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MEETINGS OF ASSEMBLIES AND SYNODS.

BY THE JUNIOR EDITOR.

I. UNITED PRESBYTERIAN. As the Minutes of this Assembly will appear in the August No., and as our readers will thus become familiar with the proceedings, we do not deem it necessary to say any thing in relation to them. The Rev. T. S. Kendall, of Oregon, discharged the duties of Moderator faithfully and satisfactorily. As this was the first meeting of the Assembly which he attended, and as he had not for many years been familiar with the rules and proceedings of church courts, he of course laboured under some disadvantages. Few Moderators have, however, upon the whole, given greater satisfaction.

The meeting was quite harmonious, and the conclusions arrived at will, no doubt, meet with general approbation throughout the church. The work for the present year is well devised; and it only remains that all strive to execute faithfully what has been so carefully projected.

The members of the Assembly were very hospitably entertained by the good people of Pittsburgh, Allegheny and vicinity.

II. THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA. The General Assembly of this church met in Philadelphia on the 19th of May. As this was the first meeting of the reunited Assembly, the Moderators, of the last Old and New School Assemblies, presided conjointly until a new Moderator was elected. Prayer was offered by Dr. M. W. Jacobus, Moderator of the Old School Assembly, and the opening sermon was preached by Dr. P. H. Fowler, Moderator of the New School. Dr. Jacobus constituted the Assembly with prayer. About six hundred commissioners were in attendance. The Rev. Dr. J. Trumbull Backus, of Schenectady, N. Y., was elected Moderator by acclamation. He was formerly of the Old School, and the motion for his election was made by Dr. Adams of the New School. Dr. Hatfield, of the New School, was, on motion of Dr. Musgrave, of the Old School, elected Stated Clerk, by acclamation. Other Clerks were elected in the same way.

The Assembly was thus organized to the apparent satisfaction of every one. The same spirit of harmony and brotherly love characterized the whole of the proceedings.

communities that retained the unforbidden. The old master of human consciences has always been snatching at the halter. And then a discussion arises about cutting it a little shorter, and people cannot exactly agree how much should be cut off, and some are afraid that if the process once begins it will never stop, and so they will not begin at all!

“The communities that refused all but what is commanded, are not at all perfect, but they will bear comparison with their neighbours. And they will be none the worse for keeping the position of the olden time, all the imputations upon bald and meager worship notwithstanding. “For the thing that hath been it is that which shall be, and that which is done is that which shall be done; and there is no new thing under the sun.”

There is a very important distinction made in the above extract between what is *forbidden* and what is *enjoined* in the word of God. Dr. Hall certainly ranges himself on the side of those who claimed that what was *enjoined* should have place in matters of religion. We rejoice that he occupies this conservative and safe ground. We must take the liberty, however, of saying that we do not think Dr. Hall is entirely consistent in action with the sentiment he has here advanced. He himself said at the meeting of the General Assembly in the fall of 1869 in Pittsburgh, that they sometimes sung the Psalms of David in his congregation in New York. They also sing hymns of human composition. Will the Dr. be so kind as to point out the place in the Bible where it is *enjoined* upon him or any one else to sing hymns made by man, in the worship of God? We are of the opinion that the Doctor would have to confess candidly that his practice and his sentiments as expressed in the above extract, do not agree. He is in this regard at least, we think, “dragging the halter,” and he will not have “clean escaped,” until he comes to the position that the songs whose use God has *enjoined* in his word are to be exclusively used in his worship.

DEATH OF AGED MINISTERS.

We have been called upon to record of late many deaths in the ministry. Among these were some of the aged and honoured ones. We may refer, for instance, to the death of Dr. Findley, and of Rev. John Graham.

Since our issue in June the news of the death of two other aged servants of God has reached us:—

I. The Rev. Matthew Snodgrass. The death of this father in the Church, occurred on the 26th of March. We had not heard of it, however, when our June number went to press. Father Snodgrass was a member of the Lake Presbytery. He had not for some years been discharging the active duties of the ministry, on account of the infirmities

of age. We had but little knowledge of his life, and therefore can do little more than record the fact of his death. Some of the brethren who knew him well would, no doubt, do a good work if they would prepare a sketch of his life. It must have had many things of interest, prolonged as it was. His memory ought to be cherished, and a fuller record of it made.

II. The Rev. David Macdill, D. D. The death of this aged and honoured father, occurred in the city of Monmouth, Ills., on the 15th of June. Dr. Macdill was, we believe, in the 80th year of his age. He was declining for a number of years, and was for a considerable time almost deprived of sight. He had, of course, laid aside the active duties of his Master's work. His disease was erysipelas. He retained his faculties and consciousness to the last, and went in peace to his rest and reward.

The following sketch of his life, furnished by himself, we find in the *Herald and Presbyter*, published in Cincinnati. It was prepared at the request of Dr. Monfort, the senior editor of the paper, who was a special friend of Dr. Macdill, and for some years a regular attendant upon his ministry. The brief sketch is as follows:—

DR. MONFORT:—According to your request, MONMOUTH, Ills., May 23, 1866. I send the accompanying, but whether you will be able to read it I cannot tell. My eyesight is worse than when I was in Cincinnati. I cannot read what I write.

Yours truly,
DAVID MACDILL.

I was born in the Northern district of South Carolina, December 27, 1790. Scotch-Irish Presbyterians were the prevailing population. They had their churches, academies and schools. By the time I was sixteen years of age I had studied as much mathematics, in a common school, as was common in colleges. There were few slaves, but when the cotton gin was invented, my father saw that he had one of three things to do: either he must raise cotton and purchase newly-imported slaves, or see his family sink down to the condition of slaves, or remove to the West. Accordingly, in the year 1806, he removed to Ohio, and settled in the wilderness in Preble county. There I spent three winters in clearing off the beech forest,—teaching a school three months each summer. I then commenced the study of the languages, under the Rev. William Robertson in Lebanon. I finished my literary course in Transylvania, Ky. Rev. Dr. Finley Crowe, the founder of the College of South Hanover, Rev. David Monfort, D. D., your uncle, and Rev. S. P. McGaw, were among my classmates. In the fall of 1813 I set out for New York, to attend the Theological Seminary, under Rev. Dr. J. M. Mason, where I spent four annual sessions. In the year 1817 I was licensed, and commenced preaching in Hamilton, Ohio, in the month of October, where I remained more than thirty years, during which time I edited the *Christian Intelligencer* for eighteen years. My health having become feeble, I removed to Southern Illinois in 1848, not intending again to take charge of the congregation; but I was prevailed on to take the charge of Union congre-

gation, where I labored for about nine years; and resigned my charge, having become too large for a person of my age. It is now divided into two pastorates. Soon after this I removed to Monmouth. I am now very feeble, and my sight is about gone.

In relation to Dr. Macdill's ability, character and labours, Dr. Monfort speaks as follows:—

Dr. Macdill was one of the ablest and best ministers this country has ever produced. His delivery was slow and not impressive, but his sermons were models of rich, pure, and sound thought. As a writer he had few superiors. He was a skilful and cultivated logician, a profound and vigorous thinker, a general and accurate scholar, and a courteous and attractive Christian gentleman. For fifteen years, from 1820, we heard him preach almost every other Sabbath in Hamilton, and no other minister has so excited our high affection and veneration. His reputation where he has lived and laboured is a sweet perfume.

The *Christian Intelligencer*, conducted by Dr. Macdill, was a very valuable monthly magazine. The Editor's Notices of Current Questions and Events are among the liveliest and best specimens of thought and style any where to be found. It contains many able and profound discussions of subjects in theology and morals. We would esteem it a great acquisition to the library of Lane Theological Seminary if any one having the volumes would donate or sell them. If we had access to them, we should reproduce in our paper many of their best articles.

It should be mentioned, in connection with the above, that Dr. Macdill ably edited, for some years, the *Western United Presbyterian*, in connection with the United Presbyterian Church. This paper was united with the *Christian Instructor*. The life of Dr. Macdill was a long, successful and useful one, and the above estimate of his character, ability as a preacher and writer and deportment as a Christian, by Dr. Monfort, will be appreciated as just by all who knew him.

THE POPE DECLARED TO BE INFALLIBLE.

The Ecumenical Council at Rome, after a lengthy and somewhat heated discussion of the matter, declared on the 12th of July the dogma of the infallibility of the Pope. The vote, as announced by the telegraph, stood ayes, 450; noes, 88.*

Thus, in the middle of the nineteenth century, it is affirmed by a great council in an apparently solemn manner, that the old man who sits at the head of the Romish Church, and of course his successors in office, cannot err, and that all those who dare to affirm the contrary are anathema. It will be interesting to know what is the position of those who voted against this dogma. If they do not immediately as-

* The vote on the 18th of July, when the dogma was formally promulgated, was 532 in favour; 2 against.