

RECORDS
OF THE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

IN THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

EMBRACING THE
MINUTES OF THE GENERAL PRESBYTERY AND
GENERAL SYNOD
1706-1788

TOGETHER WITH AN INDEX
AND THE
MINUTES OF THE GENERAL CONVENTION FOR
RELIGIOUS LIBERTY
1766-1773

PHILADELPHIA
PRESBYTERIAN BOARD OF PUBLICATION
AND SABBATH-SCHOOL WORK
1319 WALNUT STREET
1904

MINUTES

OF THE

GENERAL CONVENTION OF DELEGATES

APPOINTED BY THE

SYNOD OF NEW YORK AND
PHILADELPHIA

AND THE

GENERAL ASSOCIATION OF CONNECTICUT

1766 TO 1775.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY THE

REV. WM. H. ROBERTS, D.D., LL.D.



PHILADELPHIA, PA.

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PRELIMINARY PROCEEDINGS

THE proceedings preliminary to the General Convention for the preservation of the religious liberties of the Colonies began with the action of the Synod of New York and Philadelphia, of the Presbyterian Church in America, at its sessions in the City of New York, in 1766. On May 30th of that year the General Synod, having given the subject careful consideration, took action which is recorded in its Minutes as follows:—

ACTION OF THE GENERAL SYNOD.

“An Overture was brought in to endeavor to obtain some correspondence between this Synod and the Consociated Churches in Connecticut. A copy of a letter from this Synod to them was also read and approved, and the Rev. Messrs. John Ewing, Patrick Allison, and the moderator, are desired to present this letter and confer with our brethren upon this affair. And in case it shall seem meet to our reverend brethren to attend to this our proposal, so far as to appoint commissioners from their body to meet with commissioners from ours, we appoint the Rev. Dr. Allison and the Rev. Messrs. Timothy Jones, William Tennent, Sr., John Rodgers, Elisha Kent, John Smith, John Blair, and Samuel Buel, to meet with them at such time and place as the reverend brethren of Connecticut shall agree. Mr. Rodgers is appointed to give the Committee notice of what the associated brethren will do relative to this matter.” (Records of Synod, pp. 363, 364.)

LETTER OF THE GENERAL SYNOD.

“Rev. and Dear Brethren:—The Synod of New York and Philadelphia at their annual meeting in May, 1766, have, among many other expedients to promote the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom, concluded, upon the most mature deliberation, that a general meeting of delegates both from your Churches and our Presbyteries would answer this important purpose. Our earnest desire to accomplish so good an end has engaged us to embrace this opportunity of your next General Association, to propose the matter to your serious deliberation, and to invite you to a general consultation about such things as may have a hopeful tendency to promote and defend the common cause of religion against the attacks of its various enemies; as we are all brethren, embarked in the same interest, perfectly agreed in doctrine and worship, substantially pursuing the same method of discipline and church government, and we trust all animated with the same laudable zeal to advance the kingdom of our common Lord, we cannot but hope for your ready concurrence with our invitation. Your good sense and general acquaintance with human nature must necessarily lead you to see that a more intimate acquaintance with each others' views and designs will enable us with greater harmony and consistence, and of consequence with greater success to support the common cause, in which we are all equally engaged. A general agreement in any measures that may be adapted to preserve our religious liberties against all encroachments, and to bless the benighted heathen on our borders with the glorious light of the Gospel, must promise desirable success. From the best information we can obtain about the constitution of your churches we are persuaded that our proposal is not impracticable, and it will give us sensible pleasure to find that your extensive charity and readiness to promote the kingdom of Christ have induced you to concert such measures as will be best adapted to accomplish so important an end. We have appointed the Rev. Mr. Elihu Spencer, Mr. John Ewing, and Mr. Patrick Allison to wait upon you at your next General Association, to deliver you our letter, and to converse with you at large on the subject of this proposal.

“Signed, by order of Synod,

“ELIHU SPENCER, *Moderator.*”