

## Session XII. — 1827.

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Philadelphia, May 16, 1827.

The Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church met agreeably to adjournment, and was opened with a sermon by the Rev. James Milligan from 1 John 5:10, “He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witnesses in himself.” The public service being ended, the Synod adjourned till tomorrow at 10 o’clock, A.M.

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Thursday, May 17, 1827.

Agreeably to adjournment the Synod met, and was called to order by the Moderator. The Court proceeded to ascertain the members of the present Synod, when it appeared there were present from the —

————— Northern Presbytery. —————		
Ministers.	Elders.	Congregations.
Alexander McLeod	Andrew Gifford	New York.
James R. Johnston	— — — — —	Newburgh.
James R. Willson	W. C. Beattie	Coldenham.
— — — — —	William Stewart*	White Lake.
— — — — —	John Ewart	Albany.
— — — — —	John Monteith	Galway & Broad Albin.
Gilbert McMaster	John Cullings*	Duanesburgh.
— — — — —	William Cunningham*	Schenectady.
— — — — —	Robert Brooks*	Paterson.
James Milligan	— — — — —	Ryegate.
William Sloane	— — — — —	Topsham.
————— Philadelphia Presbytery. —————		
Samuel B. Wylie	William Henry	Philadelphia.
Samuel W. Crawford.	John Thomson	Conococheague.

[\* Undoubtedly absent. — W. M. Glasgow.]

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**Comment [NJP1]:** Marginal note:  
 “See printed Minutes, & go here  
 p. 141.  
 9 Elders.  
 J.B.W.”

Pittsburgh Presbytery.		
John Black	William Gormley	Pittsburgh.
Jonathan Gill	— — — —	Thompson's Run.
Thomas C. Guthrie	— — — —	Pine Creek, Union, etc.
— — — —	Robert Brown	Greensburg.
— — — —	Nathan Johnston	Greenfield.
Gavin McMillan	— — — —	Beech Woods.
Western Presbytery.		
Samuel Wylie	— — — —	Bethel.

1. On motion, Rev. Gilbert McMaster was called to the Moderator's chair ; Rev. John Black was continued Clerk; Rev. S. W. Crawford was appointed Assistant Clerk. The Rules were then read.

2. The Minutes of last Synod were read and approved.

3. The Synod proceeded to the appointment of the —

Committees:

(1) Unfinished Business — Revs. Gavin McMillan and William Sloane.

(2) Presbyterial Reports — Revs. James R. Johnston and T. C. Guthrie.

(3) Theological Seminary — Rev. James Milligan and elder Robert Brown.

(4) Discipline — Rev. J. R. Willson and elder John Thomson.

(5) Signs of the Times — Revs. Samuel Wylie and Jonathan Gill.

(6) Foreign Correspondence — Revs. Alex. McLeod and S. W. Crawford.

4. The Synod agree that our sessions, at least for this week, shall commence each day at 9 o'clock A.M., and terminate at 1 o'clock P.M.; and that there shall be no afternoon session, that the Committees may have time to prepare their reports.

5. Revs. William Gibson, Melancthon B. Williams and W. L. Roberts are invited to take seats in Synod as consultative members. They took their seats accordingly.

6. The Committee on the proposed correspondence with the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church are called on for their report, to be presented tomorrow morning.

7. Reports on Unfinished Business afterwards to be called for.

Adjourned till tomorrow at 9 o'clock, A.M.

Friday, May 18, 1827.

The Synod met agreeably to adjournment. Same members ut antea.

1. The Minutes of the former sederunt were read and approved.
2. Unfinished Business was called up. The Directory and Book of Discipline were committed to the Committee on Discipline. The Form of a Covenant was committed to the Committee on Unfinished Business. The concerns of the Seminary to the Committee on Theological Seminary. The fund for travelling expenses to a Committee consisting of elders John Thomson, Robert Brown and Andrew Gifford. The contingent expenses of Synod were referred to the above Committee. It was resolved that elder John Ewart be added to that Committee.
3. Presbyterial reports were called for. The Northern Presbytery presented their report, which was read and accepted; also the reports of the Philadelphia, Pittsburgh and Western Presbyteries were presented, read, and accepted. These reports were committed to the Committee on Presbyterial Reports.
4. The disposal of licentiates. Referred.
5. The Argumentative Part of the Testimony was referred to a Committee consisting of Rev. Jonathan Gill, and elders William Gormley and William Henry to report thereon.
6. The consideration of forming Subordinate Synods was referred to a Committee consisting of Revs. Alex. McLeod and John Black, and elder John Thomson.
7. Enquiry was made at Rev. Samuel Wylie whether he had carried into effect the Synod's orders in relation to the Rev. Robert Lusk and the congregation of Walnut Ridge. He stated that he had attempted it, but was prevented by the congregation. Rev. Gavin McMillan, the alternate of Mr. Wylie, reported that he had carried into execution these orders within the bounds of the congregation. This report was approved.
8. The thanks of the Synod were rendered to the Rev. James Milligan for the sermon delivered by him at the opening of Synod, and a copy requested for publication, with which Mr. Milligan complied.
9. The Chairman of the Committee on correspondence with

the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church reported the plan agreed upon by the Joint Committee, and laid on the table of Synod an authenticated copy of their proceedings, as follows: —

New York, Dec. 30, 1825.

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church and the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church having severally appointed a Committee to prepare a Plan of Correspondence between the two bodies, the said Committees met this day at the house of the Rev. Stephen N. Rowan, D.D. Present, on the part of the General Assembly, Rev. Stephen N. Rowan, D.D., and Rev. Robert McCartee. On the part of the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Revs. Alex. McLeod, D.D. and James Christie. Absent, of the Committee of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, the Rev. John Gibson. Of the Committee of the General Assembly, the Rev. Elisha W. Baldwin.

The Committee having respectively presented their commissions, the Rev. Alex. McLeod, D.D. was appointed Chairman, and the Rev. Stephen N. Rowan, D.D. Secretary. The Rev. Dr. McLeod opened the meeting with prayer, and the Rev. Dr. Rowan read a part of the fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians.

After mutual and friendly consultation the following Plan was unanimously adopted, to be recommended to the respective judicatories, viz: —

Article I. The General Assembly and the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church lamenting the existing separation between the members of the body of Christ, and, believing that all the members of that body, being many are one body; and trusting to the Word of God that these separations shall not be perpetual, do agree to use all Scriptural means, in the exercise of patience and prudence, to bring their several ecclesiastical connections to uniformity in doctrine, worship and order according to the Word of God.

Article II. In order to bring about this desirable object on the basis of the proper unity of the visible Church, it is mutually covenanted that the Ministers, Members and Judicatories of these Churches, treating each other with Christian respect, shall always recognize the validity of each other's acts and

ordinances consonant to the Scriptures; and yet, that any Church judicatory belonging to either body, may examine persons or review cases of discipline on points at present peculiar or distinctive to themselves.

Article III. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church and the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church shall severally appoint two Commissioners, with an alternate to each, to attend these judicatories respectively; who shall hold their office till they are superseded by another choice; and these Commissioners shall have the privilege of proposing measures important to the Church of Christ, and of delivering their opinions on any question under discussion, but they shall have no vote in its decisions.

Article IV. In order to carry this article into effect, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church will, at their sessions in May, 1826, appoint Commissioners who shall attend the succeeding meeting of the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, provided the said Synod shall have concurred in the above Plan of Correspondence.

Resolved: That an authenticated copy of these proceedings be furnished to the Chairman of each of the conferring Committees to be laid before their respective Judicatories.

Resolved: That a copy of the above Plan to be recommended to the General Assembly and to the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church be submitted to the members of the two Committees which are absent for their concurrence or dissent; and that the result be transmitted to the Secretary of these conferring Committees, and the same be by him, and the Chairman, communicated to their respective judicatories.

Adjourned, closing with prayer by the —

Rev. Robert McCartee, chairman.

Stephen N. Rowan, Secretary.

The foregoing Plan having, in conformity with the last resolution, been communicated to the Rev. Elisha W. Baldwin, the following result was communicated to the Secretary, viz: "I agree to the following Plan." (Signed) Elisha W. Baldwin.

Attest: Stephen N. Rowan, Secretary of the conferring Committee.

The consideration of this Plan of Correspondence was made the order of the day for tomorrow.

Adjourned till 9 o'clock, A.M. tomorrow

Eodem loco. Saturday, May 19, 1827.

Synod met pursuant to adjournment and was called to order by the Moderator. Same members ut antea.

1. The Minutes of the preceding session were read and approved.

2. A communication was made to Synod from the Associate Synod of North America, complaining of misrepresentation of some of their principles in our Testimony, and craving that measures may be adopted by this Synod to correct these misstatements. This document was referred to the Committee on Foreign Correspondence. The following is a copy of this communication: —

To the Reformed Presbyterian Synod.

Dear Brethren: —

When we endeavor to correct the errors of others we should beware of imputing opinions to these which they do not hold. In controversy the opposite parties often misunderstand one another. In witnessing to the truth this must be injurious both to the course we intend to promote, and to the parties concerned. As a religious body you have taken a conspicuous stand in contending for the truth in opposition to the flood of errs deluging the land. But to misunderstand or to misrepresent the principles of others, is to be against the truth and not for the truth. It is a pleasing to state that there is a general coincidence between your views of truth and duty and ours, and we trust it is our unfeigned desire that it should be extended to every part of our Christian profession; and one principle means of the accomplishment of this is the removing of all misrepresentations. It is painful to have to state that we consider our principles, in a number of points, as misstated in your Testimony.

The following are some of the misstatements of which we complain; and, that the ground of our complaint may be more apparent, we place your statements and ours in opposite columns:

Statement given in "Reformation Principles, ed. 1824.	Statements given by the Associate Church.
<p>1. The Associate Church condemned all distinction between such rulers as happened in Divine Providence, to have the power of a nation upon unlawful principles and such as ruled by Divine approbation.</p> <p>The only question which they would permit a Christian to ask, is in respect to the matter of fact, Is there any person actually in power? If so, he must be recognized as the ordinance of God. The powers that be are ordained of God. The Scottish Seceders exceeded the University of Oxford itself in maintaining the doctrine of passive obedience. They deny that there is any difference, as to lawfulness, between one government and another. — Pages 106, 107.</p>	<p>1. Mere usurpers can have no lawful authority, and if they shall acquire the consent of the people, whether expressed or tacit, they then cease to be such, and are invested with authority whereunto God commends subjection and obedience in matters lawful. Again, in order to render one an habitual tyrant it is at least necessary that he leave ruling by just laws, that he be engaged in war against the lives, or invading and overturning the avowed liberties and privileges of the nation; as was the case in the persecuting times before the Revolution. It cannot be supposed that such a person has any real consent of the nation to rule, and therefore he can have no lawful authority. However quietly one may be obliged to live under usurpers or habitual tyrants, yet there should be no acknowledgement of their authority as binding upon the conscience.</p> <p>The Presbytery's principle of subjection and obedience doth only respect things lawful, and is not at all inconsistent with any self-defense that is necessary, lawful, and expedient, according to the Word of God and right reason, such as our worthy ancestors endeavored at Pentland and Bothwell. Yea, there is no manner of inconsistency between being in a posture of self-defense against particular injuries by a magistrate, and an owning at the same time his title and authority in what lawful</p>

<p>2. Nations, as such, are not bound to acknowledge Christ or his religion. Magistrates have nothing to do with Christianity. — <u>Page 108.</u></p> <p>3. The Associate Church maintains that divine revelation is not the rule by which we are to act in the formation of the civil constitutions and laws. — <u>Page 107.</u></p>	<p>commands he may impose. — <u>Display of the Secession Testimony, Vol. I, page 290.</u></p> <p>The Associate Presbytery and those who adhere to them, do not hold magistracy or its lawfulness to be founded on the Providential, but on the Perceptive, will of God.</p> <p>They have nothing to say in defense of that magistracy which is merely Providential, though not a little they have to advance in proof that the office of every magistrate, whom a people have chosen, and whom they acknowledge to be invested with civil authority over them, is founded on the Perceptive will of God, and is agreeable to his law in its rise and origin. — <u>Review of the Antigovernmental Scheme, pp. 34, 35.</u></p> <p>2. As it was once the peculiar duty of the Jewish nation, so it is peculiarly incumbent upon every civil state whereinto Christianity is introduced, to study and bring to pass that civil government among them in all the appurtenances of its constitution and administration run in an agreeableness to the Word of God, and to the interests of the true religion and reformation of the Church, as otherwise they cannot truly prosper in their civil concerns, nor be enriched by the blessings of the gospel. The whole people adjoining themselves to the true church, should approve themselves as being true members thereof; and considered in their conjunct and public capacity, (as thus only the matter is competent unto them) should, by their deed of civil constitution provide that their magistrates be obliged to concur in the same true religion and reformation, and to rule them by laws nowise prejudicial but serviceable thereto. — <u>Display of the Secession Testimony, Vol. I, p. 280.</u></p> <p>3. What the apostle ascribes unto magistrates (viz: their being the ministers of God for good, being not a terror to good works but to evil) is, in some measure, competent to all such in every nation or state. But the advantage lies very far on the side of such as have occasion to exercise their office for promoting the church's public good; while, at the same time, they are privileged with (and endeavor to discharge their other special business,</p>
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<p>4. The Associate Church maintains that Jesus Christ does not, as Mediator, govern the world. His authority is confined to the church. — <u>Page 107.</u></p> <p>5. The Associate Church maintains that the Redeemer has not purchased temporal benefits for the saints.* — <u>page 108.</u></p> <hr/> <p>*This statement is defective.</p>	<p>as well as this, according to) the full discovery which God's Word hath made of those natural principles that comprehend the due exercise of their office, as well as its institution and its end. The Christian magistrate ought to determine himself, not merely by natural, but also by revealed or Christian principles. — <u>Display of the Secession Testimony, Vol. I, pp. 312, 313.</u></p> <p>4. That our Lord's mediatory government and administration doth extend to all outward things in the world of nature and providence, insofar as these things are supernaturally ordered unto supernatural ends in the spiritual advantage of his church and people, or so far as ordered in the channel of love and favor to them, with a subserviency to the purpose of and glory of free grace in their salvation ; and that all such orderings of outward things are the proper fruit of Christ's purchase; and that all these outward things, as considered in the formality or channel of these gracious orderings, do hold of Christ and his Kingdom as Mediator. All this is heartily agreed to. Christ, as being the same true God with the Father, is the maker and upholder of all things. He upholds them in their being, not by his mediation, but by the Word of his power. But he has also a mediatory Kingdom, which, as well as his essential Kingdom, extends to all persons and things. John 17:2, "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." — <u>Precious Truth, p. 250.</u></p> <p>5. We do also reject the opinion of those who teach that Christ did by his death purchase the benefits of this life, which are common to all men. For all the blessings purchased by Christ are of that nature that the Holy Spirit only can make us partakers of them; and they can be actively received by faith only; and</p>
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	<p>they are even decided as such in the Scriptures. The common benefits of life are, we believe, given to the reprobate: as meat, drink, and clothing are given to criminals lying under sentence of death, not to be put under execution till an appointed hour. With regard to the elect, God preserves them in life, though wicked and abusers of his common bounty, until the time of their conversion, and then being brought into his covenant of grace, as his blessings rest on them, so what provision they need for their outward state is given to them as to children, free from that curse which is upon the basket and the store of the wicked; and thus all the good that is in these benefits to believers flows from the death of Christ. The same provision might have been given them though he had never died for them, but not with the same gracious design of the Giver, nor with the same blessing attending it to them.</p> <p>We declare also that Christ has obtained complete and eternal redemption for his own people. He has by his obedience to the death secured to them every spiritual blessing. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." It is through his blood that they obtain pardon of sin and a title to eternal life in their justification. It is through his blood that they obtain sanctification, perseverance in grace, and eternal glory. Being united to Christ, the divine blessing rests upon all their temporal enjoyments. They receive and enjoy the bounties of Providence under the divine favor. The curse which it is on the basket and store of the wicked it, through Christ, graciously removed from theirs. The good creatures of God are sanctified to their use by the Word of God and prayer; and it is through Christ that the enjoyment of temporal blessings is made subservient to their spiritual good and to the glory of God. At the same time, temporal enjoyments themselves, such as food and raiment, in their earthly</p>
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<p>6. The Associate Church maintains that the world stands, not on purpose to exhibit the system of grace, but in order to bring into being the children of Adam, that they might be punished by the curse of the covenant of works. — <u>Page 108.</u></p>	<p>and perishing nature, and as the means of supporting animal life, are not to be considered as procured by the death of Christ. — <u>Appendix to the Act of the Associate Synod concerning Arminian errors upon the head of universal redemption, pp. 34, 35.</u></p> <p>6. The Seceders believe that the world stands on purpose that the covenant of grace might be exhibited and carried into execution, though they do not say that it stands for this purpose only; because the standing of the world is also necessary in order to the execution of the covenant of works; for which, as well as for the executions of the covenant of grace, the truth of God is engaged. — <u>Review of the Anti-Government Scheme, pp. 14, 15.</u></p>
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We adduce not these as the whole, but the principal misrepresentations of which we complain, and we disown them as tenets which the Secession Church never held; tenets which we cordially condemn, and do regard ourselves as injured when they are imputed to us. We trust you will receive with pleasure this disavowal, and promptly adopt such measures as will effectually prevent all the pernicious effects which may result from the misrepresentations of which we complain. The times require that the witnesses for God ought to exert all their energies in the support of truth and against error. And brethren, our prayer is that you and we may “contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.”

By order of the Associate Synod of North America, convened at Philadelphia, May, A.D. 1826.

James Ramsey, Moderator.

Attest: Francis Pringle, Stated Clerk.

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3. A paper embracing the objects of a call, as nearly as circumstances would admit, with accompanying documents, from Elk River congregation, Tennessee, for Mr. Robert McKee, was presented to Synod, read, and referred to the Committee on Presbyterian Reports.

4. A similar call upon Mr. James Faris, from the congregation of Bloomington, Indiana, was received, read, and referred to the Committee on Presbyterian Reports.

5. The order of the day was then called for, viz: the motion to adopt the Plan of Correspondence with the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church. After a long and dispassionate discussion the motion was withdrawn, and the following substituted in its place: —

The Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church are aware of the scattered state of the churches under their care, the duty of preserving their mutual confidence unimpaired and their strength undiminished; and, the importance of the subject itself, both in the present edification and future operations of the people of God in their communion, therefore,

Resolved, To postpone indefinitely the further consideration of the proposed Plan of Correspondence with the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church.

The Synod adopted this resolution.

Adjourned till Monday at 9 o'clock, A.M.

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Eodem loco. Monday, May 21, 1827.

Agreeably to adjournment Synod met and was constituted. Same members ut antea.

1. The Minutes of the former sederunt were read, corrected, and approved.

2. Committees were called on to report. The Committee on Foreign Correspondence reported in part on the Letter from the Associate Synod, as follows: —

Your Committee have taken into consideration the Letter addressed to this Synod by the Associate Synod of North America, Philadelphia, May, 1826, and are of the opinion that this Letter merits very particular attention. When any respectable com-

munity of Christians opens a correspondence with another in regard to the doctrines of Christianity, it ought to be met with promptness and with candor ; and especially when a Church professing adherence to the cause of the British Reformers addresses this Church on the subject of existing differences, we ought to hail it as an incipient step toward mutual explanations and the ultimate removal of the causes of dissention. What begins with complaint may, with the blessing of God, terminate in conciliation.

Your Committee, therefore, recommend to Synod the adoption of the following resolutions: —

(1) That a Committee be appointed to confer, by word or writing, with the Associate Synod, or with any corresponding Committee that they may see proper to appoint, for the purpose of free conference upon any or all of the existing differences between the two Churches.

(2) That the following letter be, in the meantime, addressed to the Associate Synod: —

Philadelphia, May 21, 1827.

To the Associate Synod of North America.

Dear Brethren: —

Your letter of May, 1826, now lies before us, and we have taken such order upon it as its own importance seems to require, and the Christian reciprocity, which we shall ever be ready to show at all times, demands. We cheerfully agree with you in saying that “when we endeavor to correct the errors of others we should beware of imputing opinions to them which they do not hold,” as well as in the declaration “that there is a general coincidence between our views of truth and duty and yours,” and in the “unfeigned desire that it should be extended to every part of our Christian profession.” It is not our wish to be found bearing false testimony against our neighbors, and it is our earnest prayer to God that our Christian brethren may see eye to eye with us in the maintenance of the testimony of Jesus Christ. We take no interest in putting any one in the wrong. It is possible, we admit, that controversies on very minute topics, carried on for several years by many

different writers, may have led to misunderstandings and misrepresentations which an impartial reviewer might find it in his power to correct. We have accordingly referred the whole matter to a Committee of Conference, who are directed to correspond with you in such manner as you may see cause to direct. In the meantime we assure you, dear brethren, that we receive with pleasure your disavowal, by the authority of Synod, of the six tenets specified in your Letter, each of which, you inform us, you disown and condemn. We shall take prompt measures to make this disavowal known to our churches; though we are not prepared to say that the writings of the Secession never afforded ground to believe them to have been principles of the Associate Church in times past. Gladly shall we correct any misapprehensions into which we may have fallen respecting things in controversy between our fathers, and meet with open arms brethren who harmonize with us in the great moral principles and pious practices of the churches of the Reformation.

If, indeed, we receive the permission of the Associate Church, as we have a right, from the disavowal of the six maxims specified in your Letter, to expect, to announce to the world that we differ less than was formerly supposed, we shall rejoice in the Lord and be grateful to you for commencing the correspondence. If the Associate Church admit the right of Christians to determine their political allegiance by the moral character of the civil institutions, rather than by the fact of the existence of a government; that all the nations are bound to acknowledge Messiah as their Sovereign; that all people in the formation of the constitution of civil polity are bound to make the revealed will of God their rule; that Jesus Christ as Mediator does in fact govern the world by God's appointment; that believers owe to the covenant of grace all their enjoyments, temporal and spiritual; and that the world itself is sustained chiefly for the purpose of manifesting the glory of the Godhead by the system of redemption, the details of the controversy between our respective churches will be greatly restricted.

Earnestly beseeching the Father of mercies to guide you by the Spirit of truth in all things,

We remain, dear brethren,

Yours, etc.

The Synod adopted this report, and appointed Revs. S. B. Wylie, John Black and Gilbert McMaster a Committee to confer with the Associate Synod.

Resolved, That this Letter be forthwith transmitted to the Associate Synod now in session in Pittsburgh.

The Committee on the Theological Seminary reported. This report was not accepted but referred back to the same Committee.

The Committee on Unfinished Business reported. This report also was referred back.

Resolved, That the Chairman of the Committee on Correspondence be instructed to inform the General Assembly, now in session in this place, of the issue of the proposed Plan by the act of this Synod.

Adjourned to meet at half past two o'clock, P.M.

Half past two o'clock, Eodem die et loco.

Synod met and was called to order by the Moderator. Same members ut supra.

1. Reports were called for.

2. The Committee on Unfinished Business reported. This report was accepted.

3. The Committee on Presbyterial Reports presented the following report: —

On inspecting the report of the Northern Presbytery, your Committee feel pleasure in contemplating the prosperity of this part of the heritage of God which it announces. It, indeed, informs us of the mournful fact that errors, destructive of the commonwealth of Israel, greatly abound in that section of the country. Still it is ground of comfort that there is no inconsistency between the abounding of iniquity and rectitude of divine government, and the administration of the grace of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Your Com-

mittee recommend that those who have the ministerial charge of that region, be faithful and valient in lifting up, under the direction of the Spirit, a standard against the enemy when he comes in like a flood.

Comment [NJP2]: [sic]

The Committee observe in this report that there is mention made of a call from a congregation in West Tennessee for Mr. Robert McKee, a licentiate under the care of the Northern Presbytery. That this congregation are extremely urgent to have Mr. McKee settled among them, and on the acceptance of their call to pay him four hundred dollars annually. Your Committee believing, that in the present circumstances, some formalities respecting the manner of the call may be dispensed with without any compromitment of principle, recommend that Mr. McKee be referred, together with these papers respecting the call, to some one of our Presbyteries who shall take order thereon and ordain Mr. McKee if he be found qualified, and provided he accept the call; and have him with all convenient speed installed in that congregation.

The above-named congregation have also sent a petition to this Synod praying, for reasons therein stated, that they be disannexed from the Southern Presbytery, which is five hundred miles from them, and be attached to the Presbytery most contiguous to them. On this your Committee suggest no order, leaving it entirely to the wisdom of the Synod.

In reviewing the report of the Philadelphia Presbytery your Committee express their gratification at the flourishing condition of this part of the Lord's inheritance. Under that jurisdiction there is one vacancy occasionally supplied with ordinances. It is recommended by your Committee that their supplies be as frequent as possible, that the people may experience a refreshing time from the presence of the Lord. With this report there are certain papers covering a call for Mr. James Faris, a licentiate under the care of the Western Presbytery, from the congregation of Bloomington, Indiana, requesting this Synod to take order that Mr. James Faris be settled among them as their pastor.

Your Committee recommend that Mr. Faris and these papers be referred to the Presbytery to which he belongs, and that the legal steps be taken by that Presbytery as early as convenient to present the call of the congregation of Bloomington to Mr. Faris, and, on his acceptance thereof, if duly qualified, to ordain and settle him in that congregation.

On inspection of the report of the Pittsburgh Presbytery, your Committee express pleasure at the prosperous state of church affairs within their boundaries. Your Committee recommend to that Presbytery unabated ardor in cultivating the extensive field in which they labor. It opens an ample range for ministerial exertion, and numerous are the vacancies under its charge. The field under the care of that Presbytery is one of special interest to the cause of the Reformation. Settled by emigrants from almost every part of the civilized world, few of whom have any fixed principles, there is a favorable opportunity afforded for inculcating the truths of the Bible. These observations chiefly apply to the vacancies in the State of Ohio.

Your Committee advert with pleasure to the view of the Reformed Presbyterian Church under the inspection of your Western Presbytery as furnished by their report. This report, however, informs you of the prevalence of errors in that highly interesting and extensive territory. Your Committee recommends faithfulness and zeal, proportioned to the prevalence of error, in inculcating the principles of Christianity in their integrity and purity, as the powerful means appointed by the Church's Head to defeat all designs and efforts opposed to the universal and permanent establishment of His Kingdom on the earth. They also recommend that missionaries be sent out to water and refresh the different vacancies in that region of the country. This recommendation is based on an anxious solicitation expressed in the report of that Presbytery that Synod would send forth laborers into that section of the Church.

Your Committee invite your attention to the case of your Southern Presbytery. Owing to a want of representation from that Presbytery, you remain in ignorance of what the

Spirit of God has been doing in the employment of proper means for the time which has elapsed from the last sessions of this Synod to the present. That you should be informed on the all-important subject is most desirable. You are responsible for the cultivation of the proper interests of Zion in every department of your jurisdiction. Your Committee, therefore, recommend that prompt measures be taken, measures at the same time legal and imbued with the spirit of Christianity, to secure a more faithful attention to the vital interests of the Church of Christ, purchased by the blood of God ; and especially to the interests of the Reformation vine which has been planted in this land, under the superintendence of Messiah, which has already flourished so prosperously, and which is destined to veil with its shade the mountains and valleys of all lands.

Your Committee have to express their regret that they find anything to disapprove in a report so replete with grateful intelligence. They refer to a decision in the report of the Pittsburgh Presbytery relative to the proposition of the correspondence between the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church and the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church. This decision your Committee think was premature and not Presbyterial, as the question was referred to the judicial cognizance of the supreme judicatory of the Church, and that the deed of Presbytery deserves an expression of disapprobation from this Synod.

This report was accepted and adopted by Synod.

4. The petition of Lincoln Co., West Tennessee, praying to be disjoined from the Southern Presbytery's care and annexed to some other more contiguous, was granted, and they were annexed to the Western Presbytery. The Western Presbytery's boundary is appointed to be Cumberland Mountain, West Tennessee.

5. Messrs. Robert McKee and James Faris were delivered to the care of the Western Presbytery.

6. The concerns of the Theological Seminary were

appointed as the order of the day for tomorrow.

W. C. Beattie asked and obtained leave of absence.

Adjourned till tomorrow at 9 o'clock A.M.

The Moderator concluded by prayer.

Eodem loco. Tuesday, May 22, 1827.

Synod met and was opened with prayer. Same members ut antea with the exception of W. C. Beattie who had leave of absence.

1. The Minutes of the preceding sederunt were read.

On motion the minute and resolution relative to the Plan of Correspondence with the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church was amended to read thus : While Synod cordially recognize the principles embraced in the proposed Plan of Correspondence between the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church and this Synod, yet aware of the scattered state of the Churches under their care, the duty of preserving their mutual confidence unimpaired and their strength undiminished, and the importance of the subject itself both to the present edification and future operations of the people of God in their community,

Resolved, To postpone indefinitely the further consideration of the proposed Plan with the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church.

On this motion the names were called. On the amendment the following members voted in the affirmative, viz: William Gibson, James Milligan, J. R. Johnston, S. B. Wylie, John Black, T. C. Guthrie, S. W. Crawford and Samuel Wylie, ministers; William Gormley, Robert Brown, John Monteith, John Ewart, elders. Total, 13.

The following voted in the negative, viz: Gavin McMillan, minister; John Thomson and Nathan Johnston, elders. Total, 3.

Not voting, Alexander McLeod, Gilbert McMaster and Jonathan Gill. Total, 3.

2. The Committee on the Theological Seminary reported. The report was committed to an Auditing Committee consisting of Andrew Gifford and Robert Brown.

3. The Board of Superintendents of the Theological Seminary reported to Synod. This report was full, lucid and gratifying. It embraced a statement of the concerns and transactions of the Seminary during the two last sessions. The Board had met on the 7<sup>th</sup> of this month, and spent ten days in hearing discourses and examining the students on the proper literature of the Seminary. The sons of the prophets give most satisfactory evidence of talent, great industry, intellectual culture, orthodoxy, zeal for the truth, ardor in the pursuit of general literature, and, as far as could be judged, of practical godliness. The labors of the Professor have been great, and the advantages of the youth confided to his care are manifest.

During the last winter there have been in the Seminary Samuel M. Gayley, John Black, John N. McLeod, William Wilson, Thomas McKinley and George Scott of the first year; John Fisher of the second year; Ebenezer Cooper and John H. Symmes of the fourth year. Messrs. Black and Gayley had been prosecuting their studies in the Seminary during the preceding session, but at their own request had been entered by the Professor among the students of the first year at the commencement of the last session.

Messrs. Cooper and Symmes being entitled to certificates of dismissal from the Seminary as having finished their course, are referred to Synod that they may be recommended to some Presbytery or Presbyteries for licensure. This report was accepted by Synod.

4. Ebenezer Cooper and John H. Symmes were committed to the Philadelphia Presbytery to be taken under trials for licensure.

5. The Committee on the Signs of the Times reported causes both of thanksgiving and fasting. This report was accepted by Synod, and the first Thursday of November next was appointed as a day of thanksgiving; and the first Thursday of January, 1828, for fasting and humiliation.

6. The Committee on Foreign Correspondence presented the following report of a Synodical Address to the Reformed Synods of Britain and Ireland, which was adopted by

Synod, and copies ordered to be transmitted to the above courts, viz:

Dear Brethren: —

Desirous of renewing the correspondence between us, it is not so important to investigate the causes of its suspension as to make provision for its regular continuance in the future. You will permit us, however, to say that an abatement of either affection for you or confidence in your acts had no part in occasioning our past negligence. Our sister Churches in the British Empire are dear to their descendents in America, and we still hear with gladness and gratitude to God of their exertions and their success in the maintenance and promotion of the distinguishing principles of the Reformation; and at all our public meetings in Synod we sincerely desire to be put in remembrance of the duties of our relation to you by an epistle from your hands. By the private correspondence of individuals, it is true, we are all made acquainted with the principal events which occur on the other side of the Atlantic; but our public records ought also to testify to our union and our friendship.

The Reformed Presbyterian Synod in North America met in this city, on Wednesday, the 16<sup>th</sup>. of May, 1827, composed of delegates from four Presbyteries, to the number of sixteen ministers and nine ruling elders in attendance. The Commissioners appointed by the Southern Presbytery had not had it in their power to come forward, and yet we learn that they are extending their borders, and stand in need of more pastors to feed the flock of God in their bounds.

The whole number of ministers in connection with this Synod is thirty six; and we have at present under our care five licentiates, several calls to be disposed of by the Presbyteries in whose bounds they occur, and many societies and organized congregations still crying earnestly for the ordinances of God. The students in prospect may furnish an accession of public laborers at the rate of two per annum for a few years, but the societies that need cultivation probably increase at a much greater proportion. Truly, the harvest is great and the laborers are few.

It must, however, be remembered that no one who has not some acquaintance with the actual state of the American population, can form an adequate idea of the ecclesiastical condition of our country. There is a perpetual fluctuation in the population generally. A spirit of enterprise leads to frequent changes of both employment and residence among our people. We have very few old congregations capable without difficulty of affording an easy settlement to a pastor. None which can give a competency to a minister for raising a family in the station which he is expected to hold in society without other resources.

Indefatigable exertions will, indeed, secure a congregation of hearers to a popular preacher in any part of our country, but our settled ministers must expect for many years to resemble missionaries on their stations, more than the pastors of compact congregations adequately supported in the discharge of parochial duties. This consideration, together with our rapid growth and scattered state over a vast field of labor, tends in an alarming degree to diversity of our forms of order, and unfit our rising ministry for the accurate application of the Presbyterian regimen in their several courts of judicatory. We have, dear brethren, many difficulties from our location which co-presbyters near together in the midst of a dense population cannot feel; but there are also from the moral state of civilized society over all the nations, dangers to the Reformation cause common to us and to you. This is an age of freedom, of action, of reasoning, and of literary enterprise. It is a time of excitement to the mind in all its faculties; and the current of public benevolence for meliorating the condition of society, never ran with a stronger and a fuller stream through the Churches. Distinctions are disputed; walls of partition are tottering; establishments are undermined; the ancient forests are yielding to the ax and to the fire, and we know not what kind of cultivation is first to succeed the burning. God reigneth. The seed of the Reformation corn is the best. Great is the Truth and it must prevail.

But where shall our **severals** Synods be found among the Churches of God in every land, when the fruit of the mountain corn shall shake like Lebanon, and they of the city shall flourish like the grass of the earth ?

Comment [NJP3]: [sic]

There is danger of our existence as a Church if we imitate too far the habits of others. There is danger of our existing uselessly and ignobly if we are not awakened thoroughly to love and to good works. We have already done much in the preservation of the truth and the order of the sanctuary. Does God intend that we shall have a part of the honor of applying the principles we hold to the churches and to the nations ? The Lollards of Kyle did much; but they have little name among the Scottish Reformers. The Walloons still exist; but the honors of the Reformation were neither sown nor reaped by them who long preserved the true seed. And shall the Reformed Presbyterian Church be content with inactivity, and leave others to plant, to build, and to triumph ?

It appears to us that the time is come for definitely shaping our course of public policy in regard to modern movements, in order that upon the one hand we may not suffer any relaxation of our Testimony to take place; and on the other that we preserve the liberties of the Church from destruction by the influence of mere popular opinions. Shall the Church be content to labor with the industry of the insect in gathering the particles which compose its impenetrable shell in which itself expires ? or shall we unlock the repository of the martyr's flag, follow Him whose vesture is dipped in blood, and venture out amidst the contending elements with waving banners to take part in the victory ?

We suggest to you, reverend and dear brethren, a plan of co-operation for all the Churches of the Reformation, in whatever land, and we request an expression of your opinion upon each of the articles.

I. That a stated correspondence be established among the several Synods of the Reformed Presbyterian Church,

each with the others, and keep each other advised of all public measures bearing upon their common interests.

II. That means be taken to provide a mutual League and Covenant, which will apply equally to all the Churches of our connection in whatever land, and so form one bond of union and co-operation for the friends of the Covenanted Reformation.

III. That the several judicatories shall, once in three years, send a delegate or two to correspond personally with each of the aforementioned judicatories.

With this communication we take leave of you in the full expectation of hearing from you at our next meeting.

7. Synod appointed a copy of this Letter preserved in the Minutes.

8. The Committee appointed to take into consideration the formation of Subordinate Synods reported : That in the existing circumstances of our Church, it be recommended to Presbyteries that are large enough to admit of division, to be divided according to convenience. And in relation to forming Subordinate Synods your Committee are of the opinion that in the present state of the Church the measure will be inexpedient.

This was accepted by Synod.

9. On motion, the minute of the disposal of Robert McKee was reconsidered. The Synod agree that Mr. McKee and the papers relative to him, be committed to the Pittsburgh Presbytery.

10. Money received by Synod from the Baltimore congregation for travelling expenses, was, by the order of Synod, transferred to the Contingent Fund.

Adjourned till 3 o'clock P.M.

Eodem die et loco. 3 o'clock, P.M.

Synod met and was called to order by the Moderator. Same members ut supra.

1. The report of the Treasurer of the Theological Sem-

inary was read and approved.

2. Your Committee on Travelling Expenses and Contingent Fund beg leave to report that they have received \$291.86 for travelling expenses and the contingent fund, which they have divided as in the statement below, viz: — \$200.46 for travelling expenses, leaving a balance of \$90.40 to be applied to the contingent funds. We have also examined the accounts of the Treasurer of the Contingent Fund and find a balance of \$19.75 now in the treasury at the disposal of Synod. The following is the

Statement.

Delegates.	Received.	Miles.	Paid Delegates.
John Black	\$ 21.50	300	\$9.75
William Gormley	— — —	300	9.75
J. R. Willson	11.01	165	5.36
Robert Brown	15.00	267	8.68
T. C. Guthrie	20.00	316	10.27
William Sloane	7.00	420	13.65
Gavin McMillan	10.81	600	19.50
S. W. Crawford	10.00	140	4.55
John Thomson	— — —	140	4.55
John Ewart	8.00	260	8.45
Andrew Gifford	69.54	96	3.12
Alexander McLeod	— — —	96	3.12
James Milligan	10.00	465	15.11
Gilbert McMaster	15.00	280	9.10
Jonathan Gill	6.00	380	11.48
S. B. Wylie	50.00	— — —	— — —
Samuel Wylie	5.00	1000	32.50
J. R. Johnston	10.00	160	5.20
W. C. Beattie	— — —	160	5.20
Nathan Johnston	3.00	350	11.37
John Monteith	— — —	300	9.75
John Gibson	20.00	— — —	— — —
<u>Total.</u>	\$ 291.86		\$200.46

3. Revs. John Black and T. C. Guthrie were appointed a Committee to revise the Rules, and adapt them to a Representative Synod.

4. The Philadelphia Presbytery reported the licensure of John H. Symmes and Ebenezer Cooper. Accepted. On motion, Mr. Symmes was referred to the Northern Presbytery, and Mr. Cooper to the Pittsburgh Presbytery until the next meeting of Synod.

5. The order of the day was called for, viz: the Theological Seminary. The Professor of Theology, the Rev. Dr. Wylie, respectfully tendered to Synod his resignation of the professorship.

6. On motion, the resignation was respectfully returned to the Professor, with a request that he should receive it back and consent to retain it sometime longer. The Professor would not consent.

7. On motion, the thanks of the Synod were returned to Dr. Wylie for his long, assiduous, and faithful discharge of the duties of the professorate.

8. A Committee of five, viz: Revs. John Black, J. R. Willson and Samuel Wylie, with elders John Thomson and Robert Brown was appointed to take into consideration the present state of the Theological Seminary, and report thereon this evening.

9. Dr. Alex. McLeod declined the appointment of giving notice to the Committee of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the decision of this Synod concerning the proposed Plan of Correspondence. The Clerk of Synod is therefore appointed to give that information to the proper organ of communication. Dr. McLeod also declined a re-appointment to the office of Superintendent of the Theological Seminary.

10. The Synod appoint its next meeting in Philadelphia, on the first Wednesday of August, 1828, to be opened with a sermon on "Covenanting," by the Moderator, the Rev. Gilbert McMaster, at 7 o'clock, P.M. in Dr. S. B. Wylie's church.

The Synod appoint a recess till 7:30 o'clock this evening.

Eodem loco. 7:30 o'clock P.M.

Synod met and resumed business.

11. The Committee on the Theological Seminary presented a report, which was amended and adopted, as follows:

Your Committee are not able to devise any plan at present by which the Theological Seminary can be kept in operation. They, therefore, respectfully suggest that the operations of the Seminary, in the mean time, be suspended; and that our students be left at liberty to prosecute their studies where they can best find the means of instruction in conformity with the provisions of the Theological Seminary.

12. The session was then closed by prayer, and the singing of the 133d. Psalm.

(Signed).

Gilbert McMaster, Moderator.

John Black, Synod Clerk.