

MINUTES

OF THE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OF THE

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

IN THE

CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA:

WITH

AN APPENDIX.

VOL. I.

A. D. 1863.

COLUMBIA, S. C.:
SOUTHERN GUARDIAN STEAM-POWER PRESS.

1863.

there exist by death two vacancies, to fill which your Committee, with the same unanimity, present the names of W. P. Finley, Esq., and the Rev. B. M. Palmer, D. D.

Your Committee beg leave further to remark that, when this report is adopted, the said Committee will consist of Revs. John B. Adger, D. D., chairman, R. L. Dabney, D. D., B. M. Smith, D. D., E. T. Baird, D. D., T. E. Peck, Benj. M. Palmer, D. D., Ministers; and Ruling Elders, W. P. Webb, T. C. Perrin, Wm. L. Mitchell, W. P. Finley.

All of which is respectfully submitted,

WM. L. MITCHELL, *Chairman.*

On motion of Dr. Waddel, the Assembly resolved to consider the payments of assessments upon the different Presbyteries, made at this time, as so much in advance upon the new assessment provided by the Committee on Finance; and that the Presbyteries which do not now pay the newly required assessment, be directed to forward the amounts assessed either to the Stated or Permanent Clerk.

The Rev. J. M. Atkinson, from the Committee on the Narrative, reported the Narrative, which was accepted and adopted. (See Appendix.)

The Rev. Dr. Palmer, from the Committee appointed to report a minute upon the death of General T. J. Jackson, presented the following, which was unanimously adopted by the members rising in silence in their places:

The Committee appointed to draft a minute upon the death of Gen. Thomas J. Jackson, respectfully submit the following:

The despatches, announcing the severe illness of this beloved servant of God, and invoking the prayers of this Assembly on his behalf, had scarcely aroused our alarm before the sad intelligence of his death fell, with its crushing weight, upon our hearts, and turned these prayers for him into weeping supplications for ourselves and for our bereaved country. Seldom in history has one been able, in so short a time, to write his name so deeply upon the hearts of his countrymen, and to raise the admiration of the world at large. Uniting the most beautiful simplicity with the most intense earnestness of character, with a religious consecration to duty as the regulative principle of his life, he was a true man in all the relations in which he moved. The additional endowment of a military genius, quick to perceive and to improve the advantage and its opportunity, made him what he was, the true soldier and the consummate general. It were idle to compress within this record his brilliant military career, which forms so large a part of this young nation's history. The rapidity of his movements, imparting to him a seeming ubiquity, the promptness and daring and uniform success of his achievements, rendered his name a terror to our foes, and a tower of strength to ourselves. It is not invidious to say that, whilst other generals of the army, superior to him in rank, command equally with himself the confidence of our people, he was the most deeply of them all enshrined in their affections. It will be the office of history to assign the position he will occupy upon her impartial page; and we doubt not that the verdict of posterity will confirm the judgment of his contemporaries, in pronouncing that the life of a hero has been crowned with the death of a martyr.

But General Jackson has stronger claims upon the affectionate and tearful remembrance of this General Assembly than those founded upon his merits as a patriot and a warrior. He was a warm and zealous Christian, a man that

feared God, and walked carefully before Him; who, being found blameless, used the office of a deacon in the house of God, filling up the portrait drawn by the apostle's hand: "Grave, not double tongued, and holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience." His religion was woven into the whole texture of his character and life, the constructive element which made him the man he was. It has been tersely and truthfully, and therefore beautifully, said of him, that in the army he was the expression of his country's confidence in God and in itself. Even those who withheld from God the homage of their own obedience and love, took refuge in the thought that their great military leader drew his strength from the God of heaven, and, like the Hebrew Moses, daily communed with Him upon the mount; and the Church of Christ turned their eyes to him with a loving joy, as the embodied and concrete representative, the living exposition of those precious truths which it is her mission to testify to a dying world. In the army his religious influence diffused itself like the atmosphere around him; and by that strange magnetic power over other minds which is given to all who are born to command, none were drawn into his presence who did not bow before the supremacy of that piety so silently yet conspicuously illustrated in the carriage of this Christian general.

The evidence is cumulative before this Assembly of his zeal to overtake the religious wants of his soldiery, and of the yearnings of his soul that this venerable court should, during its present sessions, concert large plans for the evangelization of the army, and of the country at large. Therefore it is, this Assembly, at the moment of its dissolution, as its last solemn act, would place upon its records this memorial to his praise, and bedew it with their parting tears. We shall not attempt here the interpretation of the mysterious providence which has taken away from the country, at such a juncture, so strong an arm. It is enough that He has done it who does all things well; we will "be still and know that He is God." But in the depth of our own sadness, we would speak a word of cheer to our bereaved countrymen; that in the disappointment of many of our most reasonable calculations, no less than in unexpectedly blessing us when all seemed dark and forbidding, God seems to us only the more to have charged Himself with the care and protection of this struggling Republic; and in this new chastening we recognize the token of Him whose way it is to humble those whom it is His purpose to exalt and to bless.

With the immediate family and kindred of our departed brother, we desire to mingle our grief, as they pay the tribute of their sorrow over his grave; and the Assembly conveys through this Minute its tenderest sympathy to those whose hearts are bleeding under what is to them a more close and personal bereavement, praying the God of all consolation to grant unto them joy for mourning, beauty for ashes, and the garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

Respectfully submitted,

B. M. PALMER, *Chairman.*

Col. G. J. S. Walker asked, and, on motion, obtained leave, by vote of the Assembly, to withdraw the memorial, proposed on last night to be forwarded to Congress, touching a change in the Constitution of the Confederate States.

The second order of the day, viz., the election of Directors of the Theological Seminary of Columbia, of the Secretaries of the different Executive Committees, and of the Members of the same, was announced; when, upon motion of the Rev. W. W. Morrison, the following were elected by acclamation: