

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE U.S.A.

BOARD OF MISSIONS.

Address of the Board of Mis-
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OF
Presbyterian Church in U. S. A.
The Board of Missions

ACTING UNDER THE AUTHORITY

OF THE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OF THE

Presbyterian Church.

IN THE

UNITED STATES,

ON THE SUBJECT OF

AUXILIARY MISSIONARY SOCIETIES

AND

Missionary Associations,

TO THE

CHURCHES.

Philadelphia:

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ADDRESS, &c.

DEAR BRETHREN,

THE General Asssembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States have, from the very formation of that venerable body, been engaged in the pious and benevolent work of sending missionaries to preach the gospel to the destitute. In the prosecution of this important concern, they have endeavoured to provide instruction for the Blacks, as well as for the destitute in our frontier settlements; and as opportunities offered, and their ability allowed, they have established missions for evangelizing the Indian tribes.

The missionary business, in our Church, has been gradually increasing in extent and importance. It has proved highly beneficial to the Presbyterian interest, and greatly instrumental in promoting the common cause of Christianity. A person duly acquainted with the history of the church in this country, beholds with delight flourishing Churches, important Presbyteries, and even Synods, now spreading the influence of religion and maintaining the ordinances of the gospel in regions, where not many years ago scarce a house of worship was seen, and where only the voice of solitary missionaries was occasionally heard, while they were hastily passing over their extensive fields of labour.

We have reason to give thanks to the Great Head of the Church for the exertions in the missionary cause

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that have been made, and for the encouraging success with which he has been graciously pleased to crown these exertions ; but at the same time we have reason to lament, that what has been done bears so small a proportion to the necessities of our country. There are thousands, tens of thousands, nay, hundreds of thousands, who are, at this hour, destitute of the stated means of grace, and seldom, if at all, hear the voice of ministers preaching Jesus and his salvation. Such is the deplorable condition of many parts of this country, that, if vigorous efforts be not made, the inhabitants will sink into a state of heathenism.

Two causes have circumscribed the operations of the General Assembly in their benevolent work ; the want of adequate funds, and the want of suitable missionaries. The deficiency of missionaries is likely to be supplied by the Theological Seminary established by the General Assembly at Princeton, New Jersey ; an Institution that has already furnished valuable ministers to our church, and promises to be productive of great and lasting benefit to her interest. A missionary spirit has begun to pervade the minds of the young men receiving their education in that Seminary ; and the Professors feel disposed to encourage and promote so noble a spirit, that leads them to pity the condition of the destitute, and to devise means for supplying their spiritual necessities. From that sacred place will probably issue forth many, who will devote either their whole time, or some part of it, to the missionary cause.

With this prospect in regard to future missionaries, and believing that reliance may be placed on the liberality of their people for supplying them with adequate funds, the General Assembly, in May last, adopted

measures for carrying on the Missionary business, with more efficiency and to greater extent; as will appear from the following extract from the report of a committee on that subject:

“The Committee rejoice in the prospect of a competent supply of the word of God to the poor and destitute in our country, by means of Bible Societies. The numbers and resources of these Institutions are every day increasing; so that, at no very remote period, it is hoped, that the Sun of Revelation will shine on every dark corner of our land, and irradiate every dwelling however obscure. The Committee, however, instead of regarding this as a reason for relaxing missionary efforts, are persuaded that its proper effect is to infuse new life and vigour into the missionary cause. In proportion as the word of God is known and appreciated, will the preachers of the word in its simplicity and purity be effectual: in proportion as the Bible is diffused, will missionaries be successful in organizing churches.

“That there is a wide extent of country, destitute of the ordinary means of grace, is too well known to be mentioned in this place; the present demand for missionary labours very far exceeds the ability of supply: and the population of the country is increasing with such rapidity, that, were every place now vacant completely supplied with the regular ministrations of the gospel, after the lapse of a year there would probably be in the nation, four hundred thousand souls requiring the labours of a competent number of religious instructors. When, then, there are such multitudes at this moment, who rarely, if ever, hear the gospel preached, and such mighty additions are made every year to our numbers; when, too, great multitudes, sensible of their

wants, are addressing their importunate cries to us for missionaries, the cry for help of souls ready to perish ; it appears to your Committee, that God and our brethren require of us much more than we have heretofore rendered. We are longing and praying for the coming of the day of glory ; and perhaps many of us hope to see it. But we have no right to calculate on miraculous interpositions ; and without a miracle, century after century must elapse before the earth can be filled with the knowledge of God. All that the Christian world is now doing with united effort, if continued without intermission for one thousand years, would barely serve to fill the world with Bibles and Missionaries. Yet we are not to despair. God, in his adorable providence, seems to have changed, in these latter times, the scale on which he had for ages conducted the affairs of his government. Changes which formerly were the work of years, are now produced in a day. Magnificent and astonishing events have passed so often before the eyes of men of the present age, that their minds have acquired a tone and vigour which prompt them to undertake and accomplish great things. We ourselves witness every day the wonderful effects of combined counsels and exertions, both in the moral and political world.

“From the lessons taught us by experience, your Committee have no doubt but that in the Presbyterian Church in the United States, there needs only union of purpose and effort to accomplish all the plans which have been proposed, and even to go far beyond the expectations and hopes of the most sanguine. And this especially, as so powerful an impulse has been given to the Christian community ; and the impression is so

deep and universal, that it becomes us all who love the Lord Jesus Christ, to exert ourselves for the promotion of his glory and the extension of his kingdom.

“For the purpose of enlarging the sphere of our missionary operations then, and infusing new vigour into the cause, your Committee would respectfully recommend a change of the style, and enlargement of the powers of the Standing Committee of Missions. If instead of continuing to this body, the character of a committee bound in all cases to act according to the instructions of the General Assembly, and under the necessity of receiving its sanction to give validity to all the measures which it may propose, the Committee of Missions were erected into a Board, with full powers to transact all the business of the Missionary cause, only requiring the Board to report annually to the General Assembly; it would then be able to carry on the Missionary business, with all the vigour and unity of design that would be found in a Society originated for that purpose; and, at the same time, would enjoy all the benefit that the counsel and advice of the General Assembly could afford.”

Besides altering the style of “The Standing Committee of Missions” to that of “THE BOARD OF MISSIONS,” and clothing the Board with full powers to transact all the business of the Missionary cause, the General Assembly “authorized and directed them to take measures for establishing throughout our churches *Auxiliary Missionary Societies*, to aid the funds, and extend the operations, of the Board.”

The Board of Missions have not been unmindful of the sacred trust confided to their care, nor of the im-

portant duties imposed on them ; though they cannot forbear to express their regret that circumstances have prevented their preferring an earlier claim to the attention of the churches to this most interesting concern.

You see, christian brethren, from the statement made, the deplorable condition of multitudes of our fellow-citizens in regard to religious instructions, and that the General Assembly depend on the liberality of their people to augment their funds, so as to enable them to extend the Missionary business, and render it more efficient. They are aware how repeated are the calls for pecuniary aid ; but the pressing necessities of the destitute make them *absolutely and imperiously necessary*.

To the Board of Missions it is gratifying to reflect, that there is wealth enough in the Presbyterian Church to supply adequate funds for all the pious and benevolent purposes for which they are needed ; and to believe, that, by the various appeals made by the Assembly to the liberality of their people, they are enriched, instead of being impoverished ; because the Lord will not fail to reward them for all donations they make to the support of his cause in the world.

We cherish the hope, dear brethren, that you will not turn away from the present application. We trust you will lend cheerful assistance to the interesting cause for which we plead, and that you will accept the invitation to co-operate in the great work of supplying the destitute with the gospel of Jesus Christ. We plead for the benighted and wretched Indians, whose soil you occupy ; and intreat you to endeavour to indemnify them for their loss, by sending to them devoted men, who shall preach to them the unsearchable

riches of Christ. We plead the cause of the oppressed sons and daughters of Africa ; and conjure you, by all the principles of justice and equity, to avert the judgments of Heaven, by supplying them with that gospel which "proclaims liberty to the captive, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound," and redemption by the blood of Jesus to bond and free, to the sable African, as well as to the white European. We plead the cause of your own kindred, who, having removed from places where they once enjoyed all the means of grace in rich abundance, and gone to reside in distant regions, now spend silent Sabbaths, and see not "the feet of them that publish salvation, and say unto Zion, Thy God reigneth ;" and we beseech you to aid in prosecuting vigorous measures for their spiritual instruction, lest they lose all knowledge of divine truth, forget to reverence the Sabbath of the Lord, and learn to contemn all the sacred institutions of religion.

Remember, christian brethren, that the places you inhabit, now so highly favoured with religious privileges, were formerly *missionary ground*; and that had it not been for the pious care and christian charity of others, your dwellings might at this moment have been embosomed in the darkness of heathenism, instead of being cheered and irradiated by the Sun of Righteousness. Your benefactors have gone to receive from their Redeemer the reward of their labour of love, and can receive from you no return for their kindness ; or if any survive, they expect no other recompense, than to see you looking with compassion on the destitute, and contributing according to your ability to carry into effect schemes for their relief.

In performing the duty imposed on them by the General Assembly, the Board of Missions take the liberty of recommending certain plans, in supporting which you will have an opportunity for expressing your gratitude for benefactions received, and for assisting in communicating to others the treasure with which you have been enriched. They recommend the formation of Auxiliary Missionary Societies, and of Missionary Associations; framed on principles exhibited in draughts of Constitutions accompanying this address.

One or more Societies of this kind might be formed within the bounds of every Presbytery; and one or more Associations, within the limits of every congregation. These institutions should require small contributions, so as to embrace the great body of the people, and open a door of admission, at least to the Associations, that individuals in very humble circumstances might become members.

Now, suppose this plan were adopted; suppose Auxiliary Missionary Societies established within the bounds of all our Presbyteries, and Associations formed in all our congregations; how gratifying would be the result? A large accession would be immediately made to the Missionary funds. The institutions of the latter description might *individually* produce but a small amount, yet would, from their multiplication, produce a very large *aggregate* amount; resembling a stream that at first takes its rise from a small spring, but which, in its course receiving many tributary streams, swells at length into a noble river. Contributions derived from Associations whose members pay a penny a week, have brought into the funds of "the British and Foreign Bible Society" monies to a very

large amount; and similar Associations for the support of the Missionary cause, spread over every part of our Church, would be proportionably productive.

On the supposition made, the funds derived from the Society or Societies formed within the bounds of some Presbyteries, aided by the funds of numerous Associations, might be sufficient for the support of one or more *stated* Missionaries, within the limits of each; the funds obtained from the same sources, within the limits of other Presbyteries, might be sufficient for the support of one Missionary for *a year* or *nine months*; and the funds collected in this way, within the bounds of smaller Presbyteries, embracing a population more reduced in circumstances, might meet the expense of a Missionary employed for *six* or *three* months.

The effect of the labours of these Missionaries, within the limits of the different Presbyteries, would be beneficial in a high degree. Churches might be organized, nourished, and partially supplied with the means of grace, till they gained strength to support the gospel, either individually, or by the union of two or three under one minister.

Besides, the aid that might be expected from these Societies and Associations, by augmenting the Assembly's Missionary fund, would enable the Board of Missions greatly to extend their operations, and act on a plan that would render them more permanently beneficial.

In addition to all these important consequences, the adoption of the proposed system would extend the influence of the *missionary spirit* more generally among our people, promote a growing interest in the prosperity of the Redeemer's kingdom, and incite them to act

with warmer zeal in diffusing its blessings over our own country, and through the world at large.

Such are the plans we recommend; and such the benefits likely to result from a general adoption of them in the churches. Need we suggest any additional observations to enforce what is recommended? Is not the exhibition of the plans and of their probable consequences sufficient to secure attention to them?

The voice of your country, whose welfare cannot be secured without the prevalence of religion and virtue; the intreaties of the church, which longs to multiply her children, and to impart her consolations to the miserable; the authority of her glorious Head and the sovereign Ruler of the world, who commanded that his gospel should be preached to every creature: all concur in directing your attention to this important subject, and in requiring your cordial support of the Missionary cause, and your liberal co-operation in every way for extending Missionary exertions.

By order of the Board of Missions,

J. J. JANEWAY, PRESIDENT.

Philadelphia, December, 1816.

CONSTITUTION.

ARTICLE I. This Society shall be denominated
 "The Auxiliary Missionary Society of . . ."

ART. II. The object of this Society shall be to supply with the preaching of the gospel the destitute within our own limits, and to aid the funds, and facilitate the operations, of "THE BOARD OF MISSIONS acting under the authority of THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

ART. III. Any person paying _____ dollars on subscribing, and one dollar annually, shall be a member of this Society: and any person paying at one time *twenty dollars*, or a sum which added to his former payments shall amount to *twenty dollars*, shall be a member for life, without farther contributions.

ART. IV. This Society shall meet annually at on the _____ day of _____ at which time the report of its proceedings shall be read, and its officers shall be chosen. The officers shall be a President, a Secretary and Treasurer.

ART. V. A Standing Committee of seven persons shall be chosen at the same time; any four of whom shall be a quorum to do business. It shall be the duty of this Committee to employ Missionaries,—to prescribe their routes and fix their stations,—to obtain and collect subscriptions and donations to the funds of the Society,—to manage the general business when the Society is not in session,—and to report at every annual meeting of the Society an account of their proceedings.

ART. VI. The Missionaries employed shall be either *Licentiates* or *Ordained Ministers* of the Presbyterian Church, in good and regular standing, whom the Standing Committee may deem suitable persons; or such persons as may be sent by the Board of Missions, on the application of the Standing Committee.

ART. VII. The Missionaries shall labour within the limits of this Society, and parts adjacent which may be destitute ; they shall receive from the funds of this Society for their services *forty dollars* per month, being the salary allowed by the Board of Missions to their Missionaries ; they shall report, as soon as convenient after finishing their tour, an account of their labours and apparent success, and of all other matters interesting to the missionary cause that may occur to their observation.

ART. VIII. Any surplus funds which may at any time be possessed by the Society, shall be paid over to the Missionary fund of the General Assembly, at the discretion of the Standing Committee. (Should there be no missionary ground within the limits of any Society, it is recommended that all the funds should be paid into the Missionary fund of the General Assembly.)

ART. IX. The formation of Missionary Associations, to aid the funds of this Society, shall be promoted by its members whenever an opportunity offers ; and it shall especially be the duty of Missionaries supported by this Society, to endeavour to form such Associations wherever it may be practicable.

ART. X. Any Association of persons (male or female) who shall contribute to this Society *ten dollars*, shall have the privilege of sending one deputy to the Society who shall enjoy all the privileges of any other member ; and for every additional ten dollars, they shall have a right to appoint another representative.

ART. XI. This Constitution may be altered, at any annual meeting of the Society, by a vote of a majority of all the members, or of two thirds of the members present.

As soon as twelve subscribers shall be obtained, the Society shall be considered as formed ; and may immediately proceed to the choice of its Officers and Standing Committee, who shall serve till the day appointed in the Constitution for the annual meeting.

 CONSTITUTION.

ARTICLE I. This Association shall be denominated
 "The Missionary Association of _____."

ART. II. The object of this Association shall be to
 aid the funds of the Auxiliary Missionary Society of
 (Should the local situation
 of any Associations render it more convenient to pay
 their funds immediately into the Missionary fund of
 the General Assembly, it is recommended that this
 article should be formed accordingly.)

ART. III. Any person paying annually at the rate
 of one cent per week, shall be a member of this
 Association.

ART. IV. The subscriptions shall be paid monthly,
 or quarterly, or half yearly, or annually, as the Asso-
 ciation may determine.

ART. V. The Association shall meet annually at
 _____ on the _____ day of _____
 at which time they shall chose a Treasurer, and a Com-
 mittee consisting of three persons; and read any Mis-
 sionary report or journal that may be sent by the Aux-
 iliary Missionary Society, or any piece of Missionary
 intelligence of an interesting nature that may be pro-
 cured.

ART. VI. It shall be the duty of all the members,
 and particularly of the Committee, to procure subscri-
 bers and donations.

ART. VII. The Committee shall be charged with
 the business of collecting the money due from the
 members, and paying what they collect to the Treasur-
 er.

ART. VIII. As soon as the Treasurer shall have
 received *ten* dollars, he or she shall pay it over to the
 Treasurer of the Auxiliary Missionary Society; and
 it shall be the duty of the Treasurer to report to every
 annual meeting of the Association the amount of all
 monies received and paid.

ART. IX. If the Association shall be disposed to exercise their privilege, they shall, at the annual meeting, appoint their deputy or deputies to attend the next annual meeting of the Auxiliary Missionary Society.

ART. X. As soon as ten subscribers shall be obtained, the Association may proceed to choose their Treasurer and Committee, who shall serve till the day appointed in the Constitution for the annual meeting.

The Board of Missions, chosen and appointed by the Assembly for the ensuing year, are : viz.

Of Philadelphia and its vicinity, Rev. Drs. Green, Alexander, Wilson, Janeway and Miller; Rev. Messrs. Potts and Skinner, and Messrs. Boudinot, Hazard, Connelly, Haslet, Smith, Ralston, and Bayard.

Of New York, Rev. Dr. Romeyn, Messrs. Lenox, Rogers, Bethune, Caldwell and Lewis.

Of the Synod of Geneva, Rev. David Higgins.

of Albany, Rev. Jonas Coe.

of N.Y.&N.J. Rev. Jas. Richards, D.D.

of Philadelphia, Rev. Robert Cathcart.

of Pittsburgh, Rev. Elisha Macurdy.

of Virginia, Rev. John H. Rice.

of Kentucky, Rev. James Blythe, D.D.

of Ohio, Rev. Robert G. Wilson.

of N. Carolina, Rev. James Hall, D.D.

of S. Carolina and Georgia, Rev. Andrew Flinn, D.D.

OFFICERS OF THE BOARD.

J. J. Janeway, *President.*

T. H. Skinner, *Secretary.*

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Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Board
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