

possible in our Young People's Societies. Certainly anything that will aid in securing this very desirable end should be warmly welcomed. Speaking in Pittsburgh recently, on the subject of Bible reading, David R. Breed, D. D., said a number of very suggestive things which we commend to our young people generally.

IGNORANCE OF THE BIBLE.

The Bible is read by the majority even of those who read it regularly, disjointedly, hurriedly and without reflection. The result is that while very many people are familiar with certain Biblical expressions, know the names of many Biblical characters and can even quote some Scripture passages, they are pitifully ignorant of the Bible as a complete and connected system. They do not know the sequence of characters and events; they do not know the progress of thought, the succession of type and antetype, of prophecy and fulfillment. They do not know the scope of the various parts, their relation to each other and the method of constructing them into a harmonious unity. They know the Bible only as you know that beautiful residence in the East End; whereas you saw it only in its separate portions, when the stones were uncut, the sand and lime unmixed, and the boards were neither smoothed nor joined. They know the Bible in piecemeal.

A FEW TESTS.

I have before me an unusually intelligent company of Christian people; lovers of the Word of God. To this intelligent company I propose to submit a number of startling declarations and each one may judge of their faith by applying them to himself. From my careful observation of the Scriptural knowledge of many Christians I dare affirm some things like the following: In order to an intelligent knowledge of the comprehensive character and majestic movement of the Bible we ought to be fairly familiar with the order of its books and this is certainly essential to facility in using or reading the Word of God. But I dare affirm that there are not five persons in this intelligent company who can name the books of the Bible in order. Most of you, I judge, would be obliged to take refuge with the young urchin who, when he was asked to give the list, archly replied, "I do not think that I could give their names; but I think I should know them were I to see them."

Suffer me to suggest some easier and simpler tests. There are not ten persons here that know to what tribe of Israel Moses belonged. There are not fifteen that can tell how many dynasties are represented in the Kings of Judah. There are not twenty that know when and by whom the subjects of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah were carried into captivity. There are not twenty-five that can name the book containing the history of Saul, king of Israel. There are not thirty that know when Isaiah prophesied. There are not thirty-five that know how the ministry of Jesus is divided between Judea and Galilee.

These propositions are in no sense unfair. It certainly would not be unfair to ask an equal number of readers of French history from what province Napoleon was derived, and Moses was more to Israel than Napoleon to France. It is not unfair to ask an Englishman by whom the Anglo-Saxons were subjugated, or in what countries the Duke of Wellington campaigned. You know that George Washington came from Virginia; do you know from what tribe Joshua came? You know the decisive battle in the late civil war; do you know the decisive battle in the conquests of Canaan?

American General Assembly

(Continued from last week.)

MONDAY MORNING.

The proceedings of the day opened at 9 o'clock precisely with the half hour devotional exercises led by Rev. Dr. W. W. Knox, of New Brunswick, N. J.

On the resumption of business the Moderator took the chair, and Rev. Dr. Booth moved that a request of the Woman's Mission Boards for copies of the minutes of Assembly and reports be granted.

The Committee on the Board of Missions for Freedmen reported through its chairman, Rev. Dr. V. D. Beal, of Philadelphia,

Pa. The Board during the past year has reduced teachers' salaries and otherwise decreased expenditures, even reducing the number of teachers by twenty-seven. There are fewer scholars by over one thousand as only scholars provided with scholarships or able to pay their way are received; eleven more churches and missions have been in part aided, acquiring six additional pastors; twenty men are ready to enter the ministry; 2,083 new members added to the church, this being 600 more than last year. The Freedmen have given \$35,577.34 for support of ministers and churches, and for support of schools \$32,521.94, a total of \$68,099.28, an excess of \$4,713.99 over the previous year. They also sent to the Board \$644.37, besides gifts to other Boards of the church, \$1,656.20. The extent of the Board's work for last year is seen from these figures: Ministers, 181 (8 white, 173 colored); number of churches and missions, 814; whole number added, 18,761; Sunday-schools, 314; scholars, 19,624; whole number of schools, seventy-five; teachers, 230; pupils, 9,511. The total receipts, with balance of \$2,807.31, \$177,214.46; expenditures, except balance, \$1,292.37, being the same sum; 3,311 churches raised last year \$53,834.70; 1,618 woman's societies, \$43,314.87; 442 Sabbath-schools, \$3,178.33; and 269 young people's societies also raised substantial help. The members of the Board whose term of office expired were re-elected, the work was commended to the Presbyteries, pastors and to individuals for support, and a special recommendation was made that Biddle University, with the other Freedmen schools, should be by the wealthy liberally endowed.

As unfinished business the discussion of the special report on Young People's Societies was resumed by Rev. Charles S. Lane, of Mt. Vernon, N. Y., and others. The subject was then laid over till Tuesday afternoon, as the time of adjournment had arrived.

TUESDAY.

The Judicial Committee, Rev. F. O. Monford, D. D., chairman, presented a partial report which was adopted.

A resolution was submitted by Dr. J. Clement French, of Newark, re-affirming the deliverances of former Assemblies wherein confidence has been expressed in the Young People's Societies and encouragement given to their work.

The resolutions were adopted and the committee was discharged.

The report of the Committee on Home Missions was presented by the chairman, Rev. W. P. Kane, D. D.

The Board entered upon the year under depressing circumstances. A debt which had been growing five years had reached the limits of the Board's credit.

Notwithstanding the unfavorable conditions under which the work of the year has been conducted, and the consequent evils of retrenchment, there are gratifying evidences of progress.

The seven largest and strongest synods of our Church have made provision for the support of their own missions and dependent churches.

AFTERNOON.

The report of the Committee on the Board of Aid for colleges and academies was presented by the chairman, Rev. T. H. Olcott, D. D.

This board has been in existence for thirteen years. This year has been an exceedingly trying one to most institutions and to this Board. There has been a great decrease in the receipts. Last year, from all sources the Board received \$119,627.34. This year it has received only \$89,138.37. Still there has been much to be thankful for.

A popular meeting in the interest of Home Missions was held in the evening, with addresses by Dr. John Hall, Dr. McMillan, Dr. Roberts and others.

WEDNESDAY.

The report of the Standing Committee on Foreign Missions was presented by Rev. Dr. B. C. Henry, Chairman.

During the past year this Board has received from all sources the amount of \$885,391.78, or a gain of \$19,682.41 over last year. The amount of debt one year ago was \$174,770.54. This has been reduced to \$76,770.46, and there is a surplus in the treasury of \$30,535.32, so that the debt is, practically, almost wiped out.

The attention of the Assembly is respectfully called to the very small amount given by the Sabbath-schools of the Church, \$30,232.12, being a decrease from last year of \$7,741.88. Taking the total membership of the Sabbath-schools reported last year—1,057,043—this shows an average of less than three cents for each member, while, divided by the number of schools reported, it gives but an average of about \$3.85 each. A strong resolution calling on the National administration to examine into affairs in Turkey was passed.

The report on Publication and Sabbath-school work was presented by the chairman, Rev. Dr. Thomas Verner Moore.

The work of this Board has two distinct departments—business on the one hand, and missionary work on the other.