

**SOME RECOLLECTIONS OF A VISIT TO  
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH MET AT PITTS-  
BURGH, PENNSYLVANIA, IN MAY,  
1836.**

Ever since my arrival in Canada, I have felt a lively interest in the operations and prosperity of the Presbyterian Church of the United States, which professes to retain, as an essential part of its constitution, those standards of doctrine and discipline which I believe to be agreeable to the sacred Scriptures. This interest was nothing diminished when the early history of this large body presented to me their origin from the Puritans of England, who sought in the forests of this new Continent an asylum from ecclesiastical tyranny, and the affectionate correspondence which subsisted, for a long period, between some of the early founders of this Transatlantic Church, and that of my native country. Although time and travel, and a more extended intercourse with men of different national origins, has made me more a citizen of the world than I once was, and although I have seen from the practical effects of the Gospel upon the characters of men, more of the truth and beauty of that passage—"There is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him"—I confess that I still feel a predilection, not blameable I trust, for whatever bears the impress, and reminds me, of the land of my birth. This feeling has often led me to con over with inward satisfaction the lists of Ministers names in the American Church, and as I discovered of how many of them their descent, co-national with my own, could not be mistaken, I seemed more united in spirit with my Transatlantic fellow-labourers in the vineyard of Christ, and proud-

er of my country from which their progenitors came. Nor is their names the sole surviving characteristic of their lineage. For though their physical constitution has, during the lapse of two or three generations, been acted on and changed by the climate of this new world, and they have been bred up to admire different political institutions, and some religious peculiarities dissimilar to those of the parent stock have been engrafted on them by their new circumstances, yet in all the best essential features the son is as his sire, breathing the same spirit of freedom which he breathed on his native mountains in the Island of the sea, emulous of the same independence, worshipping in the same scriptural forms, and drawing consolation from the faith. I shall take the earliest opportunity of paying them a visit, was my resolution.

I was aware too, for I had often read the accounts with pain, how much this Church was torn with dissension; that no small number of her Ministers had erred, as was alleged, in some very important points from the faith; and that questions, connected with fundamental doctrines, would become the subject of debate in the General Assembly that was about to meet. Moved with the desire of seeing and hearing the proceedings of this highest court of the American Church, I left home with two *compagnons de voyage*, in hope at once of gratifying curiosity and obtaining instruction.

Were my recollections intended for that class of persons, rather a numerous one on this continent, who make it a point to travel some thousands of miles every summer, to whom our tour and its scenery are as familiar as the road that lies between their church and home, it might be enough for me to say—"Phillip was found at Azotus"—without