

Northumberland Presbytery

MINUTES

OF THE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OF THE

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

IN THE

United States of America.

WITH

AN APPENDIX.

VOL. XIII.

A. D. 1853.

PHILADELPHIA:
PRESBYTERIAN BOARD OF PUBLICATION.

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PHILADELPHIA, MAY 19, 1853.

THE General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, met, agreeably to appointment, in the Central Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, on Thursday the 19th of May, in the year of our Lord 1853, at 11 o'clock, A. M. and was opened with a sermon by the Rev. John C. Lord, D. D., Moderator of the last Assembly, from Col. i. 16, 17, 18: "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist, and he is the head of the body, the Church."

After the sermon, the Moderator proceeded to constitute the sessions with prayer.

The Permanent Clerk, from the Standing Committee on Commissions, reported that the following persons present had been duly appointed, and were hereby enrolled as Commissioners to this General Assembly, and their Commissions were laid on the table accordingly, viz.

I. OF THE SYNOD OF ALBANY.

PRESBYTERIES.

*Londonderry,
Troy,
Albany,*

*Columbia.
Mohawk,*

*Ogdensburgh,
Steuben,
Wyoming,
Buffalo City,
Michigan,
Rochester City,*

*Hudson,
North River,
Bedford,
Long Island,
New York,*

*New York, 2d,
Canton.
Ningpo.
Connecticut,*

MINISTERS.

Thomas Savage.
Thos. P. Field,
John Woodbridge,
David Tully,

Caspar R. Gregory, (2)

Robt. T. Conant,
J. Edwin Miller,
Lemuel Leonard,
John C. Lord, D. D.,
Merit Harmon.
B. B. Stockton, (3)

III. SYNOD OF NEW YORK.

William A. Westcott.
George T. Todd,
David Irving,
William B. Reeve, (4)
Gardiner Spring, D. D.,
William Bannard.
D. M. Halliday,

A. H. Dumont.

RULING ELDERS.

John Stevenson.
Reuben H. Walworth.
Saml. C. Jackson.

Jeremiah Cooper.

John Fine.
Lewis Biles.
E. B. Miller.
A. W. Page.

George A. Hollister.

Theodorus Annan.
Seth Lyon.
Charles Sturges.
Walter Lowrie.

Robert Carter.

It was made the order of the day for Tuesday, 10 o'clock A. M. to elect Professors in the Theological Seminary at Danville.

The Special Committee, appointed to report on the claims of the American Bible Society, submitted the following paper, which was adopted, viz:

This Assembly, taking grateful occasion to reaffirm its appreciation of the importance and usefulness of the American Bible Society, which, under God has been instrumental of so much good in this and other lands; in view of the multitude of families in our own favoured country living without the sacred volume; the vast number of immigrants arriving among us; the many transient persons, labourers, boatmen, and seamen in our midst, who greatly need the Word of Life, and the wide and inviting fields opened by missionary labour in Papal, Mohammedan, and Pagan countries,

1. *Resolved*, That we recognise the fostering hand of Almighty God in enabling the Society to erect its new and spacious Bible house, without using for the purpose any of its ordinary revenues.

2. *Resolved*, That the increased facilities for printing, and the greatly increased demands for the inspired Scriptures, call for far greater and more general exertion, self-denial, and prayer on the part of the people of God.

3. *Resolved*, That the Assembly earnestly recommend to the churches under its care to take up stated annual collections for the American Bible Society.

Dr. Spring, from the Judicial Committee, having intimated that new papers of importance in Judicial case No. 1, had come to hand, the case was, on motion, recommitted.

The order of the day for half-past 9 o'clock was then taken up, viz:

Judicial case, No. 2 and 3, the complaint and appeal of James Russell.

The Moderator read the admonition of the book in regard to the responsibilities of the members as judges. The documents were then read in the order prescribed, until the testimony was taken up; when the Assembly adjourned, to meet at 4 o'clock P. M.

Closed with prayer.

MONDAY AFTERNOON, 4 o'clock.

The Assembly met and was opened with prayer.

The unfinished business was resumed, viz:

Judicial case No. 2 and 3. The testimony was read, until the order of the day for 5 o'clock arrived, the election of a Professor for the Theological Seminary at Princeton. No choice having been effected on the first ballot, the election was postponed, to be the order of the day for to-morrow morning at half-past 9 o'clock.

The Committee on the Records of the Synod of Nashville recommended the approval of the same.

Their report was adopted.

The following dissent against the action of the Assembly in locating the new Seminary in the West, was read and admitted to record, and the Committee on Theological Seminaries appointed to answer it, if necessary:

The undersigned beg leave most respectfully to enter their dissent from the action of this body in the matter of locating the great Theological Seminary of the West at Danville.

1. Because, we think the previous question was unduly used to secure that decision, before there was an adequate expression of opinions and reasons in favour of St. Louis and other places.

2. Because, the location chosen lies too near the eastern boundary of the vast country and ecclesiastical territory to be accommodated; so much is

this location eccentric, as to abandon in our view the primary idea of one great institution for the West.

3. Because, whilst we think this decision is erroneous, very similarly to that which located the Western Theological Seminary at Allegheny, it precludes the Assembly from farther action in regard to such a Seminary as will meet the exigencies of the Great West to a period too distant, and thereby gives opportunity to another Presbyterian body to preoccupy the ground; which, no doubt, they will do, and so shut us out altogether, unless we should commit the discourtesy of placing an institution too near that of one already in operation.

For these reasons we wish to exonerate ourselves from all the evils, which we think, with all due respect and courtesy to this venerable body, will flow from the location determined on.

GEO. JUNKIN,
J. EDWARDS,
P. D. YOUNG,
JOS. B. JUNKIN,
MERIT HARMON,
LEMUEL LEONARD,
JOHN F. COWAN.

The Assembly then adjourned till to-morrow morning at 9 o'clock. Closed with prayer.

TUESDAY MORNING, May 31.

The Assembly met and was opened with prayer.

The minutes of the two preceding sessions were read and approved.

The Judicial Committee submitted the following report on Judicial case No. 1, which was adopted, viz:

In relation to this appeal and complaint, the Judicial Committee unanimously recommend the following resolutions:

1. Whereas, the Synod of New Jersey, after having heard and adjudicated the appeal of Dr. Solomon Andrews, did pass a resolution which may be so carried out as to remove the cause of his appeal to this body. And whereas, time has not been afforded for the Presbytery of Elizabethtown to learn officially whether their order carrying out said resolution has been complied with by the session of the church in Perth Amboy; therefore

Resolved, That the appeal of Dr. Andrews be not received by this Assembly.

2. Whereas, it appears from the records of the Presbytery of Elizabethtown, that Dr. Andrews stated that he would withdraw his complaint if the session of the church at Perth Amboy would grant a certain letter of dismissal, which was granted; and, as it appears that Dr. Andrews admitted the correctness of this statement before the Judicial Committee of the Synod of New Jersey; and, as the complaint relates to the non-acting of the Synod in his case; therefore

Resolved, That the complaint be not entertained by this Assembly.

The Report of the Special Committee on the Report of the Board of Publication was read and adopted; and is as follows, viz:

1. *Resolved*, That in the judgment of this Assembly, the evangelical press is, next to the pulpit, the most efficient means for the propagation of divine truth, and the conversion and salvation of men, and ought, therefore, to be employed by the Church to the utmost extent of her ability.