

MINUTES

OF THE

General Assembly

OF THE

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

IN THE

CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA.

WITH

AN APPENDIX.

VOL. I.

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A. D. 1862.

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AUGUSTA, GA.  
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1862.

# MINUTES.

MONTGOMERY, ALA., May 1, 1862.

In view of the presence of the conflicting armies in the near vicinity of the city of Memphis, and the consequent danger and difficulty of assembling at that place, in accordance with the recommendation of the Moderator, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America, met, according to Proclamation made by the Stated and Permanent Clerks, in the Presbyterian Church in the city of Montgomery, on Thursday the 1st day of May, 1862, at 11 o'clock, A. M.

The Moderator of the last Assembly being absent, it was, on motion of Rev. Henry Safford—

*Resolved*, That Rev. J. L. Kirkpatrick, D.D., from the Presbytery of Concord, be appointed to preach the Opening Sermon, and preside until a Moderator be chosen.

Dr. Kirkpatrick accordingly preached from the text, Romans, viii: 17:—"And if children, then heirs: heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ."

After the Sermon he proceeded to constitute the Sessions with prayer.

The Permanent Clerk from the Committee on Commissions reported that the following Commissioners had appeared and been regularly enrolled, viz:

## I. SYNOD OF ALABAMA.

### PRESBYTERIES.

*East Alabama,*  
*South Alabama,*  
*Tuscaloosa,*

### MINISTERS.

G. R. Foster,  
Henry R. Raymond,  
John W. Pratt,

### RULING ELDERS.

N. S. Graham,  
A. B. Cooper,  
E. A. Archibald.

## II. SYNOD OF ARKANSAS.

*Arkansas,*  
*Creek Nation,*  
*Indian,*  
*Ouchita,*

## IV. SYNOD OF GEORGIA.

T. C. Crawford,  
S. H. Higgins, D.D. (2)  
Donald Fraser,  
R. Q. Mallard,  
Henry Safford,

James Green,  
Robert A. Ware, (2)  
John C. McGehee,

T. T. Windsor.

*Cherokee,*  
*Flint River,*  
*Florida,*  
*Georgia,*  
*Hopewell,*

and, on motion of Dr. Leyburn, was ordered to be forwarded to the Executive Committee of Publication, with directions that it be published as a circular for distribution among the classes to whom it is addressed, and that it be also published in the Appendix to the Minutes.

Rev. J. M. Anderson from the Committee on Education presented the Committee's Report, which was adopted, and is as follows:

Your Committee beg leave to report that in consequence of the want of any report or papers from the Executive Committee on Education, and the absence of the Secretary from the Sessions of this body, we are unable to report anything in reference to the progress of the Committee in their important work. After the full deliverance of the last General Assembly on the subject it would seem to be scarcely necessary that this Assembly should stop to give its testimony in favor of an educated Ministry, and the consequent duty of the Church to endeavor by her prayers and contributions to secure this end. Zion should never forget that according to the gracious dispensations of her divine King the gospel is not only to be preached to the poor, but also by the poor. And it is worthy of remark and devout thanksgiving that our blessed Saviour has been pleased to signify his approval of this department of our work, by making many of our beneficiaries eminently useful Ministers of His glorious gospel. Encouraged by the past, and looking hopefully to the future, we are persuaded our Church will endeavor to meet the tremendous responsibilities which are being devolved upon her, by the most earnest efforts to secure and maintain a pious and learned Ministry. To stand in her lot in her day, and to fulfil the lofty mission which seems designed for her by her glorious Head, largely increased liberality to the cause of Education will be demanded of her. May we not hope that the day is not distant when this will be fully realised? When thousands who have no sons to give to the work of the Gospel Ministry, will feel it to be a duty and glorious privilege to educate at their individual expense, gifted and pious young men whom God may be pleased to call to this work?

Your Committee would recommend the following resolutions:

*Resolved*, 1. That this General Assembly, instead of the first Wednesday in December, as designated by the last Assembly, appoint the last Thursday of February next, to be observed as a day of special prayer for the youth assembled in our various Schools, Colleges and Seminaries, and for all the baptised children of the Church—that God would be pleased to pour out His Spirit upon them and sanctify them to the blessed work of making His way known upon the earth—His saving health amongst all nations. And further that it be recommended to all the Churches under the care of this Assembly to take up a collection on that day, in aid of the cause of Education.

*Resolved*, 2. That it be recommended to the Churches under the care of this Assembly to offer special prayer on the last Sabbath of every month for all our baptised young men now in the army—that God would preserve them from all evil and make them faithful to the Captain of their salvation.

Rev. D. Johnson, from the Committee on the Records of the Synod of Georgia, reported that said Record be approved as far as written. Adopted.

Rev. H. R. Raymond offered the following Resolution, which was adopted.

*Resolved*, That the Executive Committees of Education and Foreign Missions be authorised (as has been done in the cases of the Executive Committees of Domestic Missions and Publication,) to make such temporary changes in their location as the disturbed state of our country may seem to demand; also, all needful arrangements for the security and transmission of the funds entrusted to them.

Rev. J. L. Girardeau reported the Narrative, which was adopted and ordered to be printed in the Appendix to the Minutes, and to be read from the pulpits of all our Churches—(see Appendix.)

The Assembly adjourned to meet this afternoon at 4 o'clock. Closed with prayer by Rev. Dr. Chapman.

# APPENDIX.

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## NARRATIVE OF THE STATE OF RELIGION,

IN THE BOUNDS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA:—ADDRESSED TO THE CHURCHES UNDER ITS CARE.

It is but a few months since the first General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States was organized, and our Zion was equipped for her great and distinctive work. We desire at this, our second meeting to render devout thanksgiving to our Divine Lord and Head for the abundant favor which He has manifested to our Church in entering upon that new and solemn path of our duty to which His Providence has so clearly pointed her. Having, as she conceived, a Divine call to set up her banners as an independent organization, she has not been destitute of the Divine blessing in obeying it, and, we trust, will be yet more and more richly endowed for prosecuting as well the enterprises peculiarly entrusted to her, as the general labors which are assigned to every Church of the Redeemer.

We have to regret that in consequence of the distracted condition of the country, comparatively few reports of our Presbyteries touching the state of religion in their bounds have come up to us, and that, therefore, our opportunity of forming an estimate of the condition of our Churches is somewhat limited. All the Presbyteries which have reported dwell upon the absorbing topic of the war in which we are now engaged, and the influence exerted by it upon the religious interests and efforts of the Church. In tracing the religious history of the past few months, marked by events so extraordinary, many facts of profound interest claim consideration; but in a paper like this it is possible only to glance at some of the most interesting and important. We notice

1. *The relation of our Congregations to the great struggle in which we are engaged.* All of the Presbyterian Narratives, without exception, mention the fact that their congregations have evinced the most cordial sympathy with the people of the Confederate States in their efforts to maintain their cherished rights and institutions against the despotic power which is attempting to crush them. Deeply convinced that this struggle is not alone for civil rights, and property, and home, but also for religion, for the Church, for the Gospel, and for existence itself, the Churches in our connection have freely contributed to its prosecution of their substance, their prayers and, above all, of their members and the beloved youth of their congrega-

tions. They have parted, without a murmur, with those who constitute the hope of the Church, and have bidden them go forth to the support of this great and sacred cause, with their benedictions, and with their supplications for their protection and success. The Assembly desires to record, with its solemn approval, this fact of the unanimity of our people in supporting a contest to which religion, as well as patriotism now summons the citizens of this country, and to implore for them the blessing of God in the course which they are now pursuing.

In this connection we would notice the fact that some of our Ministers have entered the army as chaplains, or in the joint capacity of chaplains and soldiers, and are discharging a most important and useful office in this relation. One of these—a member of the Presbytery of South Alabama—is now a prisoner in the hands of the enemy, and another, Rev. Dabney Carr Harrison—a member of the Presbytery of East Hanover—a chaplain and an officer, fell mortally wounded while leading his men in one of the bloodiest battles fought in this war. His name will be embalmed in the hearts of his countrymen, and will be held in veneration by the Church of which he was an ornament.

We were prepared to expect from the existing state of things that the Narratives would evince the fact that the minds of christians are, to some extent, diverted by this absorbing subject from their purely spiritual relations and duties. And while this expectation has in part been fulfilled, we rejoice to learn that the evil has not been permitted to assume the disastrous proportions suggested by our fears. This leads us, in the next place, to advert to

## II. *The Spiritual condition of the Churches as affected by the war.*

1. The fact that the attendance on the means of grace, particularly by the young, is in a great measure diminished, while showing that the material to be affected by the direct influences of the sanctuary is lessened, should not be regarded as discouraging, as it proves that what may be deleterious to the interests of particular congregations is beneficial to the country and to the church at large. It could not be desired that in the circumstances in which we are placed a different state of things should prevail. What at first sight, therefore, appears to militate against the prosperity of the churches, we cannot but regard as evincing the christian patriotism of our people, and as furnishing a powerful incentive to the exercise of intercessory prayer in behalf of kindred and friends exposed to the perils of camp life and the dangers of battle. We are constrained, however, to call the attention of the Churches to the fact mentioned by some of the Presbyteries that the absorbing interest of the struggle in which we are contending for everything dear to men, is having some influence in lessening in the minds of God's people a sense of their spiritual obligations; and we would implore our brethren not even in the present extremity to break their sympathy with that subject which should lie nearest their hearts—the interests of Christ's kingdom and the salvation of souls.

2. We observe, with unfeigned sorrow, the fact reported by some of our Presbyteries that not a few congregations have been entirely disbanded, and their members driven from their sanctuaries and their homes, as refugees seeking an asylum among strangers. The Assembly would assure these afflicted brethren of their cordial sympathy with them under these trials, and would commend them most affectionately to the care of the Shepherd and Bishop of Souls. We invoke in behalf of these sufferers the sympathies and the prayers of the entire Church.

3. It is with great pleasure and with gratitude to God, we learn that in almost all our churches religious services, notwithstanding the troubled state of the times, have been regularly maintained, and that there has been a greater disposition than formerly on the part of those who have remained at home, to honor the ordinances of the Gospel, and to attend upon the ministrations of the sanctuary.

4. We are rejoiced to know that Prayer-meetings have been very much multiplied in the bounds of our congregations, and that a spirit of fervent and importunate prayer has been poured out upon our people. The Head of the Church evidently appears to use the present afflicted condition of His people as a means for inciting them to the discharge of this all-important, but ordinarily too much neglected duty. We would express our earnest desire that these meetings for prayer may be continued without abatement, as we cannot but feel that upon the supplications of Christ's

people rest the surest hope of the interposition of a merciful Providence in behalf of an afflicted church and country.

5. We have been cheered by the fact mentioned by many of the Presbyteries that the trials to which the people of God are now subjected have been manifestly sanctified to their growth in grace. We perceive with joy and gratitude, in this striking fact, a proof of the vitality of the religion of our Churches, and the absence of that tendency to defection from Christ and apostacy from the Gospel which is to be dreaded as the sorest curse which could, in the judgment of God, befall us. We derive, too, from this fact, the soul-cheering conviction that though our sins are great, it is not the intention of our Master to forsake us. The storm rages, the night is dark, but Jesus walks upon the tempestuous floods. We hear His voice, and trust that in His own good time He will speak the word which winds and seas obey, and which stills the angry strife of nations. We exhort the churches to consider that the administration of Providence is committed to the hands of the Lord Jesus, and to hope and pray that He would employ these painful dispensations still more conspicuously for developing the graces and stimulating the zeal of His people.

6. Though comparatively few of our churches are reported as having enjoyed seasons of unusual revival, we have cause for gratitude to God that He has vouchsafed to some of them the refreshing grace of His Spirit in a remarkable degree. The Presbytery of South Alabama mentions the fact that one of its largest Churches—the Government street Church in Mobile—has enjoyed such a blessing during the whole of the past winter, and that many souls have been gathered there into the fold of Christ. The Presbytery of Fayetteville states that a like blessing has been experienced by several of its churches. The Presbytery of Georgia states that a special work of grace in one of its congregations was under God attributable directly to the afflictive influence of the war; and the Presbytery of Lexington, lying in the very track of the enemy's armies, reports that there have been many conversions of its young men while in the army, and that some of them have, on returning home for a season, united themselves to the church. These facts, at a time like the present, demand special thanksgiving, and afford strong encouragement to all our Ministers and churches to labor and pray in the conviction that the Lord Christ is yet dispensing His gifts to the church, and that "the still, small voice" of the Spirit of God is not hushed by the clamors of strife and the thunders of war.

7. We would not omit the mention of the fact that amidst the commotions of this sanguinary struggle, harmony and peace have prevailed throughout our Zion, and that there has been an almost entire absence of litigious and schismatic tendencies from the churches. We observe with pleasure, too, that a common exigency has been the means of drawing together, in closer bonds of union, the people of Christ of different denominations. Union Prayer meetings are held throughout the length and breadth of the Confederacy. The latent affinities of Christ's people of different folds are thus brought out, and while they see eye to eye, they realise the answer to the Saviour's prayer for an union of all believers akin to that which binds Him to His Father.

### III. *Efforts to extend the Kingdom of Christ.*

1. We were not unprepared to learn that the heavy drain upon our congregations for the support of the war has, to some extent, diminished the amount raised by collections for benevolent objects. Some of the Presbyteries report this as the actual result of the present state of things. We cannot, however, but regard the means so expended as contributed, under the extraordinary circumstances of our present case, to the conservation of the interests of Christ's Kingdom, and the future welfare of His Church in this land. We do not, therefore, feel that we are called upon to lament this fact as evidencing delinquency on the part of the churches in the discharge of christian obligations. Others of the Presbyteries report that notwithstanding the unusual pressure upon their churches, the collections for spiritual purposes have not been lessened, and in some cases have even been increased. For this we are thankful, and we would remind our people in this time of hardship in our financial affairs, of the example of the Macedonian churches, which out of their deep poverty and distress abounded in the grace of beneficence and the fruits

of charity. Nearly all the Presbyteries which have been heard from report that the usual collections for benevolent purposes are regularly made. This is as it should be. Let the system be preserved unbroken and opportunities be regularly presented to the people of God for the contribution of their substance to the treasury of the Lord. Let us continue to do our duty, even amidst difficulties, and trust in God for the supply of our temporal needs.

2. Our hearts have been cheered by the report of the success which has attended our Foreign Missionary operations. Our church has been baptised in her infancy with the spirit of Missions, and will, we trust, fulfil the high vocation wherewith the Master calls her to a work which lies so near His heart. The liberality manifested by our Church in this great cause, notwithstanding the stringency of the times, and the fact that so many doors of access to the heathen world are now closed against her, is strong proof of such a vocation, and suggests the hope that the circumstances which now repress this divinely implanted spirit will be providentially removed, so that she may be enabled, untrammelled, to address herself to the relief of the necessities of a dying world.

3. We rejoice to hear that most of our Presbyteries are more and more rousing up their energies to take hold of the great work of Domestic Missions, but we regret that owing to the assault of the enemy upon the city of New-Orleans, and the consequent removal of its seat of operations, the Assembly's Committee are embarrassed in the prosecution of their plans. We hope, however, that it will not be long before this difficulty will, in the good providence of God be taken out of the way.

4. Nearly all the Presbyteries make special mention of the fact that religious instruction is faithfully imparted to the colored people. We cannot but rejoice at this intelligence. The great and startling fact that about four millions of souls are immediately dependent on the Church, in these Confederate States, for all that they can know of Christ and His salvation, and that if that church neglects them, none other can impart this essential knowledge, and they must be doomed to go down to the pit at our own doors:—this, surely, is enough to incite us to a diligent and faithful cultivation of this field. We have the motives to the discharge of a great Missionary work springing from the bosom of every family, and the cabins of every plantation. The Assembly would solemnly exhort all its Ministers, office bearers, and church members to gird themselves afresh for the accomplishment of a work which none but they can do.

5. Although our churches have been depleted so largely of their young men and their male teachers by the demands of the war, we are gratified to learn that Sabbath Schools and Bible classes are almost universally maintained, and we would record it to the praise of the pious women of our Churches, not a few, that they have hastened to repair the defect in the number of teachers, and are nobly exerting themselves to keep alive these institutions for the impartation of christian knowledge to the young.

In conclusion, the Assembly renders hearty thanks to the glorious Redeemer for all the tokens of His favor which alleviate the affliction of our churches in this day of calamity; and would affectionately commend the people under its care to God and to the word of His grace which is able to build them up, and to give them an inheritance among all them that are sanctified—exhorting them to continue in the steadfast discharge of their patriotic and christian duties, in the hope that as this country enwraps in its bosom the Church of Christ—not abandoned in judgment, to apostasy from its Head—the prayers of that Church will be answered in mercy, and that God will, in His own way, and in His own time, so reveal His delivering arm as forever to engrave the lessons of His goodness and grace upon the heart of a people redeemed from bondage and rescued from ruin.

## REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF DOMESTIC MISSIONS TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

The Executive Committee of Domestic Missions are not able to report any considerable progress in the work entrusted to their management. As their fiscal year closed the 31st of March, operations included in this Report embrace but three months. On the 31st December the Committee held its first meeting and was organised by the election of its officers, and early in January the Secretary appointed by the General Assembly reached New-Orleans and entered upon his duties. A circular was immediately issued, addressed to all the pastors in our connection, soliciting their co-operation and that of their churches; but up to the present time this appeal has not been responded to as generally and heartily as could have been desired. This apparent backwardness in helping forward the Church's chosen agency is, no doubt, owing, in a large measure, to the troubles of the times, and the unsettled condition of the country. The minds of the people are occupied with the distressing and sanguinary contest in which we are called to contend for our liberties, our property, the sanctity of our homes, and all that we hold dear. Large numbers of those who have been accustomed to contribute most liberally are enlisted in the army, and doing battle for their country, whilst the resources of our entire population, with but few exceptions, are seriously curtailed. The difficulty, real or supposed, of transmitting funds to so great a distance at this time—the uncertainty in some minds as to the result of the enemy's threatened attack on New-Orleans, and the delay, always more or less incident to forming new arrangements, may also account, in some measure, for the failure in so large a portion of the churches promptly to do their part in this great work. It is to be hoped that very soon all obstacles may be removed, and that we may be cheered by the spectacle of the whole church uniting its energies for the extension of its borders, and for building up the kingdom of our Lord in all the waste places of the land.

The number of Missionaries in commission at the organization of the Committee was thirty-seven. Of these nine have not applied for re-commissions, and four new commissions have been issued, leaving the number at present in service thirty-two. The total number in service, during any part of the three months, was forty. This statement will, at once, show that but a small proportion of the Missionaries within the bounds of our Church have become connected with this Committee. The number in the States of the Confederacy, when acting under the old Board having been, as nearly as can be ascertained, one hundred and fifty.

Several applications have been received from destitute fields for Missionaries, and the Committee have been in correspondence with the Theological Seminaries at Columbia and Prince Edward, and are led to expect that the graduating classes of these Institutions will furnish the means of supplying these wants, and probably, other destitutions as well.

The forty Missionaries who have been in commission have been distributed as follows: Texas, 10; Louisiana, 10; Mississippi, 9; Arkansas, 7; Alabama, 3, and Tennessee, 1. With the exception of the last mentioned, these fields, it will be seen are confined to the bounds of the late South-western Advisory Committee. The Missionary in Tennessee had been connected with the old Board's Louisville Committee, until cut off by the political changes of the country.

The Treasurer's Report, herewith submitted, includes the five months since the dissolution of the South-western Advisory Committee, up to March 31st. The receipts have been \$6,099.18, which, with \$2,885.47 handed over by that Committee, makes a total of \$8,984.65. The disbursements have been \$4,745.52, leaving a balance in the Treasury, March 31st, of \$4,239.13. This balance will be absorbed in a few months by appropriations falling due to the Missionaries, and, indeed, unless the receipts of the Treasury during the summer should exceed what may ordinarily be expected, it is not improbable that there may be a deficiency to meet current demands. In the limited condition of the Treasury, and the uncertainty of the times, the Committee have felt compelled to proceed with great caution. Many

of the commissions issued have been but for six months, and in some cases the appropriations have been reduced. The reduction of the Missionaries' salaries, at such a time, however, is a measure the Committee are reluctant to resort to. The compensation of these faithful and self-denying brethren is inadequate at best, and now, when the ordinary receipts from the congregations are diminished, and the prices of living are so much enhanced, they more than ever need the assistance of the Church at large. Many of them report to us that the salaries promised them have either been curtailed, or remain, in great part, unpaid, so that they are seriously straitened for the means of subsistence. They are living in the most frugal manner, scarcely able to provide for themselves and their families the plainest clothing, and the simplest food. Even what are usually regarded the necessities of life have become, to a considerable extent, rare luxuries to them. The patient suffering of these brethren, in these trying circumstances, is worthy of all commendation, and loudly appeals to the Church to come to their aid. However uncomplainingly they may endure the hardships of their lot, it is not right that they should be subjected to unnecessary privation. They are faithfully doing the most difficult and self-denying work for the Church, and the Church should see to it that they do not suffer want.

The reports of the Missionaries almost uniformly speak of the deleterious effects of the war in thinning their flocks, weakening their effective force, and absorbing the minds of the people. Piety is too often languishing, and the cause of Christ is, in a measure, worsted in its progress. In some cases, happily, the prevailing troubles have had the contrary effect—humbling the people of God, and making them, more than ever, feel the value of that refuge and strength which can avail in every emergency. Some of the Missionaries report, much to the gratification of the Committee, encouraging labors amongst that most needy, and too much neglected class, our colored population.

Notwithstanding the embarrassments of the times, and the heavy demands upon our afflicted country, your Committee feel assured that the funds for this and every other department of the Church's benevolent operations, would be fully adequate to every reasonable demand, were all our congregations to carry into effect the plan of systematic contributions. The realization of the idea of every church-member giving according as God hath prospered him, is vital to the successful prosecution of the work of expansion and aggression. Could our new-born Church but carry out this Scriptural principle of benevolence, it would at once, in her infancy, crown her with honor, and would illumine her future with the most cheering prospects. The Committee cannot but hope that our pastors and church-sessions, may be led speedily to see and to do their duty in this particular, and that the General Assembly, and all the inferior judicatories may adopt such measures as may be best adapted to hasten on the desired consummation.

In this connection the Committee would also call attention to the importance of the observance in all the Churches of a monthly concert of prayer in behalf of Domestic Missions. Surely this cause demands the united prayers of God's people, and if, with their supplications, contributions were united the most happy results might be anticipated.

It has already been intimated that the receipts into the Treasury from the various sections of the Church have been very unequal. The following are the amounts contributed from the several Synods:

From the Synod of Mississippi, \$3,768.65; Synod of Virginia, \$847.91; Synod of Georgia, \$470.66; Synod of Memphis, \$311.66; Synod of Arkansas, \$266; Synod of Texas, \$83.30; Synod of Alabama, \$65; Synod of Nashville, \$10; Synod of South Carolina, \$5. From the Synod of North Carolina nothing has been received. It will thus be seen that during the three months since the Committee's organization, \$3,768.65, or nearly two-thirds of the whole receipts, have come from the Synod of Mississippi. It is clear that if this Committee is to fulfil the idea for which it was designed, as the agency for the whole Church, there must be a more general and uniform co-operation. It is hardly fair, however, to take this incipient period of the organization as a criterion of a more established and more auspicious future, and the present statements are made not in the way of rebuke,

but rather as a stimulus to hasten on and rally the churches promptly to take hold of the great work.

The magnitude and importance of the interests entrusted to this Committee can scarcely be exaggerated. They embrace, to a great extent, the aggressive work of the Church in this land, as well as the sustentation of feeble churches already organized. The field is vast—the destitution lamentable. Our Confederacy covers about 840,000 square miles, with a population of some 8,000,000 of whites, and 4,000,000 of blacks. Among these are large numbers who never hear the Gospel from the lips of a Presbyterian minister, nor indeed from Ministers of any denomination. Church members of our own connection whose lot has been cast in new and destitute neighborhoods are blessed with no stated means of grace for themselves and their families. Our scattered sheep are wandering in the wilderness, without any one to care for them. And when peace shall once more have been restored to our suffering country, it is to be presumed that a fresh tide of population will set in. Then, too, the impediments which have heretofore restrained efforts in behalf of the colored race, whose lot is cast among us, will be removed so that in all probability there will be facilities of access to that part of our population never before enjoyed. This wide and needy field among the blacks brings claims of paramount importance to the sympathies and toils of the Southern Church, and it is to be hoped that from it a rich harvest is to be gathered in coming years. Providence has opened to us a vast missionary work at our own doors; and one altogether peculiar, and at the same time peculiar in encouragements. To the Church of the South the welfare of this race is committed as a sacred trust, and it behoves her to see that she is faithful to the obligations it imposes.

The close of our national conflict, and the establishment of our independence will also call for increased zeal and activity upon the part of the Church in order to counteract that demoralization which always follows in the train of war. Those hundreds of thousands of our young men, now in our armies, are the hope of our country. Many of them will die in the hospital, or on the bloody field, but the greater part of them will return to their homes, and to them the nation and the Church, alike, must look for the coming time.

To a nation just entering on its young life, the moral character not only of those who sit in its high places, but of its population at large, is of the very first importance. Upon this must depend her future—whether it shall be for glory or for shame. Unfortunately for our young republic, her young men are now in a most unfriendly school for morals. Removed from their homes, and from the religious restraints to which they have been accustomed, and encompassed with sin in its Protean forms, it would be well nigh a miracle if they should escape the fell influence of corruption. Already it is probable that intemperance has slain more of our brave soldiers than has the sword of the enemy. Profanity and Sabbath breaking have prevailed to an appalling extent. The probable influence of this most important portion of our population, when after months or years of such training, they shall have returned to their homes, cannot but awaken the most serious apprehensions. Sad, indeed, would it be, if in addition to the injuries suffered in all the material interests of our country, we should also be overrun by a moral desolation. The only safeguard against a calamity so appalling is to spread far and wide the influences of the Gospel. The Church must steadfastly set herself to arrest and roll back the threatening tide of evil, by holding forth more extensively and energetically than ever before, the word of life. She must prove herself the leaven to leaven the whole lump—she must be the salt to purify the mass. And in view of the bright future for our young republic, which breaks out through the dark clouds which environ the present, the Church should gird herself for an onward march, that she may lend her beneficent aid in elevating and sanctifying our whole population—that this Confederacy may prove at once, the stronghold of liberty and of piety, that we may have thrice righteousness which exalteth a nation—that we may be that happy people whose God is the Lord.

#### *Church Extension.*

To this Committee, the General Assembly also entrusted the work of Church

Extension. A circular was issued calling the attention of the Churches to the subject. The receipts for this object to March 31st, were \$172.20. Applications for aid have been received, but as the amount on hand was too small to meet them, no appropriation has as yet been made.

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## FIRST REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF PUBLICATION TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

In presenting this their first Report to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States, the Committee of Publication have to regret that it should exhibit so little progress in the great work entrusted to their hands. As early as it was practicable to do so the Committee were convened, and made such arrangements as were in their power for entering upon their appropriate duties. No funds were in the Treasury and no paper in possession with which to commence the business of publishing such productions as might be deemed most immediately necessary. An appeal was at once made to our Churches, and in a little while the Committee were furnished with a sum sufficient to print catechisms and tracts more specially suited for the soldiers of our army. It was their purpose also to publish the Sabbath School paper ordered by the General Assembly.

Just here at the threshold all attempts to proceed were met by an almost insurmountable obstacle. The scarcity of paper had become so great that none could be procured for our purpose in Virginia, at any price; contracts with the Confederate and State Governments, and with political journals of wide circulation having entirely exhausted all the supplies which could be furnished from this State. Without entering into tedious details, it is enough to say that not until within a few days past could any certain expectation be entertained of securing it elsewhere, though at double the cost paid a year ago. As soon as obtained the work will be prosecuted as far as practicable.

With regard to the Sabbath School paper some explanation may be proper. Such publications having been heretofore copiously illustrated by engravings, efforts were made to procure them in Richmond. But owing to the fact that most of the best engravers here were fully engaged by the Confederate Government, and many called to the army, these efforts were unavailing. Arrangements were subsequently made with the Publishing House of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Nashville which promised satisfactory results, but they were entirely frustrated by the political misfortune befalling that city. But having now obtained from a private source a small supply of suitable paper, the first number of this periodical will be issued early this month, under the title of "The Children's Friend." It is judged better upon the whole, to establish it, though for a time, at least, without the advantages of illustrations, than to abandon, or postpone it longer. The need for something of this kind is greatly increased by the fact that our Sabbath Schools are now cut off from their usual supply of books. The number of copies subscribed for is, at the present time, only 2,274, a list far too small for the strength, the intelligence, and the piety of our Church. The Presbyterian Board in Philadelphia reached a circulation in 1861, of 60,000 copies. Counting our Church at about one-third of the whole before the separation, and making allowance for our more sparse population, "The Children's Friend" may be reasonably expected, under a more favorable condition of public affairs to obtain a circulation of 15,000 copies. And surely an enterprise with bearings so direct and weighty upon the precious youth of our Church and land must engage the hearty support of our people.