

## CHAPTER 2: CHANGING AND MATURING

Virginia was aging, and life was not what it used to be. The slave issue cut through the state as farmers in the west opposed slavery and farmers in the eastern part needed the slave help to cultivate the new crop, cotton. Large cotton plantations arose in the east bringing an increased demand for slaves, and tobacco farming diminished leaving wastelands and excessive slaves. Many slave owners turned to "raising" slaves for market to sell to the large plantation owners, as a result.

During the 1820's to the time of the Civil War, Virginia's influence in national politics declined. Her population dropped from first place, but agriculture still remained as the chief means of livelihood. The period was congenial for expansion of religious life through cooperative action.

Baptists during the early nineteenth century turned to cooperation. Even though the General Committee disbanded in 1799, there was still a feeling that some form of organization was needed to provide a continuity of fellowship among the churches throughout the state. The Meeting of Correspondence was recommended and put in action to promote and preserve union and harmony among the churches.

Virginia Baptists turned toward general education, publication missions (both domestic and foreign) this interest, the denominations constituted a system of boards to meet the local churches spiritual Meherrin Association, like many others had a public offering for mission annual meeting in 1816.

In June of 1822 at First Baptist five associations of Dover, Appomattox, Portsmouth, and Meherrin drew up a what is today known as the General Association of Virginia. By 1829, the following made in the organizations of institutions General Association, Baptist Missions, Virginia Bible Society, Virginia Society, the Temperance Society, and Baptist Minister's Meetings. For s changing and maturing into a denomination threat to the local autonomy of the But in spite of this feeling democracy, churches grew. Many blacks to the church rolls, wine was questionable, and appropriate for co musical instruments were added to experience.

In this environment came Fourth pastor. As obscure as the George W. Collier came into the position days, because of the shortage of ministers times there came from the congregation layman who surrendered himself to ministry. George Collier was such pastor from 1828 until May of 1835. can be said, other than He surrendered Lord's work, did it, and was gone.

William W. Snow became the third to stay for approximately one year.