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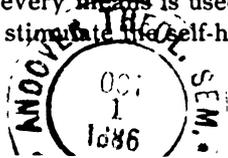
NO. V.

THE receipts of the Board from May to August were less by \$13,965 than for the same period last year. By the report of the Treasurer to September the shortcoming had grown still worse. Up to September 1st the receipts were \$57,000 less than at the same date last year—including, however, in last year's receipts special gifts for the debt. No comment is necessary upon these facts. Every reader of *THE FOREIGN MISSIONARY* can draw his own conclusions and form his own estimate of the outlook. By the special efforts of last year for the debt enough was raised to barely maintain the *work* at its existing status, leaving a debt just about equal to that of the year before, viz.: something over \$57,000.

Nothing was really gained on the debt. If, then, last year left the old debt of \$57,000 standing, and the first four months of this year fall another \$57,000 behind last year, what is the prospect as to the indebtedness of next May?

This is upon the supposition that no further decline occurs in the remaining months. And meanwhile it is to be borne in mind that no advance is being made in the expenditures for the work.

THE question of the responsibilities of a Board naturally arises under such circumstances as these. Our Presbyterian theory is, the Boards are servants of the Church. This theory was acted upon in the last Assembly with reference to the consolidation of the magazines, and its authority is heeded by the Boards. With equal authoritativeness, the Assembly, by the solemn emphasis of a rising vote, decreed that the work of Foreign Missions should not retreat, but should go forward. This mandate the Board has so far heeded as *not to go backward*. It has cast its plans and appropriations on the same basis as those of last year. Meanwhile every means is used to secure economy, and every effort is put forth to stimulate the self-help of the native churches.



slightest difference, and infidels now at work in China, Japan and India would be sure to make the most of the fact that the missionaries of any great board or society were divided among themselves upon so important a question as that of probation. With respect to this point, Dr. Davis, of Kioto, says that he has had to meet in his classroom the infidel objections to the Gospel furnished to the Japanese students by sermons preached in American, and so-called evangelical pulpits, and in editorials and other articles printed in so-called evangelical newspapers. And he declares that in one instance he took a class ready to graduate and spent a full month in steady endeavors to uproot those tares sown across the sea by American Christians.

Another: "I would not recommend the sending out of any one leaning to the view to which you refer." Another: "I do not hesitate to say that it seems to me most unwise to send out as missionaries those who believe in a future probation after death." Another: "I believe that every member of the —— Mission would be sorry to have a missionary appointed who holds these views." Another: "I should think it a great mistake," etc. Another: "It seems to me so very unscriptural that I can hardly imagine that any one who thus believes could be a safe teacher in other respects." Another: "The doctrine so tends to lull men into a sense of security that under no circumstances could I assist in ordaining any believer in the Andover view to the Gospel ministry at home or abroad, and especially the latter."

That the American Board or its constituents should be willing to send men to the mission fields against this array of protests is scarcely conceivable.

REV. JOHN LEIGHTON WILSON, D. D.

THE venerable Secretary Emeritus, Rev. J. Leighton Wilson, D. D., died at his home, near Mayesville, S. C., on the 13th of July, 1886.

His death, says one who waited by him, was emblematic of his life—calm, peaceful, beautiful.

We are indebted to the pen of another for a sketch of Dr. Wilson's life and character. He was born in Sumter County, S. C., March 25, 1809. He was graduated at Union College, N. Y., in 1829, and taught school one year at Hadnel's Point, near Charleston, S. C. In 1833 he was graduated at the Theological Seminary, Columbia, S. C., being a member of the first class of that institution, and the same year was ordained by Harmony Presbytery as a missionary to Africa. During the summer of 1833 he studied Arabic at Andover Seminary, Mass., and in the fall he sailed from Baltimore, Md., on a voyage of exploration to Western Africa, returning the following spring. As the result of his exploration, he decided on Cape Palmas, Western Africa, as the most promising place to begin his missionary work. In May, 1834, he was united in marriage to Miss Jane Elizabeth Bayard, of Savannah, Ga. In 1834 Mr. and Mrs. Wilson sailed for Cape Palmas, where they arrived at the close of the year. They remained at the Cape seven years. During these years a church of forty members was organized, more than a hundred and eighty youths were educated, the Grebo

language was reduced to writing, a grammar and dictionary of the language was published, the Gospels of Matthew and John were translated, and, with six or eight other small volumes, published in the native language. In 1842 Mr. and Mrs. Wilson removed to the Gaboon River, 1,200 miles south of Cape Palmas, and commenced a new mission among the Mpongwe people. Here, again, the language was reduced to writing for the first time. A grammar, a vocabulary, portions of the Bible and a number of small volumes were published in the native language. In the spring of 1853, owing to the failure of Mr. Wilson's health, he and his wife returned to America. In the autumn of 1853 he entered the office of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, in New York, and continued to serve as Secretary until the breaking out of the civil war, when he returned to his home in the South. At the organization of the Southern Presbyterian Church, Dr. Wilson was appointed Secretary of Foreign Missions. This office he continued to hold until 1885, when the General Assembly, in view of his declining health, relieved him of the active duties of the office and elected him Secretary Emeritus. During seven years of his active service in the office the home mission work was combined with that of foreign missions, Dr. Wilson sharing in the care of both.

In 1854 Dr. Wilson published a volume of five hundred pages on "Western Africa, its History, Condition and Prospects." Dr. Livingstone pronounced this the best volume on that part of Africa ever published.

In 1852 a strong effort was made in the British Parliament to withdraw the British squadron from the coast of Africa, under the impression that the foreign slave trade could not be broken up. Dr. Wilson wrote a pamphlet showing that the impression was erroneous, and indicating what was wanting to make the effort to suppress the slave trade successful. The pamphlet fell into the hands of Lord Palmerston, and was, by his order, published in the *United Service Journal*, and afterward in the "Blue Book" of Parliament. An edition of 10,000 copies was circulated throughout the kingdom. Lord Palmerston informed Dr. Wilson that this pamphlet put an end to all opposition to the continuance of the squadron; and in less than five years the trade itself was brought to an end.

During his residence in New York, Dr. Wilson acted as editor of the Foreign Department of the *Home and Foreign Record*. In our own Church he began *The Missionary*, of which he continued to be editor till recently. He published more than thirty articles in the *Southern Presbyterian Review* and in other literary and scientific reviews. While in Africa Dr. Wilson procured and sent to the Boston Society of Natural History the first specimen of the gorilla known in modern times.

The commanding presence of Dr. Wilson and his affable and courteous address will be remembered by many in the Church. His features indicated physical and intellectual strength. His varied information made him the attractive centre of the social circle. He was just in judgment, wise in council, practical in methods. His public life covered more than fifty years. These fifty years have recorded wonderful progress in the foreign mission work. They constitute a great missionary age in the history of the Church. Among the great workers in this branch of Christian service Dr. Wilson has stood with the first. By the grace of God he has served his generation nobly, received the loving veneration of the people among whom he lived, and will long be remembered among us as a prince and a great man.—*The Missionary, August, 1886.*