

MINUTES

OF THE

SYNOD OF SOUTH CAROLINA,

AT THEIR

SESSIONS, IN UPPER LONG CANE CHURCH,

ABBEVILLE DISTRICT, S. C.,

NOVEMBER, 1850.

WITH

AN APPENDIX.

COLUMBIA, S. C.

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1851.

Resolved, That the Moderator be empowered to call a meeting of Synod, if, in his discretion, it should be deemed important, on the condition that an election should be had by the Synod of Georgia of a Professor to fill the vacant chair in the Theological Seminary.

The committee on the Report of the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions submitted their report as follows, which was adopted :

The committee to whom was referred the report of the executive committee of Foreign Missions, report that they have carefully examined the same, and would respectfully recommend—

1st. That the part which relates to the Treasurer's report be re-committed for the purpose of being corrected, so that the amount which each church in each Presbytery has contributed may be seen in the report.

2d. That all our churches which contribute to this cause be requested to send their funds to Mr. James Adger, our Treasurer, in Charleston ; and that the Treasurers of Presbyteries be requested, in transmitting funds to our Treasurer, to be particular in specifying the exact amount given by each church.

3d. That for the ensuing year the same executive committee of Foreign Missions be continued, and that Messrs. J. M. Caldwell and W. C. Dukes be the committee of audits.

4th. That the report, when corrected, be published in the appendix to the minutes, and that the clerk be requested to furnish copies of it to the Editors of the Watchman & Observer and of the Southern Presbyterian, for publication in their respective papers.

The committee finally report that the Treasurer's account has been regularly audited and appears to be properly vouched.

The committee on the Narrative presented the following, which was adopted :

NARRATIVE.

The Synod of South Carolina, in preparing their narrative of the State of religion within their bounds, would devoutly and gratefully acknowledge their obligations to the great Head of the church for the mercies of the past year. Among these mercies we record with gratitude the fact that while God has sent among us many young and fresh laborers in the ministry, he has still spared to us all our number, even the aged and venerable fathers, except one to whose counsels we have long listened. We have abundant reason for gratitude, too, for that harmony, fraternal love, and soundness in doctrine, which pervade our body. Their duty as teachers we believe has been faithfully and zealously discharged by our members ; but we regret to be obliged to state that their duty as rulers has not been

so faithfully discharged ; many of our brethren, both ministers and ruling elders, permit too trivial causes to keep them away from our stated meetings ; yet we have reason to hope, from the spirit manifested during this session, that we shall not have cause to complain of want of faithfulness on this point. Our churches are becoming more generally supplied with pastors ; and the unpresbyterian practice of stated supplies is falling more and more into disesteem. There is, too, an increasing disposition in our churches to extend a more liberal support to the ministry. But still, on this point, our churches fall sadly short of their duty, and too often by misplaced parsimony force their minister to spend five days of the week in secular labor, when by a small sacrifice they could give him an ample support. Many of our churches have yet to make the calculation of the value to them of five-sevenths of their ministers' time, occupied in exhausting secular labor ; when that time and those exhausted energies might, with so little sacrifice on their part, be devoted to study and pastoral labors for the benefit of the church.

Two of our Presbyteries report cheering revivals of religion within their bounds ; one, a gradual accession of members ; and only one reports no greater numerical increase than will fill up the vacancies occasioned by death and removals. One Presbytery reports the prevalence of Sabbath travelling, to some extent, by members of the church ; this we deeply deplore, and hope that church sessions will promptly bring the discipline of the church to bear on such offences.

The duties of family prayer and of catechetical instruction we have reason to hope are beginning to press with greater force upon the consciences of our church members, and are now more faithfully discharged : yet these solemn and important duties are by no means so generally and faithfully discharged among us as was done by our fathers. Sabbath-schools and Bible classes, we are happy to state, are in successful operation in most of our churches, and while we heartily approve of these as helps to parents in training up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, yet they should by no means be considered by parents as taking the place of catechetical and doctrinal instruction at home.

We are happy, too, to report an increasing interest in behalf of Foreign and Domestic Missions and church extension. The deeply interesting work of circulating the books of our Board by means of colporteurs is successfully prosecuted by all of our Presbyteries, and we have reason to believe is doing good within our bounds.

There is manifestly an increasing interest in behalf of our religious

education. Besides our Theological Seminary and Oglethorpe University, under the joint control of the Synods of South Carolina and Georgia, we have within our bounds several schools of high order, which are strictly Presbyterian in their character. Among them we rejoice to recognize the High Schools, male and female, at Greenwood in Abbeville district, under the care of the Presbytery of South Carolina.

Lastly, we would notice the cheering fact, so little known, or so little appreciated by those opposed to that scriptural institution of slavery, that nearly all of our ministers devote half of their time on the Sabbath to preaching to the negroes of their congregation separate from the whites, besides the services in which both classes participate. Catechetical instruction is also imparted by many pastors. We hail with pleasure the fact, that during the past year, a commodious church has been dedicated in the city of Charleston, under the care of Rev. J. B. Adger, intended especially for the negroes of that city. We deeply deprecate the crusade against the institution of slavery, and the hindrance thrown in our way, in the proper religious instruction of our negroes, by fanatical and ignorant intermeddlers. Our slaves are contented, nay happy, in their position, and rejoice in the religious instruction they receive. Indeed, they aid joyfully in forwarding the benevolent operations of the day; as an evidence of which, we mention the fact, that brother Adger's congregation of negroes, have given this year sixty-eight dollars, for Foreign Missions. In reviewing the past year, we find much to deplore, yet abundant causes for gratitude; and with mingled feelings of penitence and joy, we submit our narrative.

The following vote of thanks was unanimously passed :

Resolved, That we express our sincere thanks to this congregation for their attention to all the wants of this Synod, and for the uniform kindness and hospitality with which we have been received in the several families in which we have been entertained : and further resolved, That Rev. D. M. Turner be requested to communicate the same to the congregation.

The Minutes being read and confirmed, the Synod was adjourned with singing and prayer, and the apostolic benediction, to meet in the town of Winnsboro, at the Presbyterian Church, on the Thursday before the second Sabbath of Nov. 1851, at 11 o'clock, A. M.

J. B. ADGER, *Moderator*.

B. M. PALMER, *S. T. C.*