

PROCEEDINGS  
OF  
THE BOARD OF MISSIONS

OF THE  
**Protestant Episcopal Church**

IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

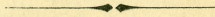
AT THEIR

THIRTY-SIXTH ANNUAL

AND

TWELFTH TRIENNIAL MEETING,

HELD IN BALTIMORE, OCTOBER, 1871.



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1871.

The subject was, on Motion, referred to the Committee on the Foreign Committee's Report.

On Motion of the Rev. Dr. Haight, the Report of the Committee on the Report of the Commission of Home Missions to Colored People was made the Order of the Day for Wednesday evening.

The Report of the Committee on the Foreign Committee's Report was made the Order of the Day for Thursday evening.

The Report of the Committee on the Domestic Committee's Report was made the Order of the Day for Friday evening.

The Right Rev. Chairman announced the following as the Committee on the Publications of the Board:

Rt. Rev. W. E. Armitage, D.D., Rt. Rev. B. Wistar Morris, D.D., Revs. L. Colman, G. J. Geer, D.D., G. D. Gillespie, H. Anstice, J. T. Magrath, G. H. McKnight, J. A. Paddock, D.D., Messrs. William Welsh, R. H. Gardiner, Benjamin Stark.

The Order of the Day having been announced, the Rev. Dr. Potter, on behalf of the Committee, appointed last year (see Journal, 1870, pp. xxii, xxiii), on the Organized Work of Women in the Church, read the following

REPORT.

The Committee appointed under the following Resolution, adopted at the last Annual Meeting of the Board of Missions, to wit:

*Resolved*, That a Committee of Bishops, Clergy and Laity be appointed by the Chair, whose duty it shall be to consider and report to the next meeting of this Board the best means of associating the organized or individual efforts of Women with the Missionary and Educational work of the Church.

Beg leave respectfully to report, that they have given the subject thus committed to them their most serious consideration, and, in seeking for those practical measures toward which it looks, have availed themselves not only of the wisdom of those of largest experience in connection with Woman's Missionary or Educational efforts among ourselves, but also, as the Appendix to this Report will show, of the counsel of some of the most successful organizers and administrators of Missionary efforts by women in our Mother Church of England, and in other lands.

In approaching the question, "What are the best means of associating the organized or individual efforts of women with the Missionary and educational work of the Church?" the Committee rejoice to believe that it is no longer necessary to argue the right of women to participate in such work, nor to participate in it under the obligations and restrictions of organized Societies and Sisterhoods. Indeed, to quote the language of a recent Episcopal Address,\* the subject "may be said to have passed through all the stages of inquiry and consideration usually preliminary to practical action." But yet, very little has been done. The whole subject floats to most minds in ideal vagueness. In the general thought among us it stands out as a beautiful abstraction, about which many fine

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\* Bishop Littlejohn, before Long Island Convention of 1871.

things have been said and written, but which few have been found willing to endeavor in any earnest way to convert into reality.

It is because this Committee believes that the time has come for such misty generalization to end, that it ventures, without further prelude, to pass directly to the question of methods.

(a) It is obvious enough that any extended scheme for enlisting women, actively and practically, in the Missionary work of the Church, must take its rise in those various organizations of the Church's life which are already in existence and in operation. In other words, if the Church would utilize the energies of women, she must begin not with some huge machinery, which shall wholly disregard all ties already existing, but primarily, with woman in her parochial relations. The Parish must, at the outset, be the awakener and educator in this direction, of every soul within its limits, whose dignity it is to share the cares of Mary, and Martha, and Salome.

There are multitudes of Parishes in the land where there are Missionary Societies, in the sense of there being Societies to minister to the physical wants of the *hungry*, and *naked*, and *uncared-for*, but there are very few Societies or Sisterhoods where the aim is Missionary in that larger sense which seeks to carry the whole Gospel—not the bread of earth without the water of life, nor yet the religious tract without the food for the body, but both together—in a large-hearted, wide-minded effort to rescue and save souls.

And yet the history of Missions, whether in our own or foreign lands, demonstrates unanswerably that the power of *woman*, as a Missionary, when it has been ripened and directed by warmth of co-operation and wisdom of counsel, is almost incalculable. And, therefore, the Committee would urge as indispensably initial to the successful realization of any extensive plan for enlisting women in the Missionary work of the Church, the speedy organization of godly and discreet women in Parishes into Parochial Sisterhoods; or, where *this* is impracticable, into other less distinctive associations, with the definite aim of seeking and saving the lost sheep for whom CHRIST died.

As it is, there is, with all our professed faith in organizations of women, a pitiful paucity of results. The Committee cannot believe that this is because there are no women in all our Parishes with the unselfishness, the tact, and the genuine love of souls, which are necessary for Missionary work, but rather because such women have never had the claims of such *work* distinctly and persistently urged upon them. It is no exaggeration to say that there are thousands of women, in this land and in this Church, with the gifts, the leisure, and the opportunities, if they were only shown how to use them, for doing great and blessed service for their LORD. They are bidden to "*give, give,*" but what? Money, garments, tracts—anything and everything, save that which their LORD wants first and most, and that is, themselves—wholly, absolutely, and unreservedly, in a life and service consecrated to Him and His, forever!

And even what they do give of service or thought for CHRIST's poor or ignorant ones under our present system, or want of system, they can only give in a desultory, half-hearted, spasmodic way. A woman, "living at home, is often surrounded by friends and relations who take little or no interest in her attempts at work for the Master," even if they are not annoyed by them. It is not only very difficult, but scarcely becoming, for

her to assert the importance of her own voluntary undertakings; and yet, the thoughtlessness of others in making demands upon her time often reduces her to the *necessity* of doing so, if she would not have all her strength frittered away upon trifles, which she rightly feels to be altogether unworthy of her energies.

Even in one's own mind, it is difficult to adjust such conflicting claims as those of poverty or "ignorance" on the one hand, and relationship on the other—very painful to assert engagements to the "physically or spiritually destitute," as a reason for withdrawing from domestic or social engagements. Modesty and sincerity alike shrink from appearing to attach more importance to one's own wretched dabbings in charity than others are willing to *concede* to them; and yet there is a sense of sacredness about the obligation to the needy and outcast, which makes it impossible to be easy in throwing aside engagements for their benefit whenever they may happen to clash with engagements of mere pleasure. Such conflicts can never arise in a life planned altogether with reference to works of charity, and only those who have suffered from them, as have Christian women everywhere, can estimate the value of any well-tried and trustworthy means of escape. To be torn in two directions by the attempt to carry on two different undertakings, or to fulfil two different sets of relations at once, almost doubles the fatigue of each; and from such distractions of mind, organized Sisterhoods, or similar associations, though your Committee by no means holds them to be always and everywhere alike indispensable, do unquestionably offer effectual protection.\*

In other words, the Church cannot afford to fritter away one of her mightiest forces, when it can most surely be conserved and increased by wise and judicious organization. And, therefore, the Committee would recommend the practical adoption of the plan of organized Sisterhoods (*a.*) in our several Parishes. What work such Sisterhoods shall undertake, how far they shall be charitable or educational, or both, in their aims, must depend on the fields in which they are called to work, and the unavoidable limitation of means and numbers by which they may be restricted. But many a Parish possesses already the germ of an efficient Sisterhood in the Dorcas, or Sewing, or Benevolent Societies, at present at work in it. Let such Societies be lifted to the level of something higher than half-social, half-beneficent associations. Let them classify themselves into full and associate Sisters. Let them have a rule of life, and a definite bond of union. Let them be led to recognize their capabilities in carrying on the aggressive and educational work of the Church, and who does not know that multitudes of earnest and godly women, working now timidly, hesitatingly, and therefore feebly, would go forth in a sense of recognized place, and definite responsibility in the MASTER'S service, to do for Him and for His Church such a work as our doubting hearts have never dreamed of.

(*b.*) From Parochial Sisterhoods (which, it may be well to remark, may be either Sisterhoods connected with a single Parish, or, in places of limited population, may consist of any association of women from different Parishes) the advance is naturally and inevitably to Diocesan Sisterhoods. These, from their more responsible position, should be composed of women of enlarged experience, and of conspicuous aptitudes for Missionary or educational work.

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\* The Service of the Poor, pp. 232, 233.

They should not only be subject, in common with all Parochial Sisterhoods, to the general supervision and *unreserved inspection* of the Bishop, but also in a sense peculiar and exclusive to his need and call. We have as yet no Sisterhoods in this country available for Diocesan work, and yet it must be obvious that, in a land like ours, with its opening and expanding field of usefulness, there must often arise occasions when a community might almost be won *en masse* to CHRIST and His Church, if, at the critical moment, the Bishop could command a few devout and judicious women to carry the Gospel into its homes; to open schools; to gather in the young; to organize pious persons already to be found there for Christian work, and thus to form a nucleus, around which a momentary enthusiasm might permanently and healthfully crystallize.

And at this point it is proper that the Committee should urge upon the recognition of this Board, as a very important means of enabling the Church to avail itself of the organized efforts of women, what is known in our mother Church of England as the Order of *Deaconesses*. The Committee venture to include in this Report the following statement of "general principles" and "proposed rules" drawn up and concurred in at a recent Conference in England, by the Bishops of Ely, Chester, Salisbury, Peterborough, and Bath and Wells, and sundry of the Clergy of their several Dioceses, and communicated to the Church at large by the Very Reverend Dr. Howson, the Dean of Chester, who has so recently and so happily spoken in this place:

#### I. GENERAL PRINCIPLES.

##### (a.) *Definition of a Deaconess.*

A Deaconess is a woman set apart by a Bishop under that title, for service in the Church.

##### (b.) *Relation of a Deaconess to a Bishop.*

(1.) No Deaconess, or Deaconess Institution, shall officially accept or resign work in a Diocese without the express authority of the Bishop of that Diocese, which authority may at any time be withdrawn.

(2.) A Deaconess shall be at liberty to resign her commission as Deaconess, or may be deprived of it by the Bishop of the Diocese in which she is working.

##### (c.) *Relation of a Deaconess to an Incumbent.*

No Deaconess shall officially accept work in a Parish (except it be in some non-Parochial position, as in a hospital or the like) without the express authority of the Incumbent of that Parish, which authority may at any time be withdrawn.

##### (d.) *Relation of a Deaconess to a Deaconess Institution.*

In all matters not connected with the Parochial or other system under which she is summoned to work, a Deaconess may, if belonging to a Deaconess Institution, act in harmony with the general rules of such Institution.

The Bishops above-named have also united in setting forth the following "suggested rules":

##### (a.) *Probation.*

It is essential that none be admitted as a Deaconess without careful previous preparation, both technical and religious.

##### (b.) *Dress.*

A Deaconess should wear a dress which is at once simple and distinctive.

##### (c.) *Religious knowledge.*

It is essential to the efficiency of a Deaconess that she should maintain her habit of prayer and meditation, and aim at continual progress in religious knowledge.

(d.) *Designation and signature.*

It is desirable that a Deaconess should not drop the use of her surname: and, with this end in view, it is suggested that her official designation should be "*Deaconess A. B.*" (Christian and surname), and her official signature should be "*A. B. Deaconess.*"

P.S.—It is desirable that each Deaconess Institution should have a body of Associates attached to it, for the purpose of general counsel and co-operation.

J. LONDON,  
E. H. ELY,  
W. CHESTER,

G. SARUM,  
W. C. PETERBOROUGH,  
A. BATH AND WELLS.

The Committee respectfully commend these "principles and suggested rules" to the Rt. Reverend the Diocesan and Missionary Bishops who are members of this Board, as furnishing a sufficient outline for the immediate inauguration of similar organizations in their several jurisdictions, to be employed in the more distinctively Missionary or Educational work of our Church, as need may arise or occasion require.

(e.) It only remains to your Committee to recommend, before closing, some more definite forms of organization for that still remaining and not yet utilized capability for Missionary usefulness residing in the large class of women who, because of their domestic relations, or for other reasons, cannot ordinarily be included in any scheme for Parochial or Diocesan Sisterhoods or Associations of Deaconesses.

One such form has already been found and most happily tested in the Ladies' Domestic Relief Association, whose branches exist in Parishes scattered all over the land. There are Bishops and Presbyters from Maine to the Gulf, and from the Alleghanies to the Pacific, who can bear testimony to the wise, and tender, and blessed ministries of this modest auxiliary to the Church's Missionary work. Above all, there are Missionary homes, all over this broad land, to which its loving and discriminating benefactions have gone, that bless God, with grateful hearts, and a courage more steadfast than ever, for its practical assurance of the Church's far-reaching and living sympathy.

The Committee would earnestly recommend that the Domestic and Foreign Committees be authorized, if necessary, to enlarge the powers and the functions of this well tried and most successful agency for organizing and utilizing the individual efforts of women, by providing that it shall be erected into a Ladies' (or Woman's) Auxiliary Missionary Society, with branches, as far as possible, in every Parish in the land, governed by simple rules, in harmony with the Constitution of this Board, and having for its aims.

- (a.) The increase of its funds.
- (b.) The circulation of Missionary publications.
- (c.) The education of Missionaries.
- (d.) The making, collecting and distributing of articles of clothing for Missionaries and their families.
- (e.) The education of Missionaries' children.

This Ladies' (or Woman's) Auxiliary Society to have at its headquarters a Central Committee, and a special department in the SPIRIT OF MISSIONS; the Society to hold Annual Meetings, where its Branches may be represented by delegates duly chosen; the Central Committee to have power to undertake any special work, such as that, *e. g.*, among the Indians, and to control its own funds, and the Committee also to have the right to

nominate Missionaries directly to the Foreign Committee, and, through the Bishops, to the Domestic Committee. Your Committee would also recommend that membership in the Ladies' (or Woman's) Auxiliary Society shall be recorded in New York, and that certificates of membership should be issued on the payment (say) of one dollar.

If some of these suggestions should seem too minute, your Committee would venture to remind the Board that its Resolution asks for definite and specific methods, which the Committee have endeavored, as above, to suggest.

In conclusion, your Committee desire to record their indebtedness for prompt and full responses to their inquiries for information in regard to organizations for woman's work in other parts of Christendom, to the Bishops of London, Winchester, Salisbury, and the Rt. Rev. Dr. Staley, from Lord Hatherly, the Lord Chancellor of England, Sir. Bartle Frere, Miss Longley (daughter of the late Archbishop of Canterbury), the Rev. Berdmere Compton, and the Rev. William Pennyfather, of the Church of England. From M. de Pressensé, of the Reformed French Communion, and from Dr. Emmanuel Wichern, concerning the Deaconesses-Institution at Kaisersworth, in Germany. These communications are too voluminous to be included in this Report, but it is intended to place them within the reach of the members of this Board, and of our Church generally, in a publication soon to be issued. Each one of them is rich in practical suggestions, and some of them are especially valuable as bearing upon a point which your Committee have been compelled to leave untouched, viz.: the relations of Sisterhoods or other similar organizations to Missionary work in Foreign lands.

In submitting this Report to the Board, your Committee feel that it only remains to them to urge upon the *members* of this Board, and especially upon their reverend Brethren of the Clergy, the importance of prompt and resolute *action*. If the Church believes in organized Sisterhoods, or associations of women, as wise and efficient instrumentalities for doing the MASTER's work, in the name of that MASTER, let us not hesitate to use them.

The Church has already a Training-house for women (that in Philadelphia), and organized Sisterhoods in several of her Dioceses; but her members have too long and too widely stood aloof from these institutions, regarding them, often, with only doubtful approbation, and oftener, still, with ill-concealed suspicion. It is time that we were done with such half-hearted recognition. Your Committee earnestly urge the reverend Clergy in our large centres of wealth and influence, to call upon women who may be unembarrassed by domestic or other ties to give their means, their hearts, themselves, to the work of the LORD JESUS.

Your Committee also respectfully call upon this Board to put its unequivocal stamp of approbation upon wisely-matured and well ordered organizations of women, as an agency imperatively demanded in the Missionary work.

And, with this view, your Committee beg leave respectfully to submit for the consideration of this Board the following Resolutions:

*Resolved*, That this Board, recognizing the tested value of organizations of Christian women in prosecuting the work of CHRIST and His Church, hereby recommends that measures be immediately taken for engrafting such Associations as may hereafter be organized under the constitutional provisions of this Board, upon the already existing Missionary Organizations of this Church, whether by the formation of "Sister-

hoods Auxiliary," or otherwise, in such manner as may be deemed most practicable and expedient.

*Resolved*, That the Rt. Reverend, the Missionary Bishops of this Church, together with the Bishops of Louisiana, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Kansas, be a Committee to consider and report at ——— what measures, if any, are practicable and expedient, in order to provide for the opening of an institution, or institutions, in the East, West, Northwest, or Southwest, for the training of Deaconesses for service in the Church's Missionary or Educational work.

*Resolved*, That the suggestions contained in this Report as to the organization of a Woman's Society Auxiliary to the Board of Missions, be referred to the Reverend Secretaries of the various departments of this Board, with power to mature such Organization as may seem to them practicable and expedient, and submit it to the consideration of the Church at large, through the SPIRIT OF MISSIONS.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

A. N. LITTLEJOHN,  
HENRY W. LEE,  
HENRY C. POTTER,  
J. W. CLAXTON,  
JOHN F. SPAULDING,  
GEO. N. TITUS,  
WM. WELSH.

The Resolutions appended to this Report were adopted unanimously.

On Motion of the Rev. Dr. Babcock,

*Resolved*, That a copy of these Resolutions be sent to the Committee of the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies on the State of the Church.

On Motion,

*Resolved*, That this House respectfully and earnestly request the Very Rev. Dean Howson to address the Board of Missions on the subject of this Report.

The Right Rev. the Bishop of Long Island and the Rev. Dr. Leeds were thereupon, on Motion, constituted a Committee to make arrangements for such Address.

The said Committee on Conference immediately reported, naming Emmanuel Church as the place and half past 6 o'clock, P.M., to-morrow, as the hour for the Address.

On Motion,

*Resolved*, That when this Board adjourns, it adjourn to meet to-morrow evening at half past 6 o'clock.

On Motion adjourned.

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TUESDAY, Oct. 17, 1871. }  
6½ o'clock, P.M. }

The Board met; the Right Rev. the Bishop of Ohio took the Chair, and offered appropriate devotions.

In pursuance of arrangements, announced last evening, the Very Rev. Dr. Howson, Dean of Chester, addressed the Board on the subject of Employing the Agency of Women in the work of the Church.