

**"UNFINISHED TASKS"
OF THE SOUTHERN
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

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"Unfinished tasks" of the Southern Presbyterian Church by Homer McMillan

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HOMER MCMILLAN

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SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

HOMER McMILLAN, SECRETARY

The Executive Committee of Home Missions

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TO THE CHURCH'S FAITHFUL HOME MISSIONARIES
AND THEIR WIVES
WHO IN LOWLINESS AND OBSCURITY
ARE LABORING TO BUILD THE KINGDOM OF GOD INTO THE
LIFE OF THE NATION
THIS BOOK IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.

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ENLARGING RESPONSIBILITIES

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

ENLARGING RESPONSIBILITIES

One of the most striking facts in the work of the Southern Presbyterian Church has been the expanding Home Mission operations. The story of Assembly's Home Missions is a story of increasing responsibility. From small beginnings it has become through constant additions one of the largest and most fruitful agencies of the General Assembly. It is the conviction of many earnest people that the work of the Executive Committee of Home Missions has grown more rapidly than the Church's information concerning its needs.

Beginning with the single duty of assisting feeble congregations in the weaker Presbyteries and newer sections of the Church to support a minister and erect a house of worship, the scope of the work has been enlarged to embrace a task, in its variety and magnitude, that other denominations have as many as five separate Boards to accomplish.

The first addition of responsibility was the transfer of the Indian work from the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions in 1889. For the next twenty years there was the growth incident to the unusual development of the country, especially in the settlement of the great Southwest.

In 1909 the General Assembly directed the attention of the Committee to the many thousands of foreign-

speaking people coming into our midst, and laid upon it the responsibility of their evangelization as a divinely appointed and enlarging task. In 1910 the Assembly discontinued the Committee on Colored Evangelization, and this work was made a department of the Assembly's Home Missions.

In 1911 Dr. E. O. Guerrant transferred to the General Assembly the work of the Soul Winners' Society, consisting of eighteen missions and fifty missionaries. The Assembly accepted the responsibility and placed this added burden upon its already over-burdened Committee of Home Missions. The same Assembly still further enlarged its Home Mission work when the Evangelistic Committee was discontinued and this responsibility was placed with the Committee of Home Missions.

In 1920, in response to several overtures, the General Assembly directed the Executive Committee to consider the advisability of doing something for the evangelization of the Jews, with the result that a Jewish Mission was opened in Baltimore in co-operation with the Home Mission Board of the Northern Presbyterian Church.

Thus, through the constant enlargement of our Home Mission activities, the territory of the Executive Committee has come to be co-extensive with that of the General Assembly. It extends from Maryland to New Mexico, and from Missouri to Florida. Some phase of the Committee's operations is found in every Synod and in almost every Presbytery. It is the Assembly's agency for the five-fold work of Home Missions, Church Erection, Colored Evangelization, Mission Schools and Evangelism. Its missionaries are found in the mountains, among the immigrants, the Indians, the Negroes, in the cities, and on the plains of the great West. It includes