

N.Z. Baptist - 1910

March 1910

HASTINGS (Rev. H. Bamford Hughes, B.A.) Inauguration of Mr. Hughes' Ministry. Baptists throughout the Dominion will rejoice to see this, our first report, and will give thanks to Almighty God because our new cause has now begun regular Sabbath services. On February 3rd, our new minister, the Rev. H. Bamford Hughes, B.A., arrived in our prosperous town, and on the following Sunday conducted special opening services. The following is an extract from the Hastings "Standard:"

"At both morning and evening meetings there gathered a congregation which almost filled the Adventists' Hall, which is being used pending the erection of a Baptist meeting-place. In the morning Mr. Hughes preached an impressive sermon (1 Cor. iii. 9), emphasising the privileges and possibilities which result from co-operation with God. At night the address, based on 1 Tim. i. 15, was a powerful advocacy of the credibility and adequacy of the Gospel of Christ."

On the following Wednesday a large gathering of local Baptists and sympathisers assembled in St. Andrew's Presbyterian Hall to welcome our minister. The chair was occupied by Mr. M. W. P. Lascelles, of the Napier Church. On the platform were also seated the Revs. J.J. North, of Vivian Street, J. Archer, of Napier, Mr. Hughes, and local ministers. Congratulatory messages were read from representatives of the churches.

[Rev. J.J North spoke saying ... that Baptists were] the most reasonable of people, allowing everyone freedom of conscience, for upon every man rested the responsibility of making up his mind concerning Jesus Christ. Mr. Hughes, he continued, came bound to no particular interpretation of the Christian faith, but to preach the Gospel as he understood it, to work for the uplifting of the people, and to make life as pure and as sweet and as beautiful as possible. He hoped Mr. Hughes would show initiative, and use every opportunity at street corner and factory to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Rev. J. K. Archer, in his charge to the new congregation, pointed out their responsibilities, and urged them to encourage their minister by their appreciation, sympathy, attention, and financial support. In returning his thanks, the Rev. H. B. Hughes said the Baptists had come to Hastings to stay, and they meant business. He expressed the hope that Baptists and brother ministers would heartily cooperate with him, the former to uprear a prosperous Church, the latter to secure civic purity and justice. Musical items were rendered at suitable intervals. Special thanks were tendered to the Napier Choir and friends for their acceptable assistance. Refreshments were then handed round, and a pleasant evening was brought to a close by the Doxology and Benediction.

On the second Sunday of his ministry, Mr. Hughes again had good congregations, and the new cause shows unmistakable signs of vitality and vigour. A special word of thanks is due to the Rev. J. K. Archer, for the valuable aid he has given us prior to our own minister's arrival, by coming out, fortnightly from Napier to conduct afternoon services, for his visitation among our people, and for his practical advice. We also desire to record our appreciation of Mrs. Robjohn's generosity in making Mr. Archer's visits possible by placing her motor car at his disposal. We would like to again remind our Baptist friends that we are still without a building of our own. This is unsatisfactory, and hinders our progress. A

building is urgently needed, and we shall gladly welcome any donation that will help us to put up a suitable place of worship.

May 1910

HASTINGS (Rev H. Bamford Hughes, M.A.) In forwarding this our second report we consider that our feelings and spirit are most adequately expressed in the words of the Doxology: "Praise God from whom all blessings flow!" It is with great gratitude to our Heavenly Father that we record the steady development of our cause. The attendances at both morning and evening services show a steady increase; our maximum congregations have been forty-three in the morning and fifty-five at night. The collections show a corresponding increase. Our membership has already reached the total of twenty-two.

A Young Men's Bible Class has been inaugurated, and our representative, the "Hastings Hero," was appointed organist at the recent North Island B.Y.M.B.C. Camp. The maximum attendance yet recorded is eight. The afternoon talks are looked forward to with pleasure, and attended with profit. There are in regular attendance at our services quite a number of children, who will form a substantial nucleus for the Sunday School, to be started immediately after the opening of the new building. It is with satisfaction that we report an increasing interest in our Pastor's preaching. God's people are manifesting desires after a deeper and more satisfying spiritual experience, and we believe that others who come regularly are not unaffected by the upholding of a high ideal and the preaching of God's glorious Gospel. We earnestly solicit the prayers of our friends that great and lasting good may be done in our midst. A pleasing feature of our meetings, on both Sabbaths and week-nights, is the bright and cheerful spirit of Christian love and unity. We are banded together by an earnest enthusiasm and desire to "Go forward." The public meeting for the purpose of definitely forming a Church was held on December 29th of last year. Consequently, the meeting on the 5th inst. was our first regular Church meeting. Matters of moment were considered, and several knotty problems incidental to the inauguration of our Church were, we believe, finally disposed of.

The need for a building of our own has been increasingly felt. Owing to the liberality of members and sympathisers, we hope soon to report the completion of the structure. Upon the personal security of four guarantors, the Union Bank of Australia Ltd. has agreed to allow us from time to time an overdraft to the amount of £450 at six per cent. We have thus been enabled to secure a valuable and central section for £250. In addition to this overdraft we have received £43 in response to our special appeal of last month, and promised debentures to the amount of £32. After a careful consideration of the position, tenders for a church building were called, and at a special Church meeting on the 12th inst., the lowest tender, involving a total expenditure of about £400, was accepted. The specified date of completion is June 13th, and we hope to hold opening services on the following Sunday, June 19th. It is desirable that a concise and complete statement of our position, needs and venture of faith be placed before readers of the BAPTIST. During the next three months our estimated expenditure will be £428 3s.; our available funds from all sources £401 17s., leaving a sum of £26 6s. yet to be made up. We have faith that this will be forthcoming, and we again make a special appeal to our many friends and sympathisers throughout the dominion. Donations of any amount will be thankfully received. Those who cannot help in this way we would urge to assist by means of a system of debentures without interest, repayable within three to five years. Loans for

£10, £5 or any other sum will be gladly welcomed. Further ... appears a detailed list of those who have responded to our special appeal of March last. God's message to us is: "Go forward!"

June 1910

HASTINGS (Rev. H. B. Hughes, M.A.) Our building is well under way, and next week will see the roof on. Since last report, subscriptions have risen to £61 odd, and there is still more to come in. We are, praying for it and we know it will come. Last week we received a donation from a South Island friend, and a note stating that he was unable to give more, but, taking advantage of our debenture system, he offered us £50 free of interest for three years. We thank God for such a magnificent offer. Other friends who are thinking of sending a debenture or donation need not be frightened that theirs may be too small after this offer, or too large. God has blessed us wonderfully, both spiritually and materially. Our Pastor is keen in his work, being filled with God's Spirit, and there is never an occasion he addresses us, but what we receive great blessing, and never a Sabbath passes but what he gives an opportunity to sinners to come to Christ. On Sunday evening, 15th May, one young man decided for Christ, and two Christians fully surrendered themselves to Christ. This shows that the Holy Spirit is working in our midst. Our morning and evening services are well attended and numbers of strangers take great interest in the Gospel preached. We are preparing for a visit from Dr. Henry. A committee has been formed from the different Churches, and our Pastor elected Secretary, which position he fills admirably. Our Young Men's Bible Class, although still small, continues to derive great benefit from addresses and papers from the members. We have lately been affiliated to the B.Y.M.B.C. Union. Last Sunday our Pastor made feeling remarks in reference to our late beloved King, and the "Dead March" was played by our organist at the evening service.

July 1910

Opening of New Church - Monday, 20 June, 1910

Rev. A. Dewdney (Brooklyn) preached to a fair congregation at the opening services of our new church yesterday. The weather was wet and rough, which somewhat kept down expected attendances. Three services were held. In the morning, Mr. Dewdney preached with his accustomed power from Zechariah ii. 1-5. In the afternoon, he addressed the young people, of whom there was a splendid muster. The evening sermon was based on Matthew xvi. 18. The church nicely filled. All the services were helpful and inspiring. Fuller particulars next month.

HASTINGS (Rev. H. B. Hughes, M.A.) We hope, ere this report is printed, to be in our new building. It is now out of the builders' hands, and ready for the ladies to put on the finishing touches. Our ladies work like Trojans, and nothing is beyond them, from scrubbing the church floor to making our Pastor comfortable on his platform. They have taken on the no small task of providing a church organ and have made arrangements, through the kindness of

one of our members, to import one from the makers, thus securing an instrument much cheaper than one bought in the Dominion. Last month Mr. Hughes went to Auckland to the capping ceremony in connection with his M.A. degree. Through an appeal from our Pastor last Sunday night, a young woman gave herself to Christ. Christ's Spirit in our Pastor and people; everyone enthusiastic in opening our new church, and the proposed visit by Dr. Henry, all lead us to believe that there is a great time in store for us. It has been proposed to start a Sunday School a week after the church opening. Mr. W. Turner is Superintendent, and we have plenty of teachers. A canvass of the district will be made to enrol scholars.

August 1910

HASTINGS (Rev. H. B. Hughes, M.A.) Following upon our telegram inserted in last month's issue, we have to more fully report on the opening services in connection with our new building. The Sunday (June 19th) was a stormy day, but still very fair congregations greeted the Rev. A. Dewdney, who came from Brooklyn and preached. Mr. Dewdney's preaching was enjoyed by all, and we only regret that the weather prevented more from coming to hear him. The afternoon service, again conducted by Mr. Dewdney, for young people, was splendid. About sixty or more came along, including members from the Methodist and Presbyterian Bible Classes, and we had a real bright and helpful time. The weather cleared for our Wednesday night meeting. The result was a packed building, and extra seats had to be procured. The "Hastings Standard," in reporting, commenced as follows: "A pronounced success in every way!" And so it was. Our Pastor, Rev. H. B. Hughes, M.A., took the chair, and with him on the platform were Rev. J.K. Archer, of Napier, and Messrs. W. Lascelles, T. Rice, of the Napier Baptist Church, and Messrs. W. Turner and H. K. Wright, of Hastings. A good programme was rendered, and items were thoroughly enjoyed. The Rev. J.K. Archer delivered an instructive address, dealing with the Baptists, showing their past history, and giving a brief account of their distinctive principles. Our Pastor referred to the surprise generally manifested at the speedy erection, the size and general comfort of the new building. He commented on the advances already made by the Church in membership and attendance at divine service during the five months of his pastorate. During an interval, refreshments were handed round by the ladies. The meeting closed with the Doxology and the Benediction. We have to thank all those who so kindly assisted us, and especially our thanks are due to the ladies of the Church. Our Sunday School, with Mr. W. Turner as Superintendent, commenced on the 26th of June. Two teachers are assisting him, and numbers are growing encouragingly. Mr. Wright has the leadership of the Young Women's Bible Class, while our Pastor leads the Young Men's Bible Class. The meetings all are bright and attractive and each Sunday new faces are welcomed in all branches. The attendance at Church, at both morning and evening services, are very good, although the weather has of late been wet and rough. We particularly notice that the number of young men attending our services is increasing steadily. The prayer-meeting is full of life and power.

September 1910

HASTINGS (Rev. H. Bamford Hughes, M.A.) We are glad to report that our movement is a decidedly forward one. Our Sunday services are well attended, and our Pastor's earnest words are listened to with great attention, and are proving helpful to all. We note with joy the great

increase in the numbers of young men now attending our services. Our Pastor each Sunday from the pulpit gives the invitation to accept Christ. We are glad to say that souls have been won in our midst. We are looking forward to the visit of Dr. Henry and Mr. Potts, who are due here for ten days, from the 25th August, and are expecting and praying for great blessings and great results. Our Sunday School is growing rapidly, and the teaching staff is being increased. The children delight in attending regularly, and are bringing many others along with them. The Bible Classes grow, and discussions and studies are dealt with freely by all. Our prayer-meeting is also well attended.

October 1910

HASTINGS (Rev. H. B. Hughes, M.A.) It is with joy and praise to God for His great love that we submit this report. Dr. Henry has been in our midst, and God has not stinted the blessings we desired and asked for. Hastings has never had such a spiritual stirring up before. The Mission was held in the Drill Hall, and the Missioner spoke to a packed house at almost every meeting. Of the personal workers we are glad to state that the Baptist Church supplied the most. Our prayer now is that the uplifting we have received may continue, so that good work may still be done for Christ in our midst. Our Sunday School is growing by leaps and bounds, and our near trouble will be to find accommodation for the classes. Mr. Lascelles, one of our members is building a Sunday School on the outskirts of the town, and over twenty children have asked to join. A canvass of the district is yet to be made, and the prospects are very encouraging. A baptismal service will be held shortly, when a number of converts and others will follow their Lord through the waters of Baptism.

December 1910

HASTINGS (Rev. H. B. Hughes, M.A.) Our Pastor and Mr. Lascelles have returned from the Conference full of news, which we are eager to hear. On Sunday, October 10th, Mr. Hughes gave a stirring address on "Home Missions." Last month we had the joy of seeing another young man give himself to Christ. Several scholars in our Sunday School have recently decided for Christ. God has blessed the efforts of Mr. Lascelles in the new Mission Hall. Last month we reported 21 children enquiring for admission to the Sunday School. Today there are 47 on the roll. The services for adults are also well attended. Our Pastor and Church members take the services alternately. Last month we had a visit from Mr. Takle, who gave us a very interesting address. We are pleased to report that on Sunday, 20th instant, we are to have our first Baptismal Service. On the previous Wednesday we had a Church social. The object, which was highly successful, was to bring the members of the Church and congregation together. Our school is growing. Additional classes are being formed, necessitating the ordering of double the quantity of school matter for the new year. The school attendance at the new Mission Hall is steadily increasing. The services are being continued regularly, and are much appreciated.