

James Otey Commiserates with Charles Barney, re. Polk

Summary

Source: Bp. James Otey to Charles Barney, 28 November 1859, sent from Memphis, "Correspondence, 1859" folder, Charles Barney Papers, University Archives.

On receiving Barney's plea for funds to pay workmen, Otey sent the letter to Col. John M. Bass in Nashville and asked for a loan to pay the amount. If that loan was not gained, Otey warned, he could only send Barney's letter on to bishops Polk and Elliott at Savannah and hope they would pay it, despite any embarrassment this might cause Barney. The Executive Committee of the Board were too far-flung to gather before their planned meeting in February 1860, and there was no other mechanism for approving the payment of bills.

"I feel very sensibly the force of all that you say. The success of our enterprise depends very much upon the moral influence which we have with the community. And if we contract debts & make no provision for their payment we shall very soon, & ought to, lose all influence with the public. I think we had better not make any contracts hereafter till we have the money in hand to pay whatever [we] promise."