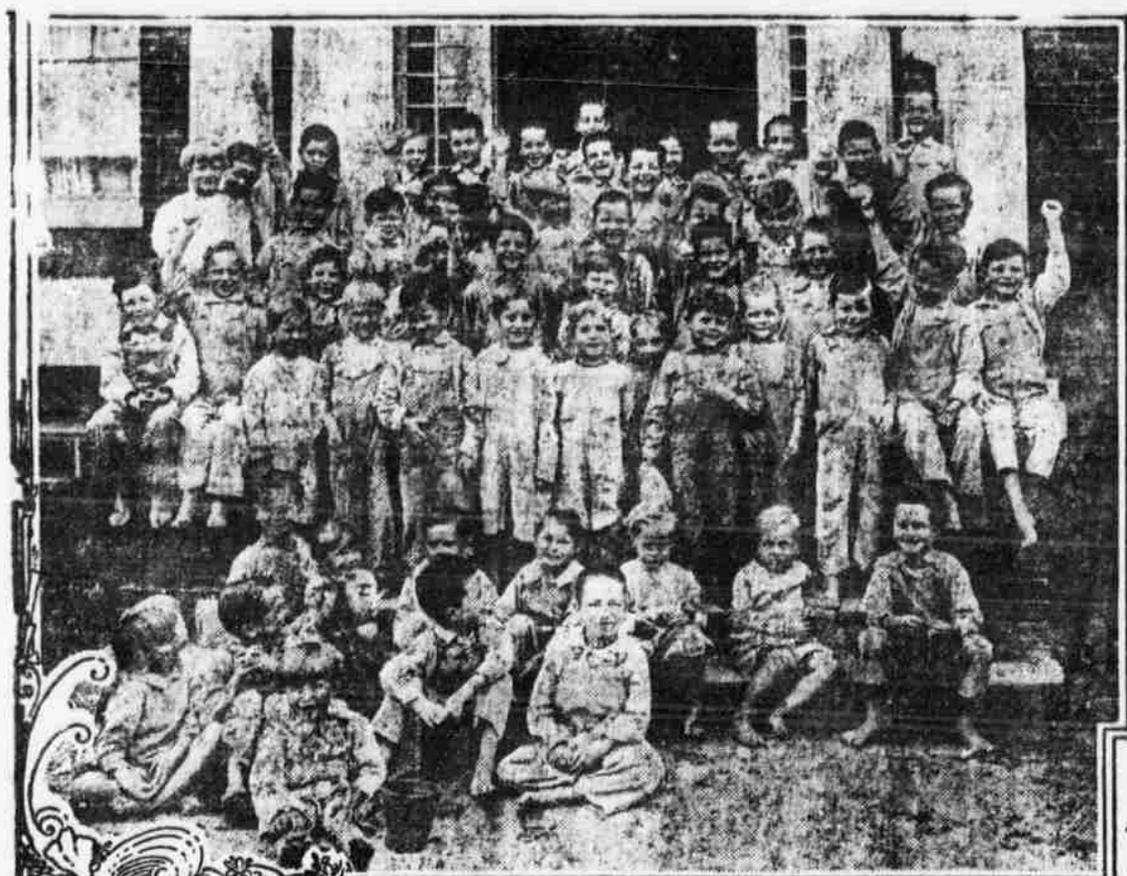

LIFE IS FULL OF SUNSHINE FOR THE BOYS AND GIRLS OF THE GEORGIA BAPTIST ORPHANAGE

PRIMARY SCHOOL BUILT OF BAMBOO ON ONE OF THE CHINESE MISSION FIELD

HEATHEN CHILDREN IN AFRICA ARE CAUGHT BY THE CAMERA MAN

GROUP OF FOREIGN KINDERGARTEN TOTS LEARN TO PLAY AMERICAN GAMES

FOREIGN MOTHER AND HER BABES EN ROUTE TO CHRISTIAN HOSPITAL FOR TREATMENT.

By FRANK E. BURKHALTER

Ever feel the thrill from the chubby arms of a little child near and dear to you as they encircled your neck in a fond embrace?

Or look into the beautiful frank eyes of that little loved one and contemplate the possibilities that lie hidden in that soul, or what you would not take in exchange for him or her who bears your name and is bone of your bone and flesh of your flesh?

Then possibly you have experienced something of that divine spirit that prompted the Man of Galilee to exclaim:

"Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones," and

"It is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish."

And it is the belief of Southern Baptists in giving a large place to the welfare and all-round development of children in the Baptist 75 Million Campaign that they are pursuing a course that has the sanction of Christ Jesus, the proclamation of whose Gospel everywhere is always accompanied by larger attention to the physical, mental, social and spiritual development of children.

First Right To Be Well Born.

Baptists believe the first right of every child is to be well born; that, in the second place, every child has a right to normal and healthful nourishment and physical surroundings during its tender years; and in the third place, every child has a right to an education that is adapted to its needs, physical, mental and spiritual.

But what has all this to do with the Baptist 75 Million Campaign? you ask.

In the first place, while the welfare of the human race is sought in the campaign, beginning with the cooing tot in the crib and including all needy ones down to those far advanced in the evening of life, special consideration has been given the welfare of the little folks in such special programs as doubling the enrollment in the Sunday Schools throughout the homeland; strengthening the weak churches in both the rural districts and the crowded centers of population in order that they may be able to discharge their full duties to the communities in which they are located, thus providing better atmospheres for the rearing of children; enlarging the work of the Woman's Missionary Union and its auxiliary organizations in the training of children and young people in Christian character and service; provision of better schools in the rural districts, especially in the mountainous sections; the enlargement and fuller equipment of Baptist educational institutions throughout the Southland where children as they develop into young men and women can be more adequately trained for lives of social and religious usefulness at the same time their minds and bodies are cultivated; and the provision of Good Will Centers in the large cities and mining and factory districts for reaching not only the children, but helping the parents as well provide better homes and home surroundings for the little ones whom God has entrusted to their care and rearing.

Hospitals Help the Little Ones.

That the children who come into the world with weak bodies, who contract illness or are maimed by accident may have a larger chance to become sound in body and thus be equipped for a larger development, happiness and usefulness in the world, Southern Baptists have provided hospitals in almost all of their states, while under the impetus of this campaign the states which have not made such provisions heretofore have agreed to set aside certain sums raised during this campaign for the erection of modern hospitals within their borders. Indicative of the special interest taken in the welfare of children, special children's departments, with roof gardens and other modern equipment specially designed to meet the needs of sickly, under-nourished and undeveloped little folks may come and under the care of the best children's experts which the cities afford, have a larger chance to attain the normal healthy lives which it is believed God wills that they should have, have been provided in some of these hospitals.

But probably the largest contribution Baptists have made to the welfare of children in the South is in the establishment of the string of orphanages, there being one of these in practically every state within the bounds of the Southern Baptist Convention. And the largest possible provision is being made at these institutions for the homeless tots who have been robbed by the Grim Reaper of their natural protectors. Time was in this country when many people felt that orphans were entitled to little consideration further than a shelter, and for a long time they felt that if children without fathers and mothers were placed in homes where they got food and shelter in exchange for hard manual labor they had been really served. Of course, many childless couples with high ideals were glad to get children upon whom they could bestow their affection and to provide with a home, but many more instances have been witnessed of persons securing orphans solely for the economic benefit they could reap from the labors of these helpless ones and the situation was neither happy nor helpful for the children involved.

Provide Homes For the Homeless.

In breaking away from this custom of placing children and in providing institutions as nearly like genuine homes as possible, where fatherless and motherless little folks can be developed in mind, body and soul under environments just as wholesome and happy as it is possible to procure, Baptists have been pioneers. Naturally, no institution can have the same environment that a real home, presided over by a natural father and mother, and occupied with these parents only by brothers and sisters of full blood affords, yet an approximation of that ideal is had in a number of the Baptist orphanages of the South through the establishment of a cottage system where a limited number of children are placed in a cottage which they call home, under the supervision of a kindly, tactful matron and patron, who study the characteristics and qualifications of each individual, assign him or her to tasks as nearly in line with the actual bent of the child as practicable, and take as large personal interest in his or her problems and development as possible. Each of these cottages has its own garden, flower plat, wood yard and other institutions, affording special individual chores for the children, and except at school, religious services, picnics and the like the children are reckoned with in terms of the individual and the family rather than in those of the mass.

But the Baptist 75 Million Campaign does not confine its interest in children to those of the homeland. There is now in Europe a commission representing the campaign studying to see how this movement can aid most effectively in the reconstruction of that country, especially those portions of it which were devastated most largely by contending armies.

"Twenty million dollars could be expended with economy and high Christian purpose in the care of the widows and orphans of our spiritual kinsmen in Europe who have suffered through these years of war and in the erection of houses of worship, schools and the like," Dr J. F. Love, chairman of the commission, declared on the eve of his departure, and while it is not contemplated that this sum will be available for this purpose under the present program, it is the settled purpose of the campaign to aid reconstruction in France, Belgium, Italy, Czecho-Slovakia, the Ukraine and other parts of Russia just as fully as possible and Dr. Love has urged the Baptists to greatly oversubscribe the $75,000,000 sought in order that there may be additional funds to apply to the European situation.

Uplifting Children of Many Lands.

And the work for the physical, mental and spiritual uplift of the children in Cuba, Panama, Mexico, Brazil, Argentine, Chile, China, Japan, Syria, Persia and Galilee, in which fields, also, missionary work is being carried on by the Southern Baptist Convention at this time.

With the exception of Japan, the education of the people has been very backward and children are always the losers where ignorance and supersition prevail. In China, for instance, in spite of the rapid progress that has come to that country within recent years, children have little or no chance for normal development except in those homes that have been reached with the enlightenment and love of the gospel. Girls are still unwelcome because of their small economic value, and there are still posted on the preserves of some of the wealthy residents whose estates adjoin the rivers such signs as, "No children shall be drowned on these premises." And the treatment for diseases prescribed by the heathen physicians in some of these countries is worse than death itself.

Shrouded in ignorance, superstition and sin as the lives of the children of these lands are in most cases, the missionaries representing the Southern Baptist Convention are convinced that schools for the enlightenment of the minds of the children, and modern hospitals where medical and surgical skill can heal their diseased and maimed bodies and put them on the road to happier and more efficient lives, are fundamental to the success of missionary endeavor and the moral and spiritual uplift of the people.

So part of the proceeds of the Baptist 75 Million Camaign will go to the establishment of kindergartens and other Christian educational intsitutions, hospitals and homes where orphans can be cared for in the foreign lands. Our missionaries have for a long time been handicapped by lack of money and other facilities. Frequently they have rescued children who have been thrown out to starve and after resuscitating them, given these outcasts a permanent place in their own homes, where many of them have grown into useful Christian workers.

Little Money Does Big Work.

For the sum of $25 a boy or girl can be maintained in one of the mission boarding schools for a year, while numerous native children are maintained and instructed in the homes of the missionaries at a cost of $12 a year.

Ozerinde Nathaniel, of Ogbomosoh, Africa, was reared and instructed in the home of Dr. C. E. Smith, Baptist missionary, became a Christian and so ambitious was he to learn that after he had completed the schools in Africa he came to America and entered Virginia University, at Richmond, where he took off all honors, at the same time working for all his expense money. He returned to Africa and is vice-president of the boys' academy in his home city.

A day school in China, one of the greatest evangelizing forces known to the mission board, and which is proving the physical, moral, mental and spiritual salvation of the girls whom it reaches can be maintained for about $70.

If so large a work has been done already, why the need of increasing it through the Baptist 75 Million Campaign? some may ask.

The answer is that the work that has been done in the homeland and on the foreign fields is a very, very small part of what needs to be done. The cry for help is coming up from hundreds of millions of helpless children in all parts of the world who need and crave the privileges and blessings of a great Christian civilization such as you covet for the children of your own.

It is to help answer this call that the campaign was launched. Other interests than those of children will be fostered at the same time.

Of the $20,000,000 apportioned to foreign missions a considerable sum will go to sending more missionaries to foreign fields to proclaim the gospel to adults as well as to children; $12,000,000 will go to home missions for its work of evangelism, enlistment, church building, mountain schools and the like in its vast field, along with special work among the foreigners, Indians and Negroes; $11,000,000 will go to state missions in an effort to win to Christ the 13,000,000 unsaved white people within the territory of the Southern Baptist Convention; $20,000,000 will be applied to Christian education in enlarging and endowing the Baptist educational institutions of the South; $4,800,000 will go to the hospitals; $4,700,000 to the orphanages; and $2,500,000 for the relief of the aged ministers of the Baptist church who have worn themselves out in the service of God on salaries that have permitted them to save nothing for old age.

But investment in the salvation of the children will bear larger and larger returns throughout the years because millions of them will live long enough to bless others and to raise up still other children who will pass on these blessings to others yet unborn.