.

What of the Future?

Available signs indicate that the cities will continue to grow, especially in the South, as industry continues to move in this direction, as trade is stimulated, and as increasing numbers of people are attracted by the Southern climate. They will grow because our Southern farms have the highest birth rate in America and the greatest surplus population, because increasing mechanization means fewer laborers will be required on the farms than now, and because new industrial opportunities are constantly arising. For many years this surplus population of the South moved largely to the cities of the North. In the future a larger proportion will remain in the South

because industry itself is moving south — moving south because the South has the markets, the materials, and the labor supply which industry demands.

The smaller cities (especially those between 10,000 and 100,000) will continue to grow because industry is deliberately seeking out such cities for its plants, and because many feel that they are better places to live and raise a family.

The larger cities of the South will continue to grow — at a slower rate, it may be, but only because a larger percentage of their population will be found in the surrounding metropolitan areas.

But cities, whether they are large or small, follow a pattern in their growth, and this, too, the Church must understand if it is not to fail in its task. As Leiffer says, "If the church is to serve the spiritual needs of men, it must in its planning be as skillful and as farsighted as the public service company or the county highway commission, moving quickly into developing territories and reorienting its program in older areas as population changes take place."⁵

At least as skillful, we might amend. For the vast hordes moving to our cities, within our cities, and to the outskirts of the cities, will seek the public services, but not all by any means will seek the Church.

As a matter of fact, a large proportion of the moving multitude has been lost to the Church. The spectacular growth of a few churches in rapidly growing residential sections and the steady, unspectacular growth of many others must not blind us to the fact that many areas of the city and contiguous suburbs are underchurched, and that the growth of church and Sunday-school membership as a whole has not kept pace with the growth of the urban population.

As Frederick A. Shippey, Director of Research and Survey in the Methodist Board of Missions and Church Extension, has recently pointed out: "There is an increasing number of unchurched adult residents in our cities . . . In new residential suburban developments, the ratio runs as high as three persons out of four. Extensive religious census studies reveal that the number of unchurched residents in United States cities ranges from 20 to 50 per cent of the gross population. An accumulation of unreached adults and children may be found in every city. Millions of such persons reside within walking distance of a Protestant church. Never in the history of America has Protestantism been presented with so extensive and so propitious an opportunity for growth."⁶

If the Church is to take advantage of this unprecedented opportunity it must learn, from its Master, to seek and to save those who are lost.

CHAPTER 11 How Cities Grow

CITIES HAVE BECOME more and more dominant in our culture. If America is to become Christian its cities must be won. And if the Church is to develop a successful strategy for the winning of these cities it must understand how these cities actually grow.

The older cities of Europe were compactly built (limited in size to the distance a man could walk in two hours — say a radius of eight miles) and were intended to endure.

The typical American city has a growing population; it is not limited in its space (the automobile and other forms of rapid transit have extended its convenient limits about fifty or sixty miles), the land is cheaper on the outskirts than it is within the city itself. In addition the American population is restless and constantly on the move. New houses are always being built with “modern” conveniences and the older houses are soon obsolescent. Before the last war the average urban family which owned its own home lived in the same house for a period varying from five to twelve years; the average family which occupied an apartment remained from two to four years. As a consequence of these and other conditions, every city, whether it be large or small, growing rapidly or slowly or not at all, experiences a continuous changing and shifting of population.

General Principles

Though every city has its own pattern of growth and differs in some respects from that of every other, cities do tend to grow in accordance with certain general principles — prin-

ciples which are set forth by Dr. Murray H. Leiffer in his recent book, *The Effective City Church*. Some of these principles, stated very briefly, and without Professor Leiffer's illuminating commentary, are as follows:

1. Cities, both small and great, grow mainly on the fringes.
2. Transportation — involving both facilities and routes — determines the structural pattern of the city.

3. Barriers appear as the city grows. It may be some natural barrier — a mountain, or a stream, or an unattractive gully; or it may be some man-made barrier — railroad yards, or a slaughterhouse section, or a cemetery. Early in its life the average city acquires a framework based primarily on its topography.

4. Different sections of the city develop specialized functions and attract certain particular types of population. There will be the business district, the industrial section, residential areas of various types, the Negro section, and the like.

5. Deterioration tends to appear around the central business districts. In Southern cities this is where we generally find the Negroes congregated.

6. Population moves from the center of the city toward the periphery, especially along familiar highways or transit lines. Long fingers extend beyond the city in every direction.

7. Moving out in any direction from center to circumference, along any one of the main traffic arteries, one will generally pass through certain zones in regular gradation: (1) the central business section; (2) areas where property has seriously deteriorated, including slums, and other areas which are in process of change, say from residential to business purposes; (3) residential areas which have passed their peak and from which the older population is now beginning to move — con-

servation areas, as they are known by the real estate men; (4) the better residential sections; and (5) new suburban areas, in process of development. "Islands," which have resisted the changes that are taking place all around them and have continued to preserve some of the characteristics of their old neighborhood, are scattered here and there through the city.

8. The rate of growth is affected by transportation facilities and also by general economic conditions. In times of depression the growth is slower than in more prosperous years.

9. The type and direction of the population movement can be charted with considerable accuracy. Telephone and public service companies are well aware of these population trends.

10. These population changes require some adjustments on the part of all institutions which attempt to serve the people of their neighborhoods. As Leiffer puts it: "The chief characteristic of the city is mobility [i.e., the fact that its population is constantly on the move], and no institution can remain unaltered by it. It can, however, learn to foresee changes and, by planning wisely, adapt its program to meet the new conditions."¹

A Life History

It may help us to see this process a little more clearly, if we follow the growth of an average American city from its beginnings.

The typical small town has a central business section, found mostly on two intersecting streets, and is often built around a town hall or county courthouse. The churches are found near the town center and draw their members from all over

the city and from the surrounding countryside. There is a feeling of unity — the town is one great neighborhood.

As the town grows larger and the business district expands, old families move into newer homes farther away from the center. New communities arise, and then distinct neighborhoods. The sense of unity disappears. Markets or stores are built perhaps at some important intersections, and when the population is somewhere between fifty and a hundred thousand new commercial centers appear, a mile or two from the downtown business section. As the city continues to expand, certain areas begin to assume distinctive characteristics. Some of the leading citizens build expensive modern homes in a new and exclusive residential section. Those with more moderate incomes build elsewhere. The cheaper housing is found in still another section. Meanwhile many of the older homes near the center of the city have begun to deteriorate. They are rented now to people with low incomes, and it does not pay the owner to modernize them or to make any but the most necessary repairs.

Until the population is five thousand or more the city is served almost entirely by the churches established near the center of the town. Soon thereafter the "First" church is likely to establish a mission in one of the newer neighborhoods, or a few interested members may open a Sunday school particularly for the children. The mission struggles along for a while against considerable odds, handicapped by the superior prestige and facilities of the central churches. Finally it becomes an independent church, the "Second" church of its denomination in the city. As the neighborhood continues to expand, new families join the church in their own community, and some of the older families transfer their membership.

When the population is somewhere between 50,000 and 150,000, the downtown churches find it not so easy to maintain themselves against the newer churches in the growing residential sections. Their old members have moved away, and the new type of folk who have moved in to take their place do not come to the "First" church in any numbers. Some of the older churches give up the struggle, others struggle on for a while and then follow their original constituency out into the suburbs, frequently competing here with other churches even of their own denomination. Some cities which have reached the half million mark no longer have a single downtown church remaining.

Meanwhile churches in the newer residential sections have undergone a period of rapid growth; younger churches are established in time on the periphery of their growing population, and people begin to move out to these still newer neighborhoods; in the course of time the "Second" church finds itself face to face with a changing neighborhood and with declining property values, and so the process continues.

Community Types

Every American city of any size contains at least the following major community types: (1) a downtown business area; (2) deteriorated areas; (3) stable residential areas; (4) conservation areas; and (5) areas of growth.

The downtown business area is given over to business enterprises and, in a growing city, is constantly expanding. Though private homes have disappeared from the central business sections of most cities with a population of over 25,000 there are always transients in the hotels and rooming houses, and a larger population than is generally realized live in the upper

stories of buildings otherwise used for commercial purposes or in inconspicuous apartments behind their shops; sometimes there are individuals or couples who have occupied the same hotel room for years.

Surrounding the main business section there is almost always a deteriorated area. The homes here were once the best in the city, but as they have become less desirable for residential purposes, and as a group with lower incomes have moved in — Negroes perhaps — they have been allowed to run down. In another section we are likely to find an area of cheap rooming houses, which are ports of entry for many of the newcomers into the city. Here, too, we find the slum areas that disgrace most of our American cities, where juvenile delinquency and crime are spawned, and where city welfare agencies are required to spend the most of their funds. Private interests are not likely to keep the property in good repair or to tear down the old and build new and better housing, for one thing because to be successful it must be done on a large scale, and for another because it is always more profitable to build in the newer residential sections farther out. Aided by public housing, however, it seems likely that large sections of deteriorated or slum districts will be rehabilitated in the years that lie ahead, and that some of the same population will move back into them under more favorable conditions.

Though these blighted areas are generally found in the older parts of the city, close to the business section, they may, of course, be found in other parts of the city as well. They may cover only a few blocks or they may extend for miles. Scattered here and there, in an unattractive river bottom, perhaps, or down by the railroad tracks, will be a handful of

dilapidated shacks. Wherever found, "urban blight" tends to spread progressively to and through adjacent areas.

Beyond the deteriorated areas, surrounding the main business zone, we find the stable residential areas, which house the largest portion of the city's population. Minor business centers will be found at various points along the main thoroughfares. The residential districts themselves may be divided into sectors, some of which are occupied by Negroes and some by whites, some by those with less income and some by those with greater. Or the whole residential area may be given over to one race or to those of a single income level. The stable community may be made up of (1) single family residences, which are still the most common type in our Southern cities, and where we find the largest percentage of home owners; (2) duplex or two-flat residences — with a smaller percentage of home owners; and (3) apartment houses, occupied mostly by older people, or by parents with very young children. Stable communities do not come into existence until most of the land has been occupied, and until the neighborhood has taken on certain characteristics which will remain until signs of change or deterioration appear. It is in such communities that we find the great bulk of middle and upper-class Americans, benevolent, community-conscious, civic-minded citizens, who support good schools and churches, and who set the tone of American life, as was once done by the more responsible elements among the rural population.

The stable residential area is almost certain to become in time what real-estate men term a "conservation" area, an area of transition or change, whose property values can be maintained, and whose general character can be preserved for a while, it may be, if at all, only by very careful effort. The

earlier changes may be scarcely perceptible. Signs advertising rooms for rent begin to appear. Small housekeeping apartments are made available. Older families sell to build more modern homes in a newer residential section. The new families which move in to replace them do not maintain the property as did the former owners. Perhaps they belong to a different racial, cultural, social, or economic background. The greatest problems are created in Southern cities when Negroes begin to move into what was once purely a white neighborhood.

Many stable communities are still receiving new accessions of population, but it is on the fringes of the city that we find the greatest growth. New housing developments will now be found on one side or the other of every metropolitan city, and of varied types, so as to fit every purse. Some are small-scale, unplanned developments (which often prove disappointing); others are large-scale, carefully planned developments, which are almost certain to succeed; still others were once rural villages, which have been gradually transformed by people moving out from the city. There is also likely to be a semi-rural fringe, probably extending along a main highway, "which the city has begun to penetrate, but without heavy concentration of population, and whose characteristics are only partially urbanized."²

The people who move into these new housing areas are prevailingly younger families, rarely over fifty years of age, and generally between 25 and 40, and of approximately the same economic status. As Leiffer says: "The rapidly growing communities around American cities are particularly appealing to alert, ambitious young men and women who wish to earn their living in the metropolitan center, but also desire

the environment of a small town. These people constitute a large proportion of the future business and professional leadership of America. If it is to be a significant institution in these communities, the church must pioneer along with the new homemakers."³

Urban Mobility

To develop the proper strategy churchmen must understand certain things about the movement of population to the city, and also about the movement of population within the city.

Migration into a city comes generally from classes on the lower economic level, and from the hinterland of the city itself. If a new rayon mill, or a new auto-assembly plant, is established in a small or larger city of the South, the engineers and higher executives may come from any part of the United States, but the industrial workers themselves, and the bulk of those who enter the new service occupations that are made available, will come from smaller towns, villages, and farms round about.

A recent study of migrants entering Durham, North Carolina, for example, reveal that 87 per cent of the total came from rural areas; 80 per cent were North Carolinians, and half of these came from Durham and the adjoining counties.

Since the Presbyterian Church does not have much strength in the rural sections of the South (outside of a few selected areas), this means, among other things, that only a small proportion of the migrants into the average Southern city are Presbyterians. The Presbyterian Church must, therefore, win people who do not have a Presbyterian background if it is not to lose in relative strength.

The movement of population within a city is fully as significant as migration into a city.

Studies indicate that lower economic groups move on the whole more frequently than those with higher incomes. Tenants, of course, move much more frequently than home owners. But home owners, also, including those with the higher incomes, are moving constantly into the suburbs.

The general movement is from the center of the city to the periphery and most frequently in the same general direction, but only farther out. In 1914-1939 the downtown population of Augusta, Georgia, decreased 27 per cent, while the suburban section increased 500 per cent. People from both the downtown section and the suburban district tended to move into the surrounding countryside. Home owners occupied their dwellings four times as long as renters, but the median home occupancy in Augusta for both groups during this period was exactly two years and ten months.

At the beginning of our study it was pointed out that in 1947 less than half the families in the United States were living in the same house that they were occupying in 1940, and that in April, 1948, one out of every five persons was living in a different house from the one he lived in a year earlier.

Hermann N. Morse estimates that "since 1940 probably sixty million people or more have moved within or between cities or close around them . . . In both urban and rural areas as a whole," he states, "the redistribution of population and the often radical changes that it effected in the racial and social composition of the population of particular areas and communities overshadowed in importance the simple factor of net increase or decrease."⁴

It is a city thus growing and with a population thus endlessly shifting that the Church must seek to win for Christ.

The Tasks of the Church

THE PRIMARY TASKS of the urban church are to maintain and extend its membership, to make sure that church members who come into the city are not lost to the Kingdom, to win new recruits for Christ among the unchurched, to assimilate newcomers into the life of the church, and to train them to live Christian lives in the midst of the city's environment.

Complicating Factors

There are a number of factors which make this a none too easy task, and one which becomes increasingly difficult. One is the excessive mobility of the American people, of which we have just spoken. Some ministers report that they must replace one fifth of their total membership each year merely to hold their own. Unfortunately people who move from one locality to another do not always transfer their church loyalties. As a matter of fact this has always been one of the church's chief sources of loss. In recent years it has been greatly intensified. It is easy for people to lose themselves in a city, and many will be permanently lost to the church, unless it is very much on the alert. Dr. Leiffer estimates that the church has its best opportunity to establish a religious tie within the first three months after a family has moved into a community. After that time the likelihood of securing its participation declines rapidly. "If people have been living in the area for ten years without establishing a church connection," he declares, "there is small chance that publicity or

visitation will induce them to join the fellowship. Such people have made their contacts, habits are established, they have found satisfactions elsewhere. The inertia is too great for a call to produce much change in their attitudes. The church had its chance, but it was years ago."¹

In addition, as a special committee on the future of Home Missions reported recently to the Home Mission Council, "Wide-scale redistribution of population is constantly creating new communities, permanent or semi-permanent, so that the number of people not adequately served by existing churches is probably greater now than ever before, and a great program of missionary extension is an urgent necessity." To discover the communities which offer the greatest opportunity for growth and which we can occupy with our limited funds and personnel, and to employ both of these to the best advantage, are tasks which require the highest type of statesmanship, as well as consecration and zeal.

Again, as we have seen, the population is constantly shifting, and communities in time change their character. If the church does not adapt itself to this changing situation, if it does not succeed in attracting the newcomers into the community, it will eventually fail. A denomination must be ever on the alert, not only to establish new churches, but also to strengthen the older ones. Its church planners must know whether a community will decline or grow, whether it is the type of community in which a Presbyterian church will normally succeed, whether missionary aid is justified or not, whether the character of the community is likely to change, and if so how the church's program can be adapted to the changing need. It is important that newcomers into a community be enlisted if they are to remain in the community

only for a short time. They may be lost at the end of that time to the particular church which has enrolled them, but saved for the Kingdom.

A second factor which makes the task of the city church increasingly difficult is the growing secularism of American life. "In the average city," says Leiffer, "fewer than half of the adults are even nominal members of any religious institution, and only half of these attend as frequently as every other Sunday. The church which may have been a powerful influence in the small town does not, for the majority of city people, enter significantly into their thinking."² The press, radio, television, motion pictures, advertisements, commercialized amusements, newspapers, magazines, and too frequently the schools are all developing a type of culture in which religion plays a very insignificant role. It becomes increasingly difficult for the church to reach the non-churched, particularly if they do not have a religious background. And it would seem that at least half of our population, even in the rural areas, are growing up with little if any religious training. In the cities we find more broken homes than we do in the country, fewer children, more mental tension, greater loneliness, more serious delinquency, greater indifference, greater restlessness, more competing interests, but also a need for purpose and peace which only a religious faith can provide.

In addition to the problems faced by all denominations in the city, there are others which are more peculiar to Presbyterians. In numbers we are far behind Baptists and Methodists, and two thirds of our total membership are in the city, which does not maintain itself and lives only at the expense of the country. And except in a few areas there are not many rural churches from which we can draw. The thousands of

newcomers who enter a great city like Louisville, Houston, Atlanta, or Memphis include relatively few Presbyterians. If our city churches relied upon their natural Presbyterian constituency, they would face a diminishing future.

But there are many who are drawn to the city who are members of no churches, and others on whom denominational loyalties sit very lightly. Pastors of successful churches in rapidly growing cities report that a large proportion of their members, sometimes more than half, come from other denominations; included in this number are many Roman Catholics. In a recent six-year period, the Park Lake Church in Orlando, Florida, of which Dr. R. M. McCaslin is pastor, received 1,500 members from 26 denominations, 14 countries, and 39 states.

For the most part, however, the Presbyterian appeal is limited to those whose income is in the middle bracket or above. Presbyterian churches which are growing most rapidly are those found in the better residential sections. The denomination has not had the same success by any means in less desirable neighborhoods, and particularly among the underprivileged.

The Gospel which the church has to offer is the same today as yesterday, the same in the city as in the country, the same in the slums as in the suburbs, but the strategy which the church must follow as it seeks to present this Gospel to men will differ from city to city and from community to community. Recognizing that each congregation and each city must develop its own program according to its own needs and its own resources, it may help us to consider some of the specific problems faced by churches in different types of communities.

The Downtown Church

The task of the downtown church is conditioned by the fact that its members move increasingly to the outlying residential districts or suburbs. Many retain their membership in the central church, but eventually they or their children are likely to join the church in their own neighborhood. The downtown church is likely to retain its strength and prestige until the city has attained a population of one hundred thousand or more. After that time signs of weakness are likely to appear, evidenced, it may be, by the loss of influential members, or by the greater difficulty encountered in the raising of the budget. As the city continues to grow, the "First" church will find it increasingly difficult to maintain itself in its downtown location against the competition of the churches in the growing residential sections. The question will then arise as to whether it is better to remain in its present location or to move farther uptown.

Prior questions in point of time may well be: Shall we aid in the establishment of a chapel or mission in some other section of the city? Shall we give financial aid, and shall we encourage some of our members to transfer their membership to the newer church? Such questions are likely to rise any time after a city has a population of five thousand or more. There have been some churches and ministers who have strenuously opposed the formation of new churches, particularly if they are to be in sections likely to enter into competition with the "First" church; they have given no aid to such ventures themselves and have opposed the efforts of individuals and even of Presbytery to go along without them. If such a policy is long continued the "First" church may con-

tinue to show a large membership for many years, to become in fact one of the "great" churches in the denomination, and to lend prestige to the minister who occupies its pulpit, but Presbyterianism in the city as a whole will be immeasurably weakened. The cities in which Presbyterianism is strong to-day are cities in which there has been "colonization," either with or without the aid of the "downtown" church. More likely it is the former, because it is not easy to move against "First" church wealth and influence. In the end even the big church, which has retained its "prestige" at the expense of Presbyterianism as a whole, is likely to discover that it has only postponed the evil day. For many Presbyterians, moving into other neighborhoods, will join the churches in those neighborhoods, whether they be Presbyterian or not; in any case, the downtown church's problem of recruitment will become increasingly difficult. Any church which opposes the organization of community churches after a city has reached a population of around 25,000 is rendering a decided disservice to Protestantism in general and to Presbyterianism in particular.

The question which a downtown church in a growing city is bound to face sooner or later, whether or not it has aided in the establishing of churches in the newer residential sections, is the question of its own future: can it be maintained in the old location? Many families will continue to worship in the old church even after they have moved into the suburbs, and others will be attracted from various sections of the city because of their love or loyalty to the church with the old ties and traditions. Others will be drawn to the commanding pulpiteer who occupies its platform, or by the prestige which the church, its members, and its ministers hold in the community. But the Sunday school will almost certainly decline as chil-

dren, with or without their parents, begin to attend the neighborhood church; it will become increasingly difficult to maintain the young people's organization, because the young people will prefer the associations in their own neighborhood; as wealthy families die or move away it will not be so easy to maintain the former budget and program.

Ought the church to remain downtown under circumstances of this sort, or should it follow its members as they move out toward the suburbs? There are times undoubtedly when the church ought to move, and it is a wise and blessed congregation that knows and can agree when that time has arrived. As the population moves away from the center of town there is not a need for the same number of churches as when the city was smaller and the central churches drew from all the city.

But there are times when the church needs to stay. Some downtown churches are needed for a witness to Christ and His Gospel in the heart of the city and, let us be frank, for the purpose of denominational prestige. It is the pastor of the downtown church whose voice is likely to be heard through the city, and there are times when the voice of Protestantism needs to be voiced where it can be widely heard. Then there are people who will be reached downtown only, if at all; some of these may be important people in the eyes of the world — transients from the hotels, or students from the schools and colleges around about; there will be others who may seem unimportant but whom the church cannot afford to overlook — roomers in the Y.M.C.A. and the Y.W.C.A., members of the lower income group who crowd into the substandard houses that surround these churches, occupants of the cheap rooming houses that fringe the downtown section,

people who live in the apartments above the stores, and the like.

These last are the people whom the downtown church finds it hard to reach, whom, indeed, it will not be able to reach, unless it succeeds somehow in breaking down the barrier that exists between the wealthy and important people who are accustomed to worship there and these lonely, indifferent, and sensitive souls who are conscious of their "inferiority" and feel that they do not really fit in with the "First" church atmosphere.

It will be hard for a church in the heart of a growing city to remain there indefinitely, unless it does find a way to minister to the people in its own neighborhood as well as those who come in from the outside.

The time may come when the downtown church ought to become an institutional church with a seven-day program intended for the people who live within its shadow, and when the Presbytery or the denomination as a whole should give it the necessary funds to develop such a program. An outstanding example of such a church, carrying its own program, is the Central Presbyterian Church of Atlanta. For many years now it has conducted a clinic for underprivileged children, to which a number of eminent physicians gladly contribute their services. The continued strength of this great downtown church in the face of many odds is the result, certainly in part, of the services which it renders its immediate constituency.

In the spring of 1949 the Consistory of the old Dutch Reformed Church in New York City finally abandoned its effort to maintain historic St. Nicholas in the heart of the metropolis. "The reason why the decision to tear down St. Nicholas seems to us so tragic," wrote the editor of the *Christian Cen-*

ture, "is because it so symbolizes the retreat of Protestantism from the struggle to influence the life of our metropolitan cities. What is about to happen at the corner of 5th Avenue and 48th Street in New York is what has happened, or is happening, all over the country. Protestantism's urban influence, such as it is, is fast becoming an 'uptown' or a suburban influence. For every church that has really thrown itself into the battle for the soul of the city . . . denominational headquarters can tell of fifty that have sold strategic sites at a profit and scuttled for the high-income residential districts. Our 'strong' city churches are those which manage to stick close to where the well-to-do live. The masses are turned over either to the Roman Catholic Church and fundamentalist tabernacles or to an unchallenged secularism."³

In January, 1947, the Home Mission Council approved the following statement of principles: "There should be at least one strong Protestant church maintained in the downtown areas of every city . . . Not all downtown churches can possibly survive . . . Some should move. Others may continue for prolonged periods to render highly essential services, although with a reduction of strength . . . Those that should remain indefinitely may have to make radical adaptations of program and should where necessary receive support from outside the parish."

The Church in the Blighted Areas

The church in the city is also faced with the challenge of the slums, which, according to the estimate of Mark W. Dawber, hold approximately one third of our urban population. In the South this would include a large percentage of Negroes. This is the area with the highest percentage of

disease, crime, and degeneracy, with the highest percentage of unchurched and, therefore, the highest percentage of need. It is difficult for the church to maintain any foothold here, because it is hard to secure capable ministerial leadership, to recruit and hold an adequate membership, or to train capable leaders among the people themselves.

Enterprises that succeed are likely to be one of three types: (1) the Good Will Industries, sponsored originally by the Methodists, now receiving general support; (2) missions of the evangelistic type — some of these are sponsored by the Salvation Army, some by the newer sects, some are of the independent, non-denominational type, which Presbyterians and others join in supporting; (3) institutional churches, which reach the young people and their parents with a seven-day, fully rounded program. Such institutional churches must receive outside support, from either denominational or interdenominational sources.

"It is possible," says Leiffer, "that the Protestantism of the future will find it just as advisable to establish carefully supervised missions with an intelligent and effective program in slum areas or on the outskirts of the city . . . as the public health authorities find it to open clinics."⁴

At present many of these underprivileged urban sections are untouched by any Protestant form of Christianity save, possibly, the Holiness sects. They are truly virgin territory for evangelism.

Churches Among Specialized Groups

In many areas the Presbyterian Church has recognized, or should recognize, its responsibility for some specialized racial or language group.

One of the most notable cases is that of the large Latin population found in that section of Tampa known as Ybor City. Forty-five thousand Latin-Americans live here, two thirds of whom own their own homes. They have their own professional leaders, their own merchants, but the great bulk are skilled artisans, laboring in the cigar factories which contribute so greatly to Tampa's wealth. Traditionally these Cubans, Spaniards, Italians, and others are Roman Catholics, but actually many have been alienated from the church, and some, at least, have been attracted by Communism.

The Presbyterians were the first group to carry the Protestant Gospel to this large and crowded area, and the response has been most encouraging. Our mission under the leadership of Rev. Walter Passiglia has moved steadily forward, and the Presbyterian influence is felt in constantly widening circles. With Mr. Passiglia's encouragement other denominations have now moved in — six in all — and Protestantism is growing rapidly among these people, whom all for so long overlooked, and among whom some at the beginning felt it was a waste of time to labor. Young people from our Ybor City Mission are now attending our colleges, Seminaries, and Training School, and some have been recognized by their fellow students as outstanding leaders.

In Texas the special opportunity is found among the Mexicans, and Texas-Mexican Presbytery, Texas-Mexican Industrial Institute, and the Presbyterian School for Mexican Girls at Taft are the fruit of our labors.

In Oklahoma it is the Indians, the oldest Americans of us all, and Indian Presbytery, Oklahoma Presbyterian College, and Goodland Orphanage are some of the fruits.

Successful missions are also carried on among the Italians in Kansas City, the Czechs in Prince George County, Virginia, the French and the Chinese in New Orleans Presbytery, and the Jews in Baltimore.

In recent years Southern Presbyterians have come to feel more keenly their responsibility toward the Negroes. It must be confessed that we have very little to show for our efforts up to this time. Snedecor Memorial Synod, with 48 churches, none of which are self-supporting, and 2,268 communicant members; a few churches attached to white Presbyteries; a number of city missions; and Stillman College, which lacks academic accreditation, and is a college only in its hopes — this is about all we have to show for more than three quarters of a century's activities.

There are explanations for this comparative failure into which we need not now enter. Today, under the capable leadership of Rev. Alex. R. Batchelor, the Church is making a new and promising start. It might seem to some that the field is now occupied, primarily by the Baptists. But the newer emotional sects are now making great gains among the Negroes, as they are among other groups, and so are the Roman Catholics. As a matter of fact, while more Negro women belong to the church than white women, the proportion of men is far less — less than a third of the total, it would appear. And the Negro churches are losing their hold on the educated group, steadily increasing in influence and in size. Many of the educated Negroes want something more than many of their churches, as now conducted, can supply. This may indicate an opportunity for the Presbyterian Church. If we have anything distinctive to offer, it is here. We have been more successful than any other group in the South in reaching

professional groups among the whites; perhaps we can have the same success among the Negroes. And this educated leadership will determine which way the Negro race shall move in the years ahead.

The movement of the Negroes in our Southern cities may furnish us the opportunity which we seek. The author knows one Southern city where the Negroes who have been more fortunate economically are moving in rather large numbers into an area formerly occupied by the whites. There is no Negro church in this large residential neighborhood and none that can conveniently minister unto it. Many of the leaders in this community, it has been ascertained, would welcome and support a Presbyterian church. It has not yet become clear whether the white Presbyterians are ready to support such a venture.

The Stable Community

A large proportion of the stronger Presbyterian churches are found in stable communities, most of whose land has been developed, and whose general character has long since been determined. It sometimes seems that the church here needs to do nothing but continue its present successful program and all will be well. But that is a dangerous illusion. If the church is alert, it will no doubt discover that trends have developed which it needs to watch. Perhaps it is failing to reach certain elements of its natural constituency, its young people, for example, or its young adults, either a failure which will ultimately, if it is not remedied, seriously affect the church's strength. The loss of some of its members by removal to more remote sections may indicate that the older population is beginning to migrate and a newer and a different population is

moving in. And if the church does not succeed in reaching this newer population — the people moving into the new apartments, or the new multiple dwellings, for example — it is in for some troubled days. In cities throughout our nation we find churches, once well-to-do and prosperous, and some still failing to recognize the warning signs that have begun to appear, which have become religious and cultural “islands” in the communities in which they are located. Some of their members still live in the neighborhood of the church, but increasing numbers now drive in from a distance. The time will likely come when these people or their children will join the church in their own neighborhood, and then the church located in the once “stable” residential community will die slowly of attrition. The tragedy is that there are so many churches in so many neighborhoods that could close their doors tomorrow and the majority of the people round about would neither know nor care. The church may still render a helpful ministry to a people from a distance, but it makes little or no contribution to the people of its own neighborhood. It is not easy to adapt a church’s program to a changing neighborhood, nor to win people in apartments, who for various reasons are not so likely to seek out a church as those who own their own homes, but a church that does not do so fails to render its greatest ministry. And the time will come when it, too, must move, merge, live on at a dying rate, or finally close its doors. The tragedy is that so many do move away or close their doors while there are still hundreds of unchurched on every side.

The Growing Community

American cities, as we have seen, tend to grow on their fringes. Some of these new housing areas may prove to

be abortive, but unless the city itself ceases to grow, and often even so, many will become the residential sections of the future, where the church will have its greatest opportunity. If a denomination, then, is not to fall hopelessly behind and to fail in its ministry to souls, it must watch for these new housing developments and at the right time and in the right way plant the nucleus of a new congregation. The type of church will depend, of course, on the neighborhood itself and its needs. If it be what is sometimes termed a "good" community, the sort of community in which the Presbyterian Church has the greatest success, one occupied by people with moderate incomes or more, it will not do to build a cheap or unattractive building. It may be only one unit of the final structure that is erected, but that unit must be of a quality which matches the neighborhood. This means that some aid must come from the outside. At times this help comes from one of the large city churches, from the Presbytery, and also from the General Assembly. But any money wisely invested in a growing residential area will certainly return rich dividends in the years to come — dividends in souls, and financial dividends as well, dividends which will in turn aid the benevolent program of our Church in each and every phase. To travel through the bounds of our Church, to see in some areas, as in the Washington-Baltimore area or in Southern Florida, miles on miles of new homes, giant apartment houses, various forms of multi-dwellings, to realize that \$50,000 here or \$75,000 there would be repaid many times over within just a few years, to have it brought home that we do not have the funds either to give or to loan, is a painful experience.

Leiffer reminds us that "the most important population movement in America is from the cities into the adjoining

suburban areas. The people who are making their homes in these nascent communities generally have a Protestant heritage. The wisdom displayed by ministers and laymen in adapting old churches or establishing new ones to serve the religious needs of this population will greatly influence the course of Protestantism for the next fifty years."⁵ It will determine the history of Presbyterianism for a far longer period than that.

The Church itself, through its Board of Church Extension, must determine where the areas of greatest need and of greatest opportunity are to be found. But each Presbytery has, as perhaps its greatest task, the responsibility of determining where these areas of greatest opportunity are to be found within its own bounds, and how it can use its own particular funds to the best advantage. Each local church should be on the alert for the best opportunities for outposts. But local churches alone cannot determine the best strategy. Each denomination should consider its task as a whole, and if possible with expert advice. Many cities have found it helpful to have Presbyterian Councils, on which each church in the city has ministerial and lay representatives. The Presbyterian forces of the city then determine collectively where the best opportunities are to be found and throw their united strength behind the new undertaking.

The Need for Comity

Ideally no denomination should form its plans without taking other denominations into its confidence. Comity principles should be drawn up, in which every denomination agrees that it will undertake no new work until it has dis-

cussed the issue with other denominations. No Protestant denomination has the strength, financial or otherwise, to meet the needs of our growing American cities, and if we are really seeking first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness we will plan to use our total resources to the best advantage.

It must be frankly recognized that it is not easy to secure comity agreements in many of our Southern cities, but this is the ideal which we should recognize, and toward which we should move as we are able. Washington, D. C., offers us a happy example of what may be accomplished by the right sort of comity arrangement.

Certainly a city will not be adequately occupied for Christ unless its churches have a grand strategy by which they are able to employ their forces to the best advantage.

CHAPTER 13 The Strategy of the Church

IF A CHURCH or a denomination is to meet the needs of the city it must develop an adequate strategy.

The Home Missions Council, composed of representatives of the major denominations of America, has accepted the following in principle:

“1. We recognize the necessity of interdenominational study of the city-wide problem as a whole. . . .

“2. Each denomination should study its own city-wide problem. When a given situation changes, the denomination should be willing to sacrifice some of the values of the old churches, that is, some members of those churches should go out and establish or join the more distant church.

“3. Each area should be primarily served by churches located within that area.

“4. Downtown churches should have a measure of responsibility to their own immediate neighborhood and also keep under review the necessity of establishing new churches in growing areas.

“5. Long-range strategy involves service to the total community . . .

“7. The controlling consideration is not the maintenance of particular congregations, but the provision of an adequate ministry to all areas of a city.”

1. *For the Local Congregation*

To develop a proper strategy it is essential that each congregation consider its responsibility for advancing the Kingdom of God within its own community. This can be done most adequately after a survey, directed or guided by qualified experts.¹

The church making a survey will almost certainly uncover certain weaknesses in its own program. For example, a recent survey of three churches, Baptist, Methodist, and Presbyterian, in the little town of Tallapoosa, Georgia, revealed that the white Protestant membership of three churches was 33.8 per cent male and 61.2 per cent female. There was a distinct lack of men under 45 years of age and a decided shortage among both sexes under the age of 30. The churches were not attracting many of the 15-25 age group either as members or non-members. Many new families were moving into Tallapoosa who were not being adequately reached by the new churches. The situation in the neighboring village of Villa Rica was quite different. The population pyramid here revealed the membership as 45.7 per cent male and 54.3 per cent female, which is more nearly the norm. The greatest lack was among men between the ages of 25 and 29, and between 35 and 44, but on the whole the three churches were drawing a fairly representative group from among both sexes and all age levels. On the other hand, the length of residence chart showed that the churches were attracting a very small proportion of persons who had been in the county less than ten years. The programs suggested for these various churches were based upon the particular needs which the survey had revealed.

The First Presbyterian Church of Huntington, West Virginia, is one of the strongest and most progressive churches in our denomination, with a total membership in 1948 of 2,178. Its present pastor, Rev. A. R. Bird, Jr., is forward-looking and mission-minded and is eager that this great church with its strong financial resources and its large membership should play its proper part in the advance of Presbyterianism in Huntington. In 1947 a survey was carried out under the auspices of Dr. H. Paul Douglass, which revealed some of the problems which a strong city church of this type is apt to encounter if it is really concerned about the advance of the Kingdom in its own community.

The survey was based on the assumption that if a denomination is strong enough to develop churches in all or most parts of a city, it would seem wise —

“1. That they be so distributed as to secure as complete coverage as possible of the total area, but far enough apart to be generally non-competitive. . . .

“2. The total strength of the denomination should be somewhat proportionately distributed relative to opportunity and need; it should not be concentrated in a few major churches to the extent that all the rest remain relatively weak.

“3. Churches of the same denomination (under conditions of average urban density . . .) should be placed a mile or more apart, particularly if they expect to draw constituents chiefly from the same type of people. Parish areas which are largely overlapping are necessarily competitive and the extensive cultivation of the same territory by two churches of the same denomination is highly inefficient . . .”²

At the time that the survey was made Huntington had a population of about 85,000. Its growth, rapid in earlier years,

was then slowing down, as was the case with most other cities throughout the nation. The population was almost exclusively native-born, and overwhelmingly white. Sixty per cent of the dwelling units were occupied by tenants; about one third needed major repairs and were without private bath; adult males averaged 8.6 years of schooling, and females 8.9 years. With a total gain of 4.3 per cent in population during the previous decade, the total number of children had decreased by 15 per cent during the same period, which helps to explain the declining Sunday-school enrollment in relation to church membership. There was a great difference in average wealth between the better and poorer sections.

The city had 157 churches, or one for every 624 persons. The membership of these churches was barely keeping pace with the growth of the city. The greatest gain was among the newer sects. In 1926 they had about one tenth of the total membership; at the time of the survey it was nearer one fifth. 3.55 per cent of the population were Presbyterian, distributed among five different congregations. 69 per cent of the total Presbyterian strength, with 57 per cent of the Sunday-school membership, was found in the First Church, which indicated clearly enough the vastly preponderate position held by the latter and raised the question as to the more advantageous distribution of Presbyterian strength.

The picture revealed by the survey is that of a powerful church, with its strength unimpaired, its ministry well sustained, its resources challenged by ever greater opportunities, but absorbing too great a proportion of the city's total Presbyterian strength. Its plant was not modern, it lacked working facilities for religious education, but carried on the varied parish program which a central church ought to maintain.

Over half of its members were massed in the district directly south of the church, and nearly nine tenths were in the wealthier three districts of the city, whose combined population was about 20,000 or approximately one fourth of the total.

The other churches, all of which had been established as missions of the First or Second Churches, occupied rather distinct parishes of their own and were definitely neighborhood institutions.

Some of the recommendations growing out of the survey (with detailed reasons, which we do not give) were as follows:

1. The First Church should remain at its present strategic downtown site (a major purpose of the survey had been to determine whether a move was advisable).

2. The First Church should not divide (as some had thought wise). Cities tend to rebuild at the center because of the necessity of commercial expansion but also to develop deteriorated areas around the downtown section because of obsolescence, changes in style, suburban trends, and the like. It seemed probable, therefore, that the proposed location for the new church would not be so desirable twenty-five years hence; in addition, a church on this site would necessarily become highly competitive with the First Church, and this might prove disastrous.

3. The First Church should develop its present property, acquiring additional land, modernizing and adding to its plant.

4. The First Church should exercise a definite responsibility in making Presbyterianism successful in Huntington, both through the older existing churches and new churches to be organized. It should encourage the colonization of its

members to form these new churches and should give financial aid to all enterprises.

5. A new church should be organized at a site designated in the survey. A church at this point would distribute Presbyterianism more adequately and equitably and would be non-competitive with other Presbyterian or Protestant churches in the city. A church of 1,000 members should be aimed at — not a small and long dependent enterprise.

6. It was suggested that another area, named in the survey, be taken under consideration. The underprivileged character of this neighborhood would suggest the possibility of a community house doing Sunday-school and community work.

A survey in some other city would bring recommendations, no doubt, of an entirely different sort, but to conceive and execute a plan of this kind is the type of statesmanship which the church badly needs.

"To be comprehensive and reliable," says Dr. Leiffer, "a plan must be based on adequate preliminary study and dependable research. Churches established on the basis of superficial 'planning' often close within five years of their opening."³ Many others continue to live but remain dependent on Home Mission aid and tie up funds which could be better employed, used and reused in more advantageous localities. Many cities have long-range master plans, which a church interested in developing a missionary strategy cannot afford to ignore. In too many cases denominational executives pay insufficient attention to industrial developments and population movements in the cities which they are attempting to seize for Christ. No exact rules can be laid down as to the population that is needed to support a new church. In the opinion of Dr. Leiffer, if a territory in a growing community

is not more than 25 per cent built up, there ought to be at least sixty families, or approximately 150 adults, to whom the church might appeal.

2. *For the Denomination*

In 1947 a "Study of Presbyterianism in Metropolitan Atlanta" was made by Richard A. Myers for the Presbyterian forces of that city, which illustrates on a wider scale some of the factors which must be taken into account if an adequate missionary strategy is to be developed.

This study revealed that after 1930 the growth of Atlanta began to develop according to a different pattern (concentric, instead of an east-west axis, as formerly), and that this new pattern was likely to continue for some time to come. The rapid expansion of Atlanta after the completion of World War II was brought on by industries moving South in accordance with the new policy of decentralization and was likely to continue until Atlanta had grown to twice its present size. All of this meant that some Atlanta churches, located when the city was growing on its former east-west axis, needed to consider a possible relocation, and that plans for new churches must take into account the future growth of the metropolitan area.

Ten areas were suggested for the erection of a church, chapel, or Sunday school. "If by 1966 Atlanta is to be almost twice as large as at present," the report stated, "most of the area within a radius of 12 miles (from the center of the city) will have been filled in with residences and these churches should be considered, so far as their future life is concerned, as future urban churches, not as rural ones. If these churches are to be urban churches, it is not enough merely to desig-

nate an area in which a church or a chapel should be located. We must give, in addition, consideration to the exact spot in order that it may be in the most convenient location, psychologically as well as physically, to draw from the community for which the church is planned."⁴ Usually, the report goes on to indicate, it is better to have a church located as near the center of a community as possible, rather than on the edge in the hope that it may be able to draw from two different communities. And there are many factors to be taken into account in determining the limits of a community, both natural boundaries and artificial ones, such as main thoroughfares, dead-end streets, railroads, and streams.

A few of the considerations advanced in regard to particular locations may prove suggestive. They reveal some of the major principles which must be taken into account in any adequate city planning. According to the Report —

1. Presbyterianism must go into Cascade Heights, a rapidly growing suburb with homes worth about \$15,000, in order to keep pace with the city and its development. The only question is how, when, and in what manner. To be successful there must be a well-equipped church from the outset. It is not possible to succeed here with the sort of building which would be possible in a community occupied by a low-income group. The entire building need not be erected all at once. If the Presbyterian Church waits too long, the religious pattern of the community will be set. Some Presbyterian families are now sending children to a Sunday school of another denomination. A building site should be purchased immediately — before it is too late. The effect of a church here on three other Presbyterian churches with members in this section of the city must be taken into account (in the Report it is con-

sidered from every point of view), and also the direction in which Negroes are likely to move.

2. The Spring Lake area contains two distinct economic communities. The Report recommends that a church be planted in the community which contains the people "who have an affinity to the Presbyterian type . . . If a sufficient start can be given to the church to enable it to get under way and attract the attention of the community, the community will be able almost immediately [to] assume responsibility for its direction and support."⁵

3. A new development is under way north of the creek that flows from Candler Lake. The Decatur churches have been able to draw members only from the south side of this creek. A church should be located at the natural center of this emerging community.

4. A new church in the Sunny Side Club Drive area would seriously affect the Peachtree Road Church. It would cause a ten per cent loss in its membership and necessitate a radical change in its program. This church should be consulted, therefore, before any decision is reached.

5. The fact that the Bell Telephone Company is building a new switchboard in one particular location means that, in its estimation, it will become a settled residential area within a very short time. Presbyterians should plan with this in mind.

6. South of Sandy Springs there is a potential residential area, in which there should be a beginning Presbyterian work. But only the first unit of a modest building should be erected until the community has developed further than at present.

7. The development north of Nancy Creek will never be a large one. Peachtree Road Church should start an outpost Sunday school in this neighborhood.

8. A new housing development is found in Georgian Hills, and another is about to be started. A church should be planted between the two.

9. The Chamblee area has possibilities which may or may not be realized. The Presbyterian Church should buy a lot and watch developments.

At the time of the Survey some of the Atlanta churches were considering the wisdom of moving to other sites. Some of the recommendations, illustrating principles which may prove suggestive, were as follows:

1. Clifton-Kirkwood. A merger of these two churches is not recommended. Each church has its own community, and, though neither can ever become large, each has a distinct service to render.

2. West End is advised not to move to Cascade Park. Few of its members live in that area, and its present community would be left unserved. And yet this community has a steadily diminishing population. The future program of this church should be restudied.

3. College Park is a residential area, divided by railroad tracks; the better residential section, with the natural Presbyterian constituency of the future, is developing on the west side. The Presbyterian church should be relocated in the center of this growing residential area, which is also accessible to its present members in the older east side. It will be well to consider in the future the establishment of another church on the east side which will serve people of a different economic level, for newcomers into this area are not likely to join a church "across the tracks."

4. Kittredge Chapel, now in a rural area, should be moved into the center of the new housing development nearby, where

it could continue to serve its present constituency. It should not be finally located, however, until the street system of the new development has become clear.

5. Formwalt is a mission of Central Church, located in an underprivileged area, combining a social and religious program. The site chosen for its permanent location would bring it into competition with Pryor Street Church as to its religious program, and with similar missions in the same neighborhood in regard to its social work. The Report recommends that this mission be located in another substandard housing area, where a weekday social program is needed, and where there would be no competition in religious program with any other Presbyterian church.

Atlanta had two Negro Presbyterian churches when the survey was made, both in substandard housing sections. The survey suggests that it might be well to organize a third church in a new community then being formed for Negroes of a different economic level, a community which in time "will probably receive most of the Negro executives and professional people. On the whole," it points out, "the Christian church is losing the better educated Negro. One of the main factors in this situation is that the better educated Negro can find no church that can minister to his needs. Just as one white church cannot minister to all types of white people, so with the Negro race. The typical Negro church of today cannot minister to the educated Negro. Thus, religion is losing its hold on the very persons among the Negro race that we must try to reach with religion if we are to keep the leadership of the Negro race Christian . . . The Presbyterian denomination in Atlanta is in good position to provide just such a church for Negroes in this community."⁶

The study reveals that the Presbyterian churches of Atlanta gained very few members from 1927 to 1939, though the city was growing almost as rapidly as any city in the South; since 1939 the growth of Presbyterianism has kept pace with the city's growth. But these gains — and this is very significant — have not come from newcomers to the city. The basic reason for this is undoubtedly the fact that a large percentage of these immigrants come from rural Georgia where the Presbyterian Church is decidedly weak, if not non-existent. The greatest membership gains were found among the churches in the better residential sections where the population was growing the fastest. Most of the persons coming into these sections were not newcomers to Atlanta but people who had been in Atlanta for some time and were moving from less to more desirable residential sections. But why did Presbyterianism begin to grow only after 1939? The only explanation that Mr. Myers could find was that this was the year when Visitation Evangelism was first undertaken in the city, and that this plan has continued to be used by most of the churches ever since.

3. *For Protestantism as a Whole*

The Huntington Survey was undertaken at the request of a great church. The Atlanta Survey was undertaken in the interests of a denomination. In 1944 an "Interdenominational Survey of Metropolitan Louisville, Ky." was made by Dr. H. Paul Douglass which illustrates some of the aspects of the problem which affect Protestantism as a whole.

The population of Louisville proper in 1940 was 319,077; that of metropolitan Louisville, 434,408. The most significant factor in the recent growth of this city was the fact that for

every five persons added to the metropolitan population during the previous decade, three had located outside the city limits.

The suburbs proper had gained population five times as fast as the city, and many of the older areas of the city had actually declined in population.

Slightly more than a third of the city's dwelling units were occupied by their owners; nearly two thirds by tenants. Thirty-two per cent of all dwelling units were substandard in the sense of needing major repairs or having no running water or bath. There were 3.55 persons in the average family, and the average adult had 8.4 years of schooling. The city had many fewer children under ten than it had in 1930 and many more elderly people over 65 — an actual decline in elementary school population in face of the rapid increase in general population.

Of 146 churches reporting, out of a total of 509 in the city, sixty had moved their location at one time or another. About half of these seemed to have been cases of radical removal from one part of the city to another, while the other half represented short moves within the same general area. Obviously they had followed the movement of population and were frequently undertaken to avoid undesirable developments in the neighborhoods which they then occupied.

Most of the churches had between one and two hundred members — the result of competitive denominational zeal rather than of wise forethought, for after a period of rapid initial growth it is difficult for a small church to succeed in a large city. (Most research specialists agree that an urban church must have at least five hundred members to develop an effective program.)

During the period 1930-43, a period in which the metropolitan population was growing very rapidly, Presbyterians and Episcopalians barely held their own (the Presbyterian churches gained only 168 members during this thirteen-year period); Disciples and Methodists did somewhat better; but the one real gain was registered by the Baptists, who increased their members from 28,856 in 1930 to 42,511 in 1943. The Baptist growth was probably due to the fact that the rural population around the city and, in fact, throughout Kentucky is overwhelmingly Baptist. No statistics were available for the newer sects, but they seemed to have grown rapidly here as in Huntington and most other American cities.

Comparing city, suburban, and rural churches, the survey revealed that nearly all suburban churches had made substantial gains, along with one third of the rural churches in the neighborhood of Louisville. But nearly as many rural churches remained stationary or declined in membership as those which gained. The rural churches which gained were those into whose territory some of the urban population were moving; those which lost were the ones from which the farm constituency was departing for the city. In the city proper 40 per cent of the churches were stationary or declining. These churches were found mostly in the less desirable sections of the city; those which were growing were found mostly in the more prosperous areas of the city.

The continued outward flow of the city's population was raising serious questions for many of the churches. The big downtown churches were not greatly affected; they were finding it a little more difficult to keep up, but they had long since lost most of their immediate constituency, and their prestige continued to draw people from a distance. The only

churches really gaining in the central districts of the city, however, were mission churches which had newly undertaken to build themselves up out of the neighborhood itself, and one or two churches depending on the surviving residential population.

The near downtown churches located in the deteriorated areas around the downtown section but lacking the prestige of the downtown churches were nearly all fighting a losing battle. Their remaining members came mostly from a distance and were so little identified with their neighborhood that their life or death would hardly be noticed. This is typical of what is happening in other American cities. The only churches which seem to gain in the poorer sections are the Roman Catholic or the newer sects.

The churches midway between the city's center and the rapidly growing suburbs were the ones most affected at the time. Their members were moving rapidly to the suburbs, some had not yet moved their membership, but others had already done so, and their number would increase. These churches must necessarily continue to go down hill, or modify their program so as to attract the new population moving in, or else themselves move or merge.

The problem of churching the new residential areas was complicated by this situation. Most of the people moving into these areas had affiliations with churches which were trying to hold them in order to maintain their own existence. But every neighborhood must have its own churches or else the denomination — and the Kingdom — will suffer.

Most all of the suburban churches were growing very rapidly.

Less than half of the non-urban population around Louisville were then living on farms, revealing the outreach of the city into the country. Some of the rural churches had a large proportion of industrial workers, some of white-collar workers, and some of proprietors and managers. But these rural churches were not equipped to give the type of religious service that an urban population demands. In Dr. Douglass' opinion it was highly important that they be strengthened, so that they might be more nearly equal to their enlarging opportunities.

Some of the conclusions and findings of the Survey Committee representing the Louisville churches, which may prove of universal interest, are the following:

"In view of the fact that organized religion in a metropolitan community represents so vast and complex a set of efforts and institutions, and that changes in the equilibrium of this community are constantly going on . . . it is . . . recommended that the cooperating Protestant Churches, through the Council of Churches, recognize and provide for the function of continuous planning and development of a common strategy (perhaps through a permanent Commission on Planning and Strategy) . . .

"In view of the fact, freshly established by this survey, that the fortunes of the churches are largely bound up with changes in the number and character of the population and especially with the social qualities of the several districts of the city in which the churches are located, it is our judgment that the community should make full use of newly available resources for the measurement and understanding of the problems of the various parts of the community, especially those parts which are handicapped or deteriorating . . .

"In view of the fact that in fulfilling their large role as city-wide institutions many of the centrally located churches are not serving their neighborhood population to any considerable degree, it is our judgment (and we should admit no exception to this rule) that a Christian congregation has some genuine responsibility for the people living in the immediate neighborhood of its church. It is, therefore, our conclusion that in cooperative agreement each centrally located church should become continuously responsible for a limited number of blocks in adjacent needy territory; that it should exercise a Christian watch-care over every dwelling in these blocks, whatever changes of occupancy may occur; connecting those homes which have a church preference with the denominations of their choice . . .

"In view of the fact that a considerable number of new denominations are entering the city, some of which are not yet fully recognized as a part of the religious forces and have not adequately entered into cooperative effort, it is our judgment that the better established churches should cultivate a sympathetic understanding and adopt a cooperative attitude toward these new denominations . . .

"It is recommended that responsible religious leaders consider a more general application of federation or merger as a solution for overchurching . . .

"It is . . . our judgment that no congregation or denomination should make a commitment as to the purchase of property or the organization of a church or Sunday school in any new area of the community without consultation through the Council of Churches with all parties concerned . . .

"In view of the fact that the outthrust of the city into the county is bringing much new population into areas previously

occupied by rural churches, and that the new population is often different in occupational types, habits, and expectations, and that the rural churches are sometimes unprepared to assimilate the new population by reason of limited leadership, inferior plans and equipment, and the survival of rural points of view, it is our judgment that denominational authorities and the Council of Churches should give special attention to the development of the rural churches throughout the county in order that they may be helped to the full realization of their new possibilities of service . . .

"In view of the perplexities and tensions resulting from the unplanned development of religion in the city . . . it is our judgment that large-scale planning should be undertaken in advance of the raising of specific issues . . . We, therefore, think that the continuous Planning and Strategy Agency, previously recommended, should, as soon as possible, offer a comprehensive plan for the religious development of the community . . ."

These are the considered judgments of a distinguished group of Christian leaders, ministers and laymen, representing many denominations, looking at the city and its needs, not from any narrow denominational point of view, but from the view of the total interests of the Kingdom. Not until this point of view has become more prevalent in Protestantism will it be able to claim our growing cities for Christ.

CONCLUSION

CHAPTER 14 ☞ A Final Word

SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIANS, as previously observed, have faced three supreme opportunities for the extension of the Kingdom. The first was in the colonial period, when Presbyterians had the first opportunity as a result of the Great Awakening to reach the untouched masses for Christ in Virginia and the Carolinas. Instead it was the Baptists who met the need most adequately, and thereby laid the foundation for their numerical superiority in the South. The second was in the post-Revolutionary period when Presbyterians were in the most strategic position to follow the pioneers across the Alleghenies. Instead it was the Methodists who met the need most adequately at that time, and accordingly drew up alongside the Baptists as the second great church of the people. The third opportunity is today, as the pattern of the new South is being formed; as the rural South, the seedbed of the nation, continues to send out its sons and its daughters; as new industries develop; as cities, both small and large, continue to grow; as metropolitan areas expand; as the urban population moves from center to circumference; as new religious groups continue their rapid growth among the masses once reached by Baptists and Methodists; as the less privileged folk and the bulk of the industrial population become increasingly alienated from the Church.

If we are to take advantage of this opportunity — it may be our last to play a great role in American Protestantism — we must:

1. *Evangelize.* We must seek to carry the Gospel not only to the well-to-do people in the growing residential sections,

where Presbyterianism makes its greatest appeal, but also to the much larger group which is moving into the less desirable sections and among whom, hitherto, we have not been conspicuously successful; not only to industrialists and manufacturers, lawyers and doctors, white-collar workers and their employers, but also to men and women who labor in the factories; not only prosperous farmers who own the best land, but also sharecroppers and tenants; not only our natural Presbyterian constituency (which does not reproduce itself), but also those with no Presbyterian and increasingly with no religious background. As Hermann N. Morse writes in *Again Pioneers*: "Religious teaching has long since vanished from the average home . . . Only a fraction of all pupils receive any religious instruction in the schools, and that, apparently, is of doubtful legality . . . Church school attendance has steadily declined, even among the families of church members . . . Few of the unchurched ever enter a church service . . . The mass evangelism of a generation ago . . . has now a very limited scope . . . The motion picture, radio, and now television offer the church a great opportunity of which far greater and more effective use should be made. The recently organized Protestant commissions in these fields give promise of real usefulness . . . Nevertheless . . . such means cannot be depended upon, as things now are, to win the unchurched half of America to Christ, even though these means may be expected to create a more favorable climate for the appeal of the church."¹

Visitation evangelism has been greatly blessed in our denomination, as in others; it has proved its value now over an extended period of time. That may be a part of the answer, but it is not the whole answer. As Dr. Morse continues: "The how of evangelism is exceedingly important and needs more

intelligent analysis and experimentation than it has yet had. [But] more than skill and technical adequacy in evangelism, we need in the church the sense of its urgency and devotion to its purpose . . . To put it plainly, multitudes are outside the fellowship of the church because the particular churches that should be trying to win them do not know that they are there. They have not bothered to find out who or what they are; what needs they have that call for the ministry of the church, what doubts and problems to be resolved, what frustrations to be overcome, what interests that can serve as points of contact, what abilities that can be developed and used constructively for the work of the Kingdom . . . At the heart of evangelism is that which is at the heart of the entire missionary enterprise — the need and the inescapable urge to present Christ's gospel to all men and to impress His spirit upon all of life."²

2. *Plant.* We must plant the church — a Presbyterian church — in the areas of greatest opportunity in needy rural areas, but above all in the growing residential areas and within the new housing developments of our growing cities.

In the last seven years (1942-49) we have tried to meet the need, originally through the Home Mission Emergency Fund and, more recently, through the Program of Progress. During this period of unprecedented urban expansion 255 churches have been organized within the bounds of our denomination. At the end of the Church year, 1948-49, these churches had a combined membership of 26,785, which, incorporated into a separate Synod, would exceed in numbers seven of our present Synods, namely, Arkansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Missouri, Oklahoma, Snedecor Memorial, and Tennessee, and would in all probability exceed three others during the course of the

current Church year (1949-50), that is, Alabama, Mississippi, and West Virginia. In a few years some of these new churches will be numbered among the largest churches in the General Assembly.

We have much to show for our efforts, therefore, and yet, compared with the total need, we have done little more than scratch the surface. There are today, to give only one example, over 273 incorporated places in Florida, most of which are growing by leaps and bounds, and in 164 of these there is no Presbyterian church, either U. S. or U.S.A. To drive through the most rapidly growing sections of the South and to see the fields which are ripe unto the harvest, but into which laborers cannot be sent, or where churches cannot be built because of our lack of funds, leaves one troubled and distressed.

The supreme opportunity which is now afforded us is not one which will continue forever, or which will be repeated in every generation. In the colonial period the opportunity was given once and was then withdrawn, the pattern of religion in the South was fixed and has remained fixed now for generations. In the post-Revolutionary period the opportunity was given once and was then withdrawn; the pattern of denominationalism was fixed and has remained fixed until the present time, when once again the situation is fluid. Today the population of the South is once more on the move, and the best possible investment which our Church can make is to plant churches in the most strategic areas where they may become the great churches of tomorrow. Our funds must not become so involved in sustentation that never liquidates itself that we cannot take advantage of the opportunities which are given us now and which shall not be given us again. We

should not forget that every cause of the Church stands to gain if we plant wisely and well; otherwise every cause will ultimately lose.

3. *Adapt.* We must adapt our churches and their programs to the changing situation — both in the country and in the city. It may be that a rural church, well located in the horse-and-buggy days, needs to be relocated now, where it can serve a larger community held together by modern roads and the automobile; it may be that several small and struggling churches should be merged into a village church that offers a more adequate plant and a more effective program; it may be that several can federate in something like a larger parish plan and develop certain features of their work as a whole; it may be that churches of various denominations can develop a co-operative program that will better serve them all and better serve their Lord; it may be that some will need to consider more carefully their responsibility for the growing number of people who move out from the city into the country but continue to drive into the city for their work; that these churches and others will need to undertake a larger ministry, serving the felt needs of the community in various areas of life.

Or perhaps it is the city church that needs to rethink its program — to remain where it is or to follow the moving population; to be content with the people who drive now from a distance or to minister more adequately to the population that lives under its eaves; to find ways to reach those newcomers who show so little eagerness to seek out the church, who find so many ways to excuse themselves from attending the church, who all too often are totally indifferent to Christ and His claims.

4. *Co-operate.* A church that seeks only its own life and its own future betrays its Lord. A church that is really committed to Christ will carefully consider how it can best advance the cause of Christ. In so doing it will recognize that it is only one member of the Body of Christ, and that all members must work harmoniously together for the best interests of the whole, if the Body itself is not to suffer.

There must be co-operation between the agencies of the Church — the local congregation, the Presbytery, the Synod, and the General Assembly. The agency of the General Assembly to which this cause is committed, and which is concerned with the forward movement in the Church as a whole, is the Board of Church Extension. To some it seems providential that in this time of supreme opportunity the Board has been reorganized; that all the agencies of the Church concerned with extension — home missions, evangelism, radio, Negro work, Sunday school extension, defense service, Christian relations — have been brought together in a single organization, so that each can aid the other, and that together the Church as a whole can offer its greatest aid to every church in the Assembly as it faces its particular task.

Studies which have been carried out in numerous cities throughout the United States indicate that there is hardly a city with more than 50,000 population which is free from wasteful competition, often between churches of the same denomination. As Frederick A. Shippey writes: "Severe competition is the normal pattern of interchurch relationship. Wars of attrition are being fought. Material resources and good will are being used up in prodigal fashion . . . The study of a leading denomination's work in a hundred cities revealed intradenominational competition in three fourths of the com-

munities. The condition is more extensive than is generally acknowledged.”³

If this disastrous competition is to be avoided, there must be comity arrangements among the various members of the Protestant family and eventually over-all planning for the city as a whole.

Such comity, such over-all planning, cannot be secured immediately in every Southern community, but there can be more comity, more understanding among the churches of the Presbyterian family, between the pastors of the larger churches and those of the smaller ones, between the pastors of the downtown churches and those in the newer residential sections, between pastors and laity, between country churches and city churches. There can be greater understanding, more adequate aid, and deeper commitment to the Master's cause; more thought for the future and less for the past.

The supreme obligation is for each to seek *first* God's Kingdom and His righteousness; to work, as well as to pray, that God's will may be done on earth as it is in heaven.

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