

## Session IV. — 1814.

Philadelphia, May 4<sup>th</sup>. 1814.

Pursuant to adjournment the Synod met and was constituted sederunt. There were present from the —

Northern Presbytery.		
Ministers.	Elders.	Congregations.
Alexander McLeod James Milligan Gilbert McMaster William Gibson	Andrew Gifford William C. Beattie — — — — — — — —	New York. Coldenham. Duanesburgh. Ryegate.
Middle Presbytery.		
Samuel B. Wylie " " " John Black	William Henry John McKinley Robert Orr Thomas McAdam — — — —	Philadelphia. " " " Pittsburgh.
Southern Presbytery.		
Thomas Donnelly John Kell	— — — — — — — —	Rocky Creek. Beech Woods.

John Kell, Moderator.

John Black, Clerk.

Agreeable to a former appointment of Synod, the Rev. Mr. Wylie was to have opened this Synod with a sermon upon the duty of providing for the Church an able and learned ministry. Mr. Wylie not being able to attend through indisposition, the sermon of course could not be preached.

Agreed to adjourn to meet at half past two tomorrow P.M.

The Moderator concluded by prayer.

5<sup>th</sup> May, 1814. Eodem loco.

The Court met and was constituted pursuant to adjournment. Same members ut antea with the exceptions of Messrs. McKinley and McAdam, ruling elders.

Rev. Thomas Donnelly this day appeared and took his seat.

Dr. McLeod was called to the Moderator's chair, and Mr. Black was continued Clerk of Synod.

The minutes of the last Synod were read, and the unfinished business was called up.

1. The Committee on Foreign Correspondence were called on to report. They reported that no official documents from the Reformed Synods of Britain or Ireland had reached them. But from private letters from Scotland it was understood that the Reformed Synod there had taken our Overtures into consideration, and had transmitted an official document containing their remarks thereon to this Synod, but the ship which carried these had been captured upon the high seas by the British and carried into Halifax. No opportunity of receiving a duplicate of this document has since offered. From the Reformed Synod in Ireland no communication has been received.

2. The Court agreed that the consideration of these Overtures be deferred until the next meeting of Synod.

3. The Committee appointed to publish the report of the Middle Presbytery relative to the trial of Mr. Graham, reported that they had fulfilled their appointment. Their report was approved.

4. The Committee appointed to visit the seat of government and confer with the constituted authorities relative to aliens in our communion, reported that

for certain reasons, which they detailed to the Court, they had not fulfilled their appointment. Their reasons were sustained, and they were released from the appointment.

5. The Committee appointed to publish the minutes of last Synod, causes of fasting, thanksgiving, etc., reported that they had not been able to comply with the injunction of the Court. Their reasons were satisfactory.

6. Mr. Milligan had been appointed to spend three Sabbaths in the bounds of the Cannonsburgh congregation, and one in the Tioga settlement on the Susquehanna, before his return to Wallkill. On being interrogated if he had fulfilled his appointments, he answered that he had fulfilled the appointment in Cannonsburgh, but had not sufficient instruction for finding the place alluded to on the Susquehanna, and consequently could not fulfill that appointment. His reasons were sustained.

7. The Middle Presbytery, which had been directed to take order with Mr. Reilly in relation to his ordination and mission to South Carolina, etc., reported that they had ordained Mr. Reilly and sent him on a mission as directed.

8. Resolved, That a Committee be appointed to enquire whether there be any causes, and if any, what causes may at present exist calling this Synod to essay the duties of fasting and humiliation, and also thanksgiving to God, and report thereon as soon as possible. Messrs. McMaster, Milligan and Orr were appointed to be that Committee.

Adjourned till 4 o'clock tomorrow P.M.

Eodem loco. May 6<sup>th</sup>. 1814.

The Court met and was constituted. Same members ut antea with the addition of Rev. S. B. Wylie; Messrs. McAdam and McKinley being absent.

1. The Committee appointed to prepare and transmit Synodical letters to our brethren in Britain and Ireland, were called on to report. They reported that in consequence of the belligerent state of Britain and America an opportunity had not been afforded to transmit such documents. Reasons sustained.

2. The Committee appointed to enquire if there be any causes of fasting and thanksgiving, reported that, in their opinion, there were causes for both, and presented these causes which were read and recommitted to the same Committee to revise and report as soon as possible.

3. The Superintendents of the Seminary made application to Synod requesting their judicial sanction to the recognition of Mr. Samuel Robinson, who had never graduated in any College, as one of the alumni of the Seminary. The Synod authorized the Superintendents to examine Mr. Robinson and admit him, if, in their judgment, he be found duly qualified. The Synod also sanctioned the recognition of Messrs. John Gibson, Francis S. Beattie and Samuel W. Crawford who are found in a similar situation.

Adjourned till tomorrow at half past four o'clock, P.M.

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May 7<sup>th</sup>. 1814.

The Court met and proceeded to business.

The Secretary of the Board of Superintendents presented to Synod the following report of the Superintendents:— Agreeable to the Constitution of the Theological Seminary, the Superintendents met and formed a Board on the first Wednesday of May. They proceeded to the proper business of the Superintendents — the examination of the students. The students of the first class are Archibald Johnston, Francis S. Beattie, John Gibson and Samuel W. Crawford, who were respectively called upon to deliver discourses connected with Biblical Literature which had been assigned them by the Professor. These students, with the exception of Mr. Beattie (who was absent), were afterwards examined on the proper literature belonging to their class. In all which exhibitions and examinations this class acquitted themselves to the satisfaction of the Board, and afford a pleasing prospect of future usefulness in the Church of God. They are referred to the second class in the Seminary.

The students of the second class, viz, Samuel

Wylie and John Cannon, were called upon to deliver discourses as specimens of their pulpit eloquence, and were also examined on metaphysics, the science of the human mind, and particularly inquired into logic, ethics, etc., in all which these gentlemen acquitted themselves respectably, affording satisfaction to the Board and anticipation of greater improvement hereafter when the sphere of their operations is enlarged. They are respectively referred to the remaining studies of the second class.

The students of the third class, viz. Robert Lusk, Jonathan Gill, Robert Wallace and Samuel Robinson, were called severally to deliver discourses in relation to systematic and polemical theology, and were also examined on theology and the analogy of faith, pursuing the plan laid down in the Testimony of the Church. In all of which the students severally gave such a satisfaction to the Board that they hereby declare that they have honorably passed through the proper series of literature belonging to the institution, and are hereby discharged from this Seminary and are now delivered up to the Synod, the highest judicatory in our Church, duly and fully certified, wishing them the guidance and blessing of the Holy Spirit.

(Signed). Alexander McLeod, chairman.  
John Black, Secretary.

The Synod agree to receive the report of the Superintendents, and now refer the above four students, Messrs. Lusk, Gill, Wallace and Robinson, to the Middle Presbytery, desiring them to take them forthwith upon trials with a view to licensure; and, if found duly qualified, to license them to preach the gospel under the direction of this Church.

Adjourned to meet Tuesday next at 3 o'clock P.M.

The Moderator concluded by prayer.

Tuesday, May 10<sup>th</sup>. 1814.

The Synod met and proceeded to business. The minutes of the former session of Synod were read and approved.

1. On motion it was agreed that the present Superintendents of the Seminary be continued.
2. A paper containing a proposition for Covenanting was

proposed to Synod, and read. Ordered to lie on the table.

3. The Committee on Causes of fasting and thanksgiving were called to report. They reported progress and had leave to sit again.

4. The Middle Presbytery were called to report. They requested, and were granted longer time, as their Presbyterial business was in progress.

The next meeting of Synod was appointed to be in Coldenham, on the second Tuesday of August, 1815. Mr. Black is to open the Synod with a sermon on "Ecclesiastical Fellowship." And on the supposition of Mr. Black failing, Mr. Milligan is appointed his substitute.

Adjourned till 3 o'clock P.M. tomorrow.

May 11<sup>th</sup>. 1814. Eodem loco.

Synod met and came to order. The Committee appointed to prepare causes of fasting and thanksgiving reported that, in their opinion, there were causes for both. They presented a draft of these causes, and their report was sustained. The second Thursday of October was appointed as the day of fasting, and the last Thursday of December as that of thanksgiving.

Dr. McLeod and John Black were appointed a Committee to extract and publish such parts of the Minutes, including a summary of the above causes, as to them may appear proper. Mr. Wylie appears, and takes his seat.

The Professor again presented his resignation of the professorate of the Theological Seminary, urging his bad state of health and the pressure of other avocations, as reasons why he should be released from the professorship. The consideration of his request was deferred till the next sederunt.

Dr. McLeod was appointed to prepare the draft of a Covenant, embracing the substance of our former covenants, together with an appropriate address to our own and other Churches, and lay it before Synod at the next meeting.

Adjourned till 9 o'clock P.M.

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May 12<sup>th</sup>. 1814. Eodem loco.

Same members ut antea. Synod met and came to order.

The Professor's resignation was called up. After much consideration, and the weighing of the case in all its bearings, the Court agree that in exciting circumstances the resignation of the professor cannot be received. The thanks of the Court were respectfully tendered to the professor for his former unwearied and acceptable service, and he is earnestly requested to continue in the discharge of the duties of his office as far as may be compatible with his health and ability. The resignation was returned, and the professor consented to continue.

A Committee was appointed to correspond with the Reformed Synods of Britain and Ireland. Revs. McMaster and Milligan are that Committee.

Reports of Presbyteries were now called for. The reports of the Northern and Southern Presbyteries represented an accession and growth in our ecclesiastical connections within their several bounds. The Rev. Mr. Reilly had been settled in Chester Co., S.C., and was now a member of the Southern Presbytery. The state of religion in the western parts of the charge of the Southern Presbytery, under the ministry of the Rev. Mr. Kell, was pleasing and satisfactory. The increase of members was considerable.

The Middle Presbytery's report was also satisfactory. Three of the students of theology delivered into their care by this Court, viz: Robert Lusk, Jonathan Gill and Robert Wallace, were licensed to preach the everlasting gospel, and were delivered up to Synod for its disposal. The fourth, Samuel Robinson, is expected to be licensed before Presbytery leaves this place.

The Synod appoint Mr. Lusk to repair with all convenient speed to the bounds of the Northern Presbytery, and Mr. Gill to remain in the Middle Presbytery. These two are to alternate as the two Presbyteries may direct, until the next meeting of Synod, if not previously ordained. Mr. Wallace is to return to the bounds of the Southern Presbytery, in the vicinity of Mr. Kell, who shall appoint him places of preaching as may be convenient.

Moved to reconsider the minute appointing the time and place of the next meeting of Synod, with a view to changing both.

This motion was seconded and carried. And it was agreed that the next meeting of Synod be held in Philadelphia, on the third Thursday of May, 1816.

The Synod also agrees that the article in the Constitution of the Theological Seminary, fixing the annual meeting of the Superintendents to be on the first Wednesday of May, be, and hereby is, changed to the third Wednesday of May.

The Moderator concluded by prayer.

(Signed).

Alexander McLeod, Moderator.

John Black, Clerk.