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Presbyterian Church in the  
U.S.A. General Assembly.

Minutes of the General  
Assembly of the

**MINUTES**

OF

**THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

OF

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

IN

**THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:**

WITH

**AN APPENDIX.**

**A. D. 1836.**

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*PHILADELPHIA:*

PUBLISHED BY THE STATED CLERK OF THE ASSEMBLY.

PRINTED BY LYDIA R. BAILEY, 26 NORTH FIFTH STREET.

1836.

Judicial business, No. 3; viz. appeals and complaints from Missouri, were taken up, and postponed to the next General Assembly.

The committee to whom was referred overture No. 18; viz. a request from the Presbytery of Fayetteville to print an edition of the Confession of Faith and Constitution of the Church, without the Scripture references, made the following report, which was adopted; viz. That after giving this subject a careful attention, they find that in time past the General Assembly has disapproved of such a procedure, and as no good is likely to arise, and much evil may ensue from such an act, therefore, resolved, that the request be not granted.

The following protest was introduced and ordered to be entered on the minutes; viz.

The undersigned do solemnly protest against the decision of the General Assembly, whereby the report of the committee of the last Assembly, respecting the Western Foreign Missionary Society, was rejected, for the following reasons; viz. *S. Miller*

1. Because we consider the decision of the Assembly in this case, as an unjustifiable refusal to carry into effect a solemn contract with the Synod of Pittsburg, duly ratified and confirmed under the authority of the last Assembly.

2. Because we are impressed with the deepest conviction, that the Presbyterian Church, in her ecclesiastical capacity, is bound, in obedience to the command of her divine Head and Lord, to send the glorious gospel as far as may be in her power, to every creature; and we consider the decision of the Assembly in this case; as a direct refusal to obey this command, and to pursue one of the great objects for which the Church was founded.

3. Because it is our deliberate persuasion, that a large part of the energy, zeal, and resources of the Presbyterian Church, cannot be called into action in the Missionary cause without the establishment of a Missionary Board by the General Assembly. It is evident that no other ecclesiastical organization, by fragments of the Church, can be formed, which will unite, satisfy, and call forth the zealous co-operation of those in every part of the Church who wish for a general Presbyterian Board.

4. Because, while the majority of the Assembly acknowledged that *they* had a Board which fully met all the wants and wishes, of themselves, and of those who sympathized with them;—they refused to make such a decision as would accord to us a similar and equal privilege; thereby, as we conceive, refusing that which would have been only just and equal, and rejecting a plan which would have greatly extended the missionary spirit, and exerted a reflex beneficial influence on the Churches thus indulged with a Board agreeable to their views.

5. Because, to all these considerations, urged with solemnity and affection, the majority of the Assembly were deaf, and have laid us under the necessity of protesting against their course; of complaining that we are denied a most reasonable, and to us most precious privilege; and of lamenting that we are laid under the necessity of resorting to plans of ecclesiastical organization, complicated, inconvenient, and much more adapted, on a variety of accounts, to interfere with ecclesiastical harmony, than the proposed Board would have been.

Pittsburg, June 9th, 1836.

Samuel Miller, John Coulter, Robert Porter, A. R. Curry, J. S. Weaver, James Lenox, J. H. Symmes, Edwin Downer, H. M. Hopkins, Clement Velandingham, George Bishop, J. H. Gray, J. McElroy, David McKinney, P. J. Sparrow, E. W. Caruthers, Robert Johnston, G. W.

Musgrave, S. G. Winchester, M. G. Wallace, F. H. Porter, R. H. Kilpatrick, Benjamin C. Swan, James McCurdy, Samuel S. Davis, H. M. Koontz, Samuel Boyd, David Morrow, John M. C. Bartley, J. Bemiss, Parly Coburn, J. S. Berryman, William Wallace, Jacob F. Price, W. L. Breckinridge, J. LeRoy Davies, Thomas L. Dunlap, James V. Henry, Wm. Marshall, Joseph Nimmo, J. Stoneroad, S. L. Graham, John W. Cunningham, Orson Douglass, Archibald George, Wm. P. Alrich, Sylvester Scovel, Benjamin F. Spilman, N. Ewing, Charles Woodward, J. R. Sharon, S. B. Lewers, James McFarren, R. Highlands, Wm. W. Phillips, Alexander A. Campbell, Samuel Henderson, H. S. Pratt, Nathaniel Todd, Evander McNair, John Miller, William Wallace, (of Lancaster,) James D. Ray, Alexander Write jr., Archibald Hanna, John Elliott, Jacob R. Castner, John Stinson, Joseph Campbell, James Kennedy, David S. Tod, Ananias Platt, Johnston Eaton, William Williamson, John S. Galloway, John H. Culbertson, Joseph Harbeson, John H. Van Court, Archibald McCallum, Thomas A. Ogden, Thomas R. Borden, John R. Hutchison, John McClure, Isaac W. Snowden, James Patterson jr., Ellison Conger, James Alexander.

Dr. Peters, Mr. Cleaveland, and Mr. H. Kingsbury were appointed a committee to answer the above protest.

The report of the committee on overture No. 5, on the subject of the Sabbath, was taken up; and after some amendments, was adopted, and is as follows; viz.

The committee to whom was referred "overture No. 5, relating to the Christian Sabbath," respectfully report,

That they have given to the consideration of it, all that attention which circumstances would permit; and are prepared to submit to the Assembly the results of their deliberations.

One important fact cannot be denied. The desecration of the Sabbath is certainly increasing with fearful rapidity, in almost every part of our beloved country. A solemn and alarming crisis has already come. Unless the slumbering energies of the Church are speedily aroused to arrest the progress of this growing evil, the entire obliteration of the Sabbath, will, at no distant period, be the result. It is necessary only to look into our large cities and villages, on the Sabbath, or to glance the eye along our navigable rivers, and over our beautiful lakes, or to trace the extended lines of our canals, and rail-roads, or listen to the perpetual rumbling of loaded vehicles, on all our travelled routes, in order to be convinced that Sabbath-breaking has already become a sin of giant growth in our land. It is, indeed, a wide-spread, deep-seated, unblushing evil. It enters boldly into almost every commercial interest in the country; and embraces, directly or indirectly, in its broad sweep of mischief, a vast multitude of individuals; and, what is still worse, an alarming proportion of these offenders belong to the Church of the living God. *Here* is the root of the evil. The Church has become a deliberate partaker in this great sin. In this way has her warning voice been well nigh silenced, her redeeming power over the community paralysed, and the salutary restraints of a consistent example effectually vacated. Reformation, then, must begin at the house of God. If the Church alone can save the Sabbath from being abolished, she must first reform her own conduct. In entering upon the work, it must not be forgotten that, in its failure or success, are involved the best interests of the Church, of our country, and the world. The *rest* of the Sabbath is the only wise and adequate provision for the wants of the animal system. The *influence* of the Sabbath can alone be relied on, to