1837
ARTES SCIENTIA
VERITAS
LIBRARY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
TUEBOR
SI QUÆRIS PENINSULAM AMŒNAM
CIRCUMSPICE

RECEIVED IN EXCHANGE
FROM
Prof. U. B. Phillips

Digitized by Google

Presbyterian church in the U.S.A. General assembly.

A DIGEST,

COMPILED FROM THE RECORDS

OF THE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OF THE

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

IN THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

AND FROM THE RECORDS

OF THE LATE SYNOD OF NEW YORK AND PHILADELPHIA,

OF THEIR

ACTS AND PROCEEDINGS,

THAT APPEAR TO BE

OF PERMANENT AUTHORITY AND INTEREST;

TOGETHER WITH

A SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE MISSIONS

CONDUCTED BY THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

BY ORDER OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

PHILADELPHIA:
PRINTED FOR THE TRUSTEES OF THE ASSEMBLY BY
R. P. M'CULLOH.

1820.

Digitized by Google

Eastern District of Pennsylvania, TO WIT:

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the fourth day of March, in the forty-fourth year of the Independence of the United States of America, A. D. 1820, the Reverend JACOB J. JANEWAY, D. D. and ROBERT RALSTON, Esquire, on behalf of the Trustees of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, in the United States of America, of the said District, have deposited in this office the Title of a Book, the right whereof they claim as Proprietors, in the words following, to wit:

L. S.

"A Digest, compiled from the Records of the General Assembly, of the Presbyterian Church, in the United States of America, and from the Records of the late Synod of New York and Philadelphia, of their Acts and Proceedings, that appear to be of permanent Authority and Interest; together with a short Account of the Missions conducted by the Presbyterian Church. By order of the General Assembly."

In conformity to the Act of the Congress of the United States, entitled "An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts and books, to the Authors and Proprietors of such copies during the time therein mentioned."—And also to the Act, entitled, "An Act supplementary to an act, entitled, 'An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts and books, to the Authors and Proprietors of such Copies during the times therein mentioned,' and extending the benefits thereof to the Arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints."

D. CALDWELL,
Clerk of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

Digitized by Google

EXTRACT

From the Minutes of the General Assembly in 1818.

THE following overture was submitted to the Assembly, and being amended, was adopted: *viz.*

Resolved, That Drs. Janeway, Neill, and Ely, be appointed, and they are hereby appointed a Committee, to extract from the records of the General Assembly, and of the late Synod of New York and Philadelphia, all such matters as may appear to be of permanent authority and interest, (including a short account of the manner in which Missions have been conducted, and their success,) that the same may be published for the information of ministers and people in our churches; and that they report the same to the next Assembly.

Resolved, That said Committee be authorized, and they are hereby authorized, to employ a person to transcribe any part of the records, that may be necessary for the above work.

Digitized by Google

EXTRACT

From the Minutes of the General Assembly in 1819.

THE Committee appointed by the last Assembly, to extract from the records of the General Assembly, and of the late Synod of New York and Philadelphia, all such matters as may appear to be of permanent authority and interest, reported; whereupon,

Resolved, That the work reported by the Committee, be completed on the plan reported; and that when thus finished, the Committee be authorised to have 4000 copies printed, and offered for sale at a reasonable price.

Resolved, That the Trustees of the General Assembly be requested to defray the expense of printing the above work, and secure the copy right of it; and that the Presbyteries be requested to promote the sale of the same.

Digitized by Google

PREFACE.

THE General Assembly is the Supreme Judicatory of the Presbyterian Church. As such it superintends the general interests of all our churches, and constitutes "the bond of union, peace, correspondence, and mutual confidence" among them. It is invested with power to preserve a due regard to the principles of our ecclesiastical government in all the Synods, Presbyteries, and Sessions; and to bear "testimony against error in doctrine or immorality in practice" in any portion of the church.

Established for purposes so important, and invested with powers so extensive, the proceedings of the General Assembly must necessarily be interesting to the whole Presbyterian Church; and consequently the knowledge of them ought to be diligently and extensively circulated among the members of that church.

From the very commencement of their operations, it has been the uniform practice of the General Assembly to publish annually extracts from their minutes, that were deemed important and interesting. But such is the extent of territory over which our church is spread, and so rapid has been its increase, that the measures heretofore adopted for diffusing a knowledge of the Acts and proceedings of its Supreme Judicatory, have proved insufficient. Very few of our ministers are in possession of the Printed Extracts that compose the first volume; and, many through accident, or inattention, have lost part of those which constitute the second. Indeed it is apprehended that the number even of Presbyteries possessing these records of the General Assembly is small.

Digitized by Google

Thus destitute of the means of information, it is not possible for the members of the lower judicatories of our church to be so accurately and intimately acquainted with the proceedings of the Supreme Judicatory as they ought; and the necessary consequence of this imperfect knowledge is the omission of important duties prescribed for the general good, and want of that unity of operation that should ever characterize the Presbyterian Church.

To correct this state of things, several attempts have been made. In the year 1809, the stated clerk, in execution of an order of the General Assembly, collected from the manuscript minutes, and methodically arranged, under different heads, whatever appeared to be of a permanent nature, in what is denominated THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY'S BOOK OF RULES. In this book a few articles were transcribed; but references were made to the volume and page where others were to be found, marked with a pencil in the margin, so as to facilitate a publication, whenever it should be ordered. Members of the Assembly being desirous of possessing all the printed extracts, attempts were afterwards made to have them reprinted. Proposals were issued for the purpose; but the subscriptions received did not warrant the accomplishment of the design. Desirous, however, to supply their church with the means of becoming acquainted with their acts and proceedings, the General Assembly, in 1818, appointed a committee to perform a duty which has given birth to this publication.

This volume will be found to contain, not only every thing of permanent authority, scattered through the printed extracts, but a number of interesting articles never before published, as well from the Records of the late Synod of New York and Philadelphia as from those of the Assembly.

The operations of the General Assembly, constituted in the year 1788, by that Synod, and convened for the first time in 1789, embrace a period of thirty years. Their manuscript minutes fill three large folios; and their printed extracts amount to more than three octavo volumes. All these have been carefully searched, together with a folio containing the manuscript records of the late Synod, in quest of materials for this book. Whatever could be found in these volumes of *permanent authority* or *interest*, has been selected and arranged under proper heads.

Digitized by Google

In preparing this publication, the Committee could not content themselves with throwing together the various articles, without any other regard to order, than that of time, or that which they were found to possess in the printed extracts. Had they aimed at nothing more than this, the labour would have been comparatively easy; but their work would have been defective in a material point. They wished to make it useful; and to render it useful, they were sensible that a perspicuous method was of prime importance.

This book is divided into thirteen parts. The parts are subdivided into chapters, and each chapter into sections. The headings of the sections are printed in Italics, to enable a person, by glancing his eye over the pages, to find any article he wishes. Still further to facilitate the use of this book, a *Table of Contents* is placed at the beginning, and an *Index* at the end. A brief historic sketch of the Missionary exertions of the Presbyterian Church, will be found at the close of this volume.

The Committee have avoided the use of their own words, as much as could be done, consistently with what they conceived to be the design of this publication. It was deemed necessary to give headings to the various articles composing the volume, for the sake of order, as well as to assist in finding articles as they might be needed. A few notes have been added for the purpose of explaining the connexion of certain extracts or transactions; which, without resorting to this expedient, would have required the printing of more copious selections. But in all cases it will be easy for the reader, to distinguish the words of the Committee from those of the General Assembly, or of the Synod.

To assist those who wish to study accurately the acts and proceedings of the Assembly, the year has been generally noted; and for the convenience of Commissioners, while attending the sessions of that body, the volume and the page of the manuscript minutes have been marked, where any article, in regard to which it was supposed a reference to the original records might be desired, will be found.

For the benefit of inexperienced members, the Committee have taken the liberty of describing the manner in which the Assembly is organized, and the mode in which business is usually done; referring all along to the rules which govern the proceedings of that body, and prescribe the duties of the

Digitized by Google

various committees annually appointed. To such members, it is presumed, this book will be particularly useful, while attending on the sessions of the Assembly. And may not the hope be indulged, that all our ministers will, by th assistance of this publication, be enabled to become more thoroughly acquainted with the duties they have to perform as members of Sessions, Presbyteries and Synods? All the acts of the Assembly relating to these judicatories, will be found arranged under proper heads; and by turning to them, ministers will find various duties that claim their attention, while acting as members of these judicatories. Ruling Elders will find equal benefit from consulting this depository of the Assembly's acts and proceedings.

The utility of this book will not terminate with the officers of our church. Matter will be found in it interesting to private christians. By perusing it, they will learn what the Presbyterian Church has done in the great and important concern of Missions; what she is doing in the interesting work of training up a numerous, able and pious ministry; what relation she sustains to other christian churches; and the vigilance and faithfulness with which the General Assembly, in superintending her affairs, have endeavoured to preserve purity of faith, soundness in principle, holiness of life, peace and harmony among all her members.

This volume, then, should be not only found in the hands of every officer, but extensively circulated among the families of the Presbyterian Church.

The Committee devoutly commend it to the care and blessing of Almighty God, and humbly trust that their labour will not be in vain. If this publication shall contribute to the gratification of their fathers and brethren in Christ; if it shall be the means of introducing more order and unity in the operations of the Church; if it shall throw light upon points of duty; if it shall subserve, in any degree, the great interests of religion: they will deem themselves amply rewarded for all the time spent, and all the labour bestowed, in collecting and arranging materials scattered through so many volumes.

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS.

PART I.

OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

CHAP. I. *Of its Constitution* - - 13
II. *Of its annual organization* - 16
III. *Of its mode of doing business* 18
IV. *Of its officers* - - - 30

PART II.

OF THE SYNODS.

CHAP. I. *Of their Constitution* - - 37
II. *Of their duties* - - - 46

PART III.

OF THE PRESBYTERIES.

CHAP. I. *Of their Constitution* - - 52
II. *Of their Duties* - - - 61
III. *Of their Reports* - - 82

PART IV.

OF THE SESSIONS.

CHAP. I. *Of their Duties* - - 92
II. *Of cases of Baptism* - - 94
III. *Of cases of Marriage* - 99
IV. *Of sundry recommendations and directions* - - - 107

Digitized by Google

PART V.

OF THE CONFESSION OF FAITH AND FORM OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT.

CHAP. I. *Of the acts of the late Synod of New York and Philadelphia* - 117
II. *Of the acts of the General Assembly* - - - - - 125

PART VI.

OF THE FUNDS AND TRUSTEES.

CHAP. I. *Of the Missionary Fund* - 159
II. *Of the Permanent Fund* - 169
III. *Of the Commissioners' Fund* 171
IV. *Of the Seminary's Fund* - 177
V. *Of the Trustees* - - 192

PART VII.

OF MISSIONS.

CHAP. I. *Of Domestic Missions* - 202
II. *Of Foreign Missions* - 216

PART VIII.

OF THE EDUCATION OF PIOUS YOUTH - - - - - 221

PART IX.

OF THE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

CHAP. I. *Of preliminary acts of the Assembly* - - - - - 231

Digitized by Google

CHAP. II. *Of the Plan of the Seminary* 259
III. *Of the location of the Seminary* 260
IV. *Of the mode of choosing Directors and Professors* - 265
V. *Of resolutions of the Assembly in relation to the Directors, Agents and others* - - - 269

PART X.

OF MINISTERS AND MISSIONARIES - - - - - - - 272

PART XI.

OF INTERCOURSE WITH OTHER CHURCHES.

CHAP. I. *Of the manner of receiving Foreign Ministers and Licentiates into our Church* - - 280
II. *Of the General Association of Connecticut* - - - 292
III. *Of the Convention of Vermont* 300
IV. *Of the General Association of New Hampshire* - - 303
V. *Of the General Association of Massachusetts* - - 305
VI. *Of Delegates to the Associations* 307
VII. *Of the Northern Associate Presbytery, &c.* - - - 309
VIII. *Of the Reformed Dutch Church, and the Associate Reformed Church* - - - 311

Digitized by Google

PART XII.

OF GENERAL DECISIONS.

CHAP. I. *Of Psalmody* - - - 313
II. *Of Extracts from the Records of the late Synod of New York and Philadelphia* - - 318
III. *Of sundry points of order* - 321
IV. *Of Baptized children* - 327
V. *Of Appeals* - - - 331

PART XIII.

OF MISCELLANEOUS MATTER.

CHAP. I. *Of testimony in favour of certain principles and against certain vices* - - - - 337
II. *Of monies in the hands of the Trustees of the College of New Jersey* - - - - 357
III. *Of the History of the Presbyterian Church* - - - 361

PART XIV.

A SHORT ACCOUNT OF MISSIONS 367

Digitized by Google

PART I.

OF THE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

CHAPTER I.

OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

THE General Assembly was constituted, in the year 1788, by the Synod of New York and Philadelphia, as appears from the following extracts from their records.

Sect. 1. An overture was brought in, That, for the better management of the Churches under our care, this Synod be divided into three Synods; and that a General Synod, or Assembly be constituted out of the whole.—The Synod agreed to enter on the consideration of this overture, on the first Friday after their next meeting, and appointed Dr. Smith to transmit a copy of this overture to such of the Presbyteries, as are not at present represented in Synod; and earnestly urge their attendance at our next meeting.—Page 388.

1785.

Digitized by Google

Sect. 2. The following motion was made and
1786. seconded, *viz.* The Synod considering the number and extent of the Churches under their care, and the inconvenience of the present mode of Government by one Synod; *Resolved*, That this Synod will establish out of its own body three or more subordinate Synods, out of which shall be composed a General Assembly, Synod, or Council, agreeably to a System hereafter to be adopted.

Upon the question being put, Will the Synod adopt the resolution aforesaid, or not? it was carried in the affirmative.

The following gentlemen were appointed to prepare and report a plan for the division of the Synod into three or more Synods, *viz.* Drs. Rodgers, Smith, Duffield, Alison, Messrs. Latta, Martin, Matthew Wilson, Graham, Houston, James Finley, and Hall.—Page 397.

For the particulars of this plan see under SYNODS and PRESBYTERIES.

Sect. 3. *Resolved unanimously*, That this Sy-
1788. nod be divided; and it is hereby divided into four Synods; agreeably to an act made, and provided for that purpose in the Sessions of Synod, in the year one thousand seven hundred and eighty-six: and this division shall commence on the dissolution of the present Synod.

Resolved, That the first meeting of the General Assembly to be constituted out of the above four Synods be held, and it is hereby appointed to be held, on the third Thursday of May, one thousand seven hundred and eighty-nine; in the Second Presbyterian Church, in the City of Philadelphia,

Digitized by Google

at eleven o'clock, A. M. and that Dr. Witherspoon, or, in his absence, Dr. Rodgers, open the General Assembly, with a Sermon; and preside till a Moderator be chosen.

Resolved, That the Synod of New York, and New Jersey, meet on Wednesday the twenty-ninth day of next October, in the First Presbyterian Church, in the City of New York, at three o'clock, P. M. and that the present Moderator, or, in his absence, the senior Minister present, open the Synod, with a Sermon; and preside till a Moderator be chosen.

Resolved, That the Synod of Philadelphia meet on the third Wednesday of October next, in the First Presbyterian Church, in the City of Philadelphia, at eleven o'clock, A. M. and that Dr. Ewing, or, in his absence, the senior Minister present, open the Synod, with a Sermon; and preside till a Moderator be chosen.

Resolved, That the Synod of Virginia meet on the fourth Wednesday of October next, at eleven o'clock, A. M. at New Providence Church; and that Mr. Sankey, or, in his absence, the senior Minister present, open the Synod, with a Sermon; and preside till a Moderator be chosen.

Resolved, That the Synod of the Carolinas meet on the first Wednesday of November next, at eleven o'clock, A. M. at Centre Church, in Roan County; and that Mr. Patillo, or, in his absence the senior Minister present, open the Synod, with a Sermon; and preside till a Moderator be chosen.

THE SYNOD WAS THEN DISSOLVED.

Page 452.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER II.

OF THE ANNUAL ORGANIZATION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

Sect. 1. Immediately after public worship, on the day appointed for the meeting of the Assembly, the Moderator takes the chair; and having called the commissioners to order, offers prayer to Almighty God for his direction and blessing.

Sect. 2. The Moderator then calls for the commissions; which being delivered to the clerk, and publickly read, a list of the commissioners is made out, in the order of the Presbyteries.

RULE.

The Assembly having proceeded to business without attending sufficiently to the order prescribed in the Constitution, respecting the commissions of the members; and having been led into that inattention by precedents in the former sessions of the General Assembly; it was thought necessary to declare:—That the business ought not, in future, to be entered upon by the Assembly, until the commissions delivered to the clerk shall have been publickly read, according to the express letter of the Constitution.—1791. Vol. I. Page 26.

Digitized by Google

Sect. 3. The list of the commissioners present being completed, a new Moderator is chosen.

RULE.

On motion, agreed, That it be a standing rule of the General Assembly, in choosing a Moderator, that any commissioner may nominate a candidate for the chair. The candidates so pointed out shall then, severally give their votes for some one of their number and withdraw; when the remaining commissioners shall proceed, *viva voce*, to choose by a plurality of voices, one of the said candidates for Moderator. 1791.—Vol. I. Page 38.

Sect. 4. A Moderator having been duly chosen, the former Moderator before he resigns his seat, addresses him and the Assembly, thus:

Sir—It is my duty to inform you, and announce to this house, that you are duly elected to the office of Moderator in this General Assembly.—For your direction in office, and for the direction of this Assembly in all your deliberations, before I leave this seat, I am to read to you and this house the rules contained in the records of this Assembly; which I doubt not will be carefully observed by both, in conducting the business that may come before you.

[Here the Moderator is to read the rules, and afterwards add]

Now, having read these rules, according to order, for your instruction as Moderator, and for the direction of all the members, in the management of business,—praying that Almighty God may direct and bless all the deliberations of this Assembly for

Digitized by Google

the glory of his name, and for the edification and comfort of the Presbyterian Church in the United States,—I resign my place and office as Moderator.—1791. Vol. I. p. 30.

Sect. 5. The new Moderator having taken his seat, calls the attention of the Assembly to the choice of a temporary clerk, who is chosen *viva voce.*

RULE.

Resolved, That it be considered as the right of every member of the Assembly, to vote for a clerk who is not a member of the body.—Vol. I. Page 68.—1793.

CHAPTER III.

OF THE MODE OF DOING BUSINESS.

Sect. 1. THE Assembly having been duly organized, any commissioner who has lost his commission may be admitted to a seat on proper testimony.

See Vol. I. p. 3, 48, 69, 85, 104.—Vol. II. p. 76, 77, 140, 276, 277, 308.—Vol. III. p. 128, 177, 221, 229, 231, &c.

See also, Vol. II. p. 148, 149, in which it appears that opposition was made to this practice of receiving commissioners without their commissions.

Digitized by Google

Sect. 2. Commissioners who do not produce their commissions at the opening of the Assembly, can be received only at the commencement of a session. See Form of Government, Chap. XXII. Sect. 3.

Sect. 3. The Moderator directs the minutes of the last General Assembly to be read; and while the temporary clerk is reading them, a docket of such business as may require the attention of the Assembly, is prepared by the permanent clerk.

Sect. 4. The minutes having been read, the Assembly appoints a COMMITTEE OF BILLS AND OVERTURES, AND THE JUDICIAL COMMITTEE; who meet at the hour and place appointed by the Assembly, and afterwards on their own adjournments. See No. III, IV, V, of the general rules.

Sect. 5. The Assembly set apart the Monday next succeeding the commencement of their sessions, for the free conversation on the state of religion. Written reports are read on that day by the Presbyteries and the Eastern Associations connected with the General Assembly; accompanied with verbal information from members, who have any important particulars to communicate that are not embraced in the written reports.

RULE.

1792. The following proposition was introduced through the committee of bills and overtures, that the General Assembly take measures to bring into distinct view, at its different sessions, the situation of the Presbyterian Church under its jurisdic-

Digitized by Google

tion in the United States of America with respect to the state of Religion in the different Presbyteries; the state of religious denominations among them, and the most probable expedients for reviving and promoting the essential interests of Christ's kingdom in the world.

Whereupon, *Resolved*, That it be recommended to each Synod to enjoin it upon the respective Presbyteries within their bounds, to specify the above particulars in the annual reports which they make of the state of their respective churches, to be laid before the General Assembly at its stated meetings.

1793. *On Motion, Resolved*, That the following clause in a resolution passed by the General Assembly of 1792 respecting the reports of Presbyteries be repealed, *viz.* "The state of religious denominations among them."

Sect. 6. In the course of the sessions of the General Assembly, the following committees are appointed.

1. The committee to take notes of the free conversation on the state of religion, and to prepare and report to the Assembly a connected narrative on the subject.

The narrative is read at the concert prayer meeting.

2. A committee to make arrangements in regard to the exercises proper for the concert prayer meeting, annually held by the Assembly, and to designate the persons who shall lead in them.

Public notice of the time and place of meeting is given from the pulpits of the several Presbyterian

Digitized by Google

Churches in Philadelphia, and the people are invited to attend.

This practice was commenced in the year 1802, and has been continued ever since.—See Vol. I. p. 290.

3. Committees to examine the records of the different Synods.

4. A committee on the reports of Synods and Presbyteries.

RULE.

Resolved, That there be annually appointed a committee of Reports, to which shall be referred all reports from Presbyteries and Synods; and of this committee it shall be the duty to compare the reports of the Synods with the reports from the Presbyteries, digest the whole, and read them to the Assembly; and also make a statement of the Synods and the Presbyteries which shall have neglected to report. 1809.—Vol. II. Page 277.

5. A committee to prepare an abstract of the reports of Synods and Presbyteries for insertion in the COMPENDIOUS VIEW.

RULES.

The committee would further propose that the Assembly, should make it a standing rule, annually to appoint a committee, who shall take the synodical and presbyterial reports, after they have been read before the Assembly, and fill up the blanks of a form, prepared to exhibit a compendious view of the number of ministers, congregations, licentiates, candidates, and communicants, together with the baptisms and collections in one year.

See Part III. Chap. III. Sect. 2.

Digitized by Google

On Motion Resolved, That the committee annually appointed to prepare the result of the reports of Synods and Presbyteries for entrance in the book kept by the stated clerk for that purpose, do carefully compare the statement of monies in said reports with the accounts of the Treasurer of the Trustees of the Assembly, that all errors or omissions may be carefully corrected before the entry be made by the stated clerk. Vol. II. Page 276. —1809.

6. A committee to prepare a minute, exhibiting what the Presbyteries shall appear to have done in relation to the education of poor and pious youth for the gospel ministry, after inquiry shall have been made by the Assembly, agreeably to a standing rule thus expressed:

RULE.

And the Assembly did, and do hereby order, that every Presbytery under their care, make annually a report to the Assembly, stating particularly what they have done in this concern, or why (if the case so shall be) they have done nothing in it; and that the Assembly will, when these Reports are received, consider each distinctly, and decide by vote, whether the Presbyteries severally shall be considered as having discharged or neglected their duty in this important business. 1806.—Vol. II. Page 180.

See minutes on this subject, published in different years in the Assembly's printed extracts.

7. A committee to ascertain the number of miles travelled by the members in coming to, and in returning from, the Assembly, and to apportion to

Digitized by Google

each what ought to be allowed him out of the commissioner's fund agreeably to the rules adopted on the subject.

See the rules in Part VI. Chap. III. Sect. 1.

8. A committee to meet the Trustees of the College of New Jersey, and dispose of monies in their hands, and to report to the next Assembly.

See an account of these Monies in Part XIV. Chap. III.

9. A committee on the report of the Board of Missions; whose duty it is to prepare any resolutions on the report that they may deem proper to be submitted to the Assembly for adoption.

10. A committee on the report of the Board of Directors of the Theological Seminary, whose duty is similar to that of the preceding committee.

11. A committee to select such parts of the Assembly's minutes, as they may deem proper for publication.

Sect. 7. THE BOARD OF MISSIONS are annually chosen.

See Part VIII. Chap. I.

THE TRUSTEES, when chosen, are elected agreeably to the rules inserted in Part VII. Chap. II.

THE DELEGATES to the *General Associations* in New England, and to the *General Convention* of Vermont, are chosen according to the rules adopted for the purpose.

See Part XII. Chap. VI.

Digitized by Google

Sect. 8. The Assembly inquires of the Synods and Presbyteries, whether they have reported on Missionary business.

RULE.

The Synods and Presbyteries shall report on the subject of missionaries, and missionary business, only to the Board of Missions; and to secure a regard to this rule, the Assembly will, at each annual session, inquire whether the Synods and Presbyteries have made such a report.

See Part III. Chap. III. Sect. 2.

Sect. 9. GENERAL RULES for regulating the proceedings of the Assembly, which are read by the Moderator before he resigns his seat to his successor.

I. The Moderator shall take the chair at the hour to which the Assembly stands adjourned; shall immediately call the members to order; and on the appearance of a quorum shall open the session with prayer, and cause the minutes of the preceding sessions to be read; and on every adjournment shall conclude with prayer.

II. The Moderator may speak to points of order, in preference to other members; rising from his seat for that purpose; and shall decide questions of order, subject to an appeal to the house by any two members.

III. The General Assembly, at every meeting, shall appoint a Committee of Bills and Overtures, to prepare and digest business for the Assembly.

Digitized by Google

Any person thinking himself aggrieved by this committee, may complain to the Assembly.

IV. Petitions, questions relating either to doctrine or order, intended to be brought before the Assembly for decision, and in general all new propositions, tending to general laws, shall usually be laid before the committee of bills and overtures, before they be offered to the Assembly.

V. The Assembly shall also, at every meeting, appoint a committee, to be styled the Judicial Committee: whose duty it shall be to take into consideration all appeals and references brought to the Assembly; to ascertain whether they are in order, to digest and arrange all the documents relating to the same; and to propose to the Assembly the best method of proceeding in each case.

VI. A motion made, must be seconded, and afterwards repeated by the Moderator or read aloud, before it be debated: and every motion shall be reduced to writing, if the Moderator, or any member, require it.

VII. Any member, who shall have made a motion, shall have liberty to withdraw it, before any debate had thereon: but not afterwards, without leave of the Assembly.

VIII. On questions of order, adjournment, postponement, commitment, or the previous question, no member shall speak more than once. On all

Digitized by Google

other questions, each member may speak twice, but not oftener, without express leave of the house.

IX. When a question is under debate, no motion shall be received unless to amend it, to commit it, to postpone it, for the previous question, or to adjourn.

X. The previous question shall be in this form, *Shall the main question be now put?* and until it is decided, shall preclude all amendment and farther debate of the main question. If the previous question be decided in the affirmative, the debate on the main question may proceed: but if it be decided in the negative, the effect shall be to arrest the discussion, and to produce an indefinite postponement of the main question.

XI. An amendment may be moved on any motion, and shall be decided before the original motion.

XII. If a question under debate contain several parts, any member may have it divided, and a question taken on each part.

XIII. Every member, when speaking, shall address himself to the chair; and shall treat his fellow members, especially the Moderator, with decency and respect: If a member act disorderly, it shall be the duty of the Moderator, and the privilege of the other members, to call him to order.

XIV. A question shall not be called up, or reconsidered, at the same sessions of the Assembly

Digitized by Google

at which it has been decided, unless by consent of two thirds of the members who were present at the decision.

XV. Any member, who may think himself aggrieved by a decision of the General Assembly, shall have his dissent or protest, with his reasons, entered on the records of the Assembly, or filed among their papers, if given in before the rising of the Assembly.

XVI. If any member act indecently or disorderly, contrary to these rules, the Moderator shall reprove, or otherwise censure him, as the Assembly shall judge proper: and if any member shall think himself denied of any right, or unjustly blamed by the Moderator, he shall not speak disrespectfully to him, but modestly require the decision of the house in the case.*

Sect. 10. PARTICULAR RULES.

1. *Resolved,* That every letter or communication addressed to the Moderator, be opened and read by him; and, at his discretion, be either communicated immediately to the Assembly for their decision, or to the committee of overtures to be by them brought before the house in the ordinary channel.—Vol. I. p. 85.—1794.

2. *Resolved,* As a standing rule of this house, that whenever more than three persons are standing

* These Rules remain as they were adopted by the Assembly in 1789, except that No. IX. was slightly altered in 1791, and No. IV. in 1819, when No. V. was inserted.

Digitized by Google

up at one time, the Moderator shall require them to take their seats.—Vol. I. p. 63.—1792.

3. Whereas considerable difficulties, and delays have been occasioned by members entitled to mileage, neglecting to give their names and distance to the committee on the commissioners' fund, or giving them verbally, or some giving double and some the single distance; therefore, *Resolved*, That the members entitled to mileage, shall give to the committee on the commissioners' fund, within three days after the appointment of said committee, in writing, their names, the names of their Presbyteries, and their distance from home to the Assembly; and if any member neglect to comply with this rule, he shall forfeit his portion of said fund: and that no member may be ignorant of this resolution, the Moderator shall read it as soon as the committee on said fund is appointed each year.—1818.- Vol. III. p. 417.

Sect. 11. No Corresponding Members can be admitted into the Assembly.

Upon motion it was agreed, That, whereas this Assembly, copying the example of their predecessors, have admitted several ministers, who are not commissioners, to join in their deliberations and conclusions, but not to vote on any question; And although this Assembly has been much indebted to the wise counsels and friendly assistance of these corresponding ministers, nevertheless, on mature deliberation, it was *resolved* as the opinion of this house;—

Digitized by Google

1. That no delegated body has a right to transfer its powers, or any part thereof, unless express provision is in its constitution.

2. That this Assembly is a delegated body, and no such provision is in its constitution.

3. Although such admission has hitherto produced no bad consequences, it may, nevertheless, at some future day, be applied to party purposes, and cause embarrassment and delay.—Wherefore, *Resolved*,—

4. And lastly, That the practice of this Assembly, in this case, ought not to be used as a precedent in future.—1791. Vol. I. page 42.

Sect. 12. After the minutes have been read, THE ROLL is called, to ascertain whether any commissioner have left the house without permission.

RULE.

Whereas it has frequently happened that members of this Assembly, neglecting their duty and inattentive to the rules of decorum, have abruptly left the Assembly and returned home without leave of absence—*Resolved*, That in all similar cases, which shall occur in future, it shall be the duty of the clerk of this house, to give notice thereof to the Presbyteries to which such delinquent members may belong; and that it be recommended to the said Presbyteries, in their settlements with such delinquents, not to allow them any compensation for services as members of the Assembly. Vol. I. p. 271. 1801.

Digitized by Google

Sect. 13. The vote being taken for the dissolving the Assembly, the Moderator dissolves it, and requires another General Assembly to meet, agreeably to constitutional direction; and, having offered up prayer and thanksgiving to Almighty God, pronounces the apostolic benediction.

See Form of Government, Chap. XXII. Sect. 6.

CHAPTER IV.

OF THE OFFICERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

Sect. 1. OF THE PERMANENT CLERK.

Duties. 1802. *Resolved*, That a Permanent Recording Clerk be chosen, whose duty it shall be, from year to year, to draught the minutes of the Assembly during their sessions, and afterwards to perform such services respecting transcribing, printing, and distributing the extracts, as shall be assigned to him from time to time; and that he be paid out of the funds of the Assembly, three dollars per day, for the time he shall be employed, as well during the sessions of the Assembly as after their dissolution.—Vol. I. p. 274.

Digitized by Google

Compensation. 1806. *On Motion Resolved*, That hereafter the Permanent Clerk shall receive $2, per day, during the sessions of the Assembly, and $1 50 per day, while necessarily attending upon the business of the Assembly after their adjournment.—Vol. II. p. 190.

Duties. 1807. The Permanent Clerk shall furnish all the stationary for the use of the Assembly and the several clerks: He shall make the original draughts of all the minutes, and give certified copies, as occasion may require, of all such as may be proper to be transmitted to the Trustees of the General Assembly, or any of their officers. After the Assembly rises, from year to year, he shall carefully revise the manuscript, render it correct, and legible, and deliver it over to the stated clerk. He shall receive a reasonable compensation for the stationary supplied by him, and the pay (*per diem*) fixed by the last Assembly.—Vol. II. p. 204.

Sect. 2. Of the Stated Clerk.

Duties. 1807. The Stated Clerk shall transcribe for the press, such parts as may be necessary, of the minutes ordered to be published from year to year; he shall correct the press, and superintend the printing of all the minutes and papers which shall be ordered to be printed by the General Assembly. As soon as the extracts are printed, from year to year, he shall send one copy by mail to each Presbytery, and apportion and send the rest by private conveyance to the Presbyteries and other bodies, as shall be prescribed by the Assembly, only reserving a sufficient number of copies for binding;

Digitized by Google

he shall have the charge of all the books and papers of the General Assembly; shall cause their minutes to be fairly transcribed into the book or books provided for the purpose, and give attested copies of all minutes, and other documents, when properly required so to do. As a compensation for his services he shall receive *forty dollars* per annum; besides the reasonable expenses of printing and packing, and all sums paid by him for the postage of letters addressed to him as Stated Clerk.—Vol. II. p. 204.

1791. Ordered, That the stated clerk extract from the records of this house a fair copy of the rules, for conducting the business thereof, and at every stated meeting have it exposed in a public part of the house that all the members may have access to it for their information.—Vol. I. Page 31.

Papers to be safely kept. 1802. And whereas the Assembly have been informed by Dr. Rodgers, that he has in his hands other important records of the former judicatories of this church, the Assembly requested Dr. Rodgers to transmit them also to the Stated Clerk, to be kept by him among the archives of the Assembly. It was further ordered, that the Stated Clerk do not deliver any records or papers in his possession to any person, unless by order of the General Assembly, and then that he always take a receipt for the same.—Vol. I. p. 276.

Statement of Monies. 1791. This Assembly presuming on the concurrence of their successors, do resolve, lastly, that there shall be printed annually, or as often as shall be thought expedient, a statement of the receipts and expenditures aris-

Digitized by Google

ing from said collections, in which shall be detailed all the churches settled and vacant, the sum (if any) received from each, for what purpose received, and how applied. And that each Presbytery shall be furnished with at least as many copies as there are churches subordinate thereto, to be transmitted to the churches for their information and satisfaction. —Vol. I. p. 39.

Index to be made. 1794.

On Motion Resolved, That the Stated Clerk provide a copy of the printed extracts of the late Synod's and of the Assembly's votes and proceedings, each year from the year 1787, and that he preserve them for the use of the Assembly; that he regularly add to them such as may be printed in future; that care be taken to have them printed on paper of the same size with those already published; and that he prepare an accurate index to these printed extracts, and to the written records of the Assembly.—Vol. I. p. 89.

Catalogue of Ministers. 1792.

On Motion Resolved, That a catalogue be kept, according to seniority in the ministry, of the names of all ministers belonging to the Presbyterian Church in America, beginning May 1789, the period when the first General Assembly met; and that after the decease of any minister his name shall be marked with an asterism, and opposite to it, in a column for that purpose, the time of his death shall be set down; and in another the name of the Presbytery to which he last belonged: and the names of new members shall be added, from year to year, when the Synodical and Presbyterial reports shall be made.—Agreeably to the above resolution, ordered, that every Presbytery belonging to this body shall send

Digitized by Google

up to the next General Assembly a list of all their members, with the dates of their ordination respectively.—Vol. I. p. 60.

Accounts. 1800. *On Motion, Ordered,* That in all cases where the General Assembly hath ascertained, or shall ascertain, the rate of compensation for services or business done, or to be done, by any person employed by them, the treasurer of the corporation shall be authorized to pay the same, on a fair account of such service or business done being first presented to the stated clerk of the General Assembly and allowed by him, and then exhibited to said treasurer for payment.—Vol. I. p. 234.

1819. *Resolved,* That the Stated Clerk be authorized and directed to liquidate all accounts for printing done by order of the Assembly; and also for transmitting the printed extracts from the minutes of the Assembly to the places of their destination.—Vol. IV.

It is the duty of the Stated Clerk to insert the abstract of the Presbyterial reports in the COMPENDIOUS VIEW.

See Vol. II. p. 220, 269, 276.—Vol. III. p. 20, 120.

1813. It is the duty of the Stated Clerk to publish annually the names of the ministers appointed by the Assembly to certify the character of travelling preachers.—Vol. III. p. 121.

His name and residence. 1808. *Resolved,* That in addition to the existing regulations on the subject, the name of the Stated Clerk, and the place of his residence, be printed on the copy of the ex-

Digitized by Google

tracts to be forwarded by mail; and that the Presbyteries hereafter, or any member of Presbytery, give notice to the Stated Clerk, of the conveyance by which their other extracts are to be forwarded.—Vol. II. p. 252.

Resolved, That the Board of Missions be authorized always to insert their Missionary appointments in the appendix to the printed extracts.—Vol. III. p. 321.

1817. The Stated Clerk was authorized to engage a person to print the extracts which are to be made from the minutes for printing; and also to appoint an agent to forward the extracts to the several Presbyteries.—Vol. III. p. 330.

Sect. 3. OF THE TEMPORARY CLERK.

Duties. 1802. *Resolved*, That a Temporary Clerk be chosen by each Assembly as heretofore, to read the minutes and communications to the Assembly, and otherwise aid the permanent clerk as occasion may require; and that he be paid one dollar per day for his services.—Vol. I. p. 274.

1806. *Resolved*, That hereafter the Temporary Clerk shall receive no pecuniary compensation for his services.—Vol. II. p. 191.

Sect. 4. OF THE TREASURER OF THE TRUSTEES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

Duties. 1800. *On Motion, Ordered*, That in all cases where the General Assembly hath ascertained, or shall ascertain the rate of compensation for services or business done, or to be done, by

Digitized by Google

any person employed by them, the Treasurer of the corporation shall be authorized to pay the same, on a fair account of such service or business done being first presented to the stated clerk of the General Assembly and allowed by him, and then exhibited to the said treasurer for payment: and it was also recommended to the treasurer of the corporation, as soon as may be after the rising of the Assembly, to review their minutes, and to take therefrom an account of all the appropriations of money that they may have made.—Vol. I. page 235.

Exhibition of his Accounts.

An exact state of the accounts of the trustees, is to be exhibited by their treasurer to the General Assembly, once in every year,
1801. Whereupon it is recommended; That this state of the accounts, be laid before the General Assembly, as early in their sessions as possible, in order that the General Assembly may know what appropriations it may be in their power to make, or what instructions to give to their trustees, respecting the monies in hand.——Vol. I. p. 270.

Resolved, That it is hereby enjoined on all per-
1809. sons, holding money belonging to, or collected for, the Assembly, to pay the same only to the Treasurer of the Trustees; and it is also enjoined on all persons to whom money may be due from the Assembly, if they do not personally apply for it, to give their written orders authorizing some one to receive the money for them.—Vol. II. p. 289.

Digitized by Google

PART II.

OF THE SYNODS.

CHAPTER I.

OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE SYNODS.

Sect. 1. *Extracts from the Records of the late Synod of New York and Philadelphia.*

YOUR committe beg leave further to report, that they conceive it will be most conducive to the interest of religion, that this Synod be divided into four Synods; and therefore submit to the Synod the following plan for dividing the Synod of New York and Philadelphia, into four distinct Synods, subordinate to a General Assembly to be constituted out of the whole. 1786.

1st. That one of the said Synods shall consist of the Presbyteries of Duchess County, Suffolk, New York, and New Brunswick; to be known by the name of THE SYNOD OF NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY.

Digitized by Google

2nd. That another Synod shall consist of the Presbyteries of Philadelphia, Lewis Town, New Castle, Baltimore, and Carlisle; to be known by the name of THE SYNOD OF PHILADELPHIA.

3d. That another Synod shall consist of the Presbyteries of Redstone, Hanover, Lexington, and Transylvania; to be known by the name of THE SYNOD OF VIRGINIA.

4th. That another Synod shall consist of the Presbyteries of Abingdon, Orange, and South Carolina; to be known by the name of THE SYNOD OF THE CAROLINAS.

5th. That out of the body of these Synods, A GENERAL ASSEMBLY shall be constituted in the following manner; *viz.* That every Presbytery shall, at their last stated meeting preceding the meeting of the General Assembly, depute to the General Assembly, Commissioners, in the following proportion:—Each Presbytery consisting of not more than six Ministers, shall send one Minister and one Elder; each Presbytery consisting of more than six Ministers, and not more than twelve, shall send two Ministers and two Elders; and so in the same proportion for every six Ministers: and these Commissioners, or any fourteen of them, whereof seven to be Ministers, being met on the day and at the place appointed, shall be competent to enter upon business. And the Judicatory thus constituted shall bear the *style and title* of THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.—Page 407.

Resolved unanimously, That the Synod be divided; and it is hereby divided into four Synods, agreeably to an act made and provided for that purpose in the sessions of Synod, in

1788.

Digitized by Google

the year one thousand seven hundred and eighty six: and this division shall take place on the dissolution of the present Synod.—p. 452.

Sect. 2. *Extract from the Assembly's Records.*

On Motion Resolved, That the river Potomac be the boundary line between the Synods of Philadelphia and Virginia, except the congregation of Alexandria, which shall belong to the Synod of Philadelphia. 1792.

Sect. 3. *The Synod of Virginia divided in* 1802.

Resolved, That the members of the Synod of Virginia, agreeably to their request, be divided into three Synods, as follows; *viz.*

1. That the Presbyteries of Hanover, Lexington, and Winchester, constitute a Synod; to be known by the name of THE SYNOD OF VIRGINIA: That they hold their first meeting at the Presbyterian Church in Lexington in Virginia, on the last Wednesday in September next, and be opened with a Sermon by the Rev. Dr. James Waddel, or, in case of his absence, by the next senior Minister present; and that they afterwards meet upon their own adjournments.

2. That the Presbyteries of Redstone, Ohio, and Erie, be constituted a Synod; to be known by the name of THE SYNOD OF PITTSBURGH: That they hold their first meeting in the Presbyterian Church at Pittsburg, on the last Wednesday in September next, and be opened with a Sermon by the Rev. James Power, or, in case of his absence, by the next

Digitized by Google

senior Minister present; and that they afterwards meet on their own adjournments.

3. That the Presbyteries of Transylvania, West Lexington, and Washington, be constituted a Synod; to be known by the name of THE SYNOD OF KENTUCKY: That their first meeting be held in the Presbyterian Church in the town of Lexington in Kentucky, on the second Thursday in October next, and be opened with a Sermon by the Rev. James Welch, or, in case of his absence, by the next senior Minister who may be present; and that they afterwards meet on their own adjournments.

Resolved, That the Presbstery of Abingdon be, and it hereby is, taken from under the care of the Synod of the Carolinas; and placed under the care, and formed into a constituent part of, the Synod of Virginia.—1803.

Sect. 4. *The Synod of Albany constituted in* 1803.

Resolved, That the Presbyteries of Albany, Oneida and Columbia, be, and they hereby are, constituted and formed into a Synod; to be known by the name of THE SYNOD OF ALBANY: that they hold their first meeting in the Presbyterian Church of Albany, on the first Wednesday of October next, at 2 o'clock, P. M. and be opened with a Sermon by the Rev. Jedediah Chapman, or, in case of his absence, by the next senior Minister who may be present; and that they afterwards meet on their own adjournments.

Digitized by Google

Sect. 5. *The Synod of Albany divided in* 1812.

The following application from the Synod of Albany, was overtured by the Committee of Overtures, that said Synod be divided in the manner following; *viz.*

That the Presbyteries of Londonderry, Columbia, Albany and Oneida, form the Eastern Division, and be constituted a Synod; to be called and known by the name of THE SYNOD OF ALBANY; and that they hold their first meeting in the Presbyterian Church in the City of Albany, on the first Wednesday in October next, at 11 o'clock, A. M. and that the meeting be opened with a Sermon, by the Rev. Samuel Blacthford, D. D. and, in case of his absence, then by the oldest Minister present.

That the Presbyteries of Onondaga, Cayuga, and Geneva, form the Western Division, and be constituted a Synod; to be called and known by the name of THE SYNOD OF GENEVA; and that they hold their first meeting, in the First Presbyterian Church in Geneva, on the first Wednesday in October next, at 11 o'clock, A. M. and that the meeting be opened with a Sermon by the Rev. David Higgins, and, in case of his absence, then by the oldest minister present.

Resolved, That the Synod of Albany be divided as above; and it hereby is accordingly divided.

Sect. 6. *The Synod of the Carolinas divided in* 1813.

An application from the Synod of the Carolinas, for the division of their Synod, was overtured and

Digitized by Google

read. Whereupon it was resolved, that the said Synod be divided as follows:

That the Presbyteries of Orange, Concord, and Fayetteville be constituted a Synod; to be known by the name of THE SYNOD OF NORTH CAROLINA; to meet at Allemance Church, on the first Thursday of October next:—That the Rev. Dr. James Hall, or, in case of his absence, then the senior member present, open the Synod with a Sermon, and preside until a Moderator be chosen; and that the Synod meet afterwards on their own adjournments.

That the Presbyteries of South Carolina, Hopewell and Harmony be constituted a Synod; to be known by the name of THE SYNOD OF SOUTH CAROLINA AND GEORGIA; to meet on the first Thursday in November next, at Upper Long Cane Church, and afterwards on their own adjournments;—that the Rev. Dr. Henry Kollock, or, in case of his absence, then the senior Minister present, preach the opening Sermon, and preside until a Moderator be elected.

Sect. 7. *The Synod of Kentucky divided in* 1814.

The Committee to which were referred the petition of the Presbytery of Lancaster for the division of the Synod of Kentucky, and a resolution of the Synod on the same subject, reported in favor of the petition: and it was resolved by the Assembly that the Presbytery of Lancaster be separated from the Synod of Pittsburgh, and the Presbyteries of Washington and Miami be separated from the Synod of Kentucky, and be erected into a new Synod; to be known and called by the name of THE SYNOD OF

Digitized by Google

Ohio; to meet at Chilicothe, on the last Thursday of October next; that the Rev. Robert G. Wilson, or, in case of his absence the senior Minister present, open the Synod with a Sermon, and preside until a new Moderator be chosen.

Sect. 8. *The Line between the Synods of Ohio and Kentucky altered in* 1815.

A petition of the Synod of Ohio, praying an alteration of the line dividing that Synod from the Synod of Kentucky, so that the Ohio river shall be the line dividing the two aforesaid Synods, was overtured. The prayer of the petition was granted; it being understood, that the connexion now subsisting between the congregation of Cabin Creek and the Rev. William Williamson, shall not be thereby effected, agreeably to the petition of the Elders of said congregation, which has been forwarded to the Assembly and read.

Sect. 9. *The Line between the ame Synods again divided in* 1817.

The committee to whom was referred the petition of the Presbytery of Louisville for an alteration in the division line between the Synod of Ohio and the Synod of Kentucky, reported; and their report being read, was adopted, and is as follows; *viz.*

Resolved, That the request be granted; and that, agreeably to the petition, so much of the Synod of Ohio, within the state of Indiana, as lies West of a

Digitized by Google

line drawn due north from the mouth of Kentucky river be attached to the Synod of Kentucky.

Sect. 10. *The Synod of Kentucky divided in* 1817.

The committee to whom was referred the petition of the Synod of Kentucky, praying for a division of said Synod, reported; and their report being read, was adopted, and is as follows; *viz.*

That, agreeably to the request of the Synod of Kentucky, the Presbyteries of Union, Shiloh, West Tennessee, and Mississippi, be constituted a Synod; to be known and called by the name of THE SYNOD OF TENNESSEE. That they hold their first session at Nashville, on the first Wednesday of October next; and that the Rev. James W. Stephenson, or, in case of his absence, the senior Minister who may be present, open the Synod with a Sermon, and preside till a new Moderator be chosen.

Sect 11. *Presbyteries to be divided by Synods.*

The committee of overtures laid before the Assembly an application from the Presbytery of Huntingdon, for a division of their Presbytery.

Resolved, That the Presbytery make their application to the Synod to which they belong, being the most proper judicature to decide in the case.—1808.

Sect. 12. *An Elder from a Vacant Congregation has a right to sit in Synod.*

The committee also overtured this question, Has an elder, whom the discipline of our church autho-

Digitized by Google

rises to sit as a member in Presbytery, from a vacant congregation or united congregations, a right, by that discipline, to sit in Synod, as a representative of such congregation, or congregations?

The vote being taken, the question was determined in the affirmative.—1808.

Sect. 13. *The Powers of a Commission of Synod.*

A Member of the committee appointed to pre-
1774. pare an overture respecting a commission of Synod, brought in a draught, which being read, and amended, was put to vote and carried by a large majority, and is as follows:

Whereas, there have arisen doubts in the minds of some members respecting the utility and powers of what is called by us The Commission, the Synod proceeded to take this matter into consideration; and after due deliberation, in order to remove any scruples upon this head, and prevent all future difficulties in this matter, do determine that the commission shall continue, and meet whensoever called by the Moderator at the request of the first nine in the roll of the commission, or a major part of the first nine ministers; and when met that it shall be invested with all the powers of Synod, sit by their own adjournments from time to time: and let it also be duly attended to that there can lie no appeal from the judgment of the commission, as there can be none from the judgment of the Synod; but there may be a review of their proceedings and judgments by the Synod; and whensoever this is done

Digitized by Google

those who were members of the commission shall be present and assist in forming all such judgments, as the Synod may think proper to make upon any such Review.—By the Synod of New York and Philadelphia, p. 274.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE DUTIES OF SYNODS.

Sect. 1. *Synod Books.*

ON Motion, *Ordered*, That the minutes of the respective Synods be laid, yearly, before the General Assembly, to be by them revised. Vol. I. p. 4.—1789.

It is recommended to the Synods of Virginia, and the Carolinas to send attested copies of their minutes, by their delegates to the General Assembly, yearly, whenever they find it inconvenient to send their books. Vol. I. p. 15.—1790.

Sect. 2. *Case of Order.*

On reading the minutes of Saturday respecting the report of the committee for examining the min-

Digitized by Google

utes of the Synod of Philadelphia, the Assembly *resolved*, That the Synod be informed, that the Assembly disapprove of the proceedings as represented in their records, in recommending a candidate to be received as in full standing, before they had given a decision upon the allegations against him. Vol. I. p. 36.—1791.

Sect. 3. *Unconstitutional Act of the Synod of New York and New Jersey.*

A remonstrance was presented by the Synod of New York and New Jersey against a decision of the Assembly of last year, by which they determine that "it is unconstitutional for the Synod of New York and New Jersey to enact, that in future candidates who have the gospel ministry in view, shall be required to attend to the study of divinity at least three years before licensure:"—Whereupon, it was *resolved*, That this Assembly reconsider the above decision; which was agreed to. And, whereas, it appeared that there was no appointment made by the Synod of New York and New Jersey, of any particular persons to advocate their cause, the Assembly, desirous to receive all the light they can on the subject, *resolved*, That every member of that Synod who may be present shall have liberty to offer what he may think necessary for or against the remonstrance: At the same time it was *resolved*, That this act of the Assembly ought not to be used as a precedent.—The members of the Synod who were present having been fully heard, the Assembly adjourned.

Digitized by Google

The Assembly resumed the consideration of the remonstrance from the Synod of New York and New Jersey; When a motion was made and seconded, as follows; *viz.* *Resolved*, as the sense of this house, that the decision of the last General Assembly, which is the subject of complaint ought not to be altered. On the question to agree to the above motion, it was unanimously determined in the affirmative. Vol. I. p. 79.—1793.

Sect. 4. *Ordination sine titulo.*

The following request was overtured by the Committee of Bills and Overtures.

That the Synods of Virginia and the Carolinas have liberty to direct their Presbyteries to ordain such candidates, as they may judge necessary to appoint on Missions to preach the Gospel; Whereupon,

Resolved, That the above request be granted—The Synods being careful to restrict the permission to the ordination of such candinates only as are engaged to be sent on Missions. 1795.—Vol. I. p. 108.

Sect. 5. *The duty of a Synod in receiving a Presbytery under their care, not formerly in our connexion, prescribed by the Assembly in* 1800.

The committee to whom was referred by the General Assembly, the consideration of an application from Charleston Presbytery in South Carolina, to be taken into connexion with the Assembly, made their report; which being corrected, was adopted, and

Digitized by Google

is as follows: *viz.*—After examining the papers and propositions brought forward by the Charleston Presbytery, the committee think if expedient, that the General Assembly refer this business to the consideration of the Synod of the Carolinas, with whom this Presbytery must be connected, if they become a constituent part of our body; That the said Synod be informed that the Presbytery ought, in the event of a connexion with us, to be allowed to enjoy and manage, without hindrance or controul, all funds and monies that are now in their possession, and that the congregations under the care of the Presbytery be permitted freely to use the system of psalmody which they have already adopted; That, on the other hand, the Synod must be careful to ascertain, that all the ministers and congregations belonging to the Presbytery do fully adopt, not only the doctrine, but the form of Government and discipline of our Church. 1800.—Vol. I. p. 216.

Sect. 6. *Adoption of the Standards of our Church, and Form of Government and Discipline, required by the late Synod of New York and Philadelphia, from a Presbytery.*

A request brought in from a Presbytery in New York Government to the east of North River, desiring to be incorporated with this Synod, and that some members of the Presbyteries of New York, and Suffolk, which are contiguous, may be allowed to be joined with them in a Presbyterial capacity. After several members of this body had given full satisfaction, concerning their characters, their good standing in the church, and that it was not from any dissatisfaction to the neighbouring churches that

Digitized by Google

they desired to be united with us; It was agreed to grant their request, provided that they agree to *adopt our Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms, and engage to observe the Directory as a Plan of Worship, Discipline, and Government,* according to the agreement of this Synod. It is allowed that Mr. John Smith, and Mr. Charncy Graham join with them, and from Suffolk Presbytery Messrs. Samuel Jacket, and Eliphalet Ball, and that they be called by the name of Dutchess County Presbytery, and that Mr. David Bostick, send them a copy of this minute to let them know our determination. 1763.—Page 69.

The Presbytery of Dutchess County being present, reported, That they have complied with the stipulations of the Synod in the year 1763, and have adopted the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms, together with the Directory for Worship and Discipline, according to the usage of this Synod, as appears from their minntes, which were produced and read. Certain members of said Presbytery being present, were allowed to take their seats. 1766.—Page 100.

Sect. 7. *Resolved,* That it be again solemnly enjoined on all Presbyteries and Synods, within the bounds of the General Assembly, on no accouut, to interfere with the instructions given by the Committee of missions to Missionaries. Vol. II. p. 295. —1809.

Sect. 8. *Tract Societies recommended in* 1809.

The committee appointed to report on the establishment of a society for procuring and distributing

Digitized by Google

religious tracts, reported the following resolution, which was adopted.

Resolved, That, whereas it appears to this Assembly, that great and increasing good hath accrued to the Church of Christ, by the distribution of small, cheap, religious tracts; it is hereby earnestly recommended, that each Synod take measures for establishing as many religious tract societies within their bounds, by the associating of one or more Presbyteries, as may be most convenient for this purpose; and that such societies may adopt such plan, for carrying into effect the object of this resolution, as may be most conducive, in their judgment, to this end.

For the rules relative to the reports to be made to the General Assembly, see Part III. Chap. III. Sect. 3.

Digitized by Google

PART III.

OF THE

PRESBYTERIES.

CHAPTER I.

OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE PRESBYTERIES.

Sect. 1. *Extracts from the Records of the Synod of New York and Philadelphia, for the year* 1786.

THE committee appointed to prepare and report a draught of a plan for the division of the Synod into three or more Synods, brought in their report, which is as follows: *viz.*

Your committee beg leave to report that they conceive it proper, previously to the division of the Synod, to divide some of the Presbyteries, which are now too extensive in their limits; and to new-

Digitized by Google

model some others, so as to render them more convenient than they are at present: And therefore recommend to the Synod, to institute the following arrangement: *viz.*

1st. That Abingdon Presbytery be divided into two Presbyteries. The one to be bounded by New River on the north and east; by the Apalachian mountains on the south; and by Cumberland Mountain on the west; consisting of the Rev. Charles Cummins, Hezekiah Balch, John Casson, Samuel Doak, and Samuel Houston; to be known by the name of THE PRESBYTERY of ABINGDON, and to hold their first meeting agreeably to adjournment of the late Presbytery of Abingdon. The other to comprehend the district of Kentucky, and the settlements on Cumberland River; consisting of the Rev. David Rice, Thomas Craighead, Adam Rankin, Andrew M'Clure, and James Crawford; and to be known by the name of THE PRESBYTERY OF TRANSYLVANIA, and to meet for the first time at Danville, in the district of Kentucky, on the third Tuesday of next October; the Rev. David Rice to preside; and, in case of his absence, the senior minister present.

2d. That the Presbytery of Hanover be divided into two Presbyteries. The one to be bounded by the Apalachian Mountains on the north-west, by the Presbytery of Orange on the south, by the Presbytery of Donnegal on the north and east, and by the Chesapeake and Atlantic on the south-east; consisting of the Rev. Richard Sanky, John Todd, James Waddel, Wm. Irvine, John Blair Smith, James Mitchell, John D. Blair, and Daniel M'Culla; to be known by the name of HANOVER PRESBYTERY; and to hold their first meeting at

Digitized by Google

Hampdon Sidney, in Prince Edward's County, on the third Thursday of September next; the Rev. Richard Sanky to preside, or, in his absence, the senior Minister present. The other to be bounded by the Presbytery of Red-stone and Carlisle on the north, by the south-eastern ridge of the Apalachian mountains on the east and south; and by New-river on the west; consisting of the Rev. John Brown, Wm. Graham, Archibald Scott, James M'Connel, Edward Crawford, Benjamin Erwin, John Montgomery, Wm. Wilson, Moses Hoge, John M'Cue, Samuel Carrick, and Samuel Shannon; to be known by the name of THE PRESBYTERY OF LEXINGTON; and to meet for the first time at Timber Ridge in Rockbridge county, on the last Tuesday of September next, the Rev. John Brown to preside, or in his absence, the senior Minister present.

3. That the Presbytery of Donnegal be divided into two Presbyteries; one of which to consist of the Rev. John Plemons, James Hunt, Stephen Balch, and Isaac Keith, with the Rev. Dr. Patrick Allison from the late second Presbytery of Philadelphia, and the Rev. George Luckey from the Presbytery of New Castle; to be known by the name of THE PRESBYTERY OF BALTIMORE; and to meet for the first time in Baltimore Town, on the last Tuesday of October next; the Rev. Dr. Allison to preside, or, in his absence, the senior Minister present. The other to consist of the Rev. Samuel Thompson, John Hoge, Hugh Magill, Robert Cowper, James Martin, James Lang, John Craighead, John King, Hugh Vance, Thomas M'Farren, John M'Knight, Dr. Robert Davidson, John Black, Samuel Dougall, John Lynn, David Beard, Samuel Waugh, Joseph Henderson, Matthew Ste-

Digitized by Google

ven, and James Johnston, with the Rev. John Elder, and Robert M'Murdic, from the late second Presbytery of Philadelphia; to be known by the name of THE PRESBYTERY OF CARLISLE; and to hold their first meeting agreeably to the adjournment of the late Presbytery of Donnegal.

4th. That the Rev. Colin M'Farquher, late of the Presbytery of Donnegal, be annexed to the Presbytery of New Castle.

5th. That the distinction of the first Presbytery and second Presbytery of Philadelphia, shall henceforth cease; and that the members of these two Presbyteries, except those that are annexed to the Presbyteries of Baltimore and Carlisle; be united into one Presbytery; to be known by the name of THE PRESBYTERY OF PHILADELPHIA; to hold their meeting on the third Tuesday of October next, in the City of Philadelphia; and the Rev. Dr. Sproat to preside, or in his absence the senior Minister present. Page 405—407.

The Synod proceeded to consider the report of the committee on a plan for dividing this Synod into three or more Synods; and adopted it as far as respects the arranging of the Presbyteries. And the Synods hereby establish the arrangement therein contained. Page 412.

Sect. 2. *The Presbytery of Carlisle divided in* 1794, *by the General Assembly.*

An overture was laid before the Assembly, through the Synod of Philadelphia, requesting a division of the Presbytery of Carlisle; whereupon, resolved, that the Presbytery be divided into two Presbyteries, by a line along the Juniata river,

Digitized by Google

from its mouth up to the Tuscarora mountain, to the head of the Path Valley, thence westwardly, to the eastern boundary of the Presbytery of Redstone, so as to leave the congregation of Bedford to the south; that the Ministers settled south of said line, *viz.* Mr. Snodgrass, Mr. Waugh, Mr. Linn, Dr. Nesbit, Dr. Davidson, Mr. Wilson, Dr. Cooper, Mr. Craighead, Dr. King, Mr. Lang, Mr. M'Pherrin, Mr. Paxton, Mr. Black, Mr. Henderson, Mr. M'Mordy, and Mr. Jones; together with all those who have been ordained, or shall be ordained, or admitted within the limits now prescribed for the Presbytery of Carlisle, since the last annual report from that Presbytery until the time when the said Presbytery shall be dissolved; shall be known by the name of THE PRESBYTERY OF CARLISLE; to hold their first meeting at Carlisle, on the second Tuesday of April. Dr. Cooper was appointed to preach a sermon on that occasion, and to preside until a new Moderator shall be chosen; and, in case of his absence, the next senior Minister present, to supply his place. And also, that the Ministers settled north of the aforesaid line, *viz.* Mr. Bard, Mr. John Johnson, Mr. Stephen, Mr. James Johnson, Mr. M'Gill, Mr. Martin, Mr. Bryson, Mr. Morrison, and Mr. Hoge, together with all those who have been ordained, or shall be ordained, or received by the Presbytery of Carlisle, within the limits prescribed for the Presbytery of Huntingdon, until the time when the present Presbytery of Carlisle shall be dissolved; shall be known by the name of THE PRESBYTERY OF HUNTINGDON; to meet for the first time in Mr. Martin's Church, in Penn's Valley, on the second Tuesday of April. Mr. Hoge was appointed to preach a sermon on that occasion,

Digitized by Google

and to preside until a new Moderator shall be chosen; and, in case of his absence, the senior Minister present, to supply his place.

Sect. 3. *The Presbytery of Albany divided in* 1802.

The committee to whom was referred the petition of the Presbytery of Albany, reported—The report being considered, was adopted, which is as follows:

Your committee are of opinion, that the division of the Presbytery ought to take place;—but that said Presbyteries ought not to be constituted a Synod, until the Synod of New York and New Jersey be consulted on the subject; and therefore submit the following resolutions:

1. That so much of the Presbytery of Albany as lies on the east side of Hudson's River, including the Rev. Messrs. Harford, Bogue, Halsey, and Coe, be constituted a Presbytery, by the name of THE PRESBYTERY OF COLUMBIA: That they hold their first meeting in the Presbyterian church in Tryon, the second Tuesday in September next; and be opened with a sermon by the Rev. Mr. Warford, or, in case of his absence, by the next senior minister present; and that they afterwards meet on their own adjournments.

2. That so much of the Presbytery of Albany as lies on the west side of the eastern line of the counties of Otsego and Herkemer, including the Rev. Messrs. Fish, Linsley, Dodd, Lewis, and Mr. Chapman, late of the Presbytery of New York, and Mr. Snowden, late of the Presbytery of New-

Digitized by Google

Brunswick, be constituted a Presbytery, by the name of THE PRESBYTERY OF ONEIDA: That they hold their first meeting in the Presbyterian church at Whitesborough, on the first Tuesday in September next; and be opened with a sermon by the Rev. Mr. Chapman; or, in case of his absence, by the next senior Minister present; afterwards to meet on their own adjournments.

3. That the remaining part of said Presbytery, lying between the Hudson's river, and the eastern line of the counties of Otsego, and Herkemer, including the Rev. Messrs. Miller, Hosack, Clarkson, Nott, Bradley, and Sweetman, be constituted a Presbytery, by the name of THE PRESBYTERY OF ALBANY: That they hold their first meeting in the Presbyterian church at Albany, on the third Tuesday in September next; and be opened with a sermon by the Rev. Alexander Miller; or, in case of his absence, by the next senior Minister present; afterwards to meet on their own adjournment.

Sect. 4. *The Presbytery of Oneida divided in* 1805.

Resolved, That so much of the existing Presbytery of Oneida, as lies on the west side of the western line of the counties of Chenango and Oneida, including the Rev. Messrs. Jedediah Chapman, John Lindsley, Samuel Leacock and Jabez Chadwick, be constituted a Presbytery by the name of THE PRESBYTERY OF GENEVA: that they hold their first meeting in the Presbyterian church at Geneva, the third Tuesday of September next; and be opened with a sermon by Mr. Chapman, or, in case of his absence, by the next senior Minister present;

Digitized by Google

and that they afterwards meet on their own adjournments.

Resolved, That so much of the existing Presbytery of Oneida, as lies between the eastern line of the counties of Otsego and Herkimer, and the western line of the counties of Chenango and Oneida, containing the Rev. Messrs. Peter Fish, Samuel F. Snowden, Isaac Lewis, Joshua Knight and James Carnahan, be constituted a Presbytery by the name of THE PRESBYTERY OF ONEIDA: that they hold their first meeting in the Presbyterian church at Utica, on the first Tuesday of September next; and be opened with a sermon by the Rev. Peter Fish, or, in case of his absence, by the next senior Minister present; and that they afterwards meet on their own adjournments.

Sect. 5. *The Presbytery of Union attached to the Synod of Kentucky, in* 1810.

The following letter from the Presbytery of Union, addressed to the stated Clerk, to be communicated to the Assembly, was read.

"*State of Tennessee*, 19*th April* 1810.

Rev. Fathers and Brethren,

This Presbytery, having understood, from documents received, that they are not yet attached to any Synod, the last Assembly having been at a loss to know whether they wished to be attached to the Synod of Virginia or of Kentucky, they now most respectfully request the assembly to attach them to the Synod of Kentucky. This request,

Digitized by Google

Rev. Sirs, I lay before you by order of the Presbytery.

ROBERT HENDERSON, *Stated clerk.*"

Resolved, That the request of the aforesaid Presbytery be granted, and it is hereby granted; and the Presbytery of Union is by the Assembly attached to the Synod of Kentucky.

Sect. 6. *Presbyteries not to interfere with each other.* 1798.

It shall be deemed irregular for any Presbytery to appoint supplies within the bounds of another, without their concurrence; or for any minister to officiate in another's congregation, without asking and obtaining his consent, or the session's, in case the minister be absent; yet it shall be esteemed unbrotherly for any one, in ordinary circumstances, to refuse his consent to a regular member, when required.

Sect. 7. *Ministers without charges, members of Church Judicatures.* 1816.

The Committee to which was referred the Overture from the Presbytery of Baltimore, in the following words: *viz.* "Are ministers without charges, constituent members of our church judicatures, and have they an equal voice with settled pastors, and ruling elders of congregations in ecclesiastical government?" reported; and their report, being read and amended, was adopted, and is as follows: *viz.*

In the judgment of this Assembly, this question is

Digitized by Google

answered affirmatively, Chap. IX. Sect. 2, of the form of government of the Presbyterian Church in these words: "A Presbytery consists of all the ministers, and one ruling elder from each congregation, within a certain district." 1816.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE DUTIES OF THE PRESBYTERIES.

Sect. 1. *A Rule regulating the intercourse of Presbyteries with each other.*

A CASE was referred to the General Assembly for counsel, from the Presbytery of New Castle, which is as follows: *viz.* "At a meeting of the Presbytery of New Castle, in Wilmington, upon the first Tuesday of January, 1791, and continued by adjournments;—The Rev. James M'Coy, of Morris County Presbytery, with a commission from Queen Ann's congregation, applied to be received as a member of the Presbytery. As Mr. M'Coy had been under trials for licensure, in the Presbytery of New York, and was licensed and ordained by the Presbytery of Morris, this Presbytery agreed not to receive him as a member, until his

Digitized by Google

case be laid before the General Assembly, at their next stated meeting." The General Assembly, upon considering this case, determined,—That neither the Presbytery of New Castle, nor any other Presbytery, ought to receive Mr. M'Coy into their connexion, until he shall have produced a certificate from the Presbytery of New York, of his having given them the satisfaction which his case requires. 1791.—Vol. I. p. 37.

Sect. 2. How to dismiss a Minister.

Resolved, That, whereas it is a fundamental principle of the government and discipline of the Presbyterian Church, *that every Minister of the Gospel belonging to it, be subject, at all times to his brethren in the Lord; and accountable to them for the orthodoxy of his principles, and for his moral, religious, and orderly deportment:* It is therefore ordered, That every Presbytery, under the care of this Assembly, whenever they dismiss a member, be careful particularly to specify, with *what Presbytery, Association, Classis, or other Religious body, he is to be associated* after his dismission; (to which some of the Presbyteries do not appear to have been sufficiently attentive;) and that every member so dismissed, be, in all cases, considered as *amenable to the Presbytery which has dismissed him*, till he shall become connected with the ecclesiastcal body which he shall have been directed to join.—1806.

Sect. 3. The time for studying Divinity.

The Assembly called for the reports of the Pres-

Digitized by Google

byteries, relative to a point on which their opinion was required, by the last Assembly: *viz.* "Whether it would be proper to extend the time necessary for young men to apply to the study of divinity, before they be taken on trials, to three years at least:" When it appeared that a considerable majority of the Presbyteries had given it as their opinion, that the time of study ought not to be extended.—1794.

Sect. 4. *A Rule relative to students confirmed in* 1792.

But, inasmuch as acts which have been performed in an informal manner, must often when done be sustained, the Assembly do hereby sustain the licensure and ordination of Mr. Hindman; while, at the same time, they enjoin it, in the most pointed manner, on the Synod of Philadelphia, to give particular attention that no Presbytery under their care depart, in any respect, from that rule of the former Synod of New York and Philadelphia, which is as follows: *viz.*

"The Synod judges that any student in divinity, who professes a design to enter into the ministry, has a right, in our present situation, to study for his improvement, under the direction of any divine of reputation in the Synod, according to a former act; but, that when he proposes to enter upon trials, with a view to the ministry, he shall come under the care of that Presbytery to which he most naturally belongs: and he shall be deemed most naturally to belong to that Presbytery, in whose bounds he has been brought up and lived for the most part, and where he is best known.

1792.

Digitized by Google

But, if another Presbytery desire that any student or students should come into their bounds; or if any such student or students for greater conveniency, or from any circumstances that make it necessary, desire to enter upon trials, in a different Presbytery, upon his offering satisfactory reasons, he may be dismissed: But in either case, the Presbytery to which he removes, shall not receive nor admit him to come under trials, upon his having a certificate as a regular church member only; but he shall bring a testimonial from the Presbytery, or several neighbouring ministers where he lived, recommending him as a candidate for the ministry, of exemplary piety and holiness of conversation; nor shall any thing less be esteemed a sufficient recommendation."

It was ordered that the foregoing rule, established by the Synod of New York and Philadelphia, in 1764, be published for the information of the Presbyteries.

Upon motion, *Ordered*, That the above minute be entered on the minutes of the Synod of Philadelphia, and that a copy of this judgment be transmitted to every Presbytery under ther care.—Vol. I. p. 60.

Sect. 5. *Another Rule adopted by the Synod, in the same year, in relation to students.*

As to the 5th Query,* Though the Synod entertains a high regard for the Associated Churches of New England, yet we cannot but judge, that stu-

* The preceding judgment was given, in answer to the 3d of several queries proposed to the Synod, and the above in answer to the 5th.

Digitized by Google

dents who go to them, [illegible]es.
own Presbyteries, to obtain [illegible]
turn and officiate among us, act ve[illegible]ther than our
are not to be approved or employed [illegible]der to re-
teries; As hereby we are deprived of [illegible] and
trying and approving the qualifications of
candidates: yet if any cases shall happen, wh[illegible]
in such a conduct may in some circumstances be thought necessary for the greater good of any congregation, it shall be laid before the Presbytery to which the congregation belongs, and approved of by them.—1764. p. 80.

Sect. 6. *The adoption of the Confession of Faith to be required of Ministers, who wish to enter into our connexion.*

The Rev. Mr. Jonathan Leavit from New Hampshire, in New England, produced to the Synod certificates of his regular standing in the Gospel Ministry; and having professed his desire to join with this body, after adopting the Westminster Confession of Faith, *as the confession of his faith*, and having promised to conform himself to the Westminster Directory for Worship and Government, he was received as a member of the Synod, and was advised to put himself under care of some one of our Presbyteries.—1765. p. 98.

Sect. 7. *Ordination sine titulo.*

The Presbytery of Hartford stated to the Assem-
1810. bly, that in their opinion it would be advantageous to the cause of religion to ordain Mr. Robert Sample, *sine titulo*, and requested

Digitized by Google

66 THE him; whereupon, *Resolved*, ytery be permitted to ordain Mr. leave if they judge it expedient.

Ordination sine titulo. 1811. The committee appointed to consider and present to the Assembly the draught of an order which it may appear to them, that the Assembly should adopt on the subject of ordinations *sine titulo*, reported; and their report, being read, was considered at some length, and the farther consideration of it was postponed, to take up the following substitute, which, being discussed, was adopted.

Whereas, there may exist cases, in which it may be needful for Presbyteries to ordain, without a regular call; but as the frequent exercise of this power may be dangerous to the church; and as this case does not appear to be fully provided for in our constitution and book of discipline; Therefore, *Resolved*, That the following rule be submitted to the Presbyteries, for their opinion and appropation; which, when sanctioned by a majority of the Presbyteries belonging to this church, shall become a constitutional rule: *viz.*

That it shall be the duty of Presbyteries, when they think it necessary to ordain a candidate, without a particular call to a congregation or congregations, to take the advice of their respective Synods, or of the General Assembly, before they proceed to this ordination.

1812. The committee appointed to report a statement of the dscisions of the several Presbyteries, on the standing rule proposed by the last Assembly on the subject of ordination *sine titulo*, reported;

Digitized by Google

and the report, being read, was accepted, and is as follows: *viz.* That decisions have been received from the Presbyteries of Albany, New York, Philadelphia, South Carolina, Transylvania, Union, Miami, Londonderry, Geneva, Hudson, Jersey, New Brunswick, Baltimore, New Castle, Harmony, West Lexington, Washington, and Hanover; and that of these the first seven are in favour of the rule proposed, and the remaining eleven are against it.

A motion was made and seconded, that this subject be now dismissed, *i. e.* that the proposed rule be not sent down again to the Presbyteries; and after considerable discussion, was determined in the affirmative.

Resolved, That, as a considerable and evident diversity of opinion, has for a length of time existed among the judicatures and ministers of our communion, on the question, whether Presbyteries can regularly proceed to ordination *sine titulo*, without consulting a higher judicature; and it is expedient, for the peace and order of the church, that this question should be decided; this Assembly, therefore, repeal the act of the last Assembly, by which a further attention to this subject was dismissed; and the Assembly do further direct, that all the Presbyteries under the care of the Assembly, as well those which have heretofore voted on this subject, as those which have not, do send up in writing the expressions of their opinion on the subject to the next General Assembly; in order that there may be a constitutional and final decision on the point in controversy, and that the practice relative thereto may be uniform in all parts

1813.

Digitized by Google

of our church. The rule proposed, and on which an affirmative or negative vote of the Presbyteries is required, is in the following words: *viz.*

"It shall be the duty of the Presbyteries, when they think it necessary to ordain a candidate without a call to a particular pastoral charge, to take the advice of a Synod, or of the General Assembly, before they proceed to such ordination."

1814. The committee appointed to report a statement of the decisions of the several Presbyteries, relative to a rule proposed by the last Assembly, on the subject of ordination *sine titulo*, which decisions had been read in the Assembly; reported, and the report, being read, was accepted, and is as follows: *viz.*

That from twenty-two Presbyteries, *viz.* Cayuga, Columbia, Londonderry, Albany, Hudson, Onondaga, Jersey, Carlisle, Baltimore, Northumberland, Huntingdon, Lancaster, Redstone, Winchester, Harmony, Lexington, Orange, Washington, Transylvania, Miami, Oneida, and Geneva, written reports in the negative were received—that from four Presbyteries, *viz.* Concord, Ohio, South Carolina, and Muhlenberg, written reports were received in the affirmative—that from four Presbyteries, *viz.* New York, New Castle, New Brunswick and West Lexington, verbal reports in the negative were received—and that from the other Presbyteries no reports were received—therefore the proposed rule was negatived.

Sect. 8. *Rule relative to the higher excommunication.*

Digitized by Google

The Synod of New York and New Jersey having requested of the General Assembly an explication of a clause in our book of discipline, in the chapter of censures, Sect. 15. The Assembly determined, that the article is in itself plain and explicit; and that, when it shall be thought proper, by any church, to proceed to the sentence of the higher excommunication, and apply to Presbytery for their concurrence, agreeably to our constitution, the Presbytery certainly will not give any decision in the case, until the object of censure be regularly cited to appear, that he may have an opportunity of availing himself of the right of appeal.—1790. Vol. I. p. 18.

Sect. 9. *No Minister can be divested of his office but by deposition.*

Resolved, That it is a principle of this Church, that no minister of the gospel can be regularly divested of his office, except by a course of discipline terminating in his deposition; that if any minister, by providential circumstances, become incapable of exercising his ministerial functions, or is called to suspend them, or to exercise them only occasionally, he is still to be considered as fully possessing the ministerial character and privileges; and his brethren of the Presbytery are to inspect his conduct; and while they treat him with due tenderness and sympathy, they are to be careful that he do not neglect ministerial duty, beyond what his circumstances render unavoidable:—That if any minister of the gospel, through a worldly spirit, a disrelish for the duties of his office, or any other criminal motive, become negligent or careless, he is by no means

Digitized by Google

to be suffered to pursue this course, so as at length to be permitted to lay aside the ministry without censure; because this would be to encourage a disregard of the most solemn obligations, by opening a way to escape from them with impunity.—But in all such cases, Presbyteries are seasonably to use the means, and pursue the methods pointed out in the word of God and the rules of this Church, to recal their offending brother to a sense of duty; and if all their endeavours be ineffectual, they are at length regularly to exclude or depose him from his office.

If any cases or questions relative to this subject shall arise in Presbyteries, which are not contemplated by the provisions of this rule, such cases or questions should be referred to the General Assembly for a special decision.—1802.

Sect. 10. *The principle stated in the preceeding section, acted on by the late Synod of New York and Philadelphia, in* 1783.

The Presbytery of New York reports, that the Rev. Mr. William Woodhull, one of their members, appeared before them at their last meeting, and stated to them his situation, as being still incapable of exercising his ministry, by his continued indisposition, and the little, or rather no, probability of his ever being able to attempt the exercise of it in future; and that he was at the same time engaged in certain secular employments, that would seem to render it improper to have his name in their records as a member, while he is incapable of attending their meetings, or discharging any of the great duties of his Ministry: and therefore submit-

Digitized by Google

ted to them the propriety of their continuing and considering him as a member from time to time: and that the Presbytery, on considering his situation, thought it best to leave his name out of their records in future, till he shall be able to return to the exercise of his ministry, an event that would give them great pleasure.

The Synod considered the above report, and are of opinion that Mr. Woodhull ought to be continued a member of the Presbytery of New York; and therfore direct the Presbytery to insert his name in their roll.—p. 352.

Sect. 11. *A deposed Minister should be published.*

Resolved, That it be recommended to the Presbyteries under the care of the General Assembly, when they shall depose any of their members from the exercise of the ministerial office; and when any person so deposed shall, *without having been regularly restored*, assume the ministerial character, or attempt to exercise any of the ministerial functions; that in such case, with a view to prevent such deposed person from imposing himself on the churches, Presbyteries be careful *to have his name publishe in the Assembly's Magazine*, as deposed from the ministry, that all the churches may be enabled to guard themselves against such dangerous impositions.—1806.

Sect. 12. *Deposition and excommunication distinct.*

In the judgment of this Assembly, the deposi-

Digitized by Google

tion and excommunication of a minister are distinct things, not necessarily connected with each other; but when connected ought to be inflicted by the Presbytery to whom the power of judging and censuring ministers properly belongs.—1814.

Sect. 13. *Case of testimony.*

The following question signed by William C. Davis: "Whether testimony taken before a Session, and sent up to the Presbytery, under the signature of Moderator and Clerk, will not be sufficient in references, as well as appeals, to render the case thus referred both orderly and cognizable by Presbytery; was answered in the affirmative.—1797. vol. I. p. 149.

Sect. 14. *Sessional Records to be examined.*

The following resolution was submitted to the
1809. Assembly, and, after a lengthy discussion, was adopted.

Whereas it appeared, in the course of the free conversation on the state of religion, that in one of the Presbyteries, under the care of the Assembly, the sessional records of the several church sessions were not regularly called up and examined, every year, by the said Presbytery; and there is reason to believe that other Presbyteries had conducted in the same manner: therefore,

Resolved, That it be, and it hereby is, required of all the Presbyteries, within the bounds of the General Assembly, annually, to call up and examine the sessional records of the several churches

Digitized by Google

under their care, as directed in the book of discipline.

1810. The Presbyteries were called upon to report what attention they had severally paid to the order of the last Assembly, in relation to sessional records. Upon enquiry, it appeared that the Presbyteries had almost universally complied with the order.

The committee appointed to consider the order of the last General Assembly, respecting the examination of session books, brought in their report; which was read and adopted, and is as follows:

The Assembly after seriously reviewing the order of the last Assembly, can by no means rescind the said order; inasmuch as they consider it as founded on the constitution of our church, and as properly resulting from the obligation on the highest judicatory of the church, to see that the constitution be duly regarded. Yet, as it is alleged, that insisting on the rigid execution of this order, with respect to some of the church sessions, would not be for edification, the Assembly are by no means disposed to urge any Presbytery to proceed under this order, beyond what they may consider prudent and useful.

Sect. 15. *An injunction of the late Synod of New York and Philadelphia, published by order of the Assembly, in* 1798.

The Synod considering the education of youth, and their being early instructed in just principles of religion, as one of the most useful means of pro-

Digitized by Google

noting the influence of the Gospel in our churches; *Resolved*, That it be enjoined on every Presbytery, in appointing supplies to their vacant congregations, to take order that every vacant congregation within their limits be carefully *catechized*, at least, once in the year, in the same manner as is required by the order of our church, in congregations supplied with regular pastors; that the ministers appointed to this duty, be required, at the next meeting of Presbytery, to render an account of their fidelity in this respect; and that the Presbyteries be required to render an account of their attention to this order.

Sect. 16. *A pastoral care to be exercised over baptized children.*

The Committee to which the pastoral letter had been committed, submitted to the Assembly the following resolution; which, being read, was adopted:

Whereas the book of discipline states that children, born within the pale of the visible church and dedicated to God in baptism, are under the inspection and government of the church, and specifies various important particulars, in which that inspection and government should be exercised, as also directs the mode, in which they shall be treated, if they do not perform the duties of church members; and whereas there is reason to apprehend, that many of our congregations neglect to catechise the children that have been admitted to the sealing ordinance of baptism, and do not exercise suitable discipline over them: therefore,

Resolved, That the different Presbyteries within

Digitized by Google

our bounds are hereby directed to inquire of the different sessions, whether a proper pastoral care be exercised over baptized children in their congregations, that they learn the principles of religion, and walk in newness of life before God; and that said Presbyteries do direct all sessions that are delinquent in this respect, to attend to it carefully and without delay.—1809.

Sect. 17. *Special care to be taken in selecting schoolmasters.*——See Part IV. Sect. 9.

Sect. 18. *The Confession of Faith, &c. to be circulated.*

The committee appointed to inquire, whether some plan cannot be devised for the wider circulation of the Confession of Faith and the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church, reported; and their report, being read and amended, was adopted, and is as follows: *viz.*

1st. That it be strictly enjoined on all the Presbyteries, under the care of the General Assembly, to endeavour, by such means as upon careful examination shall to them appear best, to promote the diffusion and wider circulation of the Confession of Faith and book of discipline of the Presbyterian Church.

2nd. That it be recommended to the congregations in our connexion, to take measures to supply their own poor with the Confession of Faith, and Catechisms, and Book of Discipline of our Church.—1816.

Digitized by Google

Sect. 19. *A Missionary recommendation in* 1811.

Resolved, That the General Assembly recommend to the Presbyteries to send out their members, either by pairs or individually, to act as Missionaries, in the country contiguous to their residence, for one or two weeks in the course of a year; and that they be allowed, as their compensation, what they may collect in their mission, provided the sum so collected do not exceed the rate of $33 33 cts. per month.

Resolved, That it would tend to promote the interest of missions, if the Missionaries were to receive religious books and tracts for distribution among the people to whom they are sent; and that, in order to accomplish this object the more easily, ***Resolved,*** That the Presbyteries be directed to point out places of deposite, with the best method of conveying such books and tracts.

Sect. 20. *Attendance on the Assembly.*

1802. The Assembly, having found by the experience of several years past, that the business to which they are regularly called to attend is so greatly increased, that the sessions are unavoidably protracted to a much greater length than formerly; judged it expedient that the Presbyteries should be, and they hereby are, informed, that their Commissioners should attend with the expectation that the sessions will be of two weeks continuance, and that arrangements should be made accordingly.—Vol. I. p. 308.

Digitized by Google

Resolved, That it be earnestly recommended to the Presbyteries, that they enjoin it upon their Commissioners to the Assembly *to be punctual in attending at the commencement of its sessions*, as considerable inconveniences are found to result in this respect. 1818.

Sect. 21. Sundry injunctions and recommendations passed in 1799.

It requires, under the gracious direction and influence of divine Providence, the awakened zeal and combined exertions of all the friends of the gospel of Christ, and especially of its ministers and other officers, to arrest the progress of vice and profaneness, and to advance the principles and practice of virtue and piety. For this end it seems to be requisite to revive and invigorate our attention to the qualifications and improvements with regard to the ministry—to the wise and faithful discharge of our pastoral duties—and to the extension of the means of grace to those portions of our country that have hitherto been destitute of this blessing. Your committee therefore, recommend to the Assembly to enjoin it upon all their Presbyteries.

Qualifications of Candidates.

1st. To take the most effectual order in their power to increase, if possible, the qualifications of candidates for the gospel ministry, with regard both to sincere piety, and to solid and extensive learning, that the improvements of the pulpit may keep full pace with the progress of society and letters.

Digitized by Google

Support of Ministers.

2nd. That they endeavour, as far as the state of society in different parts of our Church, will permit, to withdraw the ministers of the gospel from every worldly avocation for the maintenance of themselves and families, that they may devote themselves entirely to the work of their ministry. And that, for this end, they labour to convince the people of the advantage that will accrue to themselves from making such adequate provision for the support of their teachers and pastors, that they may be employed wholly in their sacred calling. And, in those places, where it may be found prudent and practicable, that they devise means to have the contracts between congregations and pastors examined in the Presbyteries, at stated periods—inquiries instituted with regard to to reciprocal fulfilment of duties and engagements —and endeavours used to promote punctuality and fidelity in both parties, before distress on one side, and complaint on the other, grow to a height unfavourable to the interests of religion.

Congregational Libraries.

3d. That inasmuch, as the clergy in many situations in the country have it not in their power to furnish themselves with libraries, so various and extensive, as to enable them to discharge their office in the manner most useful to the people, most dignified to the pulpit, and most honorable to religion; it be recommended to Presbyteries, to take measures to promote the establishment of congregational libraries, under such regulations, that the Presbyteries shall have the principal direction in the choice of the books with which those libraries shall be furnished; the ministers of the respective churches, shall

Digitized by Google

have the immediate care, and the constant use of them, and that means be used to make annual augmentations to them.

Diligence in Pastoral Duties.

4th. That, in the discharge of pastoral duties, they take the utmost care, that the word of God be known and understood by the people; and that, for this purpose, in their public instructions, the practice of lecturing on certain portions of the holy scriptures, be not laid aside, but rather revived and increased: —That they endeavour, where it is prudent and practicable, to institute private societies for reading, prayer, and pious conversation. Above all, that they be faithful in the duties of family visitation, and the catechetical instruction of children and youth. And, that, in order to aid these views, they endeavour to engage the sessions of the respective congregations, or other men most distinguished for intelligence and piety in them, to assume, as trustees, the superintendance and inspection of the schools established for the instruction and improvement of children in the elements of knowledge; to see that they be provided with teachers of grave and respectable characters, and that these teachers, among other objects of their duty, instruct their pupils in the principles of religion; which shall be done, as often as possible, in the presence of one or more of the aforesaid trustees, under the deep conviction, that the care and education of children, the examples set before them, and the first impressions made on their minds, are of the utmost importance to civil society, as well as to the church.

Digitized by Google

Contributions for Missions.

5th. That inasmuch, as the General Assembly are assiduously labouring to propagate the gospel throughout our extensive and growing frontiers, and in those places most destitute of the means of grace, it be earnestly enjoined on each Presbytery to use their most diligent endeavours, to collect voluntary and liberal contributions, and to obtain pious donations and bequests from every congregation, whether furnished with a pastor, or vacant, in order supply the funds, which are absolutely necessary to carry on with advantage this great and charitable work.

Let ministers study to impress the minds of the people, with the importance of the object, be diligent in their own exertions to promote it, and punctual in forwarding their contributions to the Treasurers of the commissions of the southern Synods, or to the Treasurer of the *Trustees of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America*; assured, that without their faithful aid and co-operation, missions and other undertakings of utility to the church, so piously begun, and hitherto conducted with such promising prospects of success, must eventually fail. And let it be required of all the Presbyteries, that they annually send up to the General Assembly, along with the duplicates of their reports, exact accounts of all monies received, and transmitted for these objects, that they may be used as checks on the Treasury.

Printed Extracts.

6th. That the recommendations and regulations, that are, from year to year, made and published by the General Assembly, may always be known and present in the judicatories of the church, for their direction and govern-

Digitized by Google

ment, that it be required that each Presbytery, Synod, and the General Assembly for ever, preserve one copy of the extracts or journals, that are yearly published, for its own use—that it shall be indexed, and stitched or bound with those which have preceded it, in the manner that shall be deemed most expedient; and that the whole shall be always kept, or brought up to the place of meeting of such Presbytery, Synod, or General Assembly, along with their own records.

7th. That they send up with their yearly reports, a schedule, containing the number of communicants belonging to each of their churches, and the number of persons yearly baptized, whether in infancy, or at adult age.

All which is humbly submitted by your committee.

The report being read, *resolved*, that it be approved and adopted—and ordered, that the several Synods, Presbyteries, and individual churches, as far as they are respectively concerned, govern themselves accordingly.—Vol. I. p. 204, 205.

Sect. 22. *Subscription to the Widows' fund, recommended in* 1800.

The Assembly earnestly recommend it to the Presbyteries, that, when they settle ministers in their churches, they endeavour to convince such ministers, of the importance of their speedily becoming contributors to the Widows' fund; whereby they may at once provide for the support of their own families, and assist in supporting an

Digitized by Google

institution so charitable and useful in the church. —Vol. I. p. 227.

See, Part VI., at the close, a statement on this subject by the Treasurer of the corporation of the Widows' fund, published by order of the Assembly in 1818.

CHAPTER III.

OF THE REPORTS OF PRESBYTERIES.

Sect. 1. *Written reports on the state of Religion required.*

WHEREAS it has been the practice of the General Assembly, for a number of years past, (a practice from which much information highly interesting, useful and animating, has been derived) to make enquiries of all the representatives of the Presbyteries, as well as from those of the sister churches with which the Assembly is connected, relative to the state of religion, within the region from which the representatives severally come; and whereas it is desirable that the information so collected should be complete, concise and accurate,

Digitized by Google

and that the time of the Assembly may not be unnecessarily consumed in receiving it: therefore *Resolved*, as a standing rule, that a written statement shall annually be required from the representatives of each Presbytery or Association in the General Assembly, which written statement shall first be read by one of such representatives; after which each of the other representatives shall be permitted to add verbally all the information, not contained in the written statement, which he may judge worthy of the attention of the Assembly.—1811.

Sect. 2. *Rules relative to Reports, adopted in* 1806, *and subsequently altered.*

The committee appointed to prescribe the forms of reports from inferior to superior judicatories of the church, exhibited their report with the proposed forms at large. The Assembly, having read the report, and considered the forms submitted to them, approved the same; and ordered that the report, with the forms, be printed in an appendix to the extracts of the present year, and that the judicatories concerned be required to observe these forms, in their future reports.

The committee appointed to draught forms for the reports, from the inferior to the superior judicatories, report, that they have draughted forms, agreeably to the existing regulations, and the amendments to them which they have thought proper to propose. The regulations, as amended, stand thus:

I. The Presbyteries shall direct each congrega-

Digitized by Google

tion, whether supplied or vacant, to make an annual report to the Presbytery to which it belongs; stating the number of communicants, and the number of persons baptized, and distinguishing both agreeably to the form prescribed for reports from congregations to Presbyteries. (See Form No. 1.)

II. Presbyteries shall make annual reports to their Synods; stating a list

Of pastors, in the order of seniority in the ministry, annexing the names of their churches, to those who have pastoral charges, and distinguishing those who have not, as in the form:

Of vacancies; designating those which are able, and those which are unable, to support pastors:

Of licentiates, together with the number (without the names) of candidates for licensure:

An account of the number of communicants admitted the last year, with the sum total in communion; and likewise the number of persons baptized in the same time, distinguishing adults from infants:

And the amount of collections made for the Presbyterial, the Missionary, and the Commissioners' funds; and also the amount raised, by collection or subscription, for the education of poor and pious young men for the ministry, together with the amount of the collections for the Theological Seminary.

These reports should be closed by an historical account of licensures, ordinations, instalments, suspensions, depositions, translations, deaths, and also of members or licentiates received or dismissed: in which account, particular care must be taken to mention the Presbytery from which a minister or licentiate is received, or the Presbytery to join which, or

Digitized by Google

to put him under the care of which he is dismissed. (See Form No. 2.)

III. The Synods shall report to each General Assembly, and detail the whole Presbyterial reports, except the historical account above mentioned.

IV. The Synods which manage their own missionary concerns, and their several Presbyteries, shall, for the information of the General Assembly, report the amount of their collections, for the pious uses specified in the form.

V. Presbyteries shall send to each General Assembly, a duplicate of their reports to the Synods. But they are at liberty, in some cases, to deviate from this rule, and extend their reports to their last meeting immediately preceding that of the General Assembly, so as to include all proper subjects of report up to that time.

VI. The Synods and Presbyteries shall report on the subject of missionaries, and missionary business, only to the *Board of Missions;* and to secure a regard to this rule, the Assembly will, at each annual session, inquire whether the Synods and Presbyteries have made such report.

All reports shall bear date and signature; and if, by any means, they fail of being sent to the proper judicatories, should be sent by mail, to the stated clerks of the Synods, or to the stated clerk of the Assembly.

VII. The preceding rules shall come in place of all former rules on the subjects contemplated

Digitized by Google

by them; and the Synods, Presbyteries, and congregations, are required to pay a special regard to these rules, and in their reports to superior judicatures, to make use of the forms adapted to them.

To secure to the different Synods, Presbyteries, and Congregations, the possession and knowledge of these rules and forms, the committee would also recommend the printing of them in an appendix to the annual extracts of the Assembly's minutes, for several years in succession, till the judicatories shall have become familiar with them; and that, whenever the Assembly shall make any resolutions or rules affecting these rules and forms, it shall be the duty of the Permament Clerk to make the requisite alterations in both.

The committee would further propose, that the Assembly should make it a standing rule, annually to appoint a committee, who shall take the Synodical and Presbyterial reports, after they have been read before the Assembly, and fill up the blanks of a form, prepared to exhibit a compendious view of the number of ministers, congregations, licentiates, candidates, and communicants, together with the baptisms and collections in one year.

And finally, the committee would propose that the Assembly should order the Permanent Clerk to have printed, a number of copies of the form, exhibiting a compendious view, &c. to be bound together, in a separate book, and preserved for the benefit of those who wish to become acquainted with the state of our church.*

* This order has been executed; and if all the Presbyteries make their annual reports, this book will contain a compendious history of the Presbyterian church.

Digitized by Google

FORM, NO. I.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CHURCH OF

From April 1820 *to April* 1821

Total in communion per last report.	Members since added.		Died	Dismissed.	Suspended.	Total now in communion.	Baptized since the last Report		
	On examination.	On certificate					Adults.	Infants.	Total.
200	24	6	8	3	1	218	8	60	68

Dated April, 182 Signed A. B. Pastor or Elder.

N. B. It is recommended to the Presbyteries, to have blank copies of this Form printed for the assistance of the congregations, especially those which are vacant.

Digitized by Google

FORM NO. II.—The Presbytery of report to the Synod, that they consist of 8 Members, and have under their care 11 Congregations, 1 Licentiate, and two Candidates, *viz.*

Names of the Ministers.	Names of the Congregations.	Collections. Missionary. D.	C.	Commissioners. D.	C	Theological Seminary. D.	C.	Education. D.	C.	Presbytery. D.	C.	Communicants. Added last year.	Total.	Baptized. Adults.	Infants.
	Vacant able to support a Pastor.														
	United able.														
	Unable.														
A. B.	Licentiate.														
Two Candidates.															

Dated April 2d, 1820. A. B. Stated Clerk.

Digitized by Google

The preceding Form No. 2 is to be used by the Presbyteries in their reports, both to the General Assembly, and to the respective Synods to which they belong; and likewise by the Synods in their reports to the General Assembly. The Presbyteries and Synods are requested to observe *particularly* the order in which the headings of the several columns stand, and to use the same words. Variation, in either respect, produces difficulty and confusion, when the reports are read by the judicatories.

To this Form, when used in reports from Presbyteries to the Synods, or to the General Assembly, must be subjoined the *Historical Account* of licensures, ordinations, instalments, &c. required by the last paragraph of the Rule marked II.

Sect. 3. *Special injunctions about reports.*

Whereas, from a variety of causes, the reports from the Synods and Presbyteries to the General Assembly, are sometimes not brought forward to the meeting of the Assembly, and it is of much importance that these reports should be complete, the General Assembly did, and hereby do renewedly, enjoin it on all the Synods and Presbyteries under their care, to be very attentive both in seeing that these reports are accurately and seasonably prepared, agreeably to the prescribed forms, and in sending them forward annually to the Assembly; but, if by any accident there be a failure in this respect by any Synod or Presbytery, such Synod or

1809.

Digitized by Google

Presbytery shall, as soon as the failure is discovered, forward the deficient report, by letter to the Stated Clerk of the Assembly, that its results may be entered in the book prepared for that purpose; and thus the design of the Assembly, to obtain and preserve from year to year, a complete view of the churches, may be accomplished. And to secure a due attention to this important object, it is hereby enjoined on every Presbytery annually to inquire of the Commissioners to the Assembly, at their first meeting after the rising of the Assembly, whether the annual Report of that Presbytery was laid before the Assembly.*

Ordered that the several Presbyteries be particularly attentive to prescribed forms, when such may be had, in all official papers to be made out agreeably to the constitution of this church.—1789. Vol. I. p. 3.

Resolved, that it be renewedly enjoined on all the Synods and Presbyteries, in connection with this Assembly, to take special care, that their annual reports to the Assembly be made out according to the forms prescribed in the printed extracts. 1816.

Sect. 4. *Presbyteries to report to the Board of Missions.*

---

* It will be observed by the Presbyteries and Synods, that the reports which they send to the Stated Clerk, after the rising of the Assembly, should not be carried farther, than the date which they would have borne, if they had been sent to the Assembly.

Digitized by Google

On inquiry it appeared, that the Presbyteries, in general, conceiving that the whole missionary business had been devolved on the standing committee of missions, had given to that body such information on the subject, as would otherwise have been transmitted to this Assembly. The Asembly accepted the apology of the Presbyteries, and approved their conduct in making their communications in manner aforesaid; and the Assembly directed the Presbyteries, in future, to report on this subject to the committee of missions only; and to make their reports so early, as to enable the said committee to avail themselves of the information, and present the same to the General Assembly, from year to year.—1803.

Digitized by Google

PART IV.

OF THE

SESSIONS.

CHAPTER I.

OF THE DUTIES OF SESSIONS.

Sect. 1. *Extract from the Records of the Synod of New York and Philadelphia.*

"THE Synod enjoin that exact registers of births, baptisms, marriages, and burials, be kept in every congregation."—1788.

Sect. 2. *Universalists not to be admitted to sealing ordinances.*

A question from the Synod of the Carolinas was introduced through the Committee of Bills and Overtures, which was as follows: *viz.* "Are they

Digitized by Google

who publickly profess a belief in the doctrine of the universal and actual salvation of the whole human race, or of the fallen angels, or both, through the mediation of Christ, to be admitted to the sealing ordinances of the gospel."—The Assembly determined that such person should not be admitted. —1792. Vol. I. p. 64.

The consideration of Dr. M'C's letter was resumed. On the first proposition in the letter, requesting a reconsideration of the sentence of the General Assembly respecting the doctrine of universal salvation, passed at Carlisle, in 1792, The Assembly *unanimously* agreed to adhere to the aforesaid decision.—1794. Vol. I. p. 94.

Sect. 3. The opinion of the late Synod of New York and Philadelphia, in regard to the doctrine of universal salvation.

Whereas the doctrine of universal salvation and of the finite duration of Hell Torments, has been propagated by sundry persons, who live in the United States of America; and the people under our care may possibly, from their occasional conversation with the propagators of such a dangerous opinion, be infected by the doctrine: the Synod take this opportunity to declare their utter abhorrence of such doctrines as they apprehend to be subversive of the fundamental principles of religion and morality; and therefore earnestly recommend it to all their Presbyteries and members to be watchful upon this subject, and to guard against the introduction of such tenets amongst our people. —1787. Page 437.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER II.

OF CASES OF BAPTISM.

Sect. 1. *The unworthiness of a Minister does not invalidate ordinances.*

The following question was proposed by the committee of overtures: viz. Ought such persons to be re-baptized, as have been offered in baptism by notoriously profligate parents, and baptized by ministers of the same description? On this question the General Assembly, after a full investigation, adopted the following determination: *viz.*

Resolved, That it is a principle of this church, that the unworthiness of the ministers of the gospel does not invalidate the ordinances of religion dispensed by them.—It is also a principle, that as long as any denomination of christians is acknowledged by us a church of Christ, we ought to hold the ordinances dispensed by it as valid, notwithstanding the unworthiness of particular ministers. Yet, inasmuch as no general rule can be made to embrace all circumstances, there may be irregularities in particular administrations, by men not yet divested of

Digitized by Google

their office either in this or in other churches, which may render them null and void.—But, as these irregularities must often result from circumstances and situations, that cannot be anticipated and pointed out in the rule, they must be left to be judged of by the prudence and wisdom of church sessions, and the higher judicatories to which they may be referred. In such cases, it may be adviseable to administer the ordinance of baptism in a regular manner, where a prophane exhibition of the ceremony may have been attempted.—These cases and circumstances however are to be inquired into by the church sessions, and referred to a Presbytery before a final decision.—1790. Vol. I. p. 20.

Sect. 2. Engagements to be required in Baptism.

The following question, brought before the Assembly, through the Committee of Overtures, was read: *viz.* "Whether, besides requiring of parents, dedicating their children to God in baptism, an express acknowledgment of the duties of parents and recommending to them the observance thereof, it should be considered as essential to require also, that they come under an explicit vow or solemn engagement to perform those duties?" Whereupon the Assembly resolved, that an answer to the question is contained, in the directory for public worship of this church, under the head of administration of baptism, which requires an express engagement on the part of the parents.—1794.

Digitized by Google

Sect. 3. The administration of Baptism by Unitarians invalid.

The committee to which was referred the question submitted by the member from the Presbytery of Harmony, and with the advice of that Presbytery, in the following words: *viz.*

"A person, who had been baptized in infancy by Dr. Priestly, applied for admission to the Lord's table: should the baptism administered by Dr. Priestly, then a Unitarian, be considered valid? reported; and their report being read, was adopted, and is as follows: *viz.*

Resolved, That this question be answered in the negative; and it accordingly was determined in the negative. In the present state of our country, whilst Unitarian errors, in various forms, are making their insidious approaches—whilst the advocates of this heresy in many cases are practising a system of concealment, and insinuating themselves into the confidence of multitudes who have no suspicion of their defection from the faith, the Assembly feel it to be their duty to speak without reserve. It is the deliberate and *unanimous* opinion of this Assembly, that those who renounce the fundamental doctrine of the Trinity, and deny that Jesus Christ is the same in substance, equal in power and glory, with the Father, cannot be recognized as ministers of the Gospel, and that their ministrations are wholly invalid.—1814.

Sect. 4. The children of slaves to be Baptized when presented by their masters.

The committee to whom was referred the following question: *viz.* "Ought Baptism, on the profes-

Digitized by Google

sion and promise of the master, to be administered to the children of slaves? reported, and their report being amended was adopted, and is as follows: *viz.*

1st. That it is the duty of masters who are members of the church, to present the children of parents in servitude to the ordinance of Baptism, provided they are in a situation to train them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, thus securing to them the rich advantages, which the Gospel provides.

2d. That it is the duty of Christ's ministers to inculcate this doctrine, and to baptize all children of this description, when presented to them by their masters.—1816.

Sect. 5. *A similar question answered by the Synod of New York and Philadelphia.*

The following case of conscience from Donnegal Presbytery was overtured: *viz.* Whether Christian masters or mistresses ought in duty to have such children baptized, as are under their care, though born of parents not in the communion of any christian church? Upon this overture Synod are of opinion, that christian masters and mistresses whose religious professions and conduct are such, as to give them a right to the ordinance of baptism for their own children, may, and ought to, dedicate the children of their household to God, in that ordinance, when they have no scruple of conscience to the contrary.—1786. Page 413.

Digitized by Google

Sect. 6. The Synod's decision on the duty of Christian slaves, in regard to the Baptism of their children.

It was overtured, Whether christian slaves having children at the entire direction of unchristian masters, and not having it in their power to instruct them in religion, are bound to have them baptized; and whether a gospel minister in this predicament ought to baptize them? And Synod determined the question in the affirmative.—1786. Page 414.

Sect. 7. A person having scruples about infant Baptism may be admitted to Communion.

A letter also came, through the committee of overtures, from Bethuel Church Esq. inquiring whether he may be admitted to occasional communion, whilst he has scruples concerning infant baptism.

The letter from Bethuel Church Esq. as overtured, was read, and the motion formerly made, thus amended—"That the sessions of the Church of Cambridge be permitted to receive Mr. Church upon satisfactory evidence of his good character, his scruples notwithstanding," was taken up and agreed to.—1798. Vol. I. p. 167, 170.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER III.

OF CASES OF MARRIAGE.

Sect. 1. *A question relative to a man having two wives, answered in* 1790.

THE following case from the Session of Mount Sion Church, in Fayette County, Kentucky, was referred to the Assembly for counsel: *viz.* "Respecting a married man, who left Ireland a number of years ago, leaving his family behind him, with hopes of providing better for them in this country: He afterwards returned to Ireland three sundry times, with an intention of bringing in his family: but by no arguments could his wife be persuaded to come with him; and the last time peremptorily refused all further cohabitation. He afterwards returned, and remained in single life ten years, in this country: He is since married, and has children in second marriage. His wife and he are desiring communion. The Assembly's judgment is hereby humbly requested, how, or whether, such persons, or any of them, can be admitted to the communion of the church.

From Mount Sion Session, in Kentucky;—By appointment.——*April* 10*th*. 1790.

ADAM RANKIN, *Moderator*.

Digitized by Google

The consideration of this case was deferred till the afternoon.

The Assembly resumed the consideration of the case referred from the Session of Mount Sion in Kentucky, for counsel; and after some time spent in deliberation on the subject, were of opinion, —That a man in circumstances such as the case has stated, ought not to be admitted to the privileges of the church.—But, in order to give as much information as possible to the Session of Mount Sion, the Rev. Dr. Samuel L. Smith was requested to prepare a draught of a letter to that Session, stating the reasons on which the above opinion is founded;—who, after some time, reported the following, which was agreed to: *viz.*

"The General Assembly to the Session of Mount Sion Church.

On the subject of your application to this judicatory, relative to a man who has married a second wife, while his first is yet living, without having obtained a legal divorce from her,—the Assembly, from the view of the facts, as stated in the written application of the Session, have judged that this man ought not to be admitted to the privileges of the church: Because, although wilful and obstinate desertion is a legal cause of divorce, yet it does not appear that this man has actually been divorced from his wife; and it is improper and dangerous to receive to church communion such persons as in the eye of the civil law are living in vice: And although a good man may sometimes be oppressed by power, and prevented from obtaining a divorce where sufficient causes exist; yet it does not

Digitized by Google

appear from your representation that he has used the proper means to obtain a legal divorce, nor even to authenticate the facts upon which he founds his application for the privileges of the church, by sufficient evidence from Ireland—the place in which they happened, and where alone they can be substantiated: and it is contrary to all just rules of proceeding to take any evidence or representation *ex parte*.—But, the decision of the Assembly notwithstanding, if it shall appear that this man was separated from his wife by her wilful and obstinate desertion, and that he has taken all just means to obtain a divorce to which he was lawfully entitled, but was prevented and oppressed by the power of antagonists or of unjust courts; and if he shall, moreover, produce such evidence of these facts, from the place in which they happened, as would entitle him to a divorce by the laws of this land, and of this church; then, in that case, it is the opinion of the General Assembly, that such a man, behaving himself otherwise as a good christian, may be admitted to church privileges. But, in such case, it is necessary that the most authentic evidence be required, and great caution used, both that the proceedings of the church may not be inconsistent with the civil law, and that a door be not opened to laxness, on this important subject of morals.

Signed by order of the General Assembly.—Vol. I. p. 21, 22.

Sect. 2. A question relative to a man married to his wife's brother's daughter, answered by the Synod, in 1772.

Digitized by Google

A reference from the First Presbytery of Philadelphia, respecting this question: *viz.* Whether a man may lawfully marry his wife's brother's daughter, was brought in and read, and the consideration of it deferred till the afternoon.

The further consideration of the reference from the First Philadelphia Presbytery was deferred till next year.—1770. Page 194.

In 1771 the case again deferred.—Page 209.

The case referred to this Synod by the last, respecting marriage, came to be considered; and after some time spent in the affair, it was deferred till tomorrow morning; and Messrs. M'Whorter, Strain, Matthew Wilson, and George Duffield were appointed a committee to prepare a minute on the case, and bring it in to-morrow morning.—Page 222.

The committee appointed yesterday upon the case respecting marriage, brought in a minute, which, after being corrected, was approved, and is as follows: After mature deliberation the Synod declare their great dissatisfaction with all such marriages as are inconsistent with the Levitical Law, which in cases matrimonial we understand is the law of our nation; and that persons intermarrying in these prohibited degrees, are not only punishable by the laws of the country, but ought to suffer the censures of the church: And farther judge, though the present case is not a direct violation of the express words of the Levitical Law, yet as it is contrary to the custom of Protestant nations in general, and an

Digitized by Google

evidence of great untenderness; and so opposite to such precepts of the Gospel as require Christians to avoid things of ill report, and all appearance of evil, and what is offensive to the church; that the persons referred to in this instance ought to be rebuked by the Church Session, and others warned against such offensive conduct: and in case these persons submit to such rebuke, and are in other respects regular professors, that they be not debarred of Christian privileges. And Mr. Hunter is ordered to read this minute publickly in his congregation, where the persons live referred to in the above case. Page 223.

Sect. 3. *A question relative to a man married to his deceased wife's half brother's daughter, answered by the Assembly, in* 1797.

A reference from the Synod of Virginia was received, through the Committee of Overtures, respecting a certain C—— M——, who had married his former wife's half brother's daughter, requesting the opinion of the Assembly, whether such persons may be admitted to Church privileges. Whereupon *resolved*, that, though the Assembly would wish to discountenance imprudent marriages, or such as tend in any way to give uneasiness to serious persons, yet it is their opinion, that the marriage referred to is not of such a nature as to render it necessary to exclude the parties from the privileges of the church. Vol. I. p. 148.

Sect. 4. *A question relating to a man married to his deceased wife's sister's daughter, answered, in* 1799.

Digitized by Google

The committee also reported to the Assembly, from the records of the Synod of the Carolinas, a reference "on the petition of J—— L——, who has married his deceased wife's sister's daughter; praying a reconsideration of his case, which was tried and issued against him, nine years ago, in the Synod of the Carolinas." After some deliberation had on this business, it was deferred for further consideration till to-morrow morning.

The Assembly proceeded to the further consideration of the reference from the Synod of the Carolinas.—After mature deliberation, it was *resolved*, that the case of J—— L——, referred for the decision of the General Assembly, by the Synod of the Carolinas, be remitted to the said Synod; and that they be directed to review the case; and if they shall judge it to be consistent with the existing laws of the state, and the peace of the church, they may admit the persons alluded to, to its privileges.—Vol. I. p. 198.

Sect. 5. *The case of a man married to his deceased wife's sister's daughter, determined, in* 1802.

The Session of the Church of Westminster, in Jefferson County, state of Tennessee, having requested the direction of this Assembly in a case of discipline: *viz.* Whether a man and his wife were admissible to Church privileges who had been related to each other as uncle and neice; that is to say, the woman being sister's daughter to the man's former wife: Whereupon the Assembly *Resolved*, That the decision given, by the General As-

Digitized by Google

sembly, in the year 1797, in a case somewhat resembling the present, may be adopted on this occasion :—

The decision referred to is as follows :—See Sect. 3. of this Chapter.—Vol. I. p. 295.

Sect. 6. *A similar case brought before the Assembly and decided, in* 1804.

The Assembly, agreeably to the order of the day, proceeded to consider the reference from the Synod of Pittsburgh, relating to a certain marriage. It appeared that a Mr. J—— G—— had been censured as guilty of incest, for having married a woman, who was sister's daughter to his former wife; and had brought the cause by appeal to the Synod of Pittsburgh. The Synod, conceiving that the cause involved a high question of discipline, chose to refer it to the General Assembly for their decision.

The Assembly having discussed the subject at some length, a motion was made and seconded, that the decision given by the General Assembly in the year 1802, in a case precisely similar, be adopted as the decision on the present occasion. After some consideration a motion was made and carried, to postpone the motion before the house, in order to introduce the following as a substitute : *viz.*

The Assembly, having given repeated decisions on similar cases, cannot advise to annul such marriages, or to pronounce them to such a de-

Digitized by Google

gree unlawful, as that the parties, if otherwise worthy, should be debarred from the privileges of the Church. But as great diversity of opinion seems to exist on such questions in different parts of the church, so that no absolute rule can be enjoined with regard to them, that shall be universally binding, and consistent with the peace of the church; and as the cases in question are esteemed to be doubtful; the Assembly is constrained to leave it to the discretion of the inferior judicatories under their care, to act according to their own best lights, and the circumstances in which they find themselves placed.

A question was then taken to agree to the substitute and determine in the affirmative.—Vol. II. p. 46 and 47.

For other cases of Marriages, see the Records of Synod, p. 26, 29, 45, 344; and the Records of the Assembly, Vol. II. p. 18, 122.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER IV.

OF SUNDRY RECOMMENDATIONS AND DIRECTIONS.

Sect. 1. *Persons concerned in secular occupations on the Lord's day are not to be admitted to the Lord's supper.*

AN appeal by Mr. W. Post-master in Washington, Pennsylvania, from a decision of the Synod of Pittsburgh, by which it is determined that Mr. W. officiating as Post-master on the Sabbath day in existing circumstances is a sufficient reason to exclude him from the special privileges of the church, was overtured and read. On motion, *resolved*, that the above decision of the Synod of Pittsburgh be affirmed; and it hereby is affirmed.—1810. Vol. II. p. 340.

Sect. 2. *A similar decision in* 1819.

An overture relative to the receiving of a person as a member of the church, who is proprietor in a line of stages which carries the mail and runs on the Sabbath, was read and committed to ———,

Digitized by Google

to report to the Assembly the several circumstances connected with the case.

The committee to whom was referred the above overture reported; and their report being read, the consideration of it was postponed to take up the following substitute, which, after considerable discussion, was adopted: *viz.*

Resolved, That it is the decided opinion of this Assembly, that all attention to worldly concerns on the Lord's day, farther than the works of necessity and mercy demand, is inconsistent, both with the letter and spirit of the fourth commandment; and, consequently, all engagements in regard to secular occupations, on the Lord's day, with a view to secure worldly advantages, are to be considered inconsistent with christian character; and that those who are concerned in such engagements ought not to be admitted into the communion of the church, while they continue in the same.—Vol. IV. 1919.

Sect. 3. *Children to be Catechised.*

See Part III. Chap. II. Sect. 15, 16.

Sect. 4. *Bible Classes recommended in* 1816.

The committee to which was referred the Overture from the Synod of New York and New Jersey, on forming classes of young people, for studying and reciting the Bible, reported; and their report, being read and amended, was adopted, and is as follows: *viz.*—

That they consider this subject of great impor-

Digitized by Google

tance, and deserving the attention and earnest recommendation of the Assembly: therefore,

Resolved, 1st. That it be recommended, and it hereby is recommended earnestly, to the ministers and sessions, which are in connection with the General Assembly, to pay a special attention to this subject, and provide without delay for the stated instruction of the children and youth in the Sacred Scriptures, within their respective congregations.

2d. That although the particular manner of instruction and recitation in the congregations, ought to be left to the discretion of their ministers and sessions respectively, yet as some degree of uniformity is desirable in a business of so much magnitude, it is recommended, as the most effectual means of promoting the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, that, in all our churches, classes be formed of the youth to recite the Scriptures in regular order; that the recitations, if convenient, be as often as once a week, and from two to five chapters appointed for each recitation; that the youth may be examined on:

1st. The history of the world, but more especially of the Church of God, and of the heathen nations who were God's agents in accomplishing his purposes towards his Church.

2nd. Persons noted for their piety or ungodliness, and the effects of their example in promoting or injuring the best interests of mankind.

3d. Doctrines and precepts, or "what man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man."

4th. Positive ordinances, or the directions which

Digitized by Google

God has given as the way in which he is to be worshipped acceptably.

5th. The particular features of character of which the Spirit of God has given notice, both in wicked and good persons; in the last particularly regarding those who were types of Christ, and in what the typical resemblance consisted.

6th. The gradual increase from time to time of information concerning the doctrines contained in the scriptures; noting the admirable adaptation of every new revelation of doctrine to the increased maturity of the church. The nature of God's law, its immutability, as constituting an everlasting rule of right and wrong, the full and perfect illustration of its precepts given by Christ.

7th. The change which God has made from time to time in the positive ordinances, together with the reasons of that change. The difference between the moral law and those laws which are positive.

8th. The illustration of the divine perfections in the history, biography, doctrines and precepts, together with the positive ordinances of the scriptures.

9th. The practical lessons to regulate our conduct in the various relations of life.

On all these particulars the meaning of the words used in scripture must be ascertained, that thus we may understand what we read.

Resolved, 3d. That the Presbyteries, under the care of the Assembly, be directed to take order on this subject; and they are hereby informed, that this is not to come in the place of learning the cate-

Digitized by Google

chisms of our church, but be added to it, as an important branch of religious education,

Sect. 5. *The assembling of Baptized children recommended in* 1818.

Resolved, That the General Assembly recommend, and they do hereby recommend, to the Pastors and Sessions of the different churches under their care, to assemble, as often as they may deem necessary during the year, the baptized children, with their parents, to recommend said children, in prayer, to God, explain to them the nature and obligations of their baptism, and the relation which they sustain to the Church.

Sect. 6. *Moral Societies recommended by the Synod, in* 1766.

The Synod recommend that every congregtion endeavour to form a Society or Societies for the Reformation of Manners within their respective bounds.—Page. 110.

Sect. 7. *Care of the poor recommended by the Synod, in* 1788.

The Synod, also, earnestly recommend to every congregation belonging to their body, to take special care of their poor, or distressed widows and orphans, and to administer to them all proper relief and assistance.

Digitized by Google

Sect. 8. *The prevention of Law-suits recommended by the Synod, in* 1788.

The Synod, taking into their serious consideration the many and great injuries arising to society, by the members thereof, contrary to the spirit and express command of our holy religion, going to law with each other, and carrying on litigious suits: Do, therefore, earnestly recommend it to every congregation under their care, faithfully to endeavour, in such way as may appear most expedient, to prevent law-suits, among their members, by having differences of a civil nature accommodated by arbitration, or by an amicable suit, when the matters cannot be otherwise settled. And the Synod earnestly recommend to all their Presbyteries, to use their utmost endeavours to secure the success of so useful a measure; whereby many evils may be prevented, and various great advantages procured.

Sect. 9. *Care in selecting school-masters recommended by the Synod, in* 1788.

The Synod recommend, that special care be taken with respect to the principles and characters of school-masters; that they teach the Westminster Catechism and Psalmody; and that the Ministers, Church Sessions, and Deacons, or Committees, where they consistently can, visit the schools, and see that these things are done: And where schools are composed of different denominations, that they invite proper persons of said denominations to join with them. And the respective Presbyteries are required to pay special attention to these matters,

Digitized by Google

and to use their best endeavours to have them carried into execution.*

Sect. 10. *Measures to prevent intemperance recommended, in* 1812.

The committee to which was referred the report of the Committee appointed by the last Assembly to devise measures, which may have an influence in preventing the mischiefs arising from the intemperate use of spirituous liquors, reported; and the report, being read, was adopted, and is as follows: *viz.*

Resolved, 1st. That it be recommended to all the ministers of the Presbyterian Church in the United States to deliver public discourses, as often as circumstances may render it expedient, on the sin and mischiefs of intemperate drinking; in which, as well as on other suitable occasions, both public and private, it will be proper, pointedly and solemnly, to warn their hearers, and especially members of the church, not only against actual intemperance, but against all those habits and indulgencies which may have a tendency to produce it.

2d. That it be enjoined on all Church-Sessions, within the bounds of the General Assembly, that they exercise a special vigilance and care over the conduct of all persons in the communion of their respective churches, with regard to this sin; and

* This and the two preceding Sections were published by order of Assembly, in connexion with their printed Extracts.

Digitized by Google

that they sedulously endeavour, by private warning and remonstrance, and by such public censures as different cases may require, to purge the church of a sin so enormous in its mischiefs, and so disgraceful to the christian name.

3d. That it be recommended to the ministers and other officers and members of our church, that they exert themselves to diffuse, as extensively as possible, among their congregations and the community at large, such addresses, sermons, tracts or other printed compositions on this subject, as may have a tendency to produce a suitable impression against the use of ardent spirits, and to recommend sobriety and temperance.

4th. That it be recommended to the officers and members of our church, to take such measures as may be judged proper and effectual, for reducing the number of taverns and other places of vending liquors by small measure, in all those parts of our country, in which either the excessive number, or the improper character of such places, renders them a public nuisance.

It is believed, that the evils arising from these sources are incalculably great, and that, by prudent management, they admit, under Providence, of very considerable diminution.

Sect. 11. *Cases in which the testimony of a man and his wife may be taken in matters that concern them.*

The Assembly went into the consideration of the case reported by the Presbytery of Ohio, which

Digitized by Google

was in the following terms: "A certain married woman charges an unmarried man with immodest conversation and conduct in attempts upon her chastity, of which her husband and another, or indifferent, person were at a certain time witnesses—Whereas our constitution declares that a person accused shall not be convicted by a single witness, can the said woman and her husband be admitted witnesses in the above case?" To the above question the Assembly answered, that, in all such cases as that submitted by the Presbytery of Ohio, it is a principle that both the husband and wife are to be admitted to give testimony. But in every particular case as it occurs, the judicature before whom it is tried, ought, in order to guard against collusion, to pay a very scrupulous regard to all the circumstances attending it, and especially to the characters of those who are admitted as evidences, so that on the one hand the necessity of the case may be consulted, and on the other that no injury may result to an innocent person.—1797. Vol. I. p. 149, 150.

Sect. 12. *Testimony taken before a Session sufficient in references.*

The following question, "Whether testimony taken before a session, and sent up to the Presbytery, under the signature of the Moderator and Clerk, will not be sufficient in references, as well as appeals, to render the case thus referred, both orderly and cognizable by the Presbytery," was answered in the affirmative.—1797. Vol. I. p. 149.

Digitized by Google

Sect. 13. *Rule relating to certificates.*

That no judicatory or private member shall certify any person's character as good, for a space of time, without mentioning whether he has been under process of scandal, during that time, and the issue of it.—Vol. I. p. 41.

See the Rules relative to Reports, and the Form for a Report from a Church to the Presbytery, in Part III. Chap. III. Sect. 2.

See Part XIII. Chap. I. for advice in regard to slavery.

See Part XIII. Chap. I. for what relates to Psalmody.

Digitized by Google

PART V.

OF THE

CONFESSION OF FAITH

AND

FORM OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT.

CHAPTER I.

OF THE ACTS OF THE LATE SYNOD OF NEW YORK AND PHILADELPHIA.

Sect. 1. *Three Articles selected from the plan of union adopted by the Synod of New York and Philadelphia, in* 1758.

THE Synod of Philadelphia and the Synod of New York appointed each, in 1757, a commission, for the purpose of forming a plan of union. May 22, 1758, the two Commissions met in Philadelphia, and agreed on a plan; which was immediately communicated to the two Synods then in session. The two Synods, having in their separate capacity

Digitized by Google

approved the plan, convened together, under the name of the Synod of New York and Philadelphia, and having read the plan *unanimously* approved of it.

There were present 177 members.—Page 1.

I. Both Synods, having always approved and received the Westminster Confession of Faith, larger and shorter Catechisms, as an orthodox and excellent system of Christian doctrine, founded on the word of God; we do still receive the same, as *the Confession of our Faith*, and also the Plan Worship, Government, and Discipline, contained in the Wesminster Directory; strictly enjoining it on all our members and probationers for the ministry, that they preach and teach according to the *Form of sound words in said Confession and Catechisms, and avoid and oppose all errors contrary thereto.* —Page 3.

II. That when any matter is determined by a major vote, every member shall either actively concur with, or passively submit to, such determination; or, if his conscience permit him to do neither, he shall be at sufficient liberty modestly to reason and remonstrate, and peaceably withdraw from our communion, without attempting to make any schism; provided always, that this shall be understood to extend only to such determinations, as the body shall judge indispensable in doctrine or Presbyterian Government.—Page 3.

VI. That no Presbytery shall licence, or ordain to the work of the ministry, any candidate, until he give them competent satisfaction as to his learning,

Digitized by Google

and experimental acquaintance with religion, and skill in divinity and cases of conscience, and declare his acceptance of the Westminster Confession of Faith, and Catechisms, as *the Confession of his Faith,* and promise subjection to the Presbyterian Plan of Government in the Westminster Directory.—Page 4.

Sect. 2. *The following Extracts form a part of the minutes of a convention composed of committees from the Synod of New York and Philadelphia, of the Reformed Dutch Synod, and of the Associate Reformed Synod.**

ARTICLE I.

786. The Synod of New York and Philadelphia adopt, according to the *known and established meaning of the terms,* the Westminster Confession of Faith *as the Confession of their Faith*; save that every candidate for the gospel ministry is permitted to except against so much of the twenty third chapter as gives authority to the civil magistrate in matters of religion.

The Presbyterian church in America considers the Church of Christ as a spiritual society, entirely distinct from the civil government; and having a right to regulate their own ecclesiastical policy independently of the interposition of the magistrate. —Page. 399.

* Drs. John Witherspoon, John Rodgers, Alexander M'Whorter, Samuel Smith, the Rev. Messrs. Nathan Ker and John Woodhull, were the committee from the Synod of New York and Philadelphia.

Digitized by Google

To the 2nd inquiry, whether the corresponding Synods, in order to lay the foundation of entire confidence in each other, were willing to give solemn and mutual assurances of their vigilance and fidelity in requiring of their ecclesiastical offices, an explicit and unequivocal assent to their present formulas or standards of discipline and faith; and will take such measures as to them respectively shall seem most reasonable and effectual to secure the same fidelity and orthodoxy in all time to come: The answer was *unanimously* given in the affirmative. —Page 400 of the Synod Book.

Sect. 3. *Measures preparatory to the adoption of the Constitution of our Church.*

1785. On motion, Ordered, That Dr. Witherspoon, Dr. Rodgers, Mr. Robert Smith, Dr. Allison, Dr. Smith, Mr. Woodhull, Mr. Cooper, Mr. Latta, and Mr. Duffield, with the Moderator, be a committee to take into consideration, the Constitution of the Church of Scotland, and other Protestant Churches: and agreeably to the general principles of Presbyterian Government, compile a system of general rules for the government of the Synod, and the several Presbyteries under their inspection, and the people in their communion; and to make a report of their proceeding herein at the next meeting of Synod.—Page 388.

1786. On motion *Resolved*, That the book of discipline and government be recommitted to a committee to meet in the city of Philadelphia, on the 2d Tuesday of September next, who shall

Digitized by Google

have powers to digest such a system as they shall think to be accommodated to the state of the Presbyterian Church in America; that they shall procure 300 copies to be printed and distributed to the several Presbyteries in proportion to the number of their members, under the engagement of this Synod to have the expense of printing and distribution reimbursed to the committee, at their next meeting: and every Presbytery is hereby required to report in writing to the Synod, at their next meeting, their observations on the said book of government and discipline.

The committee appointed to attend to the above business, were Drs. Witherspoon, M'Whorter, Rogers, Sproat, Duffield, Allison, and Ewing, Mr. Matthew Wilson, Dr. Smith, with Isaac Snowden, Esq. Mr. Robert Taggart, and Mr. John Pinkerton, Elders.—Page 409.

1787. The committee appointed to prepare a draught of a Plan of Government and Discipline reported, that they had, agreeably to order, prepared a draught, and distributed copies to the respective Presbyteries.

Ordered, That the several Presbyteries bring in their observations on the said draught in the afternoon.—Page 422.

The Synod, having gone through the consideration of the draught of a Plan of Government and Discipline, Dr. Rodgers, Dr. M'Whorter, Mr. Miller, and Mr. Wilson, Jr. were appointed a committee to have a thousand copies thereof printed as now amended, and to distribute them among the

Digitized by Google

Presbyteries for their consideration, and the consideration of the churches under their care.

The Synod took into consideration the last paragraph of the twentieth Chapter of the Westminster Confession of Faith, the third paragraph of the twenty-third Chapter, and the first paragraph of the thirty-first chapter; and having made some alterations, agreed that the said paragraphs, as now altered, be printed for consideration, together with the draught of a Plan of Government and Discipline. The Synod also appointed the above named committee to revise the Westminster Directory for Public Worship; and to have it, when thus revised, printed, together with the draught, for consideration. And the Synod agreed, that when the above proposed alterations in the Confession of Faith, shall have been finally determined on by the Body, and the directory shall have been revised as above directed, and adopted by the Synod; the said Confession thus altered, and Directory thus revised and adopted, shall be styled, THE CONFESSION OF FAITH, AND DIRECTORY FOR PUBLIC WORSHIP, OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.—Page 434.

Sect. 4. *The Constitution of our Church adopted.*

The Synod, having fully considered the draught
1788. of the Form of Government and Discipline, did, on a review of the whole, and hereby do, ratify and adopt the same, as now altered, and amended, as the CONSTITUTION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA; and order the same

Digitized by Google

to be considered and strictly observed, as the Rule of their Proceedings, by all the inferior Judicatories belonging to the Body.—And they order that a correct copy be printed; and that the Westminster Confession of Faith, as now altered, be printed, in full, along with it; as making a part of the CONSTITUTION.

Resolved, That the true intent and meaning of the above ratification by the Synod is, that the Form of Government and Discipline, and the Confession of Faith, as now ratified, is to continue to be our Constitution, and the *Confession of our Faith and Practice* unalterably, unless *two-thirds* of the Presbyteries under the care of the General Assembly shall propose alterations, or amendments, and such alterations, or amendments, shall be agreed to and enacted by the General Assembly.

Ordered, to proceed in considering the draught of the Directory, and made considerable progress.

Dr. Witherspoon, Dr. Smith, and the Moderator, were appointed a committee, to revise the Chapter of the draught of the Directory, respecting the mode of inflicting Church censures; and to lay it, as by them revised, before the General Assembly, at their first meeting; to be by them considered, and finally enacted.—Page 450, 451.

The Synod, having now revised and corrected the draught of a Directory for worship, did approve and ratify the same, and do hereby appoint the said Directory, as now amended, to be the Directory for the worship of God, in the Presbyterian Church, in the United States of America. They

Digitized by Google

also took into consideration the Westminster larger and shorter Catechisms; and having made a small amendment of the larger, did approve, and do hereby approve and ratify, the said Catechisms, as now agreed on, as the Catechisms of the Presbyterian Church, in the said United States. And the Synod order that the said Directory and Catechisms be printed, and bound up in the same volume with the Confession of Faith, and the Form of Government and Discipline; and that the whole be considered as the standard of our Doctrine, Government, Discipline, and Worship, agreeably to the resolutions of the Synod, at their present sessions.

Ordered, That Dr. Duffield, Mr. Armstrong, and Mr. Green, be a committee to superintend the printing and publishing of the above said Confession of Faith and Catechisms, with the Form of Government and Discipline, and the Directory for the worship of God, as now adopted and ratified by the Synod, as THE CONSTITUTION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA; and that they divide the several parts into chapters and sections, properly numbered.—Page 451, 452.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER II.

OF THE ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

Sect. 1. *Scripture proofs in support of the Confession of Faith, &c. selected in* 1794.

THE committee appointed to prepare the scripture-proofs in support of the doctrines of the confession of faith, cateshisms, &c. of the Presbyterian church, submitted their report; which was in part read, examined and approved as a specimen of the work. Whereupon, Dr. Green, and Messrs. John B. Smith, James Boyd, William M. Tennant, Nathaniel Irvin and Andrew Hunter, were appointed a committee, to compare the proofs prepared and now reported by said committee to the General Assembly, with the proofs annexed to the Westminster Confession of Faith, Catechisms and Directory; to revise the whole, prepare it for the press, to agree with a printer for its publication, and to superintend the printing and vending of the same. And the said committee were further instructed to secure the copy-right of said book, according to a law of the United States in such case provided.

Digitized by Google

Sect. 2. Resolutions in regard to the scripture proofs, and notes, by the Assembly, in 1816.

The committee to which was referred an inquiry proposed to the Assembly by the Presbytery of Philadelphia, relative to the notes found in the book containing the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, reported; and their report being amended, was adopted, and is as follows: *viz.*

That the book referred to was first published with nothing but the simple text, without any Scripture proofs, or any notes of any description whatsoever. This is evident, not only from the minutes of the General Assembly, but from the numerous copies of this first edition of the standards of our church, which are now in existence. It is also equally evident from examining the records of the General Assembly, that not a single note in the book has been added to, or made a part of, the Constitution of the Church since it was first formed and published, in the manner above recited. Several alterations and additions have been made, by referring them when contemplated to the Presbyteries for their decision thereon, in the manner pointed out in the Constitution itself. But among all the points thus referred, there is not found a single note which now appears in the book containing the constitution of our church. Hence it follows beyond a doubt, that these notes are no part of the constitution. If then it be inquired, how these notes obtained the place which they now occupy, and what is the character as to authority which they possess? the answer is this—When a second addition of the standards of our church

Digitized by Google

was needed, it was thought by the General Assembly, that it would be of great use in itself, highly agreeable to the members of our church generally, as well as conformable to the example of the church of Scotland, from which we derived our origin, if the Scripture proofs were added, in support of the several parts and clauses of the confession of faith, catechisms and form of government. A committee was accordingly appointed by the Assembly, to select the scripture proofs, and to prepare them for being printed with the second edition of the book. The work of this committee was the following year referred to another; and ultimately the committee charged with preparing the scripture proofs reported along with these proofs, the notes which now appear in the book, and which were approved by the General Assembly, and directed to be printed with the proofs in the form in which they now appear. These notes then are explanations of some of the principles of the Presbyterian Church, given by the General Assembly, and which of course the General Assembly may modify, or altogether exclude at their pleasure; whereas the articles of the Constitution must govern the Assembly themselves, and cannot be altered or abrogated, but in the manner pointed out in the Constitution itself.

On the whole, in the book containing the Standards of our Church, the text alone contains the Constitution of our Church; the notes are an exposition of principles given by the highest judicature of that church, of the same force while they continue with the other acts of that judicature, but subject to alterations, amendments, or a total erasure, as they shall judge proper.

Digitized by Google

Resolved, That as it belongs to the General Assembly to give direction in regard to the notes which accompany the constitution of which they are the supreme judicatory, this Assembly express it as their opinion, that, in printing future editions of the Confession of this Church, the parenthesis in the note, on this part of the form of government which defines a Synod, and which is expressed in these words, "since a Synod is only a larger Presbytery," be omitted; as well as the note connected with the scripture proofs in answer to the question in the larger catechism, What is forbidden in the eighth commandment? in which the nature of the crime of manstealing and slavery is dilated upon.

In regard to this last omission, the Assembly think proper to declare, that in directing it they are influenced by far other motives, than any desire to favour slavery, or to retard the extinction of that mournful evil, as speedily as may consist with the happiness of all concerned.

Resolved, That the foregoing resolution, with the report of the committee, sanctioned by the Assembly, on the same subject, be printed, and connected with the last edition of the confession of faith, catechisms, form of government, &c. of this Church.—Vol. III. p. 289.

Sect. 3. Time for studying Divinity not to be extended.

The Assembly called for the reports of the Presbyteries relative to a point on which their opinion was required by the last Assembly, *viz.* "Whether

Digitized by Google

it would be proper to extend the time necessary for young men to apply to the study of divinity before they be taken on trials to three years at least; When it appeared that a considerable majority of the Presbyteries had given it as their opinion, that the time of study ought not to be extended.—1793. Vol. I. p. 71.

Sect. 4. *The creed of the Rev.* H—— B——, *condemned in* 1798.

The consideration of the references on Mr. B's. creed, &c. was resumed. Ordered that Dr. M'Whorter, Dr. Green, Mr. Armstrong, together with the Moderator (Dr. John B. Smith) be a committee to form a minute on the subject of the references before the General Assembly, and report next Monday morning.

The consideration of the references relative to Mr. B., was resumed; and after some amendments made on the draught brought in by the committee, it was adopted, and is as follows: *viz.* The committee appointed to take into consideration, certain references and inquiries from the Synod of the Carolinas, relative to the publication and import of a creed, the preaching of false doctrine, and the use of indecent language by the Rev. H. B. beg leave to report,—That, having carefully examined and seriously considered the subjects submitted to them, they remark upon the first article of the creed aforesaid: That Mr. B. is erroneous in making *disinterested benevolence* the only definition of holiness or true religion; because this may perplex the minds of those not accustomed to abstract specu-

Digitized by Google

lations, is questionable in itself, and may convey the idea, that an absolute God, or a God out of Christ, is the object of the highest affection to the renewed mind.

Upon the 2nd article, they remark,—That Mr. B—— has confounded self-love with *selfishness*, in an abstract speculation calculated to puzzle plain christians and lead to unprofitable disputes—Upon the 3d article they remark,—That the transferring of personal sin or righteousness has never been held by Calvinistic divines, nor by any person in our church as far as is known to us; and therefore that Mr. B's. observations on the subject, appears to be either nugatory or calculated to mislead. But, with regard to his doctrine of original sin, it is to be observed, that he is erroneous in representing personal corruption as not derived from Adam; making Adam's sin to be imputed to his posterity in consequence of a corrupt nature *already possessed*, and derived from, we know not what; thus in effect setting aside the idea of Adam's being the federal head, or representative of his descendants, and the whole doctrine of the covenant of works.

It is also manifest, that Mr. B—— is greatly erroneous in asserting, that the formal cause of a believer's justification is the imputation of the *fruits and effects* of Christ's righteousness, and not that *righteousness itself;* because righteousness, and that alone, is the formal demand of the law; and consequently the sinner's violation of the divine law, can be pardoned only in virtue of the Redeemer's perfect righteousness being imputed to him and reckoned as his. It is also not true that

Digitized by Google

the *benefits* of Christ's righteousness are, with strict propriety, said to be *imputed* at all, as these benefits *flow to*, and are *possessed by*, the believer, as a *consequence* of his justification, and having an interest in the infinite merits of the Saviour.

On article 4th no remark is necessary.

With regard to the 5th article it is to be remarked, that Mr. B. appears to confound sentiment with the mere perception of truth, whereas it always partakes of the disposition of the heart, and consequently involves in it, either sin or holiness. The article as stated by him, contradicts the principle laid down in the introduction to our form of Government, and levels the important distinction between truth and falsehood, so as to be liable to the construction, that it is no matter what a man believes. And though Mr. B—— may not, and probably did not, intend, to insinuate any thing disrespectful to the holy scriptures, where he asserts that, "There are wrong sentiments in the Bible; yet as his expression is liable to such a construction, we judge it highly censurable.

With regard to the 6th and 7th articles, no remark seems to be necessary, except that the offence given by the reflection cast on his brethren, the Presbyterians, in the 7th, has been sufficiently removed by his candid acknowledgment before the Synod and General Assembly.

The 8th 9th and 10th articles require no remark, except that they appear to be unimportant.

With regard to the 12th article, it is remarked, that his observation upon love as exercised by the human race, so far as it may be applicable to a

Digitized by Google

state of infancy, is unintelligible; and that, though a distinction may be made between regeneration and conversion, yet the terms in which the article is expressed are exceptionable, as they seem to discourage the use of the means of grace.

With regard to the 13th article, it is remarked, that in making repentance and faith to proceed wholly from love or charity, Mr. B. has expressed an opinion unnecessary and improper.

In regard to the subject of false doctrine, in discoursing from Psalm LI. 5th verse, and Isaiah chap. XLVIII, verse 8th, nothing seems necessary to be added to the remarks made on the subject of original sin, as contained in Mr. B's. creed; except that he charges Calvinistic divines with holding sentiments relative to infants which they do not hold; and that he makes positive declarations in regard to the state of infants, when it has pleased a Wise and Holy GOD to be silent on this subject, in the revelation of his will.

In regard to the subject of indecent language alleged to have been used in the pulpit by Mr. B., it is remarked, that, if he was misunderstood by the witnesses, he has notwithstanding declared such a deep and suitable abhorrence of all such language in public discourse, as renders it unnecessary to take any further notice of it.

On the whole, your committee recommend that Mr. B. be required to acknowledge before the Assembly, that he was wrong in the publication of his creed; that in the particulars specified above, he renounce the errors therein pointed out; that he engage to teach nothing hereafter of a similar nature; that the Moderator admonish him of the di-

Digitized by Google

visions, disorder, trouble and inconvenience which he has occasioned to the church, and its judicatories, by his imprudent and unwarrantable conduct; and warn him against doing any thing in time to come, that may tend to produce such serious and lamentable evils: That if Mr. B. submit to this, he be considered as in good standing with the church; and that the reference and queries of the Synod of the Carolinas be considered as fully answered by the adoption of these measures.

From this decision, Mr. Langdon* and Mr. Williams dissented. This desision was read to Mr. B.; and he having requested time for further consideration, the indulgence was granted.

Mr. B. appeared before the General Assembly, and made the following declaration: *viz.*

I do fully acknowledge that I was wrong in publishing my creed. I do solemnly declare, however, as in the presence of my final Judge, that I never did entertain the ideas, nor intend to teach the doctrines, which are pointed out as errors in the statement of the Assembly: but as I cannot so well judge as the Assembly what ideas my language actually conveys, and the Assembly declare that my language has conveyed these ideas and doctrines to their minds, I do cheerfully and fully renounce them as wrong and improper; and I do solemnly and sincerely engage, in a reliance on divine grace, never hereafter to preach what the As-

* Mr. Langdon was a Delegate from the General Association of Connecticut.

Digitized by Google

sembly have stated as erroneous; and I do finally and cheerfully submit myself to the admonition which the Assembly may see meet to give for my irregularities, which I acknowledge to deserve censure, and for which I am sincerely sorry"—Whereupon the Moderator gave to Mr. B. the solemn admonition agreed to; and then the Assembly declared themselves fully satisfied in the case of Mr. B.; and that he is, and ought to be considered as, in good standing with the church: and the whole transaction was concluded with prayer. —Vol. I. p. 175, 176.

Sect. 5. *Part of an Address to the Ministers and other members of the Churches belonging to the Presbytery of Abingdon.* 1798.

But whilst we thus express our confidence that the competent judicatory will discharge their duty faithfully, we think it our duty to say something with regard to ourselves. We take the present occasion of declaring our uniform adherence to the doctrines contained in our Confession of Faith, in their *present plain and intelligible form;* and our fixed determination to maintain them *against all innovations.* We earnestly wish that nothing subversive of these doctrines may be suffered to exist, or to be circulated amongst the churches; we hope, that even new explanations of our known principles, by unusual and offensive phrases, will be cautiously guarded against, lest the feelings of Christians should be wounded; the cause of religion injured; and the enemy take occasion to triumph and blaspheme. We are also extremely anxious that the peace of the church, as well as its purity

Digitized by Google

of doctrine, may be preserved inviolate; and that every thing calculated to inflame the passions, to invert the order of the church, or to interrupt and disturb its union may be cautiously avoided.

Sect. 6. *The utility of Creeds.**

Consider, dear brethren, the pernicious tendency of their present disorganizing plan. Under the specious pretence of honoring the sacred scriptures, they would persuade you to reject all written or printed creeds and forms of discipline, alleging that those who adopt such, substitute them for divine inspiration.

But, dear brethren, we presume you need scarcely be informed of the absurdity of such insinuations—You know that *we*; you know that *you yourselves* consider them differently. Confessions or creeds are only the doctrines which we believe to be revealed to us from heaven, collected from different parts of sacred scripture, and brought into one view.—Must not all who read their bibles and believe them, form some opinion of what is taught therein? And where can be the criminality, when they have thus searched and collected, to publish what they believe to be the truths of God?—In so doing, we act in open day, as children of the light, and do not leave the world to conjecture, whether we be Pelagians, Semi-Pelagians, Catholics, Arminians, or Calvinists; or whether we differ essen-

* The following remarks, selected from an address of the Synod of Kentucky to the Churches under their care, are found on the minutes of the Assembly of 1805. The address made a part of the report of a committee of the Assembly.

Digitized by Google

tially from them all. We do not leave those with whom we would unite in the most tender and endearing bonds, at a loss to know whether we believe, or disbelieve, what they esteem the essential doctrines of christianity—Reject all *written creeds!* and why not with the same propriety all *verbal ones?* What must then follow? Those who believe our blessed Saviour to be no more than a mere man, and those who believe in his divine nature; those who believe that God will manifest an eternal displeasure against sin, and those who believe he will finally receive all wicked men and devils into his favor—In short, those who believe the truth, and those whose creed exhibits the most glaring errors and contradictions, all unite together, enjoy the same privileges, and surround the same board of communion—Can light and darkness have fellowship together? Or can there be concord between Christ and Belial?—Is there no necessity for a people, about to put themselves under the pastoral care of a shepherd, to know what kind of doctrines they are to be taught; or is it perfectly indifferent which of the above contradictory systems they receive?

It cannot be reasonably denied, that it is disorderly for any person to preach the word, or administer the ordinances of the gospel, who is not clothed with ministerial authority.—Compare 2 Chron. XXVI. 18. with Heb. V. 4.

The above report having been considered, the Assembly,

Resolved, That they highly approve the firm and temperate measures taken by the Synod of Kentucky and the committee of the Assembly that met

Digitized by Google

with them; and are of opinion, that the committee, besides the pecuniary indemnity assigned them, are entitled to the thanks of the Assembly for the diligence, prudence, zeal and fidelity, with which they appear to have executed their commission. —1805. Vol. II. p. 91, 94, 98.

Sect. 7. A Letter to the Synod of Kentucky, in 1807.

Dear Brethren,

The record of your proceedings in regard to the dissolution of the Presbytery of Cumberland, and other measures connected with that act, have attracted the marked attention of this Assembly, and been the subject of much discussion. The Assembly have truly sympathized with your Synod, in reviewing the very interesting circumstances in which you have been placed, and the embarrassing concerns which you have been called to manage. While the Assembly have found it their duty, on the one hand, to approve of many of your proceedings on the very irregular and censurable conduct of that Presbytery, and even to commend the zeal and decision with which you have acted; they are constrained, on the other, to suggest that your proceedings in demanding that the young men irregularly licensed and ordained, be given up to your Body for examination; in suspending the irregularly ordained ministers without process in their case; and in suspending Messrs. Hodge and Rankin, for not submitting to the re-examination of the young men, are at least of questionable regularity. They therefore advise that you seriously review

Digitized by Google

these proceedings, and consider whether some of them ought not to be rescinded, and steps speedily taken to mitigate the sufferings which your censure appears to have produced, and to remove at least a part of the complaints which it has excited. *In doing this we cannot be supposed to recommend that any demands of our constitutional standards of doctrine, discipline, and government should be violated or disregarded.* These demands are equally binding on us and you; and the recognition of their justice and obligation ought to be considered *as indispensable* in all who are to exercise the holy ministry in connection with our church. But there is, and ever must be, supposed in those who are vested with power, the right and the duty of exercising a sound discretion, which will consult the spirit, as well as the letter, of the law; which will sometimes forbid the exercise of power which is possessed; which will endeavour with equal caution to avoid the extremes of rigour and of laxness; which will yield something, yet not concede every thing, to circumstances; which, in a word, will recollect that power is given for edification, and not for destruction, and endeavour to be guided by this rule. We hope, brethren, that in the exercise of this discretion, you may be able to re-establish the Presbytery of Cumberland, and to restore to christian communion, and ministerial usefulness, some of its former members and licentiates, without sacrificing either the doctrines, or the government of our church. Of this you must judge; and we pray, that the great Head of the church may enable you so to judge and act, as that the true and lasting interests of the church, may really be promoted by your measures.

Digitized by Google

Sect. 8. *A Letter to Messrs. M'Adow, &c. in* 1807.

Brethren,

The Assembly have received your address, in which you inform them, that the Synod of Kentucky have suspended you from your ministerial office, and in which you request this Assembly to interpose in your case without delay. The Assembly are grieved at finding, that any unhappy differences exist in that part of the church of Christ, in which you reside. The conduct of the Presbytery of Cumberland, in licensing and ordaining a number of persons not possessing the qualifications required by our book of discipline, and *without explicit adoption of the Confession of Faith,* appears to have been the origin of the evils of which you now complain. The Assembly are constrained to express their decided disapprobation of this conduct, as being *highly irregular and unconstitutional;* leading to the most dangerous consequences, in introducing into our church as teachers, illiterate men, and men of any religious principles, however erroneous. But inasmuch as you have not regularly appealed to this Assembly, they do not consider themselves as called on judicially to decide on your case. The Assembly have advised the Synod of Kentucky to review their proceedings with regard to you, and to their decision we refer you.

We exhort you, brethren, to return to a *strict and steady adherence to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church,* and that you sincerely endea-

Digitized by Google

your to promote the peace and best interest of the Redeemer's kingdom.

Sect. 9. *The Synod's conduct approved by the Assembly, in* 1809.

The Assembly took into consideration a letter from the Synod of Kentucky; and, having carefully reviewed the same, and having also read another letter from their records, which by accident was detained from the last Assembly, were of opinion, That the Synod have, in these letters, exercised their unquestionable right of explaining their proceedings; which they have done, in a respectful and able manner, and to the full satisfaction of this Assembly: and the Assembly think it due to that Synod to say, that they deserve the thanks of the church for the firmness and zeal, with which they have acted, in the trying circumstances in which they have been placed.

Sect. 10. *Extract from a Letter to the Rev. J. W. Stephenson, recommending a faithful adherence to the Standards of our Church, in* 1811.

Adhere sacredly to our adopted standards, whilst you extend the hand of fellowship to others who, you have reason to hope, love our Lord Jesus Christ. In this way alone, do we conceive, peace can be cultivated, and union, in the end, established between differing christians. To relinquish principles for the sake of peace, is too dear a sacrifice. And every overture made to us from any quarter, to produce a union at such an expense, we

Digitized by Google

unhesitatingly reject. The men of whom you speak, went out from us, because they were not of us. The objection they make to our confession of faith, as if it taught the doctrine of fatality, we fear is not so much the result of a defect of understanding, as of a disposition to misrepresent. For who could dream that the doctrine of fatality was taught in an instrument, in which it is declared expressly, that the liberty of second causes is not impaired? We do not object to your appointment of a committee to confer with these men. But we wish you to be careful not to yield any principle either in doctrine or in government. You will readily perceive the propriety of the advice, when you recollect that our standards constitute our bond of union. Neither individuals nor judicatories can alter them; for the whole church is interested. If you modify any part of our standards, to suit these men, you are bound by the precedent, to modify another part for another set of men, if they should make objections. Take your stand, therefore, on the ground of the confession of faith, and the book of discipline. Keep that ground. If these men wish to join our church, they know the terms. Their wish to alter these terms is not very modest; for it is requesting the majority to yield to the minority. As we force no one to adopt our standards, there is no oppression exercised over any by our adherence to our own principles. The contrary practice, in fact, is the intolerance of a few over the many, and must produce ruinous effects. The history of your part of our church is a warning. Whilst we thus exhort you to receive none upon *any modification* of our standards, we recommend to you a conciliatory,

Digitized by Google

mild, and forbearing conduct to those who are out of our communion.—Vol. III. p. 7.

Sect. 11. *Extract from the Narrative on the state of Religion recommending the same duty, in* 1811.

There appears an increasing attention in most places to the doctrines of the gospel. People begin to be generally convinced, that it is important for them to have correct principles, in order that they may lead correct lives. Especially do they who profess the hope of gospel, pay more of that attention to doctrines which sound philosophy and the scriptures demand. And the doctrines which they esteem and cherish, are those which our fathers in the old world embraced; in the faith of which they died, and which are contained in *our standards.* They are denominated, appropriately, the doctrines of grace, and constitute both our glory and defence. By them God is honoured, and sinners are saved. They have ever been opposed, and they ever will be opposed, by those who know not the truth, or who hold it in unrighteousness. But God has ever put the seal of his approbation on them, making them effectual to the conversion of sinners. Vol. III. p. 26.

Sect. 12. *The same duty again recommended in the Pastoral Letter of* 1817.

Finally, dear brethren, be UNITED AMONG YOURSELVES. If you desire to profit by your spiritual privileges; if you hope to be instrumental in promoting the cause of Christ, or to be honoured

Digitized by Google

with this blessing; cherish harmony of affection, and union of effort.—Besides the common bonds of christian love, which unite the great family of believers; the ministers and members of the Presbyterian Church are cemented by a compact which every honest man cannot fail to appreciate. We mean the "Confession of Faith" of our church. While we believe the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the only infallible rule of faith and practice, we do also, if we deal faithfully with God and man, sincerely receive and adopt this Confession, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures. Let us adhere to this standard with fidelity; and endeavour to transmit to our children pure and undefiled, a treasure, which our fathers at great expense have, under God, bequeathed to us. But while we hold fast the *form of sound words* which we have received, let us guard against indulging a spirit of controversy, than which few things are more unfriendly to the life and power of godliness. It is never necessary to sacrifice charity, in order to maintain faith and hope. That differences of opinion, acknowledged on all hands, to be of the minor class, may and ought to be tolerated, among those who are agreed in great and leading views of Divine truth, is a principle on which the godly have so long and so generally acted, that it seems unnecessary, at the present day, to seek arguments for its support. Our Fathers, in early periods of the history of our church, had their peculiarities and diversities of opinion; which yet, however, did not prevent them from loving one another, from cordially acting together; and by their united prayers and exertions, transmitting to us a goodly inheri-

Digitized by Google

tance. Let us emulate their moderation and forbearnce, and we may hope to be favoured with more than their success.

The great adversary will, no doubt, be disposed to sow the seeds of discord and division among you. But resist him in this, as well as all his other insidious efforts. Surely those who can come together on the great principles of our public Standards, however they may differ on non-essential points, ought not to separate, or to indulge bitterness or prejudice against each other. Dear brethren, *let there be no divisions among you;—but be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment. Follow the things which make for peace, and the things whereby ye may edify one another. Behold how good, and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! Brethren, farewell, love one another; for love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. Be of one mind; live in peace, and the God of love and of peace shall be with you.* AMEN!

Sect. 13. *The "Gospel Plan" of the Rev. W. C. Davis condemned, in* 1810.

The overture from the Synod of the Carolinas, which had been laid on the table, referring to the Assembly an overture laid before that Synod, requesting their attention, to a late publication by the Rev. William C. Davis, denominated "The Gospel Plan," was read; and Messrs. Robert G. Wilson, Calhoon and Anderson, were appointed a committee to examine said book, and report to this Assembly the doctrines it contains, if any such they

Digitized by Google

find, that are contrary to the standards of the Presbyterian church.

The committee appointed to review the book lately published by Mr. Davis, reported, and the report was read; and each article separately was discussed, and being proposed, was voted upon by the Assembly.

This was followed by a resolution, which was laid on the table for future discussion and consideration.

The report of the committee, appointed to review Mr. Davis's book, entitled "The Gospel Plan," was again read; and, the vote being taken on the whole, it was adopted, and is as follows:

The resolution laid on the table in the morning was also adopted, and follows the report.

The committee, presuming that a complete and perfect enumeration of all the objectionable parts of said book is not expected, called the attention of the Assembly only to the following doctrines, supposed to be contrary to the Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian Church.

Doctrine 1st. That the active obedience of Christ constitutes no part of that righteousness by which a sinner is justified. See pages of said book 257, 261, and 264, 3d corollary.

Doct. 2d. That obedience to the moral law was not required as the condition of the covenant of works. See pages 178 and 180.

The aforesaid pages being read, it was on motion, *Resolved*, That this Assembly do consider

Digitized by Google

these doctrines as contrary to the Confession of Faith of our church.

Doct. 3. God himself is as firmly bound in duty (not obedience) to his creatures, as his creatures are bound in obedience or duty to him; see pages 164 and 166; also that God's will is not the standard of right and wrong. If God's will is the primary rule of his own actions, he would be,—1st. Entirely void of holiness;—2d. There could be no justice in God;—3d. It would be impossible for God to be unchangeable;—4th. If the will of God is the standard of right and wrong, then it would be no infringement on the divine character to be unfaithful to his word and promise. See pages 168—171. These pages were read.

Resolved, That, without deciding on the question whether these sentiments are contrary to our Confession of Faith, the Assembly consider the mode in which they are expressed as unhappy and calculated to mislead the reader.

Doct. 4. God could not make Adam, or any other creature either holy or unholy. See page 194, compared with 166.

Doct. 5. Regeneration must be a consequence of faith. Faith precedes regeneration. See page 352.

Doct. 6. That faith, in the first act of it, is not an holy act. See page 358, &c.

The pages above referred to being read, it was on motion, *Resolved*, That the Assembly do consider the three last mentioned doctrines contrary to the Confession of Faith of our church.

Digitized by Google

Doct. 7. That christians may sin wilfully and habitually. See pages 532 and 534. These pages were read.

Resolved, That the Assembly consider the expressions, in the pages referred to, as very unguarded; and so far as they intimate it to be the author's opinion, that a person may live in a habitual and allowed sin, and yet be a christian, the Assembly considers them contrary to the letter and spirit of the Confession of Faith of our church, and, in their tendency highly dangerous.

Doct. 8. If God has to plant all the principal parts of salvation in a sinner's heart, to enable him to believe, the gospel plan is quite out of his reach, and consequently does not suit his case; and it must be impossible for God to condemn a man for unbelief; for no just law condemns or criminates any person for not doing what he cannot do. See page 413.

This page and several others, on the same subject, being read, *Resolved*, That the Assembly do consider this last mentioned doctrine contrary to the Confession of Faith of our church.

On the whole, *Resolved*, That this Assembly cannot but view with disapprobation various parts of the work entitled, "The Gospel Plan," of which William C. Davis is stated in the title page to be the author.

In several instances in this work, modes of expression are adopted, so different from those which are sanctioned by use, and by the best orthodox writers, that the Assembly consider them as calculated to produce useless or mischievous speculations.

Digitized by Google

In several other instances, there are doctrines asserted and advocated, as have been already decided, contrary to the Confession of Faith of our church, and the word of God; which doctrines the Assembly feel constrained to pronounce to be of very dangerous tendency: and the Assembly do judge, and hereby do declare, that the preaching or publishing them ought to subject the person or persons so doing to be dealt with by their respective Presbyteries, according to the discipline of the church relative to the propagation of errors. —Vol. II. p. 334, 335.

Sect. 14. *Extracts of a letter to the Rev. David Rice, in* 1804.

We do not say that a liberal education is absolutely essential to a man's usefulness in the ministry of the gospel; but reason and experience both demonstrate its high importance and utility. And where ignorant men are permitted to explain the holy scriptures, it ought to be subject to the direction and control of others, of greater knowledge. But this is an order which it has not been thought proper to adopt, in the Presbyterian church. And the superior comparative prosperity and usefulness of our church, and that of our eastern brethren, which is similarly constituted, is a demonstration, by no means equivocal, of the approbation and smiles of heaven upon us, in the exercise of our present form of government and discipline.—But, were our opinion on this subject different from what it is, we cannot lawfully and conscientiously depart from our present standards, till they be changed in an orderly manner, by the consent of a ma-

Digitized by Google

jority of the Presbyteries, which compose the body of the General Assembly.

You express your apprehensions lest, if certain illiterate and unqualified men should not be admitted to the ministry of the gospel among you, they may withdraw from the church, and become the promoters of dangerous schisms. We answer, the path of duty is a safe path. Do what is right, and commit the event to God. If they are men of such a spirit, it is only a new proof that they are most unfit for the office to which they aspire. Parties created by them, will neither be important, nor durable. But if the gates of the church are opened to weakness and ignorance; she will soon be overflowed with errors, and the wildest disorders. We shall bring the ministry into disgrace and contempt, which should be like the priesthood of Aaron, without blemish.—If men are sincerely desirous of promoting the glory of God, let them first bestow the necessary pains and time, to acquire the requisite qualifications, for feeding and leading the flock of Christ: let them be regularly initiated into the priesthood; and not hasten to offer unhallowed fire on God's altar. If they are sincerely desirous of doing good, let them do it in that sphere, in which they appear destined by Providence to move. In *this* every christian, the poorest and the humblest, has ample scope to exercise his pious and benevolent dispositions, and to exert his talents, whatever they may be.

Notwithstanding the preceding reflections, it is the opinion of this Assembly, that where the field of labor is too extensive for the ordinary and regular ministry, certain assistants, like the helps or catechists of the primitive church, may, under pro-

Digitized by Google

per restrictions and limitations, be usefully employed, in instructing the young in the principles of our holy religion, and conducting the praying and voluntary societies of private christians. Great caution, however, ought to be used in employing such an order of men; lest an indiscreet zeal should impel them to extravagancies which may prove dishonourable and injurious to religion; or lest, being lifted up with pride, they come at length to spurn the authority which has appointed them, create divisions in the church, and so *fall into the condemnation of the Devil.* In some parts of the church their utility might be very great, while in others they would prove not only useless but dangerous. It must be left solely to the regular and established judicatories of the church, according to the circumstances which may exist within their respective limits, to judge upon this subject. But, wherever it may be thought expedient to resort to such helps, we give it as our advice that none be employed but men of *prudent* and *sound* minds, as well as of sincere piety; men who are humble, and willing to submit to order, as well as zealous in the service of our Lord Jesus Christ. Let their duties be clearly pointed out to them, and circumscribed within precise limits. And under the direction of the Presbytery, let them, as frequently as possible, be visited, and their conduct inspected, to see how far they are both able and faithful in discharge of the trust committed to them. They are not to be considered as standing officers in the church; but may be appointed, or removed, at the discretion of the Presbytery. But, if any, upon full experience, are found to possess uncommon talents; are diligent to acquire the requisite qualifications for preaching

Digitized by Google

the gospel, and promise to be eminently useful in the church, they may, in time, *purchase to themselves a good degree*, and be admitted, according to the regular course, to the holy ministry.

Sect. 15. *The opinion of the Assembly in regard to immediate impulses and revelations from Heaven, expressed in a Pastoral Letter of* 1804.

We strongly bear our testimony against those persons who pretend to immediate impulses and revelations from heaven, those divine communications which were given only to the Prophets and Apostles, who were appointed by God to reveal to mankind the way of eternal life. When men presume that the holy spirit, contrary to the established order of providence, interferes, by particular impulse, to direct them in all the common affairs of life; when they deem themselves to be impelled by him, to particular acts, or particular religious exercises, contrary to the established order of the Gospel, and the obvious duties of the moment; when finally, they pretend to miraculous powers, or prophetic influences, and the foretelling of future events: all these are evidences of a wild enthusiastic spirit, and tend, eventually, to destroy the authority of the word of God, as the sole rule of faith and practice. Vol. II, p. 66.

Sect. 16. *Amendments to the Constitution.*

The Committee appointed by the last Assembly, "to consider the expediency of publishing a New Edition of the Confession of Faith, &c. of this

Digitized by Google

Church; to consider whether any, and if any, what alterations ought to be made, in the said Confession of Faith, &c. and to make preparatory arrangements on this subject," exhibited their report.

The Assembly....having gone through the same by paragraphs, and made several amendments, it was adopted, as follows:

After a very serious attention to the subject committed to them, your Committee have resolved to propose no alterations whatever, in the *Confession of Faith* and *Catechisms* of our church; and are clearly of the opinion, that none ought to be attempted.

The creed of every church, as it ought to be derived immediately and wholly from the word of God, must be considered as standing on ground, considerably different from that which supports the system of forms and regulations, by which worship shall be conducted, and government administered. And, if it be once rightly settled, can never be altered with propriety, by any change of time or external circumstances of the church.

Circumstances, indeed, may render it proper, in deducing a summary of faith from the scripture, to dwell more largely and particularly on some points, at one time, than would be necessary at another; and every attentive and diligent reader of our standards will probably remark, that the state of the church, when our Confession and Catechisms were formed, was, in fact, the cause that its pious and learned authors expressed their sentiments on certain topics, especially such as relate to the con-

Digitized by Google

troversies between protestants and papists, more largely than would now be necessary, if the whole were to be formed anew. But still, as those sentiments are, we conceive, just in themselves, and as the particular delineation of them can do no harm, and will sometimes prove a guide both to the Clergy and laity of our communion, we cannot wish to see any retrenchment made. It would give alarm to many of our people, who might suspect that this was but the introduction to innovations of more importance. And your committee will take the liberty to remark, that it is by no means to be considered as a vulgar or unfounded prejudice, when alarm is excited, by alterations and innovations in the creed of a church. There are many reasons of the most weighty kind, that will dispose every man of sound judgment and accurate observation, to regard a spirit of change in this particular, as an evil, pregnant with an host of mischiefs. It leads the infidel to say, and with apparent plausibility, that there can be no truth clearly revealed in scripture; because not only its friends, of various sects, but of the same sect, pretend to see truths in it at one time, which, at another, they discover and declare to be falsehood. It hurts the mind of weak believers, by suggesting to them the same thought—It destroys the confidence of the people generally, in those who maintain a system, which is liable to constant fluctuations. It violates settled and useful habits—It encourages those who are influenced by the vanity of attempting to improve what wise men have executed, or by the mere love of novelty, to give constant disturbance to the church by their crude proposals of amendment—And it is actually found to open the door to lasting uneasiness, con-

Digitized by Google

stant altercation, and, finally, to the adoption of errors, a thousand fold more dangerous and hurtful, than any that shall have been corrected—In a word, what was true when our Confession and Catechisms were formed, is true now—We believe that this truth has been most admirably and accurately drawn into view in these excellent performances. They have become venerable from their age.—Our church has flourished under their influence; and we can see no reason to alter them. If there are few things (and few they must be, and of less importance, if they exist at all) which it might be shown could be expressed more correctly, and in a manner less liable to objection, it is not proper, with a view to obtain this, to expose ourselves to the great inconveniences and injuries that have been specified.

Leaving, then, the *Confession of Faith and Catechisms* of our Church untouched; your committee took into consideration the Form of Government, Directory for Worship, and Forms of Process. These (as has already been hinted) were considered as standing on other ground than our creeds. The word of God, in regard to these, is much less specific and particular, than in articles of faith. Many things in this part of a church organization, are, and must be, left to christian prudence, and modified by the peculiar circumstances of religious societies, guided by the general lights which the scripture holds forth.—Here churches in one country may, and perhaps ought to, differ from those of another. We have already differed very considerably from the church of Scotland, from which we derived our origin. And as it is difficult, perhaps impossible, for any man, or body of men, to

Digitized by Google

anticipate all the circumstances or cases which may turn up in practice, under a general rule or law, which is framed to provide for them, experience will point out some errors and many deficiencies; and thus may suggest many real amendments; amendments too, not liable to the most material objections that have been stated in the former case. On this part of our ecclesiastical polity then, the work in some measure of *our own hands*, the committee have ventured to propose a considerable number of amendments; remarking, however, and begging that the remark may be particularly regarded, that the alterations proposed, are of such a nature, that if the whole of them should be adopted; they would not alter, but only explain, render more practicable, and bring nearer to perfection, the general system which has already gone into use.

The committee, having thus shortly detailed to the Assembly the principles by which they have been governed, (and which they wished to do for their own justification, as well as to fulfil so important a part of what they considered their duty,) have only to call the attention of the Assembly to the alterations proposed; leaving it to such members of the committee, as are also members of the Assembly, to explain the reasons, on which the proposed alterations have been offered.

Here followed the proposed amendments which were all adopted, by the Presbyteries. This fact having been ascertained from their reports, the Assembly passed the following resolution in 1805.

Resolved, That the trustees of the General Assembly be requested to take measures for publish-

Digitized by Google

ing a new edition of the Confession of Faith and Catechisms; the plan of government, discipline and directory for worship, of the Presbyterian church in these United States. And whereas all the amendments proposed by last Assembly, have been approved by a majority of the Presbyteries; and this approbation certified by them in writing to this Assembly;

Resolved, That the Trustees cause the said amendments to be incorporated into the Plan of Government and Discipline; secure the copy right, and draw warrants, from time to time, for the sums of money which may be necessary, for carrying on and finishing the work.—Vol. II. p. 123.—1805.

Sect. 17. *An alteration made in the ratio of representation from the Presbyteries, in* 1819.

The Presbyteries were called upon to report on the subject of the overture sent down by the last General Assembly, proposing an alteration in the Constitution, in the following words:

1. *Resolved*, That it be recommended to the Presbyteries to alter the ratio of representation by substituting in Chap. XI. Sect. 2, the word *nine* for the word *six*, and the word *eighteen* in place of the word *twelve*.

2. That the Presbyteries be required to send up to the next General Assembly their respective decisions on the question submitted to their consideration in the above Resolution.

Digitized by Google

Reports on this subject from the following Presbyteries were received in writing, declaring their concurrence in the proposed amendment: *viz.* Niagara, Ontario, Onondaga, Cayuga, Geneva, Bath, Columbia, Londonderry, Hudson, Newton, Long-Island, Jersey, New-Brunswick, Oneida, Philadelphia, Northumberland, Huntingdon, Erie, Lancaster, Portage, Grand River, Hartford, Ohio, Winchester, Hanover, Lexington, Washington, Orange, Concord, Transylvania, Harmony, Mississippi, Miami, Fayetteville, and Richland:—Whereupon the General Assembly did, and hereby do, declare that the above mentioned amendment of the constitution has been duly and constitutionally made.

Sect. 18. *Persons styling themselves,* THE CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERY.

The committee to which was referred the consideration of the manner in which certain persons should be treated, who formerly belonged to the late Cumberland Presbytery, and who since the dissolution of said Presbytery continue to style themselves the Cumberland Presbytery, reported; and their report being read, was adopted, and is as follows: *viz.*

That those persons were under the censure of the church at the time of their constituting as a Presbytery—that they had neglected to take the regular steps for the removal of that censure—that they erected themselves into a judicatory contrary to the rules of our discipline—that the grounds of their separation from us were, that we would not relax our discipline, and surrender some im-

Digitized by Google

portant doctrines of our Confession of Faith:—Wherefore,

Resolved, That the aforesaid persons be viewed as having derived no authority from us to exercise discipline, or administer the ordinances of the church, and that our regular members cannot treat with them as a body, but only as individuals.—1814.

Sect. 19. *What edition of the Confession of Faith to be purchased.*

Whereas, this Assembly have been informed, that one or more unauthorised editions, of the Confession of Faith and the form of government and discipline of this church, have been published within a short period,

Resolved, That the General Assembly cannot recognize as accurate, or recommend to the churches under their care, any edition of the said Confession of Faith, published since that which was printed by Robert Aitken, in the year 1797; under the direction of the General Assembly: and the Assembly would further declare to the churches in their communion, that no edition of the said Confession of Faith ought, in future, to be purchased or encouraged by them, except such as may be published by the authority of the Assembly.

Digitized by Google

PART VI.

OF THE FUNDS AND *THE TRUSTEES.*

CHAPTER 1.

OF THE MISSIONARY FUND.

Sect. 1. *Resolutions on the subject, in* 1791.

THE committee appointed to devise a method to raise a permanent fund for the support of Missionaries and for the other purposes of the General Assembly, made the following report: *viz.*

The committee of finance beg leave to report, that in the opinion of your committee the common expenses of the General Assembly, and of supporting its missionaries, ought to be made a common burden, and equalized as far as possible; that for this purpose a general and permanent arrangement ought to be made on this subject: they, therefore, submit the following resolutions: *viz.*

Digitized by Google

Resolved 1st. That it be enjoined on the several Presbyteries subordinate to this Assembly, that they take effectual measures to collect money annually from all the churches under their jurisdiction, and to forward the same yearly to the treasurer of the General Assembly, with the name and state of their churches settled and vacant, and the sum received from each.

2. That the several Synods use their endeavours to promote this collection; and that for this purpose they annually call the Presbyteries of which they are composed to account and inquire into their diligence herein. The Presbyteries shall do the like with respect to their members, as often as occasion may require.

3. That the monies so collected shall be placed in one fund, and appropriated to defraying the incidental expenses of the General Assembly and the expenses of the commissioners at a reasonable allowance to each, according to the distance from which he comes—provided, that the sum allowed to each commissioner shall not exceed one dollar for every forty miles in coming to and returning from the Assembly, and half a dollar per day for his expenses during the time, he shall attend his duty in the Assembly: and whereas, this Assembly has it much at heart to supply with the means of eternal life, the multitudes, who are ready to perish on the frontiers of the United States, and have already adopted temporary expedients for that purpose; and as the demand is likely to be permanent and should be supplied by permanent funds; therefore, *Resolved*,

4. That the Synod of Virginia and of the Carolinas, continue to prosecute the plans for this pur-

Digitized by Google

pose, which they have formed, or may form, under the direction and allowance of the General Assembly; and account annually for their conduct, and report their success in this business.

5. That the Presbyteries composing the Synods of New York and New Jersey, and that of Philadelphia, use their best endeavours to forward yearly to the general treasurer a collection from each of their churches settled and vacant, with an account of the sums received from each; and that those Synods be enjoined to see that the said Presbyteries do their duty in respect to this collection. The fund thence arising to be applied to the support of Missionaries to preach the gospel, organize churches, and administer ordinances on the frontier parts of the United States, and to no other purpose whatever, save that each fund shall be equally charged with the expense of the necessary printing done by order of the General Assembly.

6. This Assembly, presuming on the concurrence of its successors, do *resolve*, lastly, that there shall be printed annually, or as often as shall be thought expedient, a statement of the receipts and expenditures arising from said collections; in which shall be detailed all the churches settled and vacant, the sum, (if any) received from each, for what purpose received, and how applied. And that each Presbytery shall be furnished with at least as many copies as there are churches subordinate thereto, to be transmitted to the churches for their information and satisfaction. All which is submitted, &c.—Vol. I. p. 38–40.

Sect. 2. A Plan for managing the funds proposed by the Trustees, in 1800.

Digitized by Google

The Assembly resumed the consideration of the subjects contained in the communication of the corporation for managing their funds, and agreed that the following objects deserve consideration: *viz.*

1st. The gospelizing of the Indians on the frontiers of our country—connected with a plan for their civilization, the want of which, it is believed, has been a great cause of the failure of former attempts to spread Christianity among them. The ideas of the president of the corporation, delivered in his addres at their first meeting, would on this point deserve a serious attention.

2nd. The instruction of the negroes, the poor and those who are destitute of the means of grace in various parts of this extensive country: whoever contemplates the situation of this numerous class of persons in the United States, their gross ignorance of the plainest principles of religion, their immorality and profaneness, their vices and dissoluteness of manners, must be filled with anxiety for their present welfare, and above all for their future and eternal happiness.

3d. The purchasing and disposing of bibles; and also of books and short essays on the great principles of religion and morality, calculated to impress the minds of those to whom they are given with a sense of their duty both to God and man, and consequently of such a nature as to arrest the attention, interest the curiosity and touch the feelings of those to whom they are given.

4th. The provision of a fund for the more complete instruction of candidates for the gospel ministry previously to their licensure. The want of this having been a subject of general inconvenience, it would deserve consideration, whether it would not

Digitized by Google

be both easy and practicable to appoint a number of professors of theology, (perhaps one in each Synod,) to whom the candidates might resort as a matter of choice, though not of necessity; which professors might immediately be provided with a suitable library, (the property of the corporation,) and receive a small salary, to be augmented as their labours increase and the funds are extended. It would be a most desirable extension of this plan, if the funds could be rendered adequate to furnish partly or wholly the means of subsistence to the candidates for the ministry who may need such assistance, during the time of their attendance on the professors.

As to the means and methods by which the funds necessary to the compassing of these objects may be provided, the following ideas are suggested:

1st. The continuance of the annual contributions which are now ordered, and which, it may be fairly presumed, will be abundantly more productive than they now are, when it is known that the objects here specified are in the view of the Assembly. For it has been found by experience that there is among the people generally a great readiness and freedom to contribute, and that with liberality, to the promotion of every plan calculated to spread the gospel among those who are deprived of its blessings.

2nd. The appointment of two or more suitable persons to travel through the country to solicit and receive donations for the purposes that have been mentioned.—The expenses of such persons to be paid them, a small compensation to be allowed

Digitized by Google

them, and if ministers, the supplying of their pulpits during their absence to be provided for. The prospect of a very considerable augmentation of the funds, if this measure were adopted, appears flattering.

3d. The aid that may be reasonably expected, from persons of property, piety and benevolence contributing, by testamentary bequests, and unsolicited donations, (after the example of the president of the corporation,) to the promotion of such important and interesting objects as those which are here detailed.

4th. It is not impossible, nor perhaps improbable, that if experience should demonstrate the practicability and utility of the measures contemplated, the people of the Presbyterian denomination might generally be persuaded to make an annual donation (say 25 cents each) to render them more extensively effective; and this of itself would go very far towards providing a fund adequate to all the expenses contemplated.

In connexion with what has already been stated, the following ideas deserve attention.

1st. That not the least alteration is wished or contemplated in the plan already in operation for sending missionaries to the frontiers. This plan is both useful and popular. All that shall be attempted is to be considered as additional to it.

2nd. That in consistency with this, it may deserve serious consideration whether for the instruction of the Indians, the black people, and other persons unacquainted with the principles of our holy religion, an order of men under the character

Digitized by Google

of catechists might not be instituted, from among men of piety and good sense, but without a liberal education. Not that these men should be clothed with clerical functions, but that they confine themselves to the private instruction of those among whom they are sent, together with occasional addresses of a religious kind, made to collections of people that may assemble for this purpose, and leading the devotional exercises among them; and this with a view to prepare the way for a few regular and ordained ministers to follow after them to organize churches and administer ordinances.

The catechists shall be carefully examined by the Presbyteries to whose bounds they most naturally belong, in regard to their qualifications for the work to be assigned them; they shall have a certificate of such examination, and the recommendation of the Presbytery where it has been taken; they shall be directed by the Presbytery where they are to labor; and, without a compliance with these directions, they shall not be considered as authorized to act in the manner here contemplated.

Ordered, That the foregoing statement be published in the extracts of minutes for the current year, that the judicatures and people at large under the care of the Assembly may be acquainted with the views and wishes of their highest judicature. But the Assembly neither judge it expedient themselves to attempt to carry into immediate effect all that is here suggested, nor to urge on their judicatures and people to attempt it. Some things only that are here specified will be entered on by this Assembly; and the judicatures and people will judge for themselves what other objects it may

Digitized by Google

be proper for them voluntarily to regard. It is however considered expedient by the Assembly, that no catechists should be sent out, till a further order on the subject be issued by the General Assembly.

The address of the president of the corporation of the General Assembly delivered to the board, having been read yesterday, on motion *resolved* that the thanks of this house be given to him for the information contained in the said address.

Resolved, That Dr. Green, Dr. Tennent, the Rev. Joseph Clark, William Hill, Robert Cathcart and Woodhull of Newton, or, in case of his failure, Revd. George Faitoute, be appointed to solicit donation in behalf of the trustees of the General Assembly during the ensuing year; and that their expenses be paid, by the said trustees, and their compensation be made out of the monies to be by them collected: That each of the Presbyteries to which the said persons belong, take order to supply their pulpits in their absence: That the members of this Assembly generally, and all the clergy of our denomination within our bounds, do aid the exertions of those who shall go on this business. That these orders however, be not considered as extending to the Synod of the Carolinas, nor to the commission of the Synod of Virginia west of the Alleghany mountains; but that the brethren comprehended in this exception, be, and they are hereby, directed to bring those objects distinctly before the judicatures and individual ministers under their care, and take such measures to advance the purposes specified as to themselves shall appear best, and make an accurate report thereon to the next General Assembly.

Digitized by Google

Resolved, That the Presbyteries of Albany and Hudson, take measures for appointing agents within their bounds respectively for the purpose of taking subscriptions and receiving money for the funds of the General Assembly.—Vol. I. p. 225–227.

Sect. 3. Annual collections recommended, in 1804.

Resolved, That it be recommended to the Presbyteries, to continue their exertions to procure and forward annual collections from the churches under their care; and that those who have been in any measure deficient pay a special attention to this subject. If each congregation shall punctually make one annual collection, "as the Lord hath prospered them," and seasonably forward it to the Treasurer; and if this uniformity shall have grown into habit, the labor of Assemblies and Presbyteries will be diminished; the complaints of the forward against the deficient Churches will cease; and seed will be sown which will bring forth fruit unto eternal life. On the fund which is supplied by these free will offerings, depend the Missionary efforts of the General Assembly. Never was there a time when the calls for Missionary labours were so loud and so frequent; and never was there a time when the labours of love for the souls of men, promised such an ample return.—Vol. II. p. 48.

Sect. 4. Persevering exertions for increasing the funds recommended, in 1818.

Digitized by Google

Resolved, That the Assembly earnestly recommend to the Presbyteries, the Churches, and all Missionary Associations, to persevere in the most zealous and vigorous exertions for increasing the funds appropriated to Missions; knowing by experience, as well as by faith in God's word, that in this all important concern, their labour of love is not in vain in the Lord. The fields demanding missionary cultivation are rapidly widening before us: heralds of the gospel are furnished for the work in greater numbers than formerly: and every thing promises a rich harvest of souls to be gathered from amongst men into the kingdom of our Redeemer.

Sect. 5. *Instructions in regard to collections by the Assembly of* 1819.

Resolved,

3d. That all the Presbyteries be, and they are hereby, requested to adopt measures for the taking up of collections in all their congregations, for the Missionary Fund, agreeably to repeated instructions of the Assembly.

4th. That it be, and it is hereby, recommended to all the Presbyteries and congregations, in making and disposing of collections for the Missionary and Commissioners' Funds, to appropriate a due proportion to each Fund; and also that the congregations avoid combining these important objects with any other that may require a considerable proportion of the collections intended for them.

5th. That the Presbyteries be, and they are hereby, informed, that they are not to consider the

Digitized by Google

formation of auxiliary societies as exempting them from the duty of taking up collections for the Assembly's Missionary Fund.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE PERMANENT FUND.

Sect. 1. *Resolutions on the subject, in* 1801.

THE Assembly resumed the consideration of the communication from the Trustees of the General Assembly; and having gone through the same, thereupon, *Resolved,*

1. That the monies obtained in consequence of the system adopted by the Assembly of last year, for soliciting contributions for the support of missionaries, and for other objects specified in their act, and all such monies as may be hereafter received for the same objects, (except the customary annual collections; which it is hoped will still continue to be made as usual,) be regarded as a capital stock, which shall, at no time, be broken in upon or diminished; and that it be vested, agreeably to a recommendation herein after made, in secure and permanent funds.

Digitized by Google

2. That the interest only arising from the capital, together with the annual collections, and other donations made with the express design of their being expended within the year, be employed in supporting Missionaries, in propagating the Gospel among the Indians, instructing the black people, and in purchasing pious books to be distributed among the poor, or in maintaining, when the Assembly shall think themselves competent to the object, Theological Schools, and for such other pious and benevolent purposes as may hereafter be deemed expedient.

3. That, in order to encourage farther contributions for the pious ends heretofore mentioned, and to satisfy the public mind with regard to the wise and faithful application of the monies already obtained, the Assembly will publish yearly, along with their printed extracts, a full and particular account of all the contributions received, and of all appropriations made.—Vol. I. p. 265, 266.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER III.

OF THE COMMISSIONERS' FUND.

Sect. 1. *A Plan for raising a fund adopted in* 1807.

THE Presbyteries were called upon to report on the plan for raising a fund for defraying the expenses of Commissioners to the Assembly, proposed and transmitted by the last Assembly to the Presbyteries for their consideration; and from their reports it appeared, that a majority of the Presbyteries had approved of the plan.* Messrs. Linn, Matthew Brown, Kamper, Ely, and Blackburn, were appointed a committee to take the reports into consideration, and were directed to report as soon as convenient.

The report of the committee appointed to consider the plan for raising a fund for defraying the expenses of Commissioners to the Assembly, was resumed, and the reading of it by paragraphs was

* For the overture sent down to the Presbyteries, See Vol. II. p. 186—190.

Digitized by Google

finished. The report being amended was adopted, and is as follows:

1. *Resolved*, That as the General Assembly is not only the supreme judicature, but the essential bond of union of the Presbyterian church, in the United States of America, it is equally incumbent on every part of that Church to maintain its existence and respectability, and to bear a just proportion of all the expense necessary to that end.

2. *Resolved*, That the practice which has hitherto obtained, of each Presbytery defraying the expense of its own commissioners to the Assembly, or permitting commissioners to bear the whole, or a large part of their own expenses, is not equal or just; inasmuch as it obliges the remote Presbyteries, and their commissioners, to bear a burden, many times greater than that which falls on those near to the place at which the General Assembly convenes; when the duty to be discharged by both is precisely the same, and ought not to be more oppressive to one than to the other: therefore,

3. *Resolved*, That a fund be constituted, under the direction of the General Assembly, to which all parts of the church shall contribute, and out of which all the commissioners to the Assembly shall be punctually paid, agreeably to an equitable estimate of the expenses necessarily incurred by each.

4. *Resolved*, That this fund shall never be blended with that which is already established and appropriated to missionary purposes; but that the Assembly do hereby pledge themselves to keep these

Digitized by Google

two funds, at all times, entirely separate and distinct; so that they shall not, on any occasion, make even a temporary draught on the one, to supply the deficiences of the other.

5. *Resolved*, That each commissioner to the General Assembly shall receive, out of the common fund, two dollars for every thirty miles which he shall necessarily travel, in coming to and in returning from the Assembly;—and if in any year, the fund be not adequate to pay all the commissioners at this rate, another ratio to which the fund shall be adequate, shall be assumed, agreeably to which, each member shall be paid according to the distance he shall travel.

6. *Resolved*, That all the congregations, under the care of the General Assembly, contribute pecuniary aid to the fund herein contemplated, either by raising an annual contribution, expressly and wholly for this fund, or by endeavouring to extend the contribution already ordered for the Missionary fund, and then making an equitable division between the two funds.

7. *Resolved*, That in those congregations, where only one contribution is made, the session of each congregation may divide said contribution and determine what part of the sum contributed shall go to each fund respectively; but if any session shall not make and report to Presbytery, a division of the contribution herein ordered, the Presbytery shall divide the contribution of such congregation, and assign to each fund the proportion thereof which they shall judge equitable.

8. *Resolved*, That every Presbytery be careful, annually to send forward by their commissioners

Digitized by Google

to the General Assembly, the sums which shall have been collected within the bounds of each Presbytery respectively, for the commissioners' fund; which shall be paid into the hands of the treasurer of the trustees of the Assembly: and the said trustees are hereby requested to direct their treasurer, annually at an early period of the sessions, to present to the Assembly the amount received from each Presbytery, and (as far as may be practicable,) from every congregation within the same.

9. *Resolved*, That the Assembly shall annually inquire of the commissioners from each Presbytery, what has been done the year past, in the bounds of the Presbytery to which the commissioners respectively belong, to carry into effect the design of the Assembly in these resolutions.

10. *Resolved*, That whereas it is manifestly inequitable that those parts of the church, which will not contribute to the important object of these resolutions, should receive benefit from the contributions of others; if it shall appear, on inquiry, that any Presbytery has been manifestly inattentive to the duty herein enjoined, so that the congregations generally, within its bounds, shall not have raised their reasonable proportion of the sum necessary to constitute and support the commissioners' fund; the commissioners from the Presbytery shall, for the year in which such manifest inattention and deficiency shall appear, receive out of the commissioners' fund, only the sum which they have contributed to it:—at all times, however, the General Assembly will make a candid allowance for those circumstances of any Presbyteries or congrega-

Digitized by Google

tions, which ought, in equity, to abate the expectations of much pecuniary aid from their exertions.

Resolved, That, if it shall happen in process of time, that the fund raised, in consequence of these resolutions, shall exceed the sum necessary to secure the payment of the expenses of the Commissioners, the surplus shall (at the end of every fifth year, reckoning from the first year that the surplus shall occur,) be paid into the Missionary fund; and that in disposing of this surplus, the Assembly will remit to the several Synods that manage the missionary business separately, their proportion of such surplus, to be determined by the ratio of their respective contributions to this fund.

Resolved, That it be, and it hereby is, earnestly recommended not only to all the Presbyteries, but to all the ministers under the care of the General Assembly, to endeavour to explain to their people the equity, the importance and the necessity of contributing to the Commissioners' fund:—showing them, that without spirited exertions to raise money for this fund, there is imminent danger that the harmony of our church will be destroyed, and its capacity of acting in concert with efficiency, in all its great and interesting measures for promoting the gospel, will speedily be terminated.—Vol. [illegible] p. 221, 224.

Sect. 2. An injunction of the Assembly in relation to this fund, in 1812.

Resolved, That this Assembly view, with concern, the manifest inattention of many of the

Digitized by Google

Presbyteries to raising and forwarding their reasonable proportions to the Commissioners' Fund. In consequence of which the Assembly foresee, that, if this inattention continue, the remoter parts of the churches, pressed with an unequal burden, from the circumstance of their distance, will have but a very small representation, in the future meetings of the Assembly; and that thereby the great objects of the Assembly, the preserving the union of the churches, and cherishing their interests in every part, however remote, will be greatly impeded, and, perhaps, finally defeated.

Resolved, therefore, that it be enjoined, and it is hereby enjoined on the Presbyteries, under the care of the Assembly, and especially on those that have been deficient, to pay a particular attention to this duty in future.—Vol. III. p. 70.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER IV.

OF THE SEMINARY'S FUND.

Sect. 1. *A general statement.*

FROM the year 1810, when the Assembly determined to establish a Theological Seminary, to the present time, agents have been annually commissioned for the purpose of collecting, from the pious and liberal, donations, both in books and in money, for the support of this important institution. Besides meeting the current expenses, the money collected by the agents has enabled the Assembly to erect, at Princeton, New Jersey, a large, neat and commodious edifice, which, when completed, will accommodate *one hundred* students.—See Printed Ext. from 1810 to 1819.

The establishment of a permanent fund for the support of the Professors is now contemplated by the Assembly as an object of peculiar desire. To an object so important, it is hoped, pious and liberal individuals will devote a part of their wealth.

Digitized by Google

Sect. 2. *The formation of Societies recommended, in* 1814.

The committee to which was referred the consideration of several resolutions contained in the report of the Directors of the Theological Seminary, reported the following resolutions, which were adopted: *viz.*

Resolved, 1. That it be, and it hereby is, earnestly recommended to the congregations in connexion with this Assembly, to countenance and promote the formation of societies in aid of the Theological Seminary;—that such societies when formed report themselves to the Rev. John M'Dowel, of Elizabeth-town, New-Jersey, Secretary to the Board of Directors of the Seminary, and forward the monies collected by them to Mr. Isaac Snowden, of Philadelphia, Treasurer of the Trustees of the Assembly.—Vol. III. p. 157.

Sect. 3. *A Plan for Societies recommended, in* 1814.

The committee appointed to prepare and report a plan for forming Societies to aid the funds of the Theological Seminary, reported: and their report being read and amended, was adopted, and is as follows: *viz.*

It is a fact well known, that the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, instituted sometime since a *Theological Seminary*, for the great and good purpose of securing to the Church of Christ a compe-

Digitized by Google

tent supply of learned and evangelical ministers. Their harvest truly is great, and greatly increasing, and the labourers few. The truth of this remark is established by the consideration, that four hundred organized congregations within their limits are not yet steadily supplied with gospel ordinances. Their missionary ground on the frontiers, as also among the Indians and Blacks, is very extensive. While God in his providence is inclining an unusual number of our pious young men to consecrate their lives and talents to the service of the Sanctuary, and the means of their classical education, by the exertions of the friends of Zion, are constantly increasing, shall they be left unprepared for the great work of the Lord, for the want of proper theological instruction? Shall they long in vain for this holy employment? Shall so great a portion of our churches, and our frontier settlements be suffered to lie desolate and in ruins, when the means of qualifying them for this employment are obviously within our power?

It is conceived that no man who loves his country, or who loves our Lord Jesus Christ, and the souls of men, in sincerity, can want motives to induce him to lend his aid in accomplishing an object so immensely important.

With sanguine hopes of success, therefore, the General Assembly proffer their claims to the charity of those who feel an interest in the support of our invaluable civil and political Institutions. Every free government, constituted like ours, depends primarily and essentially, for its existence, on the moral principles and habits of the people. Where the word of life is not statedly preached, and the

Digitized by Google

ordinances of the Gospel administered, the sabbath of the Lord will be profaned; and experience proves uniformly and unequivocally, that idleness, intemperance, gambling, and ungovernable licentiousness, both in principles and conduct are the inevitable consequences. Will then the lovers of rational liberty, will the friends of our beloved country, refuse to contribute a pittance of the substance which God has entrusted to them, to so noble an object? to secure to themselves and to their children, and even to their children's children, the inestimable privileges which were purchased by the sufferings, and transmitted to them, by the wisdom and labours of their fathers. It is confidently believed that few will be found, who duly appreciate the worth of their own souls and of the souls of their fellow sinners, who will not cheerfully do something for Christ; something to advance the cause of his heritage, when they consider that it is He who loved them, and died to redeem them. Remember, brethren, that all which you posses is the Lord's; and if you devote a portion of what he has given you to his service, he can easily increase the remainder an hundred fold. The righteous giveth and spareth not. Remember also the divine promise, that he that giveth to to the poor shall not lack; and that our Saviour himself hath declared, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." It is but little that is asked of you. Come then, beloved brethren, cast your mite into the treasury of the Lord; and the blessed effects of your charity, it is trusted, will be experienced by thousands, when you and your children shall be sleeping in your graves.

Digitized by Google

The General Assembly earnestly recommend to the several congregations in their connexion the formation of societies for the above purpose. And they solicit especially ministers and elders strenuously to exert themselves to form one such society with their own congregation. The Assembly cannot but flatter themselves that their recommendation will be generally regarded; and they are confident, should this be the fact, that ample means will be furnished for the accomplishment of their object.

They submit therefore the following plan, as the one most likely, in their opinion, to meet with success.

Article 1. This society shall be denominated—Society for aiding the Theological Seminary of the General Assembly.

2. Any person may become a member of this Society by subscribing and paying the sum of one dollar, and may continue a member by paying the same sum annually. And any person, by paying at one time the sum of twenty dollars, may become a member for life.

3. The officers of the society shall be a President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer, and a committee of three persons; whose duty it shall be to solicit subscriptions to this institution, and to collect the subscriptions which shall not have been regularly paid into the treasury.

4. There shall be an annual meeting of the society; at which time the officers shall be chosen by ballot, for the year ensuing, and a clergyman appointed to preach a sermon to the society at their next annual meeting.

Digitized by Google

5. The treasurers of the several societies shall pay annually to the treasurer of the Presbytery within whose bounds they are, such sums as by them shall have been collected, to be by him transmitted to the treasurer of the trustees of the General Assembly.

Sect. 4. *Female Associations recommended, in* 1815.

Resolved, That the Assembly have heard with lively pleasure, of the exertions of pious and benevolent females, in some portions of our church, to raise funds for the support of indigent students in the Theological Seminary.

By these seasonable exertions many promising youth have been supported at the Institution, who otherwise could not have had access to its advantages.

But, notwithstanding all that has been done, the funds are still inadequate for the supply of all the applicants; and through the past year several young men of promising talents and piety, were prevented from entering the Seminary for want of support. The Assembly hope that this fact will be sufficient to increase the number of female associations for the support of indigent students preparing for the Gospel ministry. The money which such Associations may raise, may be applied by the Associations themselves to such students in the Institution as they may think proper; or it may (which has usually been done) be transmitted to the Professors, to be appropriated at their discretion.

Digitized by Google

Resolved, That the Assembly do hereby again earnestly recommend to their ministers, elders, and people, the formation of Societies, in aid of the funds of the Seminary in general, according to the plan recommended in the Printed Extracts of last year; and that they pay the money which they may collect in this way to Mr. Isaac Snowden of Philadelphia, the treasurer of the General Assembly, and annually to report to the General Assembly the sums which they may have paid to the Treasurer through the year.

Sect. 5. *Resolved*, That the interest of any funds now in the hands of the Trustees of the General Assembly for the support of indigent Theological Students, and that may hereafter accrue, be, and hereby is, put under the control and subject to the order of the Directors of the Theological Seminary. —1816. Vol. III. p. 241.

Sect. 6. *A Rule relative to the endowment of scholarships, in* 1816.

Resolved, That in all cases of endowment of scholarships in the Theological Seminary, where provision is not otherwise especially made by the persons endowing the same, the Treasurer of the Trustees of this Assembly be, and he hereby is, authorized to receive the principal sums, as well as the several annuities destined for the support of said scholarships;—and that under the direction of the said Trustees he invest the said principal sums, intended as capital, without delay, in some productive public stock, the interest on which

Digitized by Google

stock, together with the annuities aforesaid, which may from time to time be paid into his hands, he shall hold subject to the order of the Board of Directors of the Theological Seminary; and that he be, and is hereby, directed to keep a distinct and separate account of every scholarship so endowed. —Vol. III. p. 264.

Sect. 7. Subscription papers prepared, in 1816.

THE COMMITTEE appointed to devise ways and means of raising funds for the THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, reported; and their Report being read and amended, was adopted, and is as follows: *viz.*

Resolved, 1st. That it be again earnestly recommended to the *Minister and Session* of each Congregation under the care of the General Assembly, to establish without delay a *Dollar Society,* for the term of five years, in aid of the contingent fund of the Seminary.

2d. That, for the purpose of creating a Permanent Fund for the Theological Seminary, two sets of Subscription Papers be sent down to each Minister and Session; that the first be headed in the following words: *viz.*—*"We whose names are hereunto annexed, promise each to pay to* ————, *for the Permanent Fund of the Theological Seminary of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, the sum of One Hundred Dollars, in five annual instalments;"*—That the heading of the second be varied from the first, by the insertion of Fifty Dollars, instead of *One*

Digitized by Google

Hundred; and that of the fund thus raised, the interest only shall ever be appropriated for the uses of the Seminary.

3d. That Agents be appointed to solicit Donations and Subscriptions, in those Congregations which have not yet been visited by any Agent; and that the monies thus procured be placed in the Contingent or Permanent Fund, as the Donors and Subscribers may direct.

4th. That the two-fold application to Ministers and Sessions, mentioned in the preceding resolutions, be accompanied with a letter, which has been prepared on the subject: and it is earnestly recommended, that this letter be read from the pulpit, in the several Congregations under the care of the Assembly.

The letter was read by paragraphs, and being amended, was adopted.

Resolved, That 3000 copies of it be printed; that the committee superintend the printing; and that the agent for forwarding the printed extracts, forward by mail a copy of this letter to each minister belonging to the Assembly, and that he forward the remaining copies with the printed extracts.

Sect. 9. *The aid of Bible Classes invited in* 1817.

The committee to devise ways and means to raise money for missionary purposes, reported; and their report, being read and amended, was adopted, and is as follows: *viz.*

Resolved, That it be earnestly recommended by this Assembly, that all our young people, compos-

Digitized by Google

ing Bible Classes and Catechetical Schools, do form themselves into Societies, for the purpose of strengthening the hands of the General Assembly in accomplishing their vast designs of unfurling still wider the missionary banner, and of aiding the Theological Seminary, and providing it with resources for a greater number of poor and pious young men, who need gratuitous support during their preparatory studies for the gospel ministry.

Sect. 9. *Resolved,* * * * * * * *

3d. That it be recommended that a collection be annually taken up in all the churches under the care of the General Assembly, for the contingent fund, or current expenses of the Seminary; and that the various Presbyteries annually report to the Assembly the amount thus collected, in the same manner in which they report the sums contributed for the education, commissioners, and missionary funds.

4th. *Resolved,* That the General Assembly have remarked, with peculiar pleasure, the Christian liberality of the female societies, which have contributed to the support of indigent students in the Theological Seminary.

Sect. 10. *Bank Notes.*

Resolved, That it be, and it hereby is, enjoined on all persons having money collected for the funds of the Assembly, that they endeavour to procure notes of the incorporated Banks of the Cities of New York, Baltimore, or Philadelphia, and that they

Digitized by Google

bring forward no notes below five dollars.—Vol. II. p. 325.

Sect. 11. *Forms of Bequests.*

IN CASES OF PERSONAL PROPERTY.

I give and bequeath to the Trustees of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, and to their successors, and assigns, the sums of , or shares in the Bank of , [or any other personal property, as the case may be] to be added to their permanent fund; and the clear profits applied to the general uses of the fund, under the direction of the said Assembly: OR, *to be applied toward the spreading of the Gospel on the frontiers and in other destitute parts of the United States:* OR, *toward civilizing and instructing, in arts and religion, the Indians of North America; under the direction of the said Assembly:* OR, *toward the support of the Theological Seminary established by the said Assembly:* OR, *toward the support of indigent students in the said Seminary.*

The Testator may select one or more of these objects, or designate any other object of piety and charity; and the corporation are bound by charter received from the Legislature of Pennsylvania, to apply the donation agreeably to his will.

IN CASES OF REAL ESTATE

I give and devise to the Trustees, &c. (as above) *all that tract or lot of land or tenement, messuage or other real estate,* as the case may be, *situate in*

Digitized by Google

&c. to be added, &c. (as above) **OR**, *toward, &c.* (as above.)

Sect. 12. *A statement of the Widow's fund, and the conditions on which ministers and congregations are admitted as subscribers.*

1. Any minister of the gospel, or professor in any university or college in the United States, being of the Presbyterian denomination; or any layman of the same denomination, (until the number shall amount to seventy,) may, at any age, if in good health, become a subscriber to the fund, on paying, as admission money, if above the age of twenty-eight years, the amount of his annual rate, considered as an annuity in arrear for a number of years, equal to half the excess of his age above twenty-eight years, computed at six per cent per annum, simple interest.

2. The annual rates or payments are $5\frac{1}{3}$, 8, $10\frac{2}{3}$, $13\frac{1}{3}$, 16, $18\frac{2}{3}$, $21\frac{1}{3}$, or 24 dollars, at the option of the subscriber; which, if in good health, he may at any future time increase within the above limits, on paying the amount of such increase, considered as an annuity in arrear for a number of years, equal to half the time elapsed since his first subscription; interest computed as above. The rates to be paid in advance, on the 22d of May, annually, during the subscriber's life. On his second, and every subsequent marriage, he must also pay one additional rate.

3. In lieu of the annual rate, a sum may at any time be deposited in the fund equal to the principal of such rate, computed at six per cent. which deposite will be returned to the family of the sub-

Digitized by Google

scriber, within one year after his death. Or a sum may be paid into the fund, not to be returned, equal to the *present worth* of the annual rate, considered as an annuity to continue for a number of years, equal to half the difference between the subscriber's age and eighty-six years, computed at five per cent. per annum, compound interest.

4. Any Presbyterian congregation, or theological seminary, or incorporated college, or seminary of learning, in the United States, may make a permanent deposite into the fund, of a sum equal to the principal of any of the above annual rates, computed at six per cent. which shall entitle the families of their ministers, or principal professors, for ever, to the same benefits with those of individual subscribers: provided such minister or professor be of the Presbyterian denomination, and conform in all other respects to the conditions and regulations applicable to individual subscribers.

5. Any congregation, college, or theological seminary, as above, may make a deposite in favour of each of their co-pastors or principal professors.

6. If any minister or professor, belonging to a congregation or seminary which has made a deposite, be, at the time of his first connection with said congregation or seminary, on account of his declining state of health, or otherwise, inadmissible to the ordinary benefits of the fund in favour of his family; then, he shall receive from the fund the annual interest of such deposite during his incumbency.

7. If the connection between any depositing congregation or seminary and their minister or professor, shall be dissolved by deposition, removal, or

Digitized by Google

otherwise, he shall not be deprived of the benefits of the deposite to his family; provided he shall pay annually into the fund during his life, the interest of said deposite, or an equivalent in one payment.

8. If any subscriber, whether as an individual, or in virtue of a permanent deposite, shall die before the fund shall have received from him, or on his account, a sum, without including interest, equal to fifteen annual rates; or shall die in arrear to the fund: then the balance shall be deducted from the annuities payable to his family.

9. The fund will pay to the widows and children of deceased subscribers, an annuity equal to *five times* their respective annual rates.

10. If the deceased subscriber shall have made no distribution of the annuity to his family, then the trustees of the fund shall make such distribution thereof as they shall judge most for their benefit; the widow not receiving less than any of the children.

11. The whole annuity will be payable to the widow and children for *thirteen years*, after the decease of the subscriber; to the widow alone after the expiration of this term, during her widowhood: and if she shall marry, then half annuities from the time of her marriage during her life.

12. The annuities will be paid by the treasurer of the fund, to the annuitants, or their orders, as they shall become due.

13. No forfeiture can be incurred by any neglect in making the regular annual payments to the fund; as the treasurer may at any time sue

Digitized by Google

for and recover any arrears that shall become due.

14. As soon as the fund shall be more than sufficient to pay all stipulated annuities, with all necessary charges, then the surplusage, or part of it, shall be divided among the annuitants, and distressed ministers, and their widows and families, in such a manner as the trustees may think proper: particular regard being had, in this distribution, to the families of deceased subscribers, in proportion to the amount of their respective payments into the fund.

☞ *The following brief statement will, it is presumed, afford a satisfactory view of the present flourishing state of the above fund, and of the great benefits which have been, and may still continue to be, derived therefrom:*

1. There has been received from subscribers, since the commencement of the institution, in 1761, (including deposites for life, and permanent deposites,) till the present time, May, 1818, the sum of $21,447, omitting fractions.

2. There have been already paid to the families of deceased subscribers $70,249; and still payable annually $1457. It has been found, that the amount of annuities paid by the fund is nearly *five times* that of the subscriptions received from annual contributors.

3. The present amount of productive capital in the fund, consisting chiefly of public securities, and bonds secured by mortgages, exclusive of the interest due, is $40,801.

Digitized by Google

For a more full and detailed view of the operations of this institution, see "Extracts from the Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, for the year 1813."

HT. PATTERSON, *Treasurer.*

CHAPTER V.

OF THE TRUSTEES.

Sect. 1. *The Act of Incorporation.*

An Act for incorporating the Trustees of the Ministers and Elders, constituting the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, in the United States of America.

WHEREAS the ministers and elders forming the General Assembly of the Presbyterian church of the United States of America, consisting of citizens of the state of Pennsylvania, and of others of the United States of America aforesaid, have by their petition represented, that by donations, bequests or otherwise, of charitably disposed persons, they are possessed of monies for benevolent and pious

Digitized by Google

purposes, and the said ministers and elders have reason to expect farther contributions for similar uses; but from the scattered situation of the said ministers and elders, and other causes, the said ministers and elders find it extremely difficult to manage the said funds, in the way best calculated to answer the intention of the donors: Therefore,

Sect. 1. *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, in General Assembly met, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same,* That John Rogers, Alexander M'Whorter, Samuel Stanhope Smith, Ashbel Green, William M. Tennant, Patrick Allison, Nathan Irvin, Joseph Clark, Andrew Hunter, Jared Ingersoll, Robert Ralston, Jonathan R. Smith, Andrew Bayard, Elias Boudinot, John Nelson, Ebenezer Hazard, David Jackson, and Robert Smith, merchant, and their successors duly elected and appointed in manner as in hereinafter directed, be, and they are hereby made, declared and constituted, a corporation and body politic and corporate, in law and in fact, to have continuance forever, by the name, style and title of "Trustees of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America;" and by the name, style and title aforesaid, shall, forever hereafter, be persons able and capable in law as well to take, receive and hold, all and all manner of lands, tenements, rents, annuities, franchises and other hereditaments, which at any time or times heretofore have been granted, bargained, sold, enfeoffed, released, devised or otherwise conveyed, to the said ministers and elders of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the

Digitized by Google

United States, or any other person or persons, to their use, or in trust for them; and the same lands, tenements, rents, annuities, liberties, franchises and other hereditaments, are hereby vested and established in the said corporation, and their successors forever, according to the original use and intent for which such devises, gifts and grants were respectively made; and the said corporation and their successors, are hereby declared to be seized and possessed of such estate and estates therein, as in and by the respective grants, bargains, sales, enfeoffments, releases, devises and other conveyances thereof, is or are declared limited and expressed; also, that the said corporation and their successors, at all times hereafter, shall be capable and able to purchase, have, receive, take, hold and enjoy, in fee simple, or of lesser estate or estates, any lands, tenements, rents, annuities, franchises and other hereditaments, by the gift, grant, bargain, sale, alienation, enfeoffment, release, confirmation or devise, of any person or persons, bodies politic and corporate, capable and able to make the same: And further, that the said ministers and elders, under the corporate name aforesaid, and their successors, may take and receive any sum or sums of money, and any portion of goods and chattels, that have been given to the said ministers and elders, or that hereafter shall be given, sold, leased or bequeathed, to the said corporation, by any person or persons, bodies politic or corporate, that is able or capable to make a gift, sale, bequest or other disposal of the same; such money, goods or chattels, to be laid out and disposed of, for the use and benefit of the aforesaid corporation, agreeably to

Digitized by Google

the intention of the donors, and according to the objects, articles and conditions of this act.

Sect. 2. *And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid,* That no misnomer of the said corporation and their successors, shall defeat or annul, any gift, grant, devise or bequest, to or from the said corporation, provided the intent of the party or parties shall sufficiently appear upon the face of the gift, will, grant or other writing, whereby any estate or interest, was intended to pass to or from the said corporation.

Sect. 3. *And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid,* That the said corporation and their successors, shall have full power and authority, to make, have and use, one common seal, with such devise and inscription as they shall think fit and proper; and the same to break, alter and renew, at their pleasure.

Sect. 4. *And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid,* That the said corporation and their successors, by the name, style and title aforesaid, shall be able and capable in law, to sue and be sued, plead and be impleaded, in any court, or before any judge or justice, in all and all manner of suits, complaints, pleas, matters and demands, of whatsoever nature, kind and form they may be; and all and every matter and thing to do, in as full and effectual a manner, as any other person, bodies politic or corporate, within this commonwealth, may or can do.

Sect. 5. *And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid,* That the said corporation and their successors, shall be, and hereby are authorised and empowered, to make, ordain and establish, bye laws and ordinances, and do every thing

Digitized by Google

incident and needful for the support and due government of the said corporation, and managing the funds and revenues thereof; *Provided*, the said bye-laws be not repugnant to the constitution and laws of the United States, to the constitution and laws of this commonwealth, or to this act.

Sect. 6. *And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid*, That the said corporation shall not, at any time, consist of more than eighteen persons; whereof the said General Assembly may, at their direction, as often as they shall hold their sessions in the state of Pennsylvania, change one third, in such manner as to the said General Assembly shall seem proper: And the corporation aforesaid, shall have power and authority, to manage and dispose of all monies, goods, chattels, lands, tenements and hereditaments, and other estate whatsoever, committed to their care and trust, by the said General Assembly: but in cases where special instructions, for the management and disposal thereof, shall be given by the said General Assembly in writing, under the hand of their clerk, it shall be the duty of the said corporation, to act according to such instructions; *Provided*, the said instructions shall not be repugnant to the constitution and laws of the United States, or to the constitution and laws of this commonwealth, or to the provisions and restrictions in this act contained.

Sect. 7. *And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid*, That six members of this corporation, whereof the president, or in his absence the vice-president, to be one, shall be a sufficient number to transact the business thereof, and to make bye-laws, rules and regulations; *Provided*, that

Digitized by Google

previous to any meeting of the board or corporation, for such purposes, not appointed by adjournment, ten days notice shall be previously given thereof, in at least one of the newspapers printed in the city of Philadelphia: And the said corporation shall and may, as often as they shall see proper, and according to the rules by them to be prescribed, choose out of their number, a president and vice-president, and shall have authority to appoint a treasurer, and such other officers and servants, as shall by them, the said corporation, be deemed necessary; to which officers the said corporation may assign such a compensation for their services, and such duties to be performed by them, to continue in office for such time, and to be succeeded by others, in such way and manner as the said corporation shall direct.

Sect. 8. *And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid,* That all questions before the said corporation, shall be decided by a plurality of votes, whereof each member present shall have one, except the president, or vice-president, when acting as president, who shall have only the casting voice and vote, in case of an equality in the votes of the other members.

Sect. 9. *And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid,* That the said corporation shall keep regular and fair entries of their proceedings, and a just account of their receipts and disbursements, in a book or books to be provided for that purpose; and their treasurer shall, once in a year, exhibit to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian church in the United States of America, an exact state of the accounts of the corporation.

Digitized by Google

Sect. 10. *And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid,* That the said corporation may take, receive, purchase, possess and enjoy, messuages, houses, lands, tenements, rents, annuities and other hereditaments, real and personal estate of any amount, not exceeding ten thousand dollars a year value, but the said limitations not to be considered as including the annual collections, and voluntary contributions, made in the churches under the care of the said General Assembly.

CADWALADER EVANS, Jun.
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

ROBERT HARE,
Speaker of the Senate.

APPROVED
March 28, 1799.

THOMAS MIFFLIN,
Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Sect. 2. *The mode of choosing the Trustees adopted in* 1801.

The General Assembly took into consideration the important concern of voting for Trustees of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, agreeably to the provision made in the sixth section of the Act of the Legislature constituting the charter of incorporation. After maturely discussing this subject, the Assembly *resolved,* that it is expedient to adopt and recommend the following system:—1. That when this subject is called up annually, a vote shall first be taken whether, for the current year, the Assembly will,

Digitized by Google

or will not, make any election of members in the board of Trustees.—2. If an election be determined on, the day on which it shall take place shall be specified, and shall not be within less than two days of the time at which such an election shall be decided on.—3. When the day of election arrives, the Assembly shall ascertain what vacancies in the number of the eighteen Trustees incorporated, have taken place by death or otherwise; and shall first proceed to choose other members in their places. When this is accomplished, they shall proceed to the trial whether they will elect any, and if any, how many of that third of the number of the Trustees which by law they are permitted to change, in the following manner: *viz.* The list of the Trustees shall be taken, and a vote be had for a person to fill the place of him who is first on the list. In voting for a person to fill said place, the vote may be given either for the person who has before filled it, or for any other person: if the majority of votes shall be given for the person who has before filled it, he shall continue in office; if the majority of votes shall be given for another person, this person is a trustee, duly chosen in place of the former. In the same form the Assembly shall proceed with the list, till they have either changed one-third of the trustees, (always including in the third those who have been elected by the sitting Assembly to supply the places that become vacant by death or otherwise,) or by going through the list, shall determine that no further alterations shall be made.—Vol. I. p. 252.

Digitized by Google

Sect. 3. The mode of intercourse between the Assembly and their Trustees determined on, in 1801.

The committee appointed to meet a committee of the Board of Trustees of the Assembly, to digest and prepare a regular and stated mode of intercourse between the Assembly and the trustees, made a report; which was read and approved as follows: *viz.* "That the management, and disposal of all monies, goods, chattels, lands, tenements, hereditaments, and all other estate whatever, committed to their care and trust, by the General Assembly, is invested in the said trustees; unless where special instructions for the management and disposal thereof, shall be given by the General Assembly in writing under the hand of their clerk, in which case, the corporation is to act according to said instructions:

That an exact state of the account of the Trustees is to be exhibited by their Treasurer to the General Assembly, once in every year: Whereupon it is recommended,

1. That this state of the accounts, be laid before the General Assembly as early in their sessions as possible; in order that the General Assembly may know what appropriations it may be in their power to make, or what instructions to give to their Trustees, respecting the monies in hand.

2. That when any appropriations are made by the General Assembly, a copy of their minute for that purpose, signed by the Clerk, shall be transmitted to the Trustees, and shall be their warrant for the payment of any monies thus appropriated.

Digitized by Google

3. That when any measures are taken, or any resolutions adopted, by the General Assembly or the Board of Trustees, which it concerns the other to be acquainted with, due information of the same shall be given, as soon as possible to the other.—Vol. I. p. 270.

Sect. 4. *Resolved*, That the Trustees of this Assembly be directed to receive and hold, for the use of the Theological Seminary, the transfers which have been made, or shall be made, of property bequeathed to the Seminary.—1814. Vol. III. p. 157.

See Chap. IV. Sect. 5 and 6, of this Part.

Digitized by Google

PART VII.

OF MISSIONS.

CHAPTER I.

OF DOMESTIC MISSIONS.

Sect. 1. *A standing Committee of Missions appointed, in* 1802.

THE Assembly, pursuant to the report of a committee,

"*Resolved,* That a committee be chosen annually by the General Assembly, to be denominated '*The standing Committee of Missions;*' that this committee shall consist of seven members, of whom four shall be clergymen and three laymen; that a majority of this committee shall be a quorum to do business; that it shall be the duty of this committee to collect, during the recess of the Assembly,

Digitized by Google

all the information in their power relative to the concerns of missions and missionaries, to digest this information, and to report thereon at each meeting of the Assembly; to designate the places where, and specify the periods during which, the missionaries should be employed; to correspond with them if necessary, and with all other persons on missionary business; to nominate missionaries to the Assembly, and report the number which the funds will permit to be employed; to hear the reports of missionaries, make a statement thereon to the Assembly relative to the diligence, fidelity, and success of the missionaries, the sum due to each, and such parts of their reports as it may be supposed the Assembly would wish to hear in detail; to ascertain annually whether any money remains with the Trustees of the College of New Jersey, which ought to be used for missionary purposes, agreeably to the last will of James Lesley deceased; that they also engage a suitable person annually to preach a missionary sermon, on the Monday evening next after the opening of the Assembly, at which a collection shall be made for the support of missions; and superintend, generally, under the direction of the Assembly, the missionary business.

Resolved, That though this standing committee shall be elected annually, yet each committee shall continue in office till the end of the sessions of that General Assembly which succeeds the one by whom said committee was appointed.

Resolved, That this standing committee of missions, in addition to the duties above specified, shall be, and they are hereby, empowered, to direct the

Digitized by Google

Trustees of the General Assembly, during the recess of the Assembly, to issue warrants for any sums of money which may become due in consequence of contracts, appropriations, or assignments of duty made by the Assembly, and for which orders may not have been issued by the Assembly; and on this subject the committee shall annually report to the Assembly."

Agreeably to the foregoing resolutions, the Assembly proceeded to elect seven persons to be *A standing Committee of Missions;* when the Rev. Dr. Green, the Rev. Messrs. Philip Milledoler, John B. Linn, Jacob J. Janeway, Messrs. Elias Boudinot, Robert Smith and Ebenezer Hazard were duly chosen.

1805. In consequence of a suggestion made by the committee of missions, the Assembly,

Resolved, That the members of the said committee, resident in or near the city of Philadelphia, be increased to ten; and that one other member be added from each Synod, making in the whole seventeen.

1808. The Assembly, having elected their standing Committee of Missions for the present year, did, and hereby do, enjoin it on those members of said committee, who live at a distance from the place where the committee meet, to communicate to the committee in writing, any information on the subject of Missions, which they may suppose will be useful, and especially within the bounds of that Synod, to which these distant members may severally belong.

Digitized by Google

Sect. 2. The Missionary field.

On motion, it was *Resolved,* that notwithstanding the reference to the Synod of the Carolinas and the Synod of Virginia, with respect to Missionaries, the Assembly may send Missionaries to labour in the bounds of the aforesaid Synods.* 1801. Vol. I. p. 262.

Sect. 3. Directions relative to Missionary business.

1803. The committee to whom was referred the report of the Standing Committee of Missions, made their report: the same being under consideration, the Assembly *Resolved,*

1. That written instructions shall be given to the Missionaries, who shall be sent out from time to time: that the said instructions be given in the name of the Committee of Missions; stating however, that they have been approved by the Assembly.

2. That the Committee of Missions shall have power, on any emergency, to issue new instructions to the Missionaries, suited to the occasion.

3. That the committee of Missions be, and they hereby are, authorized to employ a transcribing clerk, and to allow him such compensation, as they shall think reasonable.

---

* Soon after the constitution of the General Assembly, the management of the missionary business within their own limits was intrusted to the two Synods named above, in consideration of their remote distance from the places where the General Assembly were accustomed to meet.

Digitized by Google

4. That the Missionaries be left at discretion, as to the time of the year, in which to perform their services; provided their tours be completed, so as to enable them to report, agreeably to the instructions of the Committee of Missions.—Vol. I. p. 325. 336.

1807. 5. That it be a standing order of the General Assembly, for the direction of the Trustees of the Assembly, and the Standing Committee of Missions, that the Missionaries be severally allowed a months compensation in advance, when the time for which they are severally employed shall exceed a month.

1806. 6. That as reasons unknown to the Missionaries, may often influence the Committee of Missions in designating their routes, the Missionaries be directed to pay a strict regard to their instructions, and not to deviate from their prescribed course, except where insurmountable obstacles occur.—Vol. II. p. 166.

1813. 7. That the salaries of the Missionaries be *Forty Dollars.*

1803. 8. That there ought to be no anticipation of the funds, in future; or in other words, that appropriations ought not to be made in any year, beyond the amount, which the funds arising in that year, will be sufficient to satisfy.

1806. 9. That the Assembly appropriate, annually, when the funds will admit of it, the sum of *One Hundred Dollars,* for the purchase of reli-

Digitized by Google

gious books, to be distributed in those parts of our church which may most need them.

10. That as, in the opinion of this Assembly, some
1810. publication is necessary to keep alive and invigorate that *Missionary spirit* with which it has pleased God to animate his Church, the Committee of Missions be authorized, if they judge it expedient, annually to prepare and publish, for the information of the Churches, a pamphlet or pamphlets entitled "*Missionary Intelligence;*" containing extracts from the Journals of the Assembly's Missionaries, and information derived from domestic and foreign sources.

11. That the Committee of Missions be autho-
1805. rized, in case they think it proper, to apply to the General government, or to any of the particular state governments for obtaining aid in supporting the school already established under the care of the Rev. Mr. Blackburn among the Cherokee Indians, or any other school or schools which may be established among any of the Indian nations, or for promoting their civilization in general.—Vol. II. p. 100.

Sect. 4. *Instructions to Presbyteries and Synods.*

The Assembly directed that the Presbyteries,
1803. in future, report on this subject (Missionary business) to the Committee of Missions, *only*, and make their reports so early, as to enable the said committee, to avail themselves of the information,

Digitized by Google

and present the result to the General Assembly from year to year.—Vol. I. p. 319.

Resolved, That it be again solemnly enjoined on all Presbyteries and Synods, within the bounds of the General Assembly, on no account to interfere with the instructions given by the Committee of Missions to missionaries. 1809.

The Assembly renewed their order to Presbyteries and individuals who have received, or shall receive religious books for distribution, to report annually to the Standing Committee of Missions, the distribution made, the effects produced, and the books, if any, remaining on hand. 1805.

Sect. 5. *The Synod of the Carolinas resign the Missionary business, in* 1812.

An overture was received from the Synod of the Carolinas, requesting the General Assembly to take upon them the direction of the Missionary business within their bounds. This overture being read, it was

Resolved, That the request of that Synod be granted; but at the same time the Assembly recommended it to the Synod to make all practicable exertions to increase the permanent and contingent funds of the Assembly, appropriated to the support of Missions.

Sect. 6. *The Board of Missions constituted, in* 1816.

Digitized by Google

The committee appointed to consider whether the Missionary business cannot be carried on with more efficacy, and to greater extent, reported; and their report being amended was adopted, and is as follows: *viz.*

The committee rejoice in the prospect of a competent supply of the word of God, to the poor and destitute in our country, by means of Bible Societies. The numbers and resources of these institutions are every day increasing; so that, at no very remote period, it is hoped, that the sun of revelation will shine on every dark corner of our land, and irradiate every dwelling however obscure. The committee, however, instead of regarding this as a reason for relaxing missionary efforts, are persuaded that its proper effect is to infuse new life and vigour into the missionary cause. In proportion as the word of God is known and appreciated, will the preaching of the word in its simplicity and purity be effectual: in proportion as the Bible is diffused, will missionaries be successful in organizing churches.

That there is a wide extent of country, destitute of the ordinary means of grace, is too well known to be mentioned in this place; the present demand for Missionary labours, very far exceeds the ability of supply; and the population of the country is increasing with such rapidity, that, where every place now vacant completely supplied with the regular ministrations of the gospel, after the elapse of a year there would probably be in the nation, four hundred thousand souls requiring the labour of a competent number of religious instructors. When, then, there are such multitudes at this moment, who rarely, if ever, hear the gospel preached, and

Digitized by Google

such mighty additions are made every year to our numbers; when, too, great multitudes, sensible of their wants, are addressing their importunate cries to us for missionaries, the cry for help of souls ready to perish; it appears to your committee that God and our brethren require of us much more than we have heretofore rendered. We are longing and praying for the coming of the day of glory; and perhaps many of us hope to see it. But we have no right to calculate on miraculous interpositions; and without a miracle, century after century must elapse before the earth can be filled with the knowledge of God. All that the Christian world is now doing with united effort, if continued without intermission for one thousand years, would barely serve to fill the world with Bibles and Missionaries. Yet we are not to despair. God, in his adorable Providence, seems to have changed, in these latter times, the scale on which he had for ages conducted the affairs of his government. Changes which formerly were the work of years, are now produced in a day. Magnificent and astonishing events have passed so often before the eyes of men of the present age, that their minds have acquired a tone and vigour which prompt them to undertake and accomplish great things. We ourselves witness every day the wonderful effects of combined counsels and exertions, both in the moral and political world.

From the lessons taught us by experience, your Committee have no doubt but that in the Presbyterian Church in the United States, there needs only union of purpose and effort to accomplish all the plans which have been proposed, and even to go far beyond the expectations and hopes of the most

Digitized by Google

sanguine. And this especially, as so powerful an impulse has been given to the Christian community; and the impression is so deep and universal, that it becomes us all who love the Lord Jesus Christ, to exert ourselves for the promotion of his glory and the extention of his kingdom.

For the purpose of enlarging the sphere of our missionary operations then, and infusing new vigour into the cause, your Committee would respectfully recommend a change of the style, and enlargement of the powers of the Standing Committee of Missions. If instead of continuing to this body, the character of a committee bound in all cases to act according to the instructions of the General Assembly, and under the necessity of receiving its sanction to give validity to all the measures which it may propose, the Committee of Missions were erected into a Board, with full powers to transact all the business of the Missionary cause; only requiring the Board to report annually to the General Assembly: it would then be able to carry on the Missionary business, with all the vigour and unity of design that would be found in a society originated for that purpose; and at the same time, would enjoy all the benefit that the counsel and advice of the General Assembly could afford.

With these views of the subject, it is respectfully recommended:

1. That the style of the committee be changed for that of "The Board of Missions, acting under the authority of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States."

2. That the Board of Missions be enlarged by the addition of the Rev. John B. Romeyn, D. D. Samuel Miller, D. D. Messrs. Samuel Bayard,

Digitized by Google

Robert Ralston, Robert Lenox, John R. B. Rodgers, John E. Caldwell, Divie Bethune, and Zechariah Lewis.

3. That, in addition to the powers already granted to the Committee of Missions, the Board of Missions be authorized to appoint Missionaries whenever they may deem it proper; to make such advances to missionaries as may be judged necessary; and to pay balances due to missionaries who have fulfilled their missions, whenever, in their judgment, the particular circumstances of the missionaries may require it.

4. That the Board be authorized and directed to take measures for establishing throughout our churches, Auxiliary Missionary Societies; and that the General Assembly recommend to their people the establishment of such societies, to aid the funds, and extend the operations of the Board.

5. That the members of the Board of Missions, be annually chosen by the Assembly; and that they continue in office until the rising of the next General Assembly, when they are to be succeeded by the persons chosen for the current year.

Sect. 7. The Board of Trust of the Synod of Ohio.

A Letter was received from the Board of Trust of the Synod of Ohio, informing the Assembly that they had formed themselves into a Missionary Society, and requesting permission to retain in their hands all the monies collected within their bounds for Missionary purposes, since the last Assembly. A copy of their constitution accompanied their letter. This communication was refer-

Digitized by Google

red to a committee, to report thereon as soon as convenient.

The committee to whom was referred the request of the Board of Trust of the Synod of Ohio, *viz.* That, in consequence of the Synod having formed themselves into a Missionary Society, they be permitted to retain in their hands all the monies collected within their bounds for Missionary purposes, since the last Assembly; reported, and their report, being read and amended, was adopted, and is as follows: *viz.*

Resolved, That the request be granted, and that the Synod be requested to make an annual report of their Missionary business to the Board of Missions.—1817.

Sect. 8. *The Plan of the Board of Missions recommended, in* 1817.

The committee appointed to select, from the first report of the Board of Missions, such particulars as require the attention of the Assembly, reported; and their report being read, was adopted, and is follows: *viz.*

1. *Resolved*, That the Assembly approve and earnestly recommend to the Presbyteries under their care, the Address and Plan of the Board of Missions. They trust the church, at large, will immediately and vigorously enter into measures so vitally important to the interests of religion as those recommended by the Board.

2. *Resolved*, That the members of this Assembly be instructed to procure, and, in the most effectual way, to communicate to our congregations, the above Address and Plan; and that the *great busi-*

Digitized by Google

ness of domestic Missions be, as much as possible, recommended to the whole communion of the Presbyterian church.

3. *Resolved*, That the Presbyteries, and Missionary Societies which may be formed, be directed to take measures for raising their funds so as not to interfere with the annual collections, in the churches, in aid of the Missionary funds of the Assembly.

4. *Resolved*, That the Board be authorized, always, to insert their Missionary appointments in the Appendix to the printed Extracts.

Sect. 9. *The request of the Presbytery of Oneida, in* 1818.

The following extract from the minutes of the Presbytery of Oneida, was overtured: *viz.*

"*Ordered*, That our commissioners to the next General Assembly be instructed to request the Assembly to permit this Presbytery to manage their own Missionary concerns."

On motion, *Resolved*, That the Presbytery of Oneida be referred to the plan proposed by the Board of Missions.

Sect. 10. *An inquiry in regard to the attention paid to the plan, in* 1818.

The committee appointed to report to the Assembly the result of the inquiry made of the Presbyteries, relative to the recommendation of the last Assembly, on the subject of the Address and Plan of the Board of Missions, reported; and their

Digitized by Google

report being read, was adopted, and is as follows: *viz.*

That from the inquiry it appeared that the Presbyteries had in general paid a laudable attention to the subject; and the Assembly hope that they will persevere in the important business, till it is completed.

Sect. 11. *The plan recommended again in* 1819.

The report accepted in the morning, *viz.* the report of the committee appointed to examine the report of the Board of Missions, and state to the Assembly the parts of the report which require the attention of the Assembly, was read by paragraphs; and being amended, was adopted, and is as follows: *viz.*

Resolved, 1st. That it be, and it hereby is, recommended to the Presbyteries which have not yet adopted the plan of the Board of Missions, to form Missionary Societies auxiliary to the Board, agreeably to the plan which has been proposed and published by the said Board, and recommended by a former Assembly.

2d. That the Presbyteries who may form themselves into Missionary Societies auxiliary to the Board be, and they are hereby, instructed to report to the Board the establishment of such societies, and annually a brief account of their operations; and that the same be recommended to all other societies that may become auxiliary to the Board.

Digitized by Google

For instructions and recommendations in regard to the funds necessary for Missionary purposes. See Part. VI. Chap. I.

CHAPTER II.

OF FOREIGN MISSIONS.

Sect. 1. *A Committee appointed to confer with sister Churches, in* 1816.

THE Committee further report, that while deliberating on the subject referred to them, they at first thought it would be expedient for this Assembly to present to the consideration of their churches the importance of Foreign Missions, and to direct the Board to take measures for commencing and carrying on such missions; but, on mature reflection, they are inclined to believe, that the union of Foreign with Domestic Missions would produce too great complexity in the affairs of the Board, and render the pressure of business too severe and burthensome. And this consideration is strengthened by the belief which they indulge, that a New Society for conducting foreign Missions might be formed, composed not only of members belonging

Digitized by Google

to our churches, but also of members belonging to the Reformed Dutch Church, to the Associate Reformed Church, and other churches which have adopted the same creed. Such a society is highly desirable; and were it organized on an extensive plan, so as to call forth the combined energies and charity of all these sister churches, it would be productive of beneficial consequences, both at home and abroad, to ourselves as well as to the heathen.

Resolved, That the Rev. John B. Romeyn, D. D. Archibald Alexander, D. D. Edward Griffin, D. D. William Neill, D. D. and James Richards, D. D. and Messrs. Divie Bethune, and Zechariah Lewis, be a committee to correspond with the Dutch and Associate Reformed Churches, and other churches holding the same creed; and endeavour to ascertain whether the members of those churches will unite with those of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, in the formation of a Society for Foreign Missions; and if possible report to the next General Assembly a plan of a society to be established for this purpose.

Sect. 2. The Constitution of the United Foreign Missionary Society.

The Committee appointed by the last Assembly to confer with the Reformed Dutch, and the Associate Reformed Churches, and others holding the same creed, on the subject of forming a Society for Foreign Missions, reported that they had met with

Digitized by Google

committees from the general Synods of the above named churches, and agreed on a plan for such a society. This plan was submitted, and read to the Assembly, and is as follows: *viz.*

"*Article* 1. This Society shall be composed of the Presbyterian, Reformed Dutch, and Associate Reformed Churches, and all others who may choose to join them; and shall be known by the name of "*The United Foreign Missionary Society.*"

Article 2. The object of the Society shall be to spread the Gospel among the Indians of North America, the inhabitants of Mexico and South America, and in other portions of the heathen and anti-christian world.

Article 3. The business of the Society shall be conducted by a Board consisting of a President, six Vice-Presidents, a Corresponding Secretary, a Recording Secretary, a Treasurer, and twelve Managers, to be annually chosen by the Society. They shall have power to enact their own bye-laws. Seven shall constitute a quorum.

Article 4. The Board shall present their annual report to the highest judicatories of the three denominations, for their information.

Article 5. Any person paying three dollars annually, or thirty dollars, at one time, shall be a member of the Society.

Article 6. The annual meeting of the Society shall be held in the city of New York, on the

---

Article 7. Missionaries shall be selected from the three churches indiscriminately.

Digitized by Google

Article 8. The Constitution may be altered by a vote of two-thirds of the members present at an annual meeting, with the consent of the highest judicatories of the three denominations."

Resolved, That the General Assembly approve the foregoing plan of a Society for Foreign Missions, and recommend to all their ministers and people to give the measure their active and zealous support.

The Rev. Dr. John B. Romeyn and Mr. Zechariah Lewis were appointed to meet, in the city of New York, as soon as may be convenient, with committees from the General Synods of the Reformed Dutch, and Associate Reformed Churches, to carry the aforesaid plan into operation.

Sect. 3. *Amendments to the Constitution, in* 1818.

The first annual report of the United Foreign Missionary Society was laid on the table, together with their address to the three denominations united in their society; and the following amendments to the constitution of said society were approved by the Assembly: *viz.*

1. That the third article be so altered, as to make the whole number of managers eighteen, instead of twelve, exclusive of the officers. 2. That to the fifth article be added the following clause: *viz.* And any person presenting to the Society a donation of not less than one hundred dollars, shall be a Director for life, and entitled to a seat

Digitized by Google

and vote in the Board of Managers.* 3. That an article be added, after the fifth of the original instrument, to read thus: The President, Treasurer, and Secretary of any Society auxiliary to this, shall be ex-officio members of the Board of Managers. 4. That the Board of Managers be authorized to fill any vacancies that may occur in the Board.

Resolved, That the General Assembly do approve the important objects contemplated by the United Foreign Missionary Society, and recommend the said Society to the attention of the several Presbyteries.

---

* This amendment was not concurred in by the judicatories of the other churches, and consequently it forms no part of the Constitution.

Digitized by Google

PART VIII.

OF

THE EDUCATION

OF PIOUS YOUTH.

Sect. 1. *The Assembly recommended this subject to the attention of the Presbyteries, in* 1806.

THE last Assembly, having required the Presbyteries under their care, to instruct their Commissioners to this Assembly, on the subject of an overture, respecting the education of pious youth for the gospel ministry, &c. the Assembly called on their members to report the measures taken by the Presbyteries which they represented, on this subject,

The Assembly, finding that there was a general coincidence of sentiment on this subject.

Resolved, That the Moderator, Dr. Green, Dr. Nott, Mr. Arthur, and Mr. Carrick, be a committee, to take this subject into consideration, to

Digitized by Google

draught and lay before the house, a minute proper to be adopted and published by the Assembly, and calculated to carry the design into complete effect.

The minute reported by this committee, after amendment, was adopted by the Assembly, and is as follows:

The commissioners from all the Presbyteries represented in this Assembly, having been called to state the opinion entertained by their respective Presbyteries, on this subject, it appeared, that the overture had been seriously considered and highly approved, by the most of them; that some Presbyteries had long been in the habit of using the measures contemplated in the overture, for bringing forward youth of piety and talents, as candidates for the gospel ministry; and that others had adopted and organized such measures within the last year, and in consequence of the overture under consideration.—

After maturely deliberating, the Assembly determined, that *the part of the overture which relates to the selection and education of young men of piety and talents for the gospel ministry,* presents a plan, which they consider as well deserving their countenance and support. It is indeed, an obvious and melancholy fact, that the candidates for the gospel ministry, within the bounds of the Presbyterian church, at present, is greatly disproportionate to the demand which is made for their services; and that the rapid increase of vacant congregations, taken in connexion with the youth who are studying for the ministry, presents a most gloomy prospect of what is likely to be the state of our church in a few years, if prompt and effectual measures be not

Digitized by Google

taken to furnish a supply of ministers, much greater than the existing state of things is like to produce. The Assembly were indeed, deeply affected by the view which they had taken of this subject, and were extremely solicitous to adopt the most efficient measures which circumstances permit, to remedy the evil which exists, and to prevent its augmentation. But, as the Presbyteries of which the Assembly have the oversight, are scattered over a wide extent of country, and their circumstances are known to be extremely various, it occurred, that *an absolute injunction* on all the Presbyteries immediately to enter on the execution of the plan proposed, might bear hard on some, if not be entirely incapable of execution. On the other hand, *merely to recommend* an attention to the plan, without attaching any responsibility to the neglect of the recommendation, appeared to the Assembly incompatible with the high importance of the subject, and with their own duty as the guardians of the church, bound especially to provide for their people a supply of the word of life. It was therefore determined to take a *middle course* between these extremes, so as, if possible, to avoid the inconvenience of both. With this in view, it was resolved to recommend, *and the Assembly do hereby most earnestly recommend*, to every Presbytery under their care, to use their utmost endeavours to increase, by all suitable means in their power, the number of promising candidates for the holy ministry—to press it upon the parents of pious youth, to educate them for the church, and on the youth themselves, to devote their talents and their lives to this sacred calling—to make vigorous exertions to raise funds to assist all the youth who may need

Digitized by Google

assistance—to be careful that the youth whom they take on their funds, give such evidence as the nature of the case admits, that they possess both *talents and piety*—to inspect the education of these youth during the course both of their academical and theological studies; choosing for them such schools, seminaries, and teachers, as each Presbytery may judge most proper and advantageous, so as eventually to bring them into the ministry, well furnished for their work:—and the Assembly do hereby order, that every Presbytery under their care, make, annually, a report to the Assembly, stating particularly what they have done in this concern, or why (if the case so shall be) they have done nothing in it;—and the Assembly will, when these reports are received, consider each distinctly, and decide by vote, whether the Presbyteries severally shall be considered as having discharged, or neglected their duty, in this important business. —Vol. II. p. 178–180.

Sect. 2. *The Presbyteries required to report on this subject in writing, in* 1813.

The Assembly exceedingly regret to learn from the reports and statements made this year, that so few of the Presbyteries, have as yet prosecuted with effect the important business of selecting and educating poor and pious youth of promising talents, for the gospel ministry; especially when the demand for able and faithful ministers is so pressing, and constantly increasing throughout this great and growing country.

And, whereas there is a great deficiency in regular and authentic reports from several Presbyte-

Digitized by Google

ries on this subject; and whereas it appeared from statements made by members present, that some of the Presbyteries had not raised any collections, because they had no immediate object to apply them to:—Therefore, *Resolved*, That all the Presbyteries be careful to transmit, for the future, written and authenticated reports on this subject to the Assembly; and that, where circumstances will permit, they annually raise funds for this important purpose, as well as diligently seek for suitable characters, for their appropriation.—Vol. III. p. 121. See also Vol. III. p. 181.

Sect. 3. *A particular recommendation in regard to the disposal of the funds raised for this object, in* 1817.

The committee appointed to devise a plan for the disposal of the funds in the hands of certain Presbyteries for the education of poor and pious youth who have no objects on which to bestow their bounty, reported; and their report, being read, was adopted, and is as follows: *viz.*

Resolved, That it be recommended to those Presbyteries who have funds for the education of poor and pious youth for the Gospel ministry, or who are able to raise funds for this purpose, but can find no suitable young men within their own bounds, to take measures to obtain them from the bounds of other Presbyteries, and educate them for the work of the ministry; or that they annually transmit money, for this object, to the General Assembly, that the Assembly may appropriate it to the object for which it was raised; or that they transmit it to one of the Theological Seminaries

Digitized by Google

within our bounds, to be applied, by the Professors to the education of indigent young men in said Seminaries: and that the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly be the organ of communication between such Presbyteries as may have money to be applied to the above purpose, and those Presbyteries who may have under their care young men who shall need their liberality.

Sect. 4. *The Assembly resolved to establish a General Board of Education, in* 1819.

Whereas the General Assembly forms the bond of union of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, and affords the acknowledged means of combining the intelligence, and concentrating the efforts of that denomination: Whereas the present state of our country most loudly calls for increasing energy and zeal in training young men for the ministry of the Gospel; and it has become necessary to originate new and more efficient measures for carrying on this great and important work; to systematize and unite the efforts that are now making within our bounds: And whereas it is desirable that a fund be established under the direction of the General Assembly, which, among other objects, might afford assistance to those Presbyteries and parts of the church that may require the same:—Therefore, *Resolved*,

1st. That the General Assembly establish a general Board of Education.

2d. That it be recommended that Boards of Education be formed within our bounds, auxiliary to the Board of the General Assembly, as extensively as possible.

Digitized by Google

3d. That it be recommended to the several Presbyteries to form themselves into Education Societies, auxiliary to the Board, and to adopt the most vigorous efforts to accomplish this important object.

4th. That, as a fundamental principle, no young man shall be patronized and assisted by the funds of the Board, who shall not, in the judgment of the Board, or of some auxiliary society, give hopeful evidence of piety and promising talents.

5th. That it be the object of this Education Board, and its auxiliaries, to assist the young men under their patronage and direction, to obtain all parts of an education necessary to their introduction into the pulpit, including both their classical and theological course.

6th. That the Boards, auxiliary to the Board of the Assembly, shall be permitted to make such arrangements and selections of places for the young men under their care to prosecute their education, whether classical or theological, as they may prefer.

7th. That the auxiliaries shall annually report their proceedings to the Board; and that the Board report to the Assembly.

8th. That the auxiliaries shall send to the Board all the surplus funds in their hands, which shall not be necessary for those young men under their own immediate care.

9th. That the Board, according to its best discretion, assign to the several Auxiliary Societies, their just proportion of the whole disposable funds of the Board.

Digitized by Google

10th. That Drs. Hill, Richards, and Blatchford, with the Rev. Messrs. Martin and Herron, be appointed a committee to digest and draw up a Constitution embracing these fundamental objects, and to present it to this Assembly for their adoption.

Sect. 5. *The Constitution of the Board.*

The committee appointed to draft a constitution for establishing a general Board of Education, agreeably to the resolutions adopted by the Assembly on the subject, reported one; which, being read and amended, was adopted, and is as as follows: *viz.*

1st. There shall be a general Board of Education, known by the name of THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, UNDER THE CARE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

2d. The Board shall consist of thirty-six members; of whom there shall be twenty ministers and sixteen elders, one minister and one elder to be chosen from each Synod, and the remainder from Philadelphia, and from a distance convenient to it. Seven members, including the President or Vice-President, shall be a quorum to transact business.

3d. The whole number of members shall be divided into four classes—one-fourth to be annually elected.

4th. The election of the members of the Board shall be made by nomination and ballot, by the General Assembly.

Digitized by Google

5th. The officers shall be a President, three Vice-Presidents, a recording, and a corresponding Secretary, and a Treasurer, to be annually elected by the Board.

6th. The objects of this Board shall be,

1. To recognise such Presbyteries and other associations as may form themselves into Education Societies, as auxiliary to the General Board.

2. To assist such Presbyteries and associations, in educating pious youth for the gospel ministry, both in their academical and theological course.

3. To assign according to their best discretion, to the several auxiliary Societies, a just proportion of the whole disposable funds under their controul.

4. To concert and execute such measures as they shall judge to be proper, for increasing their funds and promoting the general object.

7th. No young man shall be patronized or assisted by any auxiliary Society, unless he shall produce a testimonial of his hopeful piety and talents, from some Presbytery under whose care he shall be taken.

8th. Auxiliary Societies may make such arrangements, and selection of a Seminary for the young men under their patronage, as, in their opinion, shall be most eligible for the prosecuting of their education, whether classical or theological.

9th. The auxiliary Societies shall send to the Board all the surplus funds in their hands, which shall not be necessary for the accommodation of those immediately depending on them for support.

10th. Every auxiliary society shall annually forward a report of their proceedings to the Board,

Digitized by Google

sufficiently early to enable the Board, whose duty it shall be, to report to the General Assembly.

11th. The Board shall have power to make such bye-laws to regulate their own proceedings, and effectually to accomplish the great objects of their appointments, as shall not be inconsistent with this constitution.

12th. The Board may propose to the General Assembly, from time to time, such plans as they may consider useful and necessary for the success of this institution, to be recommended to the several societies or churches, as the Assembly may think proper.

13th. No addition or amendment to the provisions of this constitution, shall be made, unless by the consent of two-thirds of the members of the General Assembly, present at any of their sessions; of which notice shall be given at least one day previous.

Digitized by Google

PART IX.

THEOLOGICAL

SEMINARY.

CHAPTER I.

OF THE PRELIMINARY ACTS OF THE ASSEMBLY.

Sect. 1. *Plans submitted to the consideration of the Presbyteries, in* 1809.

THE Committee to which was referred the overture in relation to the establishment of a Theological School, brought in the following report; which, being read, was adopted, and is as follows:

The committee appointed on the subject of a Theological School, overtured from the Presbytery of Philadelphia, report,

That three modes of compassing this important object have presented themselves to their consideration.

Digitized by Google

The first is, to establish one great School, in some convenient place, near the centre of the bounds of our church.

The second is, to establish two such schools, in such places as may best accommodate the northern and southern divisions of the church.

The third is, to establish such a school, within the bounds of each of the Synods. In this case, your committee suggest the propriety of leaving it to each Synod to direct the mode of forming the school, and the place where it shall be established.

The advantages attending the first of the proposed modes are, that it would be furnished with larger funds, and, therefore, with a more extensive library, and a greater number of professors.

The system of education pursued in it, would, therefore, be more extensive and more perfect; the youths educated in it would also become more united in the same views, and contract an early and lasting friendship for each other; circumstances which could not fail of promoting harmony and prosperity in the church. The disadvantages attending this mode would be, principally those derived from the distance of its position from the extremities of the presbyterian bounds.

The advantages attending the second of the proposed modes, and the disadvantages will readily suggest themselves, from a comparison of this with the other two.

The advantages which would attend the third, to wit; the establishment of theological schools, by the respective synods, would be the following. The local situation of the respective schools would

Digitized by Google

be peculiarly convenient for the several parts of a country so extensive, as that for the benefit of which they were designed. The inhabitants having the seminaries brought near to them, would feel a peculiar interest in their prosperity, and may be rationally expected to contribute to it much more liberally, than to a single school, or even to two. The synods also, having the immediate care of them, and directing either in person, or by delegation, all their concerns, would feel a similar interest, and would probably be better pleased with a system formed by themselves, and therefore peculiarly suited to the wishes and interests of the several parts of the church immediately under their direction. Greater efforts, therefore, may be expected from ministers and people, to promote the prosperity of these schools, than of any other. The disadvantages of this mode would be, the inferiority of the funds, a smaller number of professors, a smaller library, and a more limited system of education in each. The students also, would, as now, be strangers to each other.

Should the last of these modes be adopted, your committee are of opinion that every thing pertaining to the erection and conduct of each school, should be left to the direction of the respective Synods. If either of the first, the whole should be subject to the controul of the General Assembly.

Your committee also suggest, that in the former of these cases, the funds for each school should be raised within the bounds of the Synod, within which it was stationed. In the latter they should be collected from the whole body of the church.

Digitized by Google

Your committee, therefore, submit the following resolution: to wit,

Resolved, That the above plans be submitted to all the Presbyteries within the bounds of the General Assembly, for their consideration, and that they be careful to send up to the next Assembly, at their sessions in May, 1810, their opinions on the subject.

Sect. 2. *The Plan determined on, in* 1810.

The Presbyteries were called upon to state what they had respectively done with respect to the recommendation of the last Assembly, relative to the establishment of a Theological school.

The committee appointed to present to the Assembly a plan for the establishment of a Theological school, reported, and the report was laid on the table.

The Committee appointed farther to consider the subject of Theological schools, reported; and the report, being read and amended, was adopted, and is as follows: *viz.*

That after maturely deliberating on the subject committed to them, they submit to the Assembly the following results.

1. It is evident, that not only a majority of the Presbyteries which have reported on this subject, but also a majority of all the Presbyteries, under the care of this Assembly, have expressed a decided opinion in favour of the establishment of a Theological School or schools in our church.

Digitized by Google

2. It appears to the committee, that although, according to the statement already reported to the Assembly, there is an equal number of Presbyteries in favour of the first plan, which contemplates a single school for the whole church; and in favour of the third plan, which contemplates the erection of a school in each Synod; yet, as several of the objections made to the first plan, are founded entirely on misconception, and will be completely obviated, by developing the details of that plan; it seems fairly to follow, that there is a greater amount of Presbyterial suffrage in favour of a single school, than of any other plan.

3. Under these circumstances, the committee are of opinion, that, as much light has been obtained from the reports of Presbyteries, on this subject, as would be likely to result from a renewal of the reference, no advantage will probably arise from farther delay in this important concern, but, on the contrary, much serious inconvenience and evil; that the present Assembly is bound to attempt to carry into execution some one of the plans proposed; and that the first plan, appearing to have, on the whole, the greatest share of public sentiment in its favour, ought of course to be adopted.

4. Your committee therefore recommend, that the present General Assembly declare its approbation and adoption of this plan, and immediately commence a course of measures for carrying it into execution, as promptly and extensively as possible; and for this purpose, they recommend to the Assembly, the adoption of the following resolutions.

Digitized by Google

Resolved, 1. That the state of our churches, the loud and affecting calls of destitute frontier settlements, and the laudable exertions of various christian denominations around us; all demand, that the the collected wisdom, piety and zeal of the Presbyterian church, be, without delay, called into action, for furnishing the church, with a large supply of able and faithful ministers.

2. That the General Assembly will, in the name of the Great Head of the church, immediately attempt to establish a Seminary for securing to candidates for the ministry more extensive and efficient theological instruction, than they have heretofore enjoyed. The local situation of this seminary is hereafter to be determined.

3. That, in this Seminary, when completely organized, there shall be at least three professors; who shall be elected by, and hold their offices during, the pleasure of, the General Assembly, and who shall give a regular course of instruction in divinity, oriental and biblical literature, and in ecclesiastical history and church government, and on such other subjects as may be deemed necessary. It being, however, understood that, until sufficient funds can be obtained for the complete organization and support of the proposed Seminary, a smaller number of professors than three may be appointed to commence the system of instruction.

4. That exertions be made to provide such an amount of funds for this seminary as will enable its conductors, to afford gratuitous instruction, and, where it is necessary, gratuitous support, to all such students as may not themselves possess adequate pecuniary means.

Digitized by Google

5. That the Rev. Drs. Green, Woodhull, Romeyn and Miller, the Rev. Messrs. Archibald Alexander, James Richards, and Amzi Armstrong, be a committee to digest and prepare a plan of a Theological Seminary; embracing in detail; the fundamental principles of the Institution, together with regulations for guiding the conduct of the instructors and the students; and prescribing the best mode of visiting, of controuling and supporting the whole system. This plan is to be reported to the next General Assembly.

* * * * * * * * *

7. That, as filling the church with a learned and able ministry without a corresponding portion of real piety, would be a curse to the world, and an offence to God and his people; so the General Assembly think it their duty to state, that in establishing a Seminary for training up ministers, it is their earnest desire to guard, as far as possible, against so great an evil. And they do hereby solemnly pledge themselves to the churches under their care, that in forming and carrying into execution the plan of the proposed seminary, it will be their endeavour to make it, under the blessing of God, a nursery of vital piety, as well as of sound theological learning, and to train up persons for the ministry, who shall be lovers as well as defenders of the truth as it is in Jesus, friends of revivals of religion, and a blessing to the church of God.

8. That as the the Constitution of our Church guarantees to every Presbytery the right of judging of its own candidates for licensure and ordination; so the Assembly think it proper to state, most explicitly, that every Presbytery and Synod

Digitized by Google

will, of course, be left at full liberty to countenance the proposed plan or not, at pleasure; and to send their students to the projected Seminary, or keep them as heretofore within their own bounds, as they may think most conducive to the prosperity of the church.

9. That the professors in the Seminary shall not, in any case, be considered as having a right to license candidates to preach the Gospel, but that all such candidates shall be remitted to their respective Presbyteries to be licensed as heretofore.

10. *Resolved*, Finally, that Dr. Samuel Miller, and Rev. James Richards be a committee, to prepare a draught of an address from this Assembly to the churches under our care; calling their attention to the subject of a Theological School, and earnestly soliciting their patronage and support, in the execution of the plan now proposed.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER II.

OF THE PLAN OF THE SEMINARY.*

Sect. 1. *The design of the Seminary,*†

INASMUCH as the obtaining of salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord, to the glory of the eternal God, is the chief object which claims the attention of man; and considering, that in the attainment of this object the dispensation of the Gospel is principally instrumental; it is manifestly of the highest importance, that the best means be used to ensure the faithful preaching of the Gospel, and the pure administration of all its ordinances. With this view, therefore, institutions for the education of youth intended for the holy ministry, have been established in all Christian countries, and have been found, by long experience, most eminently conducive to the prosperity of the Church. Hence the founders of the Presbyterian Church in the

* This Plan was adopted in 1811, and is published as amended by future Assemblies.

† To preserve uniformity in this volume, what has heretofore been dedominated ARTIGLES in the Plan is denominated SECTIONS; and the former sections are distinguished numerically.

Digitized by Google

United States of America, did, from its very origin, exert themselves with peculiar zeal to establish and endow colleges, academies, and schools, for the education of youth for the Gospel ministry. So rapid, however, has been the extension of this Church, and so disproportionate, of late, has been the number of ministers educated, to the call which has been made for ministerial service, that some additional and vigorous efforts to increase the supply are loudly and affectingly demanded. Circumstances also do imperiously dictate, not only that the labourers in the vineyard of the Lord should be multiplied, but that they should be more thoroughly furnished than they have ordinarily been for the arduous work to which they must be called. Influenced by the views and considerations now recited, the General Assembly, after mature deliberation, have resolved, in reliance on the patronage and blessing of the Great Head of the Church, to establish a new Institution, consecrated solely to the education of men for the Gospel ministry, and to be denominated, *The Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.* And to the intent that the true design of the founders of this institutionn may be known to the public, both now and in time to come, and especially that this design may, at all times, be distinctly viewed, and sacredly regarded, both by the teachers and the pupils of the Seminary, it is judged proper to make a summary and explicit statement of it.

It is to form men for the Gospel ministry, who shall truly believe, and cordially love, and therefore endeavour to propagate and defend, in its

Digitized by Google

genuineness, simplicity, and fulness, that system of religious belief and practice which is set forth in the Confession of Faith, Catechisms, and Plan of Government and Discipline of the Presbyterian Church; and thus to perpetuate and extend the influence of true evangelical piety, and Gospel order.

It is to provide for the Church an adequate supply and succession of able and faithful ministers of the New Testament; workmen that *need not be ashamed*, being qualified *rightly to divide the word of truth*.

It is to unite, in those who shall sustain the ministerial office, religion and literature; that piety of the heart which is the fruit only of the renewing and sanctifying grace of God, with solid learning: believing that religion without learning, or learning without religion, in the ministers of the Gospel, must ultimately prove injurious to the Church.

It is to afford more advantages than have hitherto been usually possessed by the ministers of religion in our country, to cultivate both piety and literature in their preparatory course: piety, by placing it in circumstances favourable to its growth, and by cherishing and regulating its ardour; literature, by affording favourable opportunities for its attainment, and by making its possession indispensable.

It is to provide for the Church, men who shall be able to defend her faith against infidels, and her doctrines against heretics.

It is to furnish our congregations with enlightened, humble, zealous, laborious pastors, who shall truly watch for the good of souls, and con-

Digitized by Google

sider it as their highest honour and happiness to win them to the Saviour, and to build up their several charges in holiness and peace.

It is to promote harmony and unity of sentiment among the ministers of our Church, by educating a large body of them under the same teachers, and in the same course of study.

It is to lay the foundation of early and lasting friendships, productive of confidence and mutual assistance in after-life among the ministers of religion; which experience shows to be conducive not only to personal happiness, but to the perfecting of inquiries, researches, and publications advantageous to religion.

It is to preserve the unity of our Church, by educating her ministers in an enlightened attachment, not only to the same doctrines, but to the same plan of government.

It is to bring to the service of the Church genius and talent, when united with piety, however poor or obscure may be their possessor, by furnishing, as far as possible, the means of education and support, without expense to the student.

It is to found a nursery for missionaries to the heathen, and to such as are destitute of the stated preaching of the gospel; in which youth may receive that appropriate training which may lay a foundation for their ultimately becoming eminently qualified for missionary work.

It is, finally, to endeavour to raise up a succession of men, at once *qualified for* and thoroughly *devoted to* the work of the Gospel ministry; who, with various endowments, suiting them to different stations in the church of Christ, may all possess a portion of the spirit of the primitive propagators of

Digitized by Google

the Gospel; prepared to make every sacrifice, to endure every hardship, and to render every service which the promotion of pure and undefiled religion may require.

*Sect. 2. Of the General Assembly.**

1. As this institution derives its origin from the General Assembly, so that body is to be considered at all times as its patron, and the fountain of its powers. The Assembly shall accordingly ultimately sanction all its laws, direct its instructions, and appoint its principal officers.

2. The General Assembly shall choose a Board of Directors, consisting of twenty-one ministers and nine ruling elders, by whom the Seminary shall be inspected and conducted. Of this number, one-third, or seven ministers and three elders, shall be chosen annually; to continue in office three years. And if any vacancy shall occur in the Board, by death, resignation, or incapacity to serve, the Assembly may annually fill up such vacancies.

3. All professors of the Seminary shall be appointed by the Assembly. But in cases of necessity, the Board of Directors may employ a suitable person to perform the duties of a professor, till a meeting of the Assembly shall take place.

4. The General Assembly shall, at all times, have the power of adding to the Constitutional Articles of the Seminary, and of abrogating, altering, or amending them; but, in the exercise of this power, the contemplated additions, abrogations, alterations,

* This is Article I. in the original Plan.

Digitized by Google

or amendments, shall, in every case, be proposed at one Assembly, and not adopted till the Assembly of the subsequent year, except by unanimous vote.

Sect. 3. *Of the Board of Directors.*

1. The Board of Directors shall meet statedly, twice in each year; once in the spring, and once in the fall, and oftener on their own adjournments, if they shall judge it expedient. Eleven members of the Board shall be a quorum; provided always, that of this number six, at least, be ministers of the Gospel, and the president, or, in case of his absence, the vice president be one.

2. The Board shall choose out of their own number, a president, vice-president and secretary. In the absence of the president and vice-president, the senior member present shall preside.

3. The president of the Board, or in the event of his death, absence, or inability to act, the vice-president, shall at the request of any three members, expressed to him in writing, call a special meeting of the Board of directors by a circular letter addressed to each; in which letter notice shall be given, not only of the place and time of meeting, but of the business intended to be transacted at the meeting notified; and this letter shall be sent at least twenty days before the time of said meeting.

4. The Secretary of the Board shall keep accurate records of all the proceedings of the directors; and it shall be his duty to lay these records, or a faithful transcript of the same, before the General Assembly, annually, for the unrestrained inspection of all the members.

Digitized by Google

5. Every meeting of the Board of directors shall be opened and closed with prayer.

6. The Board of directors may make rules and regulations for the performance of the duties assigned them, or for the preservation of order, not inconsistent with the prescriptions of this plan, or the orders of the General Assembly.

7. At the commencement of each stated spring meeting, the whole plan of the Seminary shall be distinctly read before the Board of directors.

8. The Board shall direct the professors of the Seminary, in regard to the subjects and topics on which they are severally to give instructions to the pupils, so far as the same shall not be prescribed by this plan, or by the orders of the General Assembly.

9. It shall be the duty of the Board of directors to inaugurate the professors of the Seminary, and to direct what forms shall be used, and what services performed, on such occasions.

10. Every director, previously to his taking his seat as a member of the board, shall solemnly subscribe the following formula: *viz.*—"Approving the plan of the Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, I solemnly declare and promise, in the presence of God and of this Board, that I will faithfully endeavour to carry into effect all the articles and provisions of said plan, and to promote the great design of the Seminary."

11. The Board of directors shall inspect the fidelity of the professors, especially in regard to the doctrines actually taught; and if, after due inquiry and examination, they shall judge that any professor is either unsound in the faith, opposed to

Digitized by Google

the fundamental principles of Presbyterian Church Government, immoral in his conduct, unfaithful to his trust, or incompetent to the discharge of his duties, they shall faithfully report him as such to the General Assembly. Or if the longer continuance of a professor be judged highly dangerous, the directors may immediately suspend him, and appoint another in his place, till the whole business can be reported, and submitted to the Assembly.

12. It shall be the duty of the Board of directors to watch over the conduct of the students; to redress grievances: to examine into the whole course of instruction and study in the Seminary; and generally to superintend and endeavour to promote all its interests.

13. The Board of directors shall make, in writing, a detailed and faithful report of the state of the Seminary, to every General Assembly; and they may, at the same time, recommend such measures for the advantage of the Seminary, as to them may appear proper.

14. At every stated meeting of the Board of directors, unless particular circumstances render it inexpedient, there shall be at least one sermon delivered in the presence of the Board, the professors, and students, by a director or directors previously appointed for the purpose.

Sect. 4. *Of the Professors.*

1. The numbers of the professors in the Seminary shall be increased or diminished, as the Assembly may, from time to time, direct. But when the Seminary shall be completely organized, there shall not be less than three professors; one of Di-

Digitized by Google

dactic and Polemic Divinity; one of Oriental and Biblical Literature; and one of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government.

2. No person shall be inducted into the office of professor of divinity, but an ordained minister of the Gospel.

3. Every person elected to a professorship, in this Seminary, shall, on being inaugurated, solemnly subscribe the Confession of Faith, Catechisms, and Form of Government of the Presbyterian Church, agreeably to the following formula: *viz.*—"In the presence of God and of the directors of this Seminary, I do solemnly, and *ex animo* adopt, receive, and subscribe the Confession of Faith, and Catechisms of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, as the confession of my faith, or, as a summary and just exhibition of that system of doctrine and religious belief which is contained in holy Scripture, and therein revealed by God to man for his salvation; and I do solemnly *ex animo* profess to receive the Form of Government of said Church, as agreeable to the inspired oracles. And I do solemnly promise and engage, not to inculcate, teach, or insinuate any thing which shall appear to me to contradict or contravene, either directly or impliedly, any thing taught in the said Confession of Faith or Catechisms; nor to oppose any of the fundamental principles of Presbyterian Church Government, while I shall continue a professor in this Seminary."

4. The salaries of the professors shall be recommended by the directors; but they shall be fixed only by a vote of the General Assembly.

5. The professors may accompany their lectures and recitations with prayer, as frequently as they

Digitized by Google

may judge proper, in addition to those daily seasons of prayer in which all the students will unite.

6. Each professor shall lay before the Board of directors, as soon as practicable after his appointment, a detailed exhibition of the system and method which he proposes to pursue, and the subjects which he proposes to discuss, in conducting the studies of the youth that shall come under his care: and in this system he shall make such alterations or additions as the Board shall direct; so that, eventually, the whole course through which the pupils shall be carried, shall be no other than that which the Board of directors shall have approved and sanctioned, conformably to Sect. 3. No. 8. And as often as any professor shall think that variations and additions of importance may be advantageously introduced into his course of teaching, he shall submit the same to the Board of directors, for their approbation or rejection.

7. Every professor shall, if practicable, have at least one lecture or recitation every day, on which the pupils, in his branch of instruction, shall be bound to attend; and on which the other pupils of the Seminary shall attend as often, and in such manner, as may be directed by the majority of the Board of directors.

8. Any professor intending to resign his office, shall give six months notice of such intention to the Board of directors.

9. The professors of the Institution shall be considered as a faculty. They shall meet at such seasons as they may judge proper. In every meeting the professor of didactic and polemic divinity shall preside, if he be present. If he be absent, a president shall be chosen pro tempore. The faculty

Digitized by Google

shall choose a clerk, and keep accurate records of all their proceedings; which records shall be laid before the directors at every meeting of the Board. The president of the faculty shall call a meeting whenever he shall judge it expedient, and whenever he shall be requested to do so by any other member. By the faculty, regularly convened, shall be determined the hours and seasons at which the classes shall attend the professors severally, so as to prevent interference and confusion, and to afford to the pupils the best opportunities of improvement. The faculty shall attend to, and decide on all cases of discipline, and all questions of order, as they shall arise. They shall agree on the rules of order, decorum, and duty, (not inconsistent with any provision in the plan of the Seminary, nor with any order of the Board of directors,) to which the students shall be subjected; and these they shall reduce to writing, and cause to be publicly and frequently read. They shall determine the hours at which the whole of the pupils shall, morning and evening, attending for social worship; and the manner in which, and the person or persons, of their own number, by whom, the exercises of devotion shall be conducted.

10. The faculty shall be empowered to dismiss from the Seminary any student who shall prove unsound in his religious sentiments; immoral or disorderly in his conduct; or who may be, in their opinion, on any account whatsoever, a dangerous, or unprofitable member of the Institution.

11. Each member of the faculty shall have an equal vote.

12. It shall be the duty of the professors, under the direction of the Board of directors, to supply

Digitized by Google

the pupils of the Institution with the preaching of the Gospel, and the administration of the Sacraments of the Christian Church; if this supply shall not, in the judgment of the directors, be satisfactorily furnished by a Church or Churches in the place where the Institution shall be established.

Sect. 5. *Of Study and Attainments.*

As the particular course of study pursued in any Institution will, and perhaps ought to, be modified in a considerable degree, by the views and habits of the teachers; and ought, moreover, to be varied, altered, or extended, as experience may suggest improvements; it is judged proper to specify, not so precisely the course of study, as the attainments which must be made. Therefore,

1. Every student, at the close of his course, must have made the following attainments: *viz.* He must be well skilled in the original languages of the Holy Scriptures. He must be able to explain the principal difficulties which arise in the perusal of the Scriptures, either from erroneous translations, apparent inconsistencies, real obscurities, or objections arising from history, reason, or argument. He must be versed in Jewish and Christian antiquities, which serve to explain and illustrate Scripture. He must have an acquaintance with ancient geography, and with oriental customs, which throw light on the sacred records.—Thus he will have laid the foundation for becoming a sound biblical critic.

He must have read and digested the principal arguments and writings relative to what has been called the deistical controversy.—Thus will he be

Digitized by Google

qualified to become a defender of the Christian faith.

He must be able to support the doctrines of the Confession of Faith and Catechisms, by a ready, pertinent, and abundant quotation of Scripture texts for that purpose. He must have studied, carefully and correctly, Natural, Didactic, Polemic, and Casuistic Theology. He must have a considerable acquaintance with General History and Chronology, and a particular acquaintance with the history of the Christian Church.—Thus he will be preparing to become an able and sound divine and casuist.

He must have read a considerable number of the best practical writers on the subject of religion. He must have learned to compose with correctness and readiness in his own language, and to deliver what he has composed to others in a natural and acceptable manner. He must be well acquainted with the several parts, and the proper structure of popular lectures and sermons. He must have composed at least two lectures and four popular sermons, that shall have been approved by the professors. He must have carefully studied the duties of the pastoral care.—Thus he will be prepared to become a useful preacher, and a faithful pastor.

He must have studied attentively the form of Church Government authorized by the Scriptures, and the administration of it as it has taken place in Protestant Churches.—Thus he will be qualified to exercise discipline, and to take part in the government of the Church in all its judicatories.

2. The period of continuance in the Theological Seminary shall, in no case, be less than three years,

Digitized by Google

previously to an examination for a certificate of approbation. But students may enter the Seminary, and enjoy the course of instruction for a shorter time than three years; provided they in all other respects submit to the laws of the Seminary, of which facts they may receive a written declaration from the professors.

3. There shall be an examination of all the pupils in the Seminary at every stated meeting of the Board of Directors. Those pupils who shall have regularly and diligently studied for three years, shall be admitted to an examination on the subjects specified in this section. All examinations shall be conducted by the Professors, in the presence of the Directors, or a committee of them.—Every Director present shall be at liberty, during the progress of any examination, or after the same shall have been closed by the Professors, to put to any pupil such questions as he shall deem proper. Every pupil that shall have passed his final examination to the satisfaction of the Directors present, shall receive a certificate of the same, signed by the Professors, with which he shall be remitted to the Presbytery under whose care he is placed, to be disposed of as such Presbytery shall direct. Those who do not pass a satisfactory examination shall remain a longer space in the Seminary.

4. It shall be the object of the professors to make such arrangements in the instruction of their pupils, as shall be best adapted to enable them, in the space of three years, to be examined with advantage on the subjects specified in this section.

Digitized by Google

Sect. 6. Of Devotion, and Improvement in Practical Piety.

It ought to be considered as an object of primary importance by every student in the Seminary, to be careful and vigilant not to lose that inward sense of the power of godliness which he may have attained; but, on the contrary, to grow continually in a spirit of enlightened devotion and fervent piety; deeply impressed with the recollection that without this, all his other acquisitions will be comparatively of little worth, either to himself, or to the Church of which he is to be a minister.

He must remember, too, that this is a species of improvement which must of necessity, be left, in a great measure, with himself, as a concern between God and his own soul.

It is proper, however, to delineate the path of duty, to express the wishes and expectations of the founders of the Seminary, and to make such requirements as the nature of the subject will permit.

1. It is expected that every student in the Theological Seminary will spend a portion of time every morning and evening in devout meditation, and self-recollection and examination; in reading the holy Scriptures, solely with a view to a personal and practical application of the passage read, to his own heart, character, and circumstances; and in humble fervent prayer and praise to God in secret.

The whole of every Lord's day is to be devoted to devotional exercises, either of a social or secret kind. Intellectual pursuits, not immediately con-

Digitized by Google

nected with devotion or the religion of the heart, are on that day to be forborne. The books to be read are to be of a practical nature. The conversations had with each other are to be chiefly on religious subjects. Associations for prayer and praise, and for religious conference, calculated to promote a growth in grace, are also proper for this day; subject to such regulations as the professors and directors may see proper to prescribe. It is wished and recommended, that each student should ordinarily set apart one day in a month for special prayer and self-examination in secret, and also that he should, on suituable occasions, attend to the duty of fasting.

2. If any student shall exhibit, in his general deportment, a levity or indifference in regard to practical religion, though it do not amount to any over-act of irreligion or immorality, it shall be the duty of the professor who may observe it, to admonish him tenderly and faithfully in private, and endeavour to engage him to a more holy temper, and a more exemplary deportment.

3. If a student, after due admonition, persist in a system of conduct not exemplary in regard to religion, he shall be dismissed from the Seminary.

4. The professors are particularly charged, by all the proper means in their power, to encourage, cherish and promote devotion and personal piety among their pupils, by warning and guarding them, on the one hand, against formality and indifference, and on the other, against ostentation and enthusiasm; by inculcating practical religion in their lectures and recitations; by taking suitable occasions

Digitized by Google

to converse with their pupils privately on this interesting subject; and by all other means incapable of being minutely specified, by which they may foster true experimental religion, and unreserved devotedness to God.

Sect. 7. Of the Students.

1. Every student, applying for admission to the Theological Seminary, shall produce satisfactory testimonials that he possesses good natural talents, and is of a prudent and discreet deportment; that he is in full communion with some regular Church: that he has passed through a regular course of academical study; or, wanting this, he shall submit himself to an examination in regard to the branches of literature taught in such a course.

2. The first six months of every student in the Seminary shall be considered as probationary; and if, at the end of this period, any student shall appear to the professors not qualified to proceed in his studies, they shall so report him to the Board of directors, who, if they are of the same opinion with the professors, shall dismiss him from the Seminary.

3. The hours of study and of recreation for the students shall be fixed by the professors, with the concurrence of the directors; and every student shall pay a strict regard to the rules established relative to this subject.

4. Every student shall be obliged to write on such theological and other subjects, as may be prescribed to him by the professors. In the first year, every student shall be obliged to produce a

Digitized by Google

written composition on such subjects, at least once in every month; in the second year, once in three weeks; in the third year, once in two weeks. Once a month each student shall also commit to memory a piece of his own composition, and pronounce it in public, before the professors and students.

5. Every student shall not only preserve an exemplary moral character, but shall be expected to treat his teachers with the greatest deference and respect, and all other persons with civility.

6. Every student shall yield a prompt and ready obedience to all the lawful requisitions of the professors and directors.

7. Diligence and industry in study shall be considered as indispensable in every student, unless the want of health shall prevent, of which the professors shall take cognizance, and make the suitable allowance.

8. Strict temperance in meat and drink is expected of every student, with cleanliness and neatness in his dress and habits; while all excessive expense in clothing is strictly prohibited.

9. Every student, before he takes his standing in the Seminary, shall subscribe the following declaration: *viz.*—"Deeply impressed with a sense of the importance of improving in knowledge, prudence, and piety, in my preparation for the Gospel Ministry, I solemnly promise, in a reliance on divine grace, that I will faithfully and diligently attend to all the instructions of this Seminary, and that I will conscientiously and vigilantly observe all the rules and regulations specified in the plan for its instruction and government, so far as the

Digitized by Google

same relate to the students; and that I will obey all the lawful requisitions, and readily yield to all the wholesome admonitions of the professors and directors of the Seminary, while I shall continue a member of it."

10. There shall be three vacations in the Seminary every year. The spring vacation to continue six weeks; the fall vacation six weeks; and the winter vacation two weeks. The vacations to commence at such times as the Board of Directors shall deem most expedient.

Sect. 8. *Of the Library.**

1. To obtain, ultimately, a complete theological Library, shall be considered as a leading object of the Institution.

2. It shall be the duty of the directors to present to the General Assembly, a catalogue of the most necessary books for the commencement of a library, and recommend the purchase of such a number as the state of the funds will permit.

3. It shall be the duty of the professors to procure and keep a large folio, to be denominated, *The Prospectus of a Catalogue of a Theological Library.* In this folio, divided into proper heads, each professor shall, at his pleasure, enter, in its proper place, the title of such books as he shall deliberately judge to be proper for the library. The Board of directors, or the members of it individually, may do the same. From this folio it shall

* This Section is laid over for the consideration of a future Assembly.

Digitized by Google

be the duty of the directors to select such books as they think most necessary, and as the sum appropriated for the current year will purchase, and recommend their purchase to the Assembly. The Assembly shall, annually, decide by vote, what sum of money, for the current year, shall be laid out in the purchase of books.

4. A suitable room or apartment shall be assigned for the library. The shelves for the books shall be divided into compartments or alcoves; and if any of them be filled, or nearly so, by a donor, his name shall be conspicuously placed over it.

5. A Librarian shall be appointed by the Assembly.

6. No book shall be permitted, on any occasion, to be carried away from the Seminary.

7. A book of donations shall be carefully kept by the Librarian, in which shall be entered, by him, the books given to the library, the time when, and the name of the donor.

8. Regulations for the use of the library, not inconsistent with the provisions of this Section, shall be detailed in a system of by-laws, for that purpose; to be draughted by the first Librarian, and occasionally modified and added to, as circumstances shall require, by his successors; which regulations, after being ratified by the Board of directors, shall be authoritative.

Sect. 9. *Of the Funds.*

1. The funds of the Institution shall be kept, at all times, entirely distinct and separate from all

Digitized by Google

other monies or funds whatsoever; and they shall be deposited in the hands of such corporation, or disposed of for safe keeping and improvement, in such other manner, as the General Assembly shall direct.

2. The Board of directors shall, from time to time, as they may see proper, lay before the Assembly plans for the improvement of the funds, and propositions for the appropriation of such sums as they may think necessary for particular purposes.

3. No money shall, at any time, be drawn from the funds, but by an appropriation and order of the Assembly for the purpose.

4. A fair statement shall annually be laid before the Assembly, by the proper officer, of the amount of the funds belonging to the Seminary, of the items which constitute that amount, and of the expenditures in detail for the preceding year.

5. The intention and directions of testators or donors, in regard to monies or other property left, or given to the Seminary, shall, at all times, be sacredly regarded. And if any individual, or any number of individuals, not greater than three, shall by will, or during his or their lives, found or endow a professorship or professorships, a scholarship or scholarships, or a fund or funds, destined to special purposes, said professorships, scholarships, or funds, shall for ever afterwards be called and known by the name or names of those who founded or endowed them. And if any congregation, Presbytery, Synod, or Association, shall found a professorship or professorships, scholarship or scholarships, or a fund or funds, said professorship or professorships, or scholarship or scholar-

Digitized by Google

ships, fund or funds, shall forever afterwards be called or known by such name as the body founding them shall give.*

6. After supporting the professors, and defraying the other necessary charges of the Seminary, the funds shall be applied, as far as circumstances will admit, to defray or diminish the expenses of those students who may need pecuniary aid, as well as to lessen, generally, the expense of a residence at the Seminary.

CHAPTER III.

OF THE LOCATION OF THE SEMINARY.

Sect. 1. *Princeton selected as the site, in* 1812.

THE resolution for locating the Theological Seminary, was again resumed; and, after considerable discussion and special prayer for direction on the important subject, was adopted, and is as follows: *viz.*

Resolved, That Princeton be the site of the The-

* The sum necessary to endow a Professorship is not less than 25,000 dollars, and to endow a scholarship, not less than 2,500 dollars.

Digitized by Google

ological Seminary; leaving the subject open as to its permanency, agreeably to stipulations agreed upon by the joint committees of the last Assemby and the Trustees of the College of New Jersey.

Sect. 2. The agreement between a Committee of the General Assembly and a Committee of the Trustees of the College of New Jersey, in 1811.

The following plan of an agreement, between a Committee appointed by the last General Assembly and a Committee of the Trustees of the College of New Jersey, for the location and establishment of a Theological Seminary, was submitted to this Assembly, and was adopted, and is as follows: *viz.*

1. That the Theological Seminary, about to be erected by the General Assembly, shall have its location in Princeton, or its immediate vicinity, in the State of New Jersey; and in such connection with the College of New Jersey, as is implied in the following articles.

2. That the Trustees of the College engage, that the General Assembly, and Directors to be by them appointed, shall carry into full and complete effect, without any interposition, interference, let or hindrance from them the Trustees or their successors, the whole plan of a Theological Seminary as laid down and agreed upon at a meeting of the Assembly, in the present year of our Lord 1811—That is to say, that the said General Assembly shall appoint their Directors, choose their Professors, carry on their instruction, govern their pupils, and manage their funds, as to them shall appear best.

Digitized by Google

3. That the Trustees of the College engage to the General Assembly freely to allow them to erect, at their own expense, on the grounds belonging to the College, such buildings for the accommodation of pupils and professors as they may judge proper, and which may not interfere with the buildings and their conveniences already erected by the Trustees: and to prevent all future dissatisfaction on this subject, that it be agreed, that when the General Assembly or the Directors of the Theological Seminary may wish to erect any building on the College grounds, and there shall be any discordance of views relative to the same; then the General Assembly, or the Directors aforesaid, shall appoint three men, and the Board of Trustees the same number, and these six shall choose one man, not belonging to either body; and these seven men, by a majority of votes, shall determine whether said building can be properly erected on said grounds, and if so, what shall be the site and size of the same; and that this determination shall be conclusive and final with both parties: Provided nothing contained in this article shall be understood, to prohibit the General Assembly, or the Directors of the Theological Seminary from making use of any other ground within the limits prescribed in article first for the purposes aforesaid.

4. That the Trustees engage to the General Assembly to grant them every practicable accommodation in the buildings now existing; not only till others may be erected by the General Assembly, but afterwards, so long as the same may be desirable.

Digitized by Google

5. That the Trustees engage to endeavour to receive into the College all the youth whom the Assembly, or the Directors by them appointed, may send to it for the purpose of education, subject to such examination at entrance, and to such discipline during their residence in College, as the other pupils of the College are subjected to; the Trustees to receive for the expenses of board, tuition, and room rent, the same as for others; and giving to the Assembly the assurance that as pupils increase, and the funds of the College will permit, they will reduce as low as possible, all the expenses of the pupils under their care.

6. That the Trustees agree to receive and hold, for the use of the Assembly, such sums of money, as they may voluntarily choose to deposite in the hands of the Trustees for improvement; so as to incur no inconvenience to said Trustees from the limitation of their charter; and that such sums of money be accordingly invested in such funds as the Assembly shall direct; that the Trustees pay the interest thereof when received to the order of the Assembly, keep it wholly separate from the funds of the College, and pay over or transfer to the order of the Assembly, the principal sum whenever they shall so direct.

7. That the Trustees grant to the professors and pupils of the Theological Seminary the free use of the College library; subject to such rules as may be adopted for the preservation of the books, and the good order of the same.

8. That, if the General Assembly shall wish to establish at Princeton an elementary school, for the instruction of youth in such learning as usually

Digitized by Google

precedes their entrance into college, the Trustees agree to aid them in this undertaking, by every accommodation and all the patronage in their power; so, however, as not to engage to make drafts on the funds of the College for the purpose.

9. That, if at any time the General Assembly shall find, that the connexion between their Seminary and the College does not conduce sufficiently to the great purposes contemplated to be answered by the said Seminary, they shall be at liberty to remove it to some other place. And the Trustees engage that, while the Theological Seminary shall remain at Princeton, no Professorship of Theology shall be established in the College.

10. That, whereas the Trustees of the College have in their hands a fund, the annual income of which is nearly eighteen hundred dollars, appropriated by the donors to the education of poor and pious youth for the gospel ministry of the Presbyterian denomination; the Trustees give an assurance to the Assembly, that if the first of these articles take effect, they will pay a high regard to the recommendation of the Assembly, or of their Directors, as to the youth who shall receive the benefit of this fund.

Princeton, June 26th, 1811.

ASHBEL GREEN,
R. STOCKTON,
JOHN WOODHULL,
} Committee of the Trustees of New Jersey College.

ARCHIBALD ALEXANDER,
JACOB J. JANEWAY,
ROBERT RALSTON,
JOHN M'DOWELL,
} Committee of General Assembly.

Digitized by Google

Sect. 3. *The Seminary permanently located, in* 1813.

The subject of locating the Theological Seminary permanently having been postponed yesterday, was called up this morning; and, after a full discussion of the subject, the following Resolution was adopted: *viz.*

Resolved, That the permanent location of the Theological Seminary be in the borough of Princeton, New Jersey, in conformity with the agreement with the Trustees of the College, signed at Princeton, June 26th, 1811, and ratified by the General Assembly, at their sessions in May, 1812.

CHAPTER IV.

OF THE MODE OF CHOOSING DIRECTORS AND PROFESSORS.

Sect. 1. *The mode adopted in* 1812.

THE Committee appointed to prepare a plan to be adopted for the election of Directors of the Theological Seminary, and of Professors in said institution reported; and their report, being read and amended, was adopted, and is as follows: *viz.*

Digitized by Google

1st. That when the Assembly shall proceed to the election of Directors of the Theological Seminary, the Clerk shall call on the members severally to nominate any number of persons, not exceeding the number to be elected, if he shall think it expedient to make any nomination.

2nd. That, when the members have been severally called upon, in the order of the roll, to make a nomination, agreeably to the above rule, the names of the persons nominated shall be immediately read by the Clerk for the information of the members; and that on the day following the Assembly proceed to elect by ballot the whole number of Directors to be chosen.

3rd. That two members be appointed to take an account of the votes given for the candidates nominated for Directors of said Theological Seminary, and to report to the Assembly the number of votes for each of the said candidates, who have a plurality of votes, who shall be declared duly elected: but if the whole number to be elected should not be elected, and two or more of the candidates should have an equal number of votes, then in that case the house shall proceed to elect from the nomination a sufficient number to complete the Board; and shall continue to vote in this manner, until the the full number specified, by the constitution of the Theological Seminary be completed.

4th. When the votes shall have been counted, and the requisite number of Directors shall have been elected in the manner above specified, the Moderator shall announce to the Assembly the names of those persons who shall appear to have the highest number of votes, and are thus elected.

Digitized by Google

5th. That, whenever a Professor or Professors are to be elected, the Assembly by a vote shall determine the day when said election shall be held; which day when said election shall be held, shall be at least two days after the above determination has been made. Immediately after the vote fixing the day has passed, the Assembly shall have a season for special prayer for direction in the choice. The election in all cases shall be made by ballot. The ballots having been counted by two members previously appointed, they shall report a statement of said votes to the Moderator; and in case there shall appear to be an equal number of votes for any two or more candidates, the Assembly shall proceed either immediately, or at some subsequent period of their sessions to a new election. The choice being made, it shall be announced to the Assembly by the Moderator.—Vol. III. p. 62.

Sect. 2. *An additional Rule adopted, in* 1815.

Resolved, That as the whole number of the Directors, is to be elected at this time, the seven ministers and the three elders, who have the greatest number of votes, be considered as elected for three years—the next highest seven ministers and three elders, for two years—and the next highest seven ministers and three elders, for one year.

Resolved, further, that if, in thus classing the Directors, any should be found to have an equal number of votes, they may be classed according to seniority in office.

Resolved, That it be the duty of the Board of Directors, every year in their report to the Assembly, to give a list of the Directors, whose term of

Digitized by Google

service may have expired, as well as of those whose seats may have become vacant by death, resignation, or incapacity to serve.—Vol. III. p. 185.

Sect. 3. Professors chosen.

1812. The Assembly proceeded to the election of a Professor of Didactic and Polemic Divinity in the Theological Seminary. After special prayer for direction on the subject, the ballots were taken and read: and the Rev. Archibald Alexander, D. D. was declared duly elected. The election being closed, a special prayer was made for a divine blessing upon the Professor and the Theological Seminary.

1813. It being the order of the day the Assembly proceeded to the election of a Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government in the Theological Seminary; and, the ballots being taken and counted, the Rev. Samuel Miller, D. D. was declared duly elected.

Sect. 4. Five Scholarships have been founded: viz.

1. The Le Roy Scholarship, } Both founded by
2. The Banyer Scholarship, } Mrs. Martha Le Roy, N. Y.

3. The Lenox Scholarship, founded by Robert Lenox, Esq. of New York.

4. The Whitehead Scholarship, founded by John Whitehead, Esq. of Burke county, Georgia.

Digitized by Google

5. The Charleston Female Scholarship, founded by the Congregational and Presbyterian Female Associations of Charleston, for assisting in the education of pious youth for the Gospel Ministry.

CHAPTER V.

OF RESOLUTIONS OF THE ASSEMBLY RELATIVE TO DIRECTORS, AGENTS, AND OTHERS.

Sect. 1. YOUR Committee further report, that
1814. in their opinion the Agents should be instructed to use their utmost exertions to promote the formation of Societies, for the accomplishment of the views of the Assembly on this important subject.

Sect. 2. *Resolved,* that the pulpits of the Agents,
1815. when they are prosecuting the business of their Agency, be supplied, when necessary, at the expense of the Assembly; and that the necessary expenses of the Agents, while performing the service assigned to them above be defrayed from what they may collect.

Digitized by Google

Sect. 3. *Resolved*, that it be, and hereby is
1815. again, enjoined on all the former and present Agents, to transmit to the Rev. John M'Dowel of Elizabethtown, New Jersey, Secretary to the Board of Directors, an accurate list of the names of the Donors to the Institution, with the sums or books which they may have given, that they may be recorded in the book kept for that purpose.

Resolved, further, that if any of the Agents should decline their appointment, the Board of Directors may, on receiving information thereof, appoint some other persons in their place, until the meeting of the next Assembly.

Sect. 4. *Resolved*, That it be, and it hereby is,
1816. made the duty of the agents appointed to solicit contributions to the Theological Seminary, to lay an account of the expenses attending that business before the Assembly, in order that the Treasurer may be authorized to pay the accounts, when approved by the Assembly.

Sect. 5. *Resolved*, That the Directors of the
1815. Theological Seminary be authorized to have printed, when they may think it expedient, a correct copy of the Plan of said Seminary; together with such other information relating to the Seminary as may appear to them important to be communicated to the public.

Sect. 6. *Resolved*, That this Assembly renew
1818. the recommendation of the last Assembly to Presbyteries and Students, that the

Digitized by Google

course of study prescribed by the Plan of the Seminary be in every case completed.

Sect. 7. *Resolved*, That the Board of Directors of
1817. the Theological Seminary be authorized to fill up any vacancies that may be occasioned by the failure of agents appointed by the Assembly; and, in case they hear of unoccupied ground were there is a prospect of obtaining aid, they have the power of appointing agents for such places.

Sect. 8. *Resolved*, * * * * * That the Board of Directors take measures to
1818. procure and have published, in such manner as they shall think best, the names of the Donors to the Seminary, and of the charitable institutions that have in any manner contributed to the support of the institution.

Sect. 9. *Resolved*, * * * * * That the Directors of the Theological Seminary
1818. be charged with preparing and publishing, as soon as they may find it practicable, such statement in regard to the establishment and present state and circumstances of the Seminary, as shall be calculated to give full and correct information in regard to it; and that they furnish the agents to be appointed to solicit donations and contributions for the Seminary with a sufficient number of copies of this statement; and that the Directors also take the most effectual measures in their power to diffuse generally in the various parts of our country, the information contemplated by this order.

Digitized by Google

PART X.

OF MINISTERS

AND

MISSIONARIES.

Sect. 1. *Ministers should be supported.*

WITH pain we have heard, that in some parts of our church the disposition to support the gospel ministry is becoming cold. We lament this appearance the more, because we learn that there is no backwardness to advance money for objects, which, though laudable in themselves, are subordinate in importance to the preaching of the word. We trust that our people possess too much good sense, and too much respect for the God who made and redeemed them, to listen to the dreams of men who neither know what they say, nor whereof they affirm. These do not hesitate to libel an ordinance of the living God, to promote their selfish views, their degrading, prejudices. God has said, whosoever serveth at the altar, shall live of the altar. But these say no—the ministry

Digitized by Google

must be kept in want, that they may be kept humble. We fervently wish that the men who thus act towards the ministry would, to be consistent, apply their reasonings to themselves. We do not hesitate to say, that the profession of religion which is connected with a disposition to abridge the means of supporting the gospel, is, at best, suspicious. Men who do so, practically say, we love our bodies more than our souls; our temporal substance more than an eternal inheritance. It is among the foulest blots on the christian name, that, in so many instances, the confession is made of the heart being opened to receive the truth in the love of it, whilst at the same time great reluctance is displayed in giving worldly substance, for the service of Him who alone changes the heart. One of the best evidences of the power of religion, is an increase of liberality in relation to all those objects, which regard the salvation of souls and the prosperity of Zion. We hope that they who have in this respect gone back, will without delay retrace their steps, and redeem their name from reproach or suspicion.*

Sect. 2. *Diligence in discharge of pastoral duties enjoined by the Assembly, in* 1811.

See Part III. Chap. II. Sect. 21. No. 4.

Sect. 3. *Ministers should persuade their peo-*

* An extract from the narative on the state of religion for 1811.

Digitized by Google

ple to make liberal contributions in aid of the Assembly's funds.

See Part III. Chap. II. Sect. 21. No. 5.

Sect. 4. *The question whether it is proper for a Minister to hold a civil office answered by the Assembly, in* 1806.

The committee to whom were referred the communication from the Presbytery of Ohio respecting the Rev. B. M. and his letter to the Moderator of the Assembly, exhibited their report. The report having been read and amended, was adopted and is as follows:

With respect to the abstract question, whether the tenure of a civil Office be, or be not, incompatible with that of the holy Ministry; your committee are of opinion that there is nothing in the holy scriptures, or in the constitution, acts or proceedings of the Presbyterian Church, in these United States, expressly prohibiting of such union of Offices.

With respect to the particular case referred to their consideration, as Mr. M. in his letter expressly asserts, that it is not his intention to decline the Office of the Holy Ministry, and that he was led to devote himself, for the present, to the functions of an associate judge, by a state of health so infirm, as to interrupt the regular discharge of his public duties as a Minister of religion; your Committee are of opinion, that the Presbytery of Ohio ought not to censure him, unless there be some circumstances, in the case, unknown to the Assembly.

Digitized by Google

That none, however, may so far misconstrue these sentiments, as to persuade themselves that they countenance a covetous, ambitious spirit, your committee further beg leave to suggest the propriety, of cautioning your clergy against worldly mindedness; of exhorting them not to aspire after places of emolument or civil distinction; of reminding them, that the cure of souls is their peculiar business; and that they who serve at the altar ought, as far as possible, to avoid temporal avocations.—Vol. II. p. 172.

Sect. 5. *Portions of the Printed Extracts to be selected for reading to their people.*

On motion *Resolved*, That it be recommended to all the ministers within the bounds of this Assembly to read, every year, such parts of the printed extracts of the Assembly, as they may judge proper and useful.—1801. Vol. I. p. 272.

Sect. 6. *A particular line of conduct in regard to Duellists recommended by the Assembly, in* 1805.

The committee to whom was referred the proposition from the Presbytery of Baltimore respecting duelling, exhibited their report. The report being read and amended, was adopted, and is as follows: *viz.*

The General Assembly having taken into serious consideration the unhappy prevalence of the practice of duelling in the United States, and being anxiously desirous of contributing what may be in

Digitized by Google

their power, consistently with their character and situation, to discountenance and abolish this practice;

Resolved unanimously, that they do, in the most unequivocal manner, declare their utter abhorence of the practice of duelling; and of all measures tending thereto, as originating from the malevolent dispositions of the human heart and a false sense of honour; as a remnant of Gothic barbarism; as implying a presumptuous and highly criminal appeal to God, as the Sovereign Judge; as utterly inconsistent with every just principle of moral conduct; as a direct violation of the sixth commandment, and destructive of the peace and happiness of families: and the Assembly do hereby recommend it, to the ministers in their connection, to discountenance, by all proper means in their power, this scandalous practice.

Resolved, also, that it be recommended to all the ministers under the care of the Assembly, that they scrupulously refuse to attend the funeral of any person who shall have fallen in a duel; and that they admit no person, who shall have fought a duel, given or accepted a challenge, or been accessary thereto, unto the distinguished privileges of the church, until he manifest a just sense of his guilt, and give satisfactory evidence of repentance.

Sect. 7. Concert prayer meetings should be promoted.

Whereas, the King and head of the Church has, during the last year, poured out his Spirit, in a remarkable and glorious manner, on many of the

Digitized by Google

churches within our bounds, and has manifestly succeeded the efforts of Christians in years past, in their endeavours to diffuse the light of revealed truth among the heathen; and has hereby encouraged and urged the pious to united and importunate wrestling at the throne of grace:—And whereas many Christians in Asia, Africa and Europe, have agreed to set apart the *first Monday evening* of every month, that they may meet together, and say, with one heart, to the prayer hearing God, "Thy kingdom come; Come, Lord Jesus, and fill the world with thy glory;" Therefore,

Resolved, that this General Assembly do approve of concerts of prayer for the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom, and do recommend it to the friends of Zion in their connexion, as far as may be convenient, to spend the first Monday evening in every month in special prayer to God, for the coming and glorious reign of Christ on earth.—1815. Vol. III. p. 215.

Sect. 8. *To refrain from offering ardent spirits.*

The committee to which was referred the overture from the Presbytery of New Brunswick, proposing the adoption of measures to restrain vice in general, and the intemperate use of ardent spirits in particular, reported; and their report being read and amended, was adopted, and is as follows; *viz.*

That this Assembly recommend to the ministers, and all the people under their care, to use

Digitized by Google

their influence in forming associations for the suppression of vice, and the encouragement of good morals: and

That it be recommended to the ministers, elders, and deacons of the Presbyterian churches, to refrain from offering ardent spirits to those who may visit them at their respective houses, except in extraordinary cases.—1818.

Sect. 9. *To endeavour to suppress the sin of intemperance.*

See Part IV. Chap. IV. Sect. 10.

Sect. 10. *It is the duty of preachers travelling to officiate in the Eastern States, to have their qualifications certified by one or more of the Committee appointed for the purpose.*

See Part XI. Chap. II. Sect. 1. and Chap. III. Sect. 3, 4.

Sect. 11. *Missionaries may administer ordinances.*

It was moved that the restriction laid by the last General Assembly on our Missionaries, which confines them to administer the ordinance of the Lord's Supper in places only where there are church officers regularly appointed, be repealed, and it was repealed accordingly.—1798. Vol. I. p. 167.

Digitized by Google

Sect. 12. They must pay a strict regard to the instructions of the Board of Missions.

Resolved, That as reasons unknown to the Missionaries, may often influence the Committee of Missions in designating their routes, the Missionaries be directed to pay a strict regard to their instructions, and not to deviate from their prescribed course, except where insurmountable obstacles occur.—1806. Vol. II. p. 166.

Digitized by Google

PART XI.

OF INTERCOURSE

WITH

OTHER CHURCHES.

CHAPTER 1.

OF THE MANNER OF RECEIVING MINISTERS AND LICENTIATES INTO OUR CHURCH.

Sect. 1. *Regulations relating to Foreign Ministers and Licentiates adopted, in* 1800.

THE draught of certain regulations respecting the admission of foreign ministers and licentiates, reported by the committee appointed for that purpose, was again read; and having been fully considered and amended, was adopted by a large majority, and is as follows: *viz.*

"When any minister or licentiate from Europe, shall come into this country and desire to become connected with the Presbyterian church in the

Digitized by Google

United States, he may apply to any committee appointed to direct the services of travelling ministers and candidates; which committee shall inspect his credentials, and, by examination or otherwise, endeavour to ascertain his soundness in the faith and experimental acquaintance with religion, his attainments in divinity and literature, his moral and religious character and approbation of our public standard of doctrine and discipline: if the result shall be such as to encourage further trial, said committee may give him appointments to supply and recommend him to the churches, till the next meeting of the Presbytery to which said committee belongs. It shall then become the duty of such minister or licentiate to apply to that Presbytery, or to any other in whose bounds he may incline to labour; provided always that he make his application to the Presbytery at their first meeting after his coming within their bounds: And also that immediately on coming within the bounds of any Presbytery, he apply to their committee, to judge of his certificate of approbation, and, if they think it expedient, to make him appointments; or if it shall be more convenient, the application may be made to the Presbytery in the first instance; but it shall be deemed irregular for any foreign minister or licentiate to preach in any vacant church, till he shall have obtained the approbation of some Presbytery or committee of Presbytery in manner aforesaid. The Presbytery to which such minister or licentiate may apply, shall carefully examine his credentials, and not sustain a mere certificate of good standing, unless corroborated by such private letters or other collateral testimony as shall fully satisfy them as to the authenticity and sufficiency of

Digitized by Google

his testimonials. After inspecting any evidences of his literary acquirements which may be laid before them, the Presbytery shall enter into a free conversation with him, in order to discover his soundness in the faith, and experimental acquaintance with religion. If they shall obtain satisfaction on these several articles, they shall proceed to examine him on the learned languages, the arts, sciences, theology, church history and government; nor shall they receive him, unless he shall appear to have made such attainments in these several branches, as are required of those who receive their education or pass their trials among ourselves. But if upon the whole he appear to be a person worthy of encouragement, and who promises usefulness in the church, they shall receive him as a minister or candidate on probation; he first adopting our standards of doctrine and discipline, and promising subjection to the Presbytery in the Lord. During this state of probation, he may preach the gospel where regularly called, either as a stated or occasional supply, and if an ordained minister, perform every part of the ministerial functions, except that he may not vote in any judicatory, or accept a call for settlement.

If the foreigner who shall apply to any committee or Presbytery as aforesaid be an ordained minister, such committee and Presbytery may, at their discretion, dispense with the special examination on literature in this act prescribed; provided he shall exhibit satisfactory evidence that he has received such education and made such progress in languages, arts and sciences, as are required by the constitution of our church as qualifications for the gospel ministry; but in all other respects the exami-

Digitized by Google

nation shall be the same as in the case of a licentiate.

If from prospects of settlement or of greater usefulness, a minister or licentiate under probation in any Presbytery, shall wish to move into the bounds of another, he shall receive a dismission containing a certificate of his standing and character from the Presbytery under whose care he shall have been: which certificate shall entitle him to the same standing in the Presbytery into whose bounds he shall move; except that from the time of his coming under the care of this latter Presbytery, a whole year shall elapse before they come to a final judgment respecting his reception.

When any foreign minister or licentiate received on certificate, or pursuant to trials in any Presbytery shall have resided generally and preached within their bounds and under their direction for at least one year, they shall cause him to preach before them, (if they judge it expedient;) and taking into consideration as well the evidence derived from their trials, as that which may arise from his acceptance in the churches, his prudence, gravity and godly conversatiou, shall, from the combined evidence of the whole, determine either to receive him, to reject him, or to hold him under further probation. In case of receiving him at that subsequent period, the Presbytery shall report the same to their Synod at its next meeting, together with all the certificates and other testimony on which they received him, or, if it shall be more convenient, this may be made to the General Assembly.

The said Assembly or Synod (as the case may be) shall then inquire into the proceedings of the Presbytery in the affair; and if they find them to

Digitized by Google

have been irregular or deficient, they shall recommit them to the Presbytery in order to a more regular and perfect process. But if the proceedings had in the Presbytery appear to have been conformable to this regulation, they shall carefully examine all the papers laid before them by the Presbytery or which shall be exhibited by the party concerned, and considering their credibility and sufficiency, come to a final judgment, either to receive him into the Presbyterian body agreeably to his standing, or to reject him.

In order however to facilitate the settlement of foreign ministers as soon as may consist with the purity and order of the church, it is further ordained, that if the proper Synod or the General Assembly are not to meet within three months after that meeting of a Presbytery at which a foreign minister on probation is expected to be received, the Presbytery may (if they see cause) lay his testimonials before that meeting of the Assembly or Synod which shall be held next before said meeting of the Presbytery. If this Assembly or Synod shall approve the testimonials, they shall give the Presbytery such information and direction as the case may require, and remit the same to them for final issue.

In all other cases it shall be deemed irregular for any Synod or General Assembly to receive a foreign minister or licentiate, until he shall have passed his period of probation and been received and reported by some Presbytery in manner aforesaid. No minister or licentiate, after being rejected by one Presbytery, shall be received by another, or if received through mistake or otherwise,

Digitized by Google

he shall no longer be countenanced or employed after the imposition is discovered.

If however any minister or licentiate shall think himself aggrieved by the sentence of any Presbytery, he shall have a right to carry the matter by complaint to the proper Synod, or the next General Assembly, giving notice thereof to the Presbytery during the meeting at which the sentence was pronounced, or at the meeting next following.

These regulations and provisions relative to the reception of foreign ministers and licentiates, are to be considered as coming in place of all that have heretofore been established on this subject; and all judicatures and individuals under the care of the Assembly, are to regard them accordingly. Vol. I. p. 230.

Sect. 2. *Remarks relative to the preceding regulations.*

The necessity of guarding against the admission of ministers or licentiates coming from abroad defective in point either of orthodoxy or piety, was felt by the late Synod of New York and Philadelphia, at an early period. In the year 1764 they adopted a rule on this subject, which was further explained the next year. See their records p. 80 and p. 91. In the year 1774, they adopted the following regulations, which were *unanimously* approved.

Whereas, it is of the highest importance to the interest of the Redeemers Kingdom, that the greatest care be observed by church judicatures, to maintain orthodoxy in doctrine, and purity in practice, in all their members; this Synod in addition

Digitized by Google

to the agreement upon this head in the year 1764, and further explained in the year 1765, do most earnestly recommend to all their Presbyteries, to be very strict and careful respecting those matters; especially in examining the certificates and testimonials of ministers and probationers, who come from foreign churches: And that they be very cautious about receiving them, unless the authority of their certificates and testimonials be supported by private letters, or other credible and sufficient evidence. And, in order more effectually to preserve this Synod, our Presbyteries and Congregations, from imposition and abuse; every year, when any Presbytery may report that they have received any minister or probationer from a foreign church, that Presbytery shall lay before the Synod the testimonials, and all other certificates, upon which they received such minister or probationer, for the satisfaction of the Synod, before such minister or probationer shall be enrolled as a member of our body. And if the Synod shall find the said testimonials false or insufficient, the whole proceedings held by the Presbytery on the admission shall be held to be void; and the Presbytery shall not, from that time, receive or acknowledge him as a member of this body, or in ministerial communion with us—And, on the other hand, when any ministers or probationers from any foreign church shall come duly recommended, as above, we will gladly receive them as brethren, and give them every encouragement in our power.—p. 269.

To awaken the attention of the Presbyteries to this important subject, these injunctions were renewed in 1784.

Digitized by Google

The Synod, having reason, by information given since their present meeting, to apprehend the Churches under their care in imminent danger from ministers and licensed candidates of *unsound principles* coming among us, do hereby renew their former injunctions to the respective Presbyteries within their bounds, relative to this matter; and do also strictly enjoin on every member of this body, under pain of censure, to be particularly careful in this respect. And the Stated Clerk is hereby directed to furnish each of our Presbyteries with an attested copy of the said injunctions, together with a copy of this minute.—Page 373.

In the year 1798 the General Assembly adopted certain "regulations intended to embrace and extend the existing rules, respecting the reception of foreign ministers and licentiates." See Vol. I. p. 168. The next year the Presbytery of New York requested the Assembly to reconsider and rescind these regulations, which produced the following justification of them:

The committee appointed to state the grounds on which the Assembly has thought proper not to comply with the request of the Presbytery of New York, to reconsider and rescind the regulations established by the last General Assembly, relative to the introduction of foreign ministers, Reported as follows: Your committee to state, &c. beg leave to report,

1. That the first reason assigned by the Presbytery of New York, for their request, is founded on a mis-interpretation of an ambiguous expression in the constitution. The sixth section of the 11th chap. is thus expressed, "*Before any overtures or*

Digitized by Google

regulations proposed by the Assembly as STANDING RULES *shall be obligatory on the churches, it shall be necessary to transmit them to all the Presbyteries, and to receive the returns of at least, a majority of the Presbyteries in writing, approving thereof."*

Standing rules, in this section can refer only to one of the following objects—1st. To articles of the constitution, which when once established, are unalterable by the Assembly—or 2ndly. To every rule or law enacted without any term of limitation expressed in the act. The latter meaning would draw after it consequences so extensive and injurious, as forbid the Assembly to give the section that interpretation. It would reduce this Assembly to a mere committee to prepare business upon which the Presbyteries might act. It would undo, with few exceptions, all the rules that have been established by this Assembly since its first institution, and would prevent it forever from establishing any rule not limited in the terms of the act itself. Besides, *standing rules* in the evident sense of the constitution, cannot be predicated of any act made by the Assembly and repealable by it; because they are limited in their very nature, to the duration of a year, if it please the Assembly to exert the power inherent in it at all times to alter or annul them, and they continue to be rules only by the Assembly's not using its power of repeal. The law in question, is no otherwise a *standing rule,* than all other laws repealable by this Assembly.

2d. The Presbytery of New York also imputes to these rules a defect of charity towards foreign churches. The charity of this Assembly for foreign churches is undiminished. The rule is esta-

Digitized by Google

blished to guard as far as possible against impostors, who plead a relation to those churches which they do not actually hold. The churches in America have so frequently and so severely suffered by impostors of this description—and our relative position to Europe, and the newness of our country, render impositions so easy, and detection so difficult, that rules too scrupulous on this subject can hardly be adopted. The existing rule, although somewhat irksome to good men, will be cheerfully submitted to for the superior interests of religion. Nay, it is believed, that such men, grieved at the dishonour brought upon the churches of their native country by unworthy emigrants from them into this, will readily co-operate with the Assembly in every measure that will contribute to preserve the purity and respect of their name, and by a state of probationary trial will tend to discriminate between meritorious and unworthy ministers who shall offer their services to our churches.

3rd. An inconsistency is supposed further to exist in one part of the rule to another; because, it permits Colleges, Academies, and individual Churches, to call from Europe to this country, men of known and good character to preside over them, without subjecting such men to the probation prescribed in other cases. Your committee do not perceive the inconsistency that has been attempted to be pointed out; especially as no individual church can call a minister from abroad more than at home without the permission and advice of the Presbytery to which it is attached, and who will, in ordinary cases, be able to preserve it from imposition. The Assembly however might not object

Digitized by Google

to a modification of the rule as far as it relates to Academies, unconnected with pastoral charges.

4th. The Presbytery of New York likewise deems this rule *unnecessary*. The greater part of the Presbyteries composing this Assembly, as far as their opinions can be now collected, esteem it useful. Time will either confirm its utility, or point out the amendments of which it is susceptible.

Your committee farther advise a reference of *this* article of the constitution to the respective Presbyteries for their interpretation; at the same time recommending to them to advise and empower the next Assembly to substitute the phrase *constitutional rules*, in this article, in the room of *standing rules*.

The above report was accepted, and ordered to be inserted on the minutes: and agreeably to the last article, the respective Presbyteries were, and they are hereby required to send up to the next Assembly their opinion on the section of the *constitution* referred to; and if they think proper, to advise and empower said Assembly to make the alteration therein proposed in the phraseology of this section, according to the mode pointed out in the *constitution* for effecting any alteration in that instrument. —Vol. I. p. 201.

The Assembly in 1800 appointed "a committee to consider the regulations made by the Assembly in 1798 respecting the introduction of foreign ministers, and to report such modifications and amendments of the same" as might "appear conducive to the general interests of the church."—Vol. I. p. 220. This committee reported; and the regulations stated above were adopted.

Digitized by Google

Sect. 3. *Rules relating to a Methodist minister.*

1792. A petition was laid before the General Assembly from the Presbyterian Church in the Island of Jamaica, requesting the settlement of a Mr. Enoch Matson, an elder formerly connected with the Methodist church, who was represented as willing to subscribe the doctrine, discipline and government of the Presbyterian church; accompanied with a request from the Presbytery of Baltimore for direction in what manner to proceed in receiving him into this church. On mature deliberation, the Assembly recommended to the Presbytery of Baltimore to proceed in receiving Mr. Matson to trials for the Ministry in the same manner as if no licensure or ordination by the Methodist church had taken place.—Vol. I. p. 59.

1810. The Committee of Overtures brought in the following resolution, which, having been read and amended, was adopted, and is as follows: *viz.* ***Resolved***, That in the opinion of this Assembly, the decision of the General Assembly, in 1792, and referred to by the Assembly of 1800, respecting the reordination of ministers regularly ordained in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and desiring to connect themselves with the Presbyterian church in the United States of America, however expedient at the time of its formation, ought not to be considered as a precedent to guide the future decisions of the judicatories of this church; and that the Presbyteries under the care of this Assembly, when they receive into their connexion an or-

Digitized by Google

dained minister from any other denomination, be careful to record the circumstances of the case, and the reasons which induced them to receive such ordained ministers.—Vol. II. p. 318.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE GENERAL ASSOCIATION OF CONNECTICUT.

Sect. 1. *A plan of union and correspondence adopted by the Assembly, in* 1792.

THE minutes of the Convention of the Committees of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, and of the General Association of the state of Connecticut, were taken into consideration, an extract of which is as follows:*

"Considering the importance of union and harmony, in the Christian Church, and the duty incumbent on all its pastors and members to assist each other, in promoting, as far as possible, the

* This convention originated in measures adopted by the General Assembly in 1790 and 1791, for affecting this union of intercourse.

Digitized by Google

general interest of the Redeemer's kingdom; and considering further, that divine Providence appears to be now opening the door for pursuing these valuable objects, with a happy prospect of success;

This convention are of opinion, that it will be conducive to these important purposes—

That a *Standing Committee of Correspondence*, be appointed in each body, whose duty it shall be, by frequent letters, to communicate to each other, whatever may be mutually useful to the churches under their care, and to the general interest of the Redeemer's Kingdom.

That each body should from time to time appoint a committee consisting of three members, who shall have a right to sit in the other's general meeting, and make such communications as shall be directed by their respective constituents, and deliberate on such matters as shall come before the body; but shall have no right to vote.

That effectual measures be mutually taken to prevent injuries to the respective churches, from irregular and unauthorised preachers.

To promote this end, the convention judge it expedient, that every preacher, travelling from the limits of one of these churches into those of the other, shall be furnished with *recent testimonials*, of his regular standing, and good character as a preacher, signed by the Moderator of the Presbytery, or Association, in which he received his license; or, if a minister, of his good standing and character as such, from the Moderator of the Presbytery, or Association, where he last resided, and that he shall, previously to his travelling as a preacher into distant parts, further receive a recom-

Digitized by Google

mendation, from one member, at least of a standing committee to be hereafter appointed by each body, certifying his good qualifications as a preacher.

Also, that the names of this standing committee, shall be mutually communicated, and also that every preacher travelling, and recommended as above, and submitting to the stated rules of the respective churches, shall be received as an authorised preacher of the gospel, and cheerfully taken under the patronage of the Presbytery, or Association, within whose limits he shall find employment as a preacher: And

That the proceedings of the respective bodies, on this report, be communicated to our brethren of the Congregational and Presbyterian churches throughout the states."

Upon mature deliberation, the Assembly unanimously and cordially approved of the said plan, and to carry the same into effect, appointed—The Rev. Dr. John Rogers, Dr. John Witherspoon and Dr. Ashbel Green, to be a committee of correspondence, agreeably to the said plan: and it is moreover agreed, that this Assembly, will send delegates, to sit and consult with the General Association of Connecticut, and receive their delegates to sit in this Assembly, agreeably to another article of the plan, as soon as due information shall be received that it is adopted on the part of the General Association of Connecticut.

The Rev. Dr. M'Knight, Dr. M'Whorter, Mr. James Woodhull, Dr. S. S. Smith, Dr. Alison, Dr. Nesbitt, Mr. John B. Smith, Mr. Graham, Mr. Lacy, Mr. M'Call, Mr. M'Donald, and Dr.

Digitized by Google

M'Corkle,* were appointed a standing committee to certify the good qualifications of the preachers travelling to officiate in the bounds of the Association of the state of Connecticut; and it was moreover agreed, that any preacher travelling as aforesaid, shall have at least the name of one of the committee, who shall belong to the Synod, from whose bounds he came.—Vol. I. p. 53.

Sect. 2. *The plan ratified by the Association.*

The Revd. Dr. Jonathan Edwards and the Revd. Mr. Matthias Burnet from the General Association of the state of Connecticut, appeared in the Assembly, and produced an extract from the records of that Association, whereby it appeared that the convention, between said Association and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, had been ratified on their part; and that these gentlemen with the Revd. Dr. Timothy Dwight were appointed, agreeably to an article of said convention, to sit in this Assembly: whereupon, Dr. Edwards and Mr. Burnet were admitted as members, and took their seats accordingly.—Vol. I. p. 68.

Sect. 3. *An alteration in the plan proposed by the Assembly, in* 1794.

On motion, ordered, that the delegates appointed from the General Assembly to the General As-

* By an after order, Rev. Aaron Woolworth, of Long Island, was added to this committee.

Digitized by Google

sociation of Connecticut propose to the Association, as an amendment to the articles of intercourse agreed upon between the aforesaid bodies, that the delegates from these bodies, respectively, shall have a right, not only to sit and deliberate, but also to vote in all questions which shall be determined by either of them:—And to communicate the result of their proposal to the next General Assembly. Vol. I. p. 87.

Sect. 4. *Agreed to by the Association.*

Dr. M'Whorter laid before the General Assembly an extract from the minutes of the proceedings of the General Association of the State of Connecticut, which, having been read, was ordered to be entered upon the minutes of the General Assembly, and was as follows:—

"The motion of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, that the delegates from that Assembly to this Association, and the Delefrom this Association to that Assembly, be empowered to vote in all questions decided in those Bodies respectively, was taken into consideration; and after discussion, the General Association voted a compliance with the said proposal".—

That the above is an authentic extract from the Minutes of the proceedings of the General Assodiation of the state of Connecticut, at their Sessions begun on the 17th day of June, A. D. 1794, is attested by

JONATHAN EDWARDS,
Scribe of the General Asssociation.
Vol. I. Page 106.

Digitized by Google

Sect. 5. A plan of union between Presbyterians and Congregationalists in the new settlements, adopted in 1801.

The report of the committee appointed to consider and digest a plan of government for the churches in the new settlements, was taken up and considered; and after mature deliberation on the same, approved, as follows:

Regulations adopted by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian church in America, and by the General Association of the State of Connecticut, (provided said Association agree to them,) with a view to prevent alienation and promote union and harmony, in those new settlements which are composed of inhabitants from these bodies.

1st. It is strictly enjoined on all their missionaries to the new settlements, to endeavour, by all proper means, to promote mutual forbearance and accommodation, between those inhabitants of the new settlements who hold the Presbyterian and those who hold the Congregational form of church government.

2nd. If in the new settlements, any church of the Congregational order shall settle a minister of the Presbyterian order, that church may, if they choose, still conduct their discipline according to congregational principles, settling their difficulties among themselves, or by a council mutually agreed upon for that purpose: But if any difficulty shall exist between the minister and the church or any member of it, it shall be referred to the Presbytery to which the minister shall belong, provided both parties agree to it; if not, to a council consisting of an

Digitized by Google

equal number of Presbyterians and Congregationalists, agreed upon by both parties.

3d. If a Presbyterian church shall settle a minister of congregational principles, that church may still conduct their discipline according to Presbyterian principles; excepting that if a difficulty arise between him and his church, or any member of it, the cause shall be tried by the Association, to which the said minister shall belong, provided both parties agree to it; otherwise by a council, one half Congregationalists and the other half Presbyterians, mutually agreed on by the parties.

4th. If any congregation consist partly of those who hold the congregational form of discipline, and partly of those who hold the Presbyterian form; we recommend to both parties, that this be no obstruction to their uniting in one church and settling a minister: and that in this case, the church choose a standing committee from the communicants of said church, whose business it shall be, to call to account every member of the church, who shall conduct himself inconsistently with the laws of christianity, and to give judgment on such conduct: and if the person condemned by their judgment, be a Presbyterian, he shall have liberty to appeal to the Presbytery; if a Congregationalist, he shall have liberty to appeal to the body of the male communicants of the church: in the former case the determination of the Presbytery shall be final, unless the church consent to a further appeal to the Synod, or to the General Assembly; and in the latter case, if the party condemned shall wish for a trial by a mutual council, the cause shall be referred to such council. And provided the said standing committee of any church, shall depute one of themselves to attend the

Digitized by Google

Presbytery, he may have the same right to sit and act in the Presbytery, as a ruling elder of the Presbyterian Church.

On motion *Resolved*, That an attested copy of the above plan be made by the Stated Clerk, and put into the hands of the delegates of this Assembly to the General Association, to be by them laid before that body for their consideration; and that if it should be approved by them, it go into immediate operation.—Vol. I. p. 261, 262.

Sect. 6. *Adopted by the Association.*

The Delegates to the last General Association of Connecticut reported, that they all attended the Association during the whole of their Sessions, and were received and treated with great cordiality and friendship:—

That the Regulations submitted by the last Assembly, respecting the establishment of churches in the frontiers consisting of Members partly of the Presbyterian and partly of the Congregational denominations, were unanimously adopted by the Association.—Vol. I. p. 276.

Sect. 7. *An order for printing the plan in* 1806.

Resolved, that the Committee, of Missions, cause a number of Copies of this plan to be printed, and delivered to the Missionaries who may sent by the Assembly among the people concerned. Vol. II. p. 192.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER III.

OF THE CONVENTION OF VERMONT.

Sect. 1. *The plan of union and correspondence proposed by the Assembly, in* 1803.

THE Committee appointed on the communication from the Convention of the regular ministers of the gospel, of the State of Vermont, Reported. The report, being considered and amended, was adopted, and is as follows: Your committee are of opinion, that, although this Assembly, have not received any answer, to the request of last Assembly, proposed to the convention of Vermont; yet the Assembly have received satisfactory information on the subjects alluded to, both from their own delegates to the General Association of Connecticut of last year, and also from the representatives of that body, in the present Assembly. The Committee, therefore, submit the following plan of union and intercourse, between the said Convention and the General Assembly: *viz.*

I. Each body shall send one or two Delegates, to meet and sit with the other, at the stated sessions of each body respectively.

Digitized by Google

II. The delegate or delegates from each respectively shall have the privilege of joining in the discussions and deliberations of the body, as freely and fully, as their own members.

III. That the union and intercourse may be full and complete between the said bodies, the delegate, or delegates from each respectively, shall not only sit and deliberate, but also act and vote: which articles comprise the great principles of the union between the General Assembly, and the General Association of Connecticut. Your committee finally submit the following resolution: *viz.* *Resolved*, That the above plan shall go into operation so soon as it shall be ratified by the convention.—Vol. I. p. 334.

Sect. 2. *Ratified by the Convention.*

A communication from the convention of the Congregational ministers in the state of Vermont, was received and read. From this it appears, that the convention have ratified, on their part the plan of union and correspondence agreed upon and transmitted to them by the last General Assembly with one exception, *viz.* that the convention considering the smallness of their number, and distance from the Assembly's usual place of meeting, cannot promise to send an annual delegation to the General Assembly; *Resolved*, That this Assembly accept and ratify, on their part and behalf, the said plan of union and correspondence with the exception aforesaid; and that the Assembly will for the present year, send one delegate to attend the next meeting of the convention.—Vol. II. p. 28, 29.

Digitized by Google

Sect. 3. *Proposition relating to travelling preachers made in* 1809.

Resolved, That the delegate appointed to represent this Assembly at the next meeting of the Convention of Vermont, be and he is hereby authorized to propose and agree upon the same regulations, which have been agreed to be observed, by this Assembly and the General Association of Connecticut, in relation to the credentials requisite for such ministers, as may come within the bounds of this Assembly or the convention of Vermont, for the purpose of preaching the gospel.—Vol. II. p. 288.

Sect. 4. *Accepted by the Convention in* 1810.

The resolution of the General Assembly respecting the appointment of a standing committee to certify the good standing of ministers travelling into the bounds of the General Assembly from the state of Vermont, and which your delegate was authorized to transact, was agreed to with great unanimity: and an extract from the minutes of the convention on this subject is forwarded herewith; to which it may be proper to add, that the publishing the names of the committees appointed by the respective bodies in this case, and taking measures to make the different parts of the church acquainted with them to prevent imposition, was considered of great consequence.—Vol. II. p. 311. See also, Vol. III. p. 131.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER IV.

OF THE GENERAL ASSOCIATION OF NEW HAMPSHIRE.

Sect. 1. *A proposal from the Association accepted, in* 1810.

A PROPOSAL from the General Association of New Hampshire was made by the Rev. William F. Rowland, and the Rev. John H. Church, commissioners appointed for that purpose, for a union between them and this Assembly, similar to that subsisting between the General Association of Connecticut and this Assembly. The certificate of their appointment, and the papers accompanying it containing the fundamental principles and regulations of the Association of New Hampshire, were read.

Resolved, That said Union be formed, and it accordingly was formed.

Resolved, That the Rev. Messrs. Rowland and Church be invited to sit as members of this Assembly; and they accordingly took their seats.

Resolved, That the General Assembly send annually two delegates to the meetings of the General Association of New Hampshire.

Digitized by Google

Sect. 2. *An alteration in the delegation proposed by the Association, in* 1816.

The following extract from the minutes of the General Association of New Hampshire was received and read: *viz.*

"Voted that the delegates from this General Association to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, be instructed to propose to that respected body, that this Association should in future be represented, in that Assembly, by only one delegate.

True copy from the minutes.—Vol. III. p. 224.

Sect. 3. *Acceded to by the Assembly.*

The committee, to which was referred the extract from the minutes of the General Association of New Hampshire reported; and the report being read, was adopted, and is as follows: *viz.*

That after due deliberation they think, that the articles of union between the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, and the General Association of New Hampshire, require, that the Assembly should hereafter only send one delegate to the aforesaid Association.

Ordered, that a copy of this minute be forwarded to the Association of New Hampshire by the delegate who may be chosen to attend the next meeting of said Association.—Vol. III. p. 226.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER V.

OF THE GENERAL ASSOCIATION OF MASSACHUSETTS.

Sect. 1. *A proposal from the Association accepted by the Assembly, in* 1811.

A PROPOSAL from the General Association of Massachusetts proper, was made by the Rev. Joseph Lyman, D. D. and the Rev. Samuel Worcester, delegates appointed for that purpose, for the establishment of a union between them and this Assembly, similar to that subsisting between the Association of Massachusetts proper, and the Associations of Connecticut and New Hampshire. The certificate of their appointment, and the articles of union with said Associations were read.

The articles of said Union are as follow:

"1st. The General Association of Connecticut, and the General Association of Massachusetts proper shall annually appoint each two delegates to the other.

2nd. The delegates shall be admitted in each body to the same rights of sitting, debating and voting with their own members respectively.

Digitized by Google

3rd. It shall be understood that the articles of agreement and connexion between the two bodies, may be at any time varied by their own consent."

The same articles were adopted in their connexion with the Association of New Hampshire.

The delegates stated that the shorter Catechism of the Westminster Assembly was adopted as the basis of their union; and by answering several questions proposed to them, fully satisfied the Assembly relative to the standard of their faith, and the object of their Association.

Whereupon, *Resolved*, unanimously, that said union be formed; and it was accordingly formed.

Resolved, that Dr. Lyman and the Rev. Samuel Worcester be enrolled as members of this Assembly; and they took their seats accordingly.

Resolved, that the Assembly send annually two delegates to the General Association of Massachusetts proper.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER VI.

OF DELEGATES TO THE ASSOCIATIONS.

Sect. 1. *The mode of electing delegates adopted, in* 1796.

THE Assembly *Resolved,* that in electing delegates to the General Association of the state of Connecticut, the roll of the house shall be called, and every member shall nominate any number of candidates he may please, not exceeding three; the candidates to consist of any ordained Ministers of the Presbyterian Church. When such nomination is made, if any of the candidates present be acquainted with any circumstances which forbid their attendance on the Association; or if any member present be acquainted with any such circumstances in regard to candidates who may not be present; they shall be at liberty to make them known to the Assembly, that the names of said candidates, if it be judged expedient, may be stricken off the list. From the names which remain on the list after this procedure, an election shall be made of three members to attend the Association; which election shall be made by ballot, on the opening of that sitting of the Assembly, which shall immediately succeed

Digitized by Google

the one at which the nomination took place.—Vol. I. p. 122.

Sect. 2. *An additional rule adopted in* 1811.

Resolved, That two of the delegates chosen to attend the General Association of Connecticut, be chosen also to attend the Association of Massachusetts proper; and that one of the delegates chosen to attend the Association of New Hampshire, be chosen also to attend the convention of Vermont.—Vol. II. p. 365.

Sect. 3. *Printed Extracts to be carried by the delegates.*

Resolved, As a standing order, that the representatives from the General Assembly to the several supreme judicatures or Associations of Churches, with which the Assembly hold intercourse, shall annually carry forward to such judicatures or Associations, a competent number of the printed extracts from the minutes of the Assembly, of the latest date, that may have been printed before the sittings of the judicatures aforesaid.—1811. Vol. II. p. 358.

Sect. 4. The delegates are allowed two dollars for every 40 miles which they necessarily travel in going and returning, and one dollar per day during the sessions of those bodies they attend.—Vol. II. p. 84. 212.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER VII.

OF THE NORTHERN ASSOCIATE PRESBYTERY, &c.

Sect. 1. *The plan of correspondence with the Presbytery of Albany approved by the Assembly, in* 1802.

A COMMUNICATION was received from the Presbytery of Albany, stating, that a joint committee, consisting of members of that Presbytery and members from a Presbytery known by the name of the Northern Associate Presbytery, had met, and agreed upon a plan of friendly correspondence between the ministers and churches belonging to these Presbyteries respectively, consisting of three articles: *viz.* The committee has in effect agreed,

1. That there shall be occasional communion between the members of the particular churches subordinate to those Presbyteries respectively.

2. That there be a friendly interchange of services among the ministers: And,

3. That each Presbytery, while in session, may invite members occasionally present from

Digitized by Google

the other, to sit as corresponding members: That the Presbytery of Albany having heard the report of the said committee, approved thereof, and resolved to request the General Assembly to sanction the same, and authorise the Presbytery of Albany to adopt it.

The Assembly after due examination and deliberation, expressed their approbation of the said plan of correspondence.—Vol. II. p. 286.

Sect. 2. *The plan of union and correspondence with the Synod of Albany approved, in* 1808.

The Synod of Albany requested the Assembly to sanction a plan of union and correspondence, between themselves and the Northern Associate Presbytery, and the Middle Association in the Western District in the state of New York; which plan is contained in pages 117—121 of the Synodical minutes. The plan being read, and the subject discussed, *Resolved*, That the Assembly sanction the aforesaid plan.—Vol. II. p. 258.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER VIII.

OF THE REFORMED DUTCH CHURCH, AND THE ASSOCIATE REFORMED CHURCH.

Sect. 1. IN 1798 committees from the three churches met in convention, and agreed that the plan of intercourse, having for its basis the preservation of the several ecclesiastical judicatories concerned in a state entirely separate and independent; should embrace

I. The communion of particular churches;

II. The friendly interchange of ministerial services; and

III. A correspondence of the several judicatories, of the conferring churches.

It was moreover agreed that the several churches should watch over each other's purity in doctrine, discipline, and manners, and be ready to receive complaints against any of their ministers, or members on these subjects.

This plan was unanimously approved by the General Assembly; but it was not accepted by the judicatories of the other churches. Still, however, a friendly intercourse has been maintained, more or less, between the ministers and people of the three denominations. We are happy to add that it is increasing.

Digitized by Google

Sect. 2. *A negotiation for effecting a correspondence with the Associate Reformed Church, in* 1819.

Resolved, That Drs. Romeyn, Blatchford, and Green, and Mr. Lewis and Dr. Rodgers, be a committee to confer with a similar committee of the General Synod of the Associate Reformed Church, and report to the next General Assembly the result of their conference, on the subject of a brotherly correspondence between the two churches.

The following communication was received and read:

"Session of the General Synod of the Associciate Reformed Church, May 27, 1819.

"*Resolved,* That this Synod reciprocate to the General Assembly their assurances of a disposition to maintain a friendly correspondence; and that the Rev. Drs. Mason and Proudfit, and Mr. M'Loud, ministers; and Messrs. William Wilson, and Henry Rankin elders; be and they hereby are appointed commissioners to confer on this subject with the commissioners already appointed by the General Assembly, and that the result of their deliberations be reported to this Synod at its next meeting.

"By order of the General Synod.

"R. M' CARTEE, *Clerk of the Synod.*"

The Commissioners from the two churches met shortly after their appointment, and adopted a plan of correspondence: and it is presumed that the plan will be approved by the General Assembly and the General Synod of the Associate Reformed Church, in May next.

Digitized by Google

PART XII.

GENERAL

DECISIONS.

CHAPTER I.

OF PSALMODY.

Sect. 1. *The use of Watts's Psalms allowed by the late Synod of New York and Philadelphia, in* 1787.

THE Synod did allow, and do hereby allow, that Dr. Watts's imitation of David's Psalms, as revised by the Rev. Mr. Barlow, be sung in the churches and families under their care. But they are, at the same time, far from disapproving of Rouse's version, commonly called "The Old Psalms," in those who are in the use of them, and choose to continue; but are of opinion that either may be used by the churches, as each congregation

Digitized by Google

may judge to be most for their peace and edification. And do, therefore, highly disapprove of severe and unchristian censures being passed on either of the said systems of Psalmody.—Page 431. Published by order of the Assembly in 1803.

Sect. 2. *Mr. Rankin's query answered by the Assembly, in* 1789.

The following query, signed by a member of the Presbytery of Transylvania, was overtured by the committee of overtures.—"Query, whether the churches under the care of the General Assembly, have not, by the countenance and allowance of the late Synod of New York and Philadelphia, fallen into a great and pernicious error in the public worship of God, by disusing Rouse's versification of David's Psalms, and adopting in the room of it Watts's imitation? Conscience is the motive that has induced me to make the above inquiry, and I trust I shall be heard on the subject with candour. —Vol. I. p. 9.

The committee appointed on Mr. Rankin's affair, reported the following draught of a minute, which was adopted: *viz.* The General Assembly, having heard Mr. Rankin at great length, and endeavoured to relieve his mind from the difficulty he appears to labour under, are sorry to find that all their efforts have been in vain; and, therefore, only recommend to him that exercise of christian charity, towards those who differ from him in their views of this matter, which is exercised towards himself; and that he be carefully guarded against

Digitized by Google

disturbing the peace of the church on this head.—Vol. I. p. 9.

Sect. 3. Report of the Committee who reviewed Dr. Dwight's alterations, &c. of Watts's version, in 1801.

The committee appointed to meet the committee of the General Association of Connecticut, on the second Tuesday of June 1800, to examine the alterations and additions to Dr. Watts's version of the Psalms, made by the Rev. Dr. Timothy Dwight, brought in their report, which was read as follows: *viz.*—"That they met the said committee of the Association on the day appointed, and spent the remainder of that day, and the two following days, in carefully examining said alterations, which they approved with some amendments: and they report farther, that these joint committees unanimously advised Dr. Dwight to add a number of hymns, selected out of Dr. Watts's, and Dr. Doddridge's hymns, with some few of Dr. Rippon's to enlarge the system of Psalmody, and have the whole printed as soon as convenient, for the use of the churches.....John Rodgers, Asa Hillyer, Jonathan Freeman."

On motion *Resolved*, That in reference to the above report, the Assembly do not think it advisable to express their approbation of any system of Psalmody, without its having been first submitted to their inspection and review.—Vol. I. p. 251.

Digitized by Google

Sect. 4. *Watts's Hymns, as well as Psalms, and Dwight's allowed to be used, in* 1802.

The committee on Psalmody reported, and thereupon the Assembly determined as follows:

Whereas the version of the Psalms made by Dr. Watts has heretofore been allowed in the congregations, under the care of the General Assembly, it is now thought expedient that the Hymns of Dr. Watts be also allowed; and they are accordingly hereby allowed, in such congregations as may think it expedient to use them in public and social worship. And whereas the Rev. Dr. Timothy Dwight, by order of the General Association of Connecticut, has revised the version of the Psalms made by Dr. Watts, and versified a number omitted by him, and has also made a selection of Hymns from various authors; which, together with the Psalms, were intended to furnish a system of Psalmody for the use of churches and families; which system has been revised and recommended by a joint committee of the General Assembly and the General Association of Connecticut heretofore appointed, as well as examined and approved by a committee of this Assembly:

The said system is hereby cheerfully allowed, in such congregations and churches as may think it for edification to adopt and use the same.—Vol. I. p. 291.

Sect. 5. *The above resolutions explained in* 1806.

The committee to whom was referred the com-

Digitized by Google

munication from the Presbytery of Ohio respecting Psalmody reported. The report having been read and considered, was approved, and is as follows: *viz.*

Your committee are of opinion, that the General Assembly of the year 1802, in their Resolution on this subject, did not intend that the churches under their care, should use no other Psalms and Hymns, than those specified in the Resolution. It is further the opinion of your committee, that when any families or congregations, in their religious worship, make use of Hymns containing erroneous doctrine, or trivial matter, it becomes the duty of church sessions and Presbyteries, to inquire into the matter, and act as the case may require.—Vol. II. p. 164.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER II.

EXTRACTS FROM THE RECORDS OF THE LATE SYNOD OF NEW YORK AND PHILADELPHIA.

Sect. 1. *The judgment of the Synod in regard to the qualifications of candidates for the ministry, in* 1785.

AN overture was brought in, in the following terms: *viz.* Whether in the present state of the church in America, and the scarcity of ministers to fill our numerous congregations, the Synod or Presbyteries ought therefore to relax in any degree in the literary qualifications required of candidates for the Ministry? and it was carried in the negative by a great majority.—Page 386.

Sect. 2. *Presbyteries to pay due regard to order in receiving candidates for the ministry.*

The Presbytery of Newcastle, expressing some uneasiness at the conduct of the second Philadelphia Presbytery, for having received and licensed a certain Mr. John M'Clean, who they apprehend most properly belonged to the Presbytery of New-

Digitized by Google

castle, and had applied to them to be licensed; and while they were taking the proper steps for obtaining more full satisfaction concerning his church membership and christian character, he in the mean time removed from them and applied to the second Philadelphia Presbytery, and was licensed by them. Both the Presbyteries were fully heard in a free conference on this subject, and withdrew. The Synod, after mature deliberation, order Mr. M'Clean to be cited before the Presbytery of Newcastle, with power to them to hear the charges against him, and issue the affair in a regular manner, and report to the next meeting of Synod; and the Synod do prohibit the second Philadelphia Presbytery from employing him to preach till the affair shall be concluded.—1772. Page 236.

Sect. 3. *An Elder may resign his official relation to a particular congregation.*

A petition from the members of the session of the Third Presbyterian Church in this City, asking advice of this Synod with respect to the execution of their office, in consequence of the judgment of the Synod respecting that church, was read. After it was duly considered, they returned the following answer: *viz.* The Synod advise them to continue to act as Elders; but in case they cannot, consistently with what they apprehend to be their duty, continue as such, and act upon the decisions of Synod, that they may resign their office, and the congregation proceed to choose other elders who may have freedom to act according to the determinations of the Synod.—1772. Page 237.

Digitized by Google

Sect. 4. Charges should be specific.

The Synod orders that all their judicatures shall for the future be particulary careful, not to receive or judge of any charges, but such as shall be seasonably reduced to a *specialty* in the complaint laid before them.—1770. Page 187.

Sect. 5. Due respect to be paid to the constitution, both in conducting the trials of candidates for the ministry, and in making a record of the proceedings.

The Presbytery-book of Suffolk was approved since the time of the union of the two Synods, except, that they have neglected to record their candidates adopting our public standards at licensure, (though they inform us, it is a matter of constant practice,) that they try and license at the same Presbytery, and in one instance ordained without previous trial or licensure, and that they license for a certain time :—Of all which we highly disapprove. —1764. Page 82.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER III.

OF SUNDRY POINTS OF ORDER.

Sect. 1. *Two or more members of a judicatory may adjourn from time to time.*

ON motion *Resolved,* as the opinion of the Assembly, that from the nature of the thing, two or more members of any judicatory, meeting according to adjournment, may adjourn, from day to day, until a sufficient number attend for the transacting of business: and in case a quorum should not attend within a reasonable time, that the Moderator shall be considered as competent to fix any time and place he may judge proper for convening the Body; and if he be absent, that the members assembled shall represent the matter speedily to him that he may act accordingly.—1796. Vol. I. p. 127.

Sect. 2. *A particular question in relation to the doctrine of appeals decided.*

The following case was overtured, by the committee of overtures: *viz.* "whether the General Assembly, out of their liberality, charity and can-

Digitized by Google

dour, will admit to their communion, in the ecclesiastic Assemblies, as far as they can consistently with the scrupulosity of their consciences, a Presbytery, who are totally averse to the doctrine of receiving, hearing, or judging of any appeals, from Presbyteries to Synods, and from Synods to General Assembly; because, in their judgment, it is inconsistent with scripture, and the practice of the primitive churches?—In answer to which the General Assembly reply, that although they consider the right of appeal, from the decision of an inferior judicature to a superior, an important privilege, which no member of their body ought to be deprived of, yet they at the same time declare, that they do not desire any member to be active, in any case which may be inconsistent with the dictates of his conscience.—1789. Vol. I. p. 9.

Sect. 3. *Persons elected and ordained Elders in an unconstitutional manner, are only private members of a church.*

The following inquiry was referred to the decision of the Assembly, by the Synod of the Carolinas: *viz.* "In what point of light are the elders nominated and ordained by Mr. Balch, to be viewed hereafter, in Mount Bethel congregation? In answer to which it was determined by the Assembly, that the "elders" mentioned in the inquiry, are to be henceforth viewed as private church members only, unless they be duly elected and set apart as church officers hereafter.—1798. Vol. I. p. 177.

Digitized by Google

Sect. 4. *A candidate for the ministry not to be recommended by a judicatory as in full standing, while allegations against him remain undecided.*

On reading the minutes of saturday, respecting the report of the committee for examining the minutes of the Synod of Philadelphia, the Assembly resolved that the Synod be informed, that the Assembly disapprove of the proceedings as represented in their records, in recommending a candidate to be received as in full standing, before they had given a decision upon the allegations against him.—1791. Vol I. p. 36.

Sect. 5. *No person to be condemned without due notice of the accusation against him.*

It was *Resolved*, as the sense of this house, that no man or body of men, agreeably to the constitution of this church, ought to be condemned or censured, without having notice of the accusation against him or them, and notice given for trial.—Vol. I. p. 77. 1793.

Sect. 6. *Any person having new evidence to offer, may apply to the proper court for a new trial.*

Resolved, also, that it is the well known privilege of Mr. Hindman, if he consider himself as having new evidence to offer in this case, to apply to the Presbytery for a new trial upon that new evidence.—1811. Vol. III. p. 18.

Digitized by Google

Sect. 7. A Presbytery has a right to decide in regard to the propriety of receiving a member, but but the Synod may censure their conduct, when they exercise their right improperly.

The committe appointed to examine the records of the Synod of Geneva reported; and the report being read, and amended, was adopted, and is as follows: *viz.*

That they have examined the same, and found them generally kept with care. That they contain a protest signed by a number of members of the Synod of Geneva, against a decision of the Synod, excluding the Presbytery of Geneva from voting on the question, *whether their own records should be attested by the Moderator of the Synod as approved.* Your committee were however of opinion that the decision of the Synod was consonant to the prevalent usage of the judicatures of the Presbyterian Church, as well as to the usage of other analagous bodies in similar cases; and that it ought therefore to be approved—But though your committee were of this opinion, they doubted the correctness of the order given by the Synod to the Presbytery of Geneva; *to reconsider their proceedings on the subject of the admission of the Rev. Shipley Wells, a constituent member of that Presbytery;* which order though it be not appealed from, appears to have given rise to the protest in question.

The Synod of Geneva were, beyond doubt, in the opinion of your committee, competent to cen-

Digitized by Google

sure the Presbytery of Geneva for admitting, hastily and on slight evidence into their body, an unworthy or even a suspicious character. But it is, in the opinion of your committee, equally clear, that the right of deciding on the fitness of admitting Mr. Wells a constituent member of the Presbytery of Geneva, belonged to the Presbytery itself; and that having admitted him, no matter how improvidently, that their decision was valid and final.

The individual admitted became a member in full standing: nor could the Presbytery, though it should reconsider, reverse its own decision, or in any way sever the member so admitted, from their body, except by a regular process.—1816. Vol. III. p. 235.

Sect. 8. *The Assembly may order a new trial, when they do not sustain the judgment of a lower court.*

1817. The Assembly judge that the charges, in the case of Mr. Bourne, were not fully substantiated; and that, if they had been, the sentence was too severe:

Therefore *Resolved*, that the sentence of the Presbytery of Lexington, deposing Mr. Bourne, be reversed, and it hereby is reversed; and that the Presbytery commence the trial anew.—Vol. III. p. 327.

1817. The business left unfinished yesterday was resumed, *viz.* the consideration of an appeal of Mr. John Todd from a decision of the

Digitized by Google

Synod of Kentucky, affirming a decision of the Presbytery of Transylvania, by which Mr. Todd was suspended from the gospel ministry. After considerable discussion, the following resolution was adopted: *viz.* The Assembly having heard the documents in this case, are of opinion that the way is not clear, at present, for the reversal of the sentence of suspension: but as it appears to the Assembly, that Mr. Todd's opinions have not been perfectly understood; and whereas there appears to have been some irregularity as to the nature of the testimony admitted on the trial before the Presbytery; therefore,

Resolved, That the Presbytery of Transylvania be directed to reconsider the case of Mr. Todd, to afford him another opportunity of explaining himself, and, if they should be satisfied, to restore him to his former standing.—Vol. III. p. 371.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER IV.

OF BAPTIZED CHILDREN.

Sect. 1. *A reference on the subject from the Synod of Virginia.*

A REFERENCE from the Synod of Virginia was laid before the General Assembly in the following words: *viz.* "Through the committee of overtures was laid before the Synod the following question: How far, and in what sense, are persons who have been regularly baptized in infancy and have not partaken of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, subject to the discipline of the church?"

WILLIAM HILL,
Clerk of the Synod of Virginia.
September 27th, 1798.

After some discussion, it was *Resolved*, that the public standards of this church contain a sufficient answer to the question stated in the above reference. —1799. Vol. I. p. 195.

Sect. 2. *A committee appointed to prepare a report in relation to baptized children, in* 1811.

Resolved, that Drs. Miller and Romeyn and

Digitized by Google

the Rev. James Richards, be a committee to prepare and report, to the next Assembly, a full and complete answer to the following overture from the Synod of Kentucky, which had been made to this Assembly: "What steps should the church take with baptized youth, not in communion, but arrived at the age of maturity, should such youth prove disorderly and contumacious.——Vol. III. p. 19.

Sect. 3. *The report of the committee ordered to be printed, in* 1812.

The committee appointed by the last Assembly to report to this Assembly on the subject of disciplining baptized children reported; and the report being read, was recommitted to the same committee for revision and publication: and it was resolved that the Assembly, without expressing any opinion, on the principles it contains, recommend it to the serious consideration of all the Presbyteries and ministers, that in due time a decision may be had on the important subjects, discussed in the report.

Resolved, That this minute be printed in the beginning of the pamphlet containing the report of the aforesaid committee.—Vol. III. p. 74.

Sect. 4. *A committee appointed in* 1814, *to consider and report what should be done with the above report.*

The subject of a report on the disciplining of baptized children, in relation to which the Assembly of the last year and the year before had taken order, was called up, and it appeared that several

Digitized by Google

Presbyteries had brought forward a formal expression of their opinion, in regard to the adoption or rejection of the report in question. On this a discussion having arisen, whether the report was intended to be sent to the Presbyteries, for the expression of Presbyterial opinion on the subject; it was, therefore, resolved, that the whole subject be referred to a committee, to consider and report to the Assembly, what shall appear to them to be a correct method of procedure to be adopted relative thereto, in the circumstances in which it is now before the Assembly; and that Drs. Green, Woodhull, Wilson, and Messrs. Caldwell and Connelly be the committee.—Vol. III. p. 130.

Sect. 5. *The report indefinitely postponed, in* 1814.

Resolved, That the committee appointed to report to the Assembly a correct method of procedure to be adopted relative to a report made by a former committee on the subject of disciplining baptized children, be discharged; and they were accordingly discharged; and the subject was *indefinitely* postponed.—Vol. III. p. 164.

Sect. 6. *A question relative to the qualifications to be required of parents who offer their children in baptism proposed to the Assembly, in* 1816.

The following question was proposed to the Assembly for their decision: *viz.* "Are those parents entitled to the right of having their children bap-

Digitized by Google

tized, who live in the constant neglect of the other sacrament, *viz.* The Lord's Supper?"

The following answer to this question, was, on motion, submitted to the Assembly: *viz.*

"To the foregoing question, the Assembly answer, that all persons who make such a credible profession of saving faith, as to entitle them to the sacrament of baptism, are by the same profession entitled to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; but every church session must judge, when, *if ever*, the neglect of one ordinance is a sufficient ground of suspension, and excommunication from the privilege of church membership."

After a considerable discussion of the subject, the previous question, being called for, was put and decided in the negative.——Vol. III. p. 252.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER V.

OF APPEALS.

Sect. 1. *An appeal may be made, in some cases, immediately by a Presbytery to the General Assembly.*

RESOLVED, That the records of the Synod of Virginia be approved; except their censure of the Presbytery of Lexington, for allowing an appeal from their decision directly to the Assembly, without noticing the supposed irregularity of such appeal.——1818. Vol. III. p. 420. See also, p. 280.

Sect. 2. *The duty of the respondents, when the appellant does not appear.*

On motion, *Resolved*, That in case of an appeal or complaint, entered in an inferior judicatory to a superior, if the appellant or appellants do not appear at the first meeting of the superior judicatory, protest may be admitted at the instance of the respondents, at the last session of such meeting, that the appeal is fallen from, and the sentence so ap-

Digitized by Google

pealed from shall be considered as final.—Vol. I. p. 38.

See this rule acted on.—Vol. I. p. 47. Vol. III. p. 23.

Sect. 3. *Attempts to bias the judgment of the Assembly condemned, in* 1814.

Resolved, That, in the opinion of the Assembly, the distribution of books, letters and pamphlets, among the members of the house, relating to a cause pending before them, or which is expected to be submitted to their decision, is an infringement upon the prerogatives of this house, and ought to be discountenanced as an illegal and improper attempt to bias the judgment of the members.—Vol. III. p. 143.

Sect. 4. *What members of the Assembly have no right to vote in cases of appeal.*

Ordered, that the business of the appeal, introduced last session, be now resumed; whereupon, the parties were heard at full length; and previously to the discussion of the merits of the cause, it was *Resolved*, that no minister belonging to the Synod of Philadelphia, nor elder who was a member of the judicature when the vote appealed from took place, shall vote in the decision thereof by this Assembly. The Moderator, being a member of the Synod of Philadelphia, withdrew, and Dr. M'Knight took the chair.—1792. Vol. I. p. 52.

Digitized by Google

Sect. 5. *Members of a judicatory may not vote in the superior judicatory, in the question of approving or disapproving their records.*

See Chap. II. Sect. 7, of this Part.

Sect. 6. *A Synod has no right to try a minister, unless his case be brought before them, either by a reference, or an appeal, from his Presbytery.*

See the case of the Rev. W. C. Davis.—Vol. II. p. 327, 329, 358, 362.

Sect. 7. *Rules prescribed in regard to the calling of a pastor, in* 1814.

After a full discussion, the motion to sustain the Appeal of the Session of the Third Presbyterian Church in this city, from the decision of the Synod of Philadelphia, affirming a decision of the Presbytery of Philadelphia, by which the Presbytery directed the said Session, within twenty days from the date of their decision, or after the final determination of the case, to convene the congregation for the purpose of electing a Pastor, was determined in the affirmative; and Dr. Green, Dr. Neill, and Mr. Richards was appointed a committee to prepare a minute, stating the principles upon which the Assembly sustained the Appeal.

The Committee reported; and their report, being read and amended, was adopted in the words following: *viz.*

That both to prevent misapprehension, and to aid the congregations and judicatures of this Church,

Digitized by Google

in deciding on any similar cases that may arise, the Assembly therefore declare,

1. That in vacant congregations, which are fully organized, the Session of each Congregation are to determine, under their responsibility to the higher judicatures, when the congregation are prepared to elect a Pastor, as directed in the Form of Government of this Church.——Chap. XIV. Sect. 1.

2. That it is the duty of the Session, when a congregation is vacant, to use their best endeavours to promote the settlement of a pastor in the same, in the speediest manner possible, consistently with the peace, order, and edification of the congregation; and it is the privilege of the people, or any portion of them, to complain to the Presbytery, when they think that the session, after being suitably requested, neglect or refuse to convene the congregation to elect a Pastor.

3. That it belongs to the Presbyteries to take cognizance of the proceedings of Sessions and Congregations in the important concern of settling Pastors; and to adopt the most effectual measures on the one hand to prevent all undue delay by the Session or the People, and on the other to prevent all precipitancy in the settlement of any minister, or the adoption of any system of proceedings in the congregation inconsistent with the real and permanent edification of the people.

4. That by the due and discreet observance of these principles by all concerned, it will be found that so far from the Session of a congregation having it in their power to deprive a majority of the congregation of their right to make an election of a Pastor, when sought in an orderly and christian

Digitized by Google

manner, or to keep a congregation unsettled for an indefinite length of time, the rights of the people will be most effectually secured, and their precious and unalienable privelege of choosing their own pastor will be exercised by them in the shortest period which their own real benefit will permit.

5. That the conviction of this Assembly, that the foregoing obvious and constitutional principles had not been duly adhered to in the case before them,—that the Congregation had not proceeded with a suitable respect to the Session, and the Presbytery did not adopt the most suitable measure, when they advised and directed the session to convene the congregation in twenty days;—has led the Assembly to sustain this appeal, as the measure most constitutional, best calculated on the whole to do justice to all the parties concerned, and to point the way to the most speedy settlement of the unhappy differences and disorders which have so long existed in the particular congregation immediately concerned.—Vol. III. p. 153, 154.

Sect. 8. Judicial sentences of sister churches to be respected.

The business left unfinished on Saturday was resumed, *viz.* The Appeal of the Presbytery of Onondaga from a decision of the Synod of Geneva, relative to the restoration of the Rev. John Shepherd to the Gospel Ministry, who had been deposed by the Association of Fairfield, Connecticut. After a considerable discussion of the subject, the following resolutions were adopted: *viz.*

Digitized by Google

Resolved, 1st. That the decision of the Synod of Geneva, relative to the restoration of the Rev. John Shepherd to the office of the Gospel Ministry, so far as it censures the restoration of said Shepherd, who was deposed by a judicatory of the Church of Christ, in fellowship with us, be, and hereby is, confirmed; because it did not appear from the records of the Presbytery of Onondaga, that the said restoration took place, in consequence of any confession of the alleged crime for which the said Shepherd was deposed; or of any profession of penitence for it; or of any conference with the Judicatory which deposed him.

2. That the Appeal of the Presbytery of Onondaga, so far as it relates to the rescinding of their vote to restore the Rev. John Shepherd, be, and hereby is, sustained, on the second reason of appeal, and upon that alone; because the Assembly judge, that a minister of the gospel, when once restored by presbyterial authority, cannot be deprived of his office, except it be by a new process and conviction.—1818. Vol. III. p. 416.

Sect. 9. *A complaint from one Presbytery against another, should be laid before the Synod to which the latter Presbytery belong.*

See Vol. III. p. 413.

Sect. 10. *A cause may be withdrawn by consent of parties and all proceedings on it stayed.*

See Vol. III. p. 155.

Digitized by Google

PART XIII.

OF

MISCELLANEOUS MATTER.

CHAPTER I.

OF TESTIMONY IN FAVOUR OF CERTAIN PRINCIPLES, AND AGAINST CERTAIN VICES.

Sect. 1. Testimony of the late Synod of New York and Philadelphia against intolerance.

IT having been represented to the Synod, that the Presbyterian Church suffers greatly in the opinion of other denominations, from an apprehension that they hold intolerant principles, the Synod do solemnly and publickly declare, that they ever have, and still do, renounce and abhor the principles of intolerance; and we do believe that every peaceable member of civil society ought to

Digitized by Google

be protected in the full and free exercise of his religion.—Page 356.—1783.

Sect. 2. The opinion of the Synod in regard to slavery and its abolition, in 1787.*

The Synod, taking into consideration the overture concerning slavery transmitted by the committee of overtures, came to the following judgment: The Synod of New York and Philadelphia do highly approve of the general principles in favour of universal liberty that prevail in America, and the interest which many of the states have taken in promoting the abolition of slavery. Yet in as much as men introduced from a servile state to a participation of all the privileges of civil society, without a proper education and without previous habits of industry, may be, in many respects, dangerous to the community; therefore they earnestly recommend it to all the members belonging to their communion, to give those persons who are at present held in servitude such good education as to prepare them for the better enjoyment of freedom: and they moreover, recommend that masters, wherever they find servants disposed to make a just improvement of the privilege, would give them a peculium, or grant them sufficient time and sufficient means of procuring their own liberty at a moderate rate; that thereby they may be brought into society with those habits of industry that may render them useful citizens: and, finally, they recommend it to all their people to use the most prudent measures, con-

* Published by order of the Assembly in 1793.

Digitized by Google

sistent with the interests and the state of civil society in the countries where they live, to procure eventually the final abolition of slavery in America.

Sect. 3. *Advice given by the Assembly in relation to slavery, in* 1815.

The committee to which was committed the report of the committee to which the petition of some elders, who entertain conscientious scruples on the subject of holding slaves, together with that of the Synod of Ohio concerning the buying and selling of slaves, had been referred, reported; and their report being read and amended, was adopted, and is as follows: *viz.*

The General Assembly have repeatedly declared their cordial approbation of those principles of civil liberty which appear to be recognized by the Federal and State governments in these United States. They have expressed their regret, that the slavery of the Africans and of their descendants still continues in so many places, and even among those within the pale of the church; and have urged the Presbyteries under their care to adopt such measures as will secure at least to the rising generation of slaves, within the bounds of the church, a religious education; that they may be prepared for the exercise and enjoyment of liberty, when God, in his Providence, may open a door for their emancipation. The committee refer said petitioners to the Printed Extracts of the Synod of New York and Philadelphia, for the year 1787 on this subject, republished by the Assembly in 1793; and also to the Extracts of the minutes of the Assem-

Digitized by Google

bly for 1795; which last are in the following words: *viz.*

"A serious and conscientious person, a member of a Presbyterian congregation, who views the slavery of the negroes as a moral evil, highly offensive to God, and injurious to the interests of the Gospel, lives under the ministry of a person, or amongst a society of people, who concur with him in sentiment on the subject upon general principles; yet, for particular reasons, hold slaves, and tolerate the practice in others: Ought the former of these persons, under the impressions and circumstances above described, to hold christian communion with the latter?"

Whereupon, after due deliberation, it was *Resolved*, that as the same difference of opinion with respect to slavery takes place in sundry other parts of the Presbyterian Church, notwithstanding which they live in charity and peace, according to the doctrine and practice of the Apostles; it is hereby recommended to all conscientious persons, and especially to those whom it immediately respects, to do the same. At the same time the General Assembly assure all the churches under their care, that they view with the deepest concern any any vestiges of slavery which may exist in our country, and refer the churches to the Records of the General Assembly, published at different times; but especially to an overture of the late Synod of New York and Philadelphia, published in 1787, and re-published among the extracts from the minutes of the General Assembly of 1793, on that head, with which, they trust, every conscientious person will be fully satisfied.

Digitized by Google

This is deemed a sufficient answer to the first petition; and with regard to the second, the Assembly observe, that, although in some sections of our country, under certain circumstances, the transfer of slaves may be unavoidable, yet they consider the buying and selling of slaves by way of traffic, and all undue severity in the management of them, as inconsistent with the spirit of the Gospel. And they recommend it to the Presbyteries and Sessions under their care, to make use of all prudent measures to prevent such shameful and unrighteous conduct.

Sect. 4. *A full expression of the Assembly's views of slavery, in* 1818.

The committee to which was referred the resolution on the subject of selling a slave, a member of the church, and which was directed to prepare a report to be adopted by the Assembly, expressing their opinion in general on the subject of slavery, reported; and their report being read, was *unanimously* adopted, and referred to the same committee for publication.

It is as follows: *viz.*

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, having taken into consideration the subject of SLAVERY, think proper to make known their sentiments upon it to the churches and people under their care.

We consider the voluntary enslaving of one part of the human race by another, as a gross violation of the most precious and sacred rights of human nature; as utterly inconsistent with the law of God, which requires us to love our neighbour as

Digitized by Google

ourselves; and as totally irreconcilable with the spirit and principles of the Gospel of Christ, which enjoin that, "all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Slavery creates a paradox in the moral system—it exhibits rational, accountable, and immortal beings, in such circumstances as scarcely to leave them the power of moral action. It exhibits them as dependent on the will of others, whether they shall receive religious instruction; whether they shall know and worship the true God; whether they shall enjoy the ordinances of the Gospel; whether they shall perform the duties and cherish the endearments of husbands and wives, parents and children, neighbours and friends; whether they shall preserve their chastity and purity, or regard the dictates of justice and humanity. Such are some of the consequences of Slavery,—consequences not imaginary—but which connect themselves with its very existence. The evils to which the slave is *always* exposed, often take place in fact, and in their very worst degree and form: and where all of them do not take place, as we rejoice to say that in many instances, through the influence of the principles of humanity and religion on the minds of masters, they do not—still the slave is deprived of his natural right, degraded as a human being, and exposed to the danger of passing into the hands of a master who may inflict upon him all the hardships and injuries which inhumanity and avarice may suggest.

From this view of the consequences resulting from the practice into which christian people have most inconsistently fallen, of enslaving a portion of their *brethren* of mankind—for "God hath made

Digitized by Google

of one blood all nations of men to dwell on the face of the earth"—it is manifestly the duty of all christians who enjoy the light of the present day, when the inconsistency of slavery, both with the dictates of humanity and religion, has been demonstrated, and is generally seen and acknowledged, to use their honest, earnest, and unwearied endeavours, to correct the errors of former times, and as speedily as possible to efface this blot on our holy religion, and to obtain the complete abolition of slavery throughout Christendom, and if possible throughout the world.

We rejoice that the church to which we belong commenced, as early as any other in this country, the good work of endeavouring to put an end to slavery,* and that in the same work, many of its members have ever since been, and now are, among the most active, vigorous, and efficient labourers. We do, indeed, tenderly sympathize with those portions of our church and our country, where the evil of slavery has been entailed upon them; where a *great*, and *the most virtuous part* of the *community* abhor slavery, and wish its extermination, as sincerely as any others—but where the number of slaves, their ignorance, and their vicious habits generally, render an immediate and universal emancipation inconsistent, alike, with the safety and happiness of the master and the slave. With those who are thus circumstanced, we repeat that we tenderly sympathize.—At the same time, we earnestly exhort them to continue, and, if possible, to in-

* In a note the Assembly republished the minutes of the Synod of New York and Philadelphia, on this subject, which the reader may find in Sect. 2, preceding.

Digitized by Google

crease their exertions to effect a total abolition of slavery.—We exhort them to suffer no greater delay to take place in this most interesting concern, than a regard to the public welfare *truly* and *indispensably* demands.

As our country has inflicted a most grievous injury on the unhappy Africans, by bringing them into slavery, we cannot, indeed, urge that we should add a second injury to the first, by emancipating them in such manner as that they will be likely to destroy themselves or others. But we do think, that our country ought to be governed in this matter, by no other consideration than an honest and impartial regard to the happiness of the injured party; uninfluenced by the expense or inconvenience which such a regard may involve. We therefore warn all who belong to our denomination of christians, against unduly extending this plea of necessity; against making it a cover for the love and practice of slavery, or a pretence for not using efforts that are lawful and practicable to extinguish the evil.

And we, at the same time, exhort others to forbear harsh censures, and uncharitable reflections on their brethren, who unhappily live among slaves, whom they cannot immediately set free; but who, at the same time, are really using all their influence, and all their endeavours, to bring them into a state of freedom, as soon as a door for it can be safely opened.

Having thus expressed our views of slavery, and of the duty indespensably incumbent on all christians to labour for its complete extinction, we proceed to recommend—(and we do it with all the earnestness and solemnity which this momentous

Digitized by Google

subject demands)—a particular attention to the following points.

We recommend to all our people to patronize and encourage the Society, lately formed, for colonizing in Africa, the land of their ancestors, the free people of colour in our country. We hope that much good may result from the plans and efforts of this Society. And while we exceedingly rejoice to have witnessed its origin and organization among the *holders of slaves*, as giving an unequivocal pledge of their desire to deliver themselves and their country from the calamity of slavery; we hope that those portions of the American Union, whose inhabitants are, by a gracious Providence, more favourably circumstanced, will cordially, and liberally, and earnestly co-operate with their brethren, in bringing about the great end contemplated.

We recommend to all the members of our religious denomination, not only to permit, but to facilitate and encourage the instruction of their slaves, in the principles and duties of the christian religion; by granting them liberty to attend on the preaching of the gospel, when they have the opportunity; by favouring the instruction of them in Sabbath-Schools, wherever those Schools can be formed; and by giving them all other proper advantages for acquiring the knowledge of their duty both to God and man. We are perfectly satisfied, that, as it is incumbent on all christians to communicate religious instruction to those who are under their authority, so the doing of this in the case before us, so far from operating, as some have apprehended that it might, as an excitement to insubordination and insurrection, would, on the contrary,

Digitized by Google

operate as the most powerful means for the prevention of those evils.*

3. We enjoin it on all Church Sessions and Presbyteries, under the care of this Assembly, to discountenance, and, as far as possible, to prevent, all cruelty of whatever kind in the treatment of slaves; especially the cruelty of separating husband and wife, parents and children; and that which consists in selling slaves to those who will either themselves deprive these unhappy people of the blessings of the Gospel, or who will transport them to places where the Gospel is not proclaimed, or where it is forbidden to slaves to attend upon its institutions.—The manifest violation or disregard of the injunction here given, in its true spirit and intention, ought to be considered as just ground for the discipline and censures of the church.—And if it shall ever happen that a christian professor, in our communion, shall sell a slave who is also in communion and good standing with our church, contrary to his or her will, and inclination, it ought immediately to claim the particular attention of the

* The following intelligence has been recently received, and may be relied on as authentic: "The legislature of Antigua, having held a conference with the Missionaries (of the United Brethren, commonly called Moravians) to induce them to extend their missions there, and finding it out of their power, voted them one thousand pounds to build a church and house, and three hundred pounds per annum, for the support of Missionaries at one station; granting and offering as much crown land as should be wanting for that or other stations: and in the despatch to Lord Bathurst from the government of Antigua, it is stated that the legislature lamented their limited finances prevented their doing more; as they were persuaded, that to the labours of those Missionaries among the negroes, they were mainly indebted for a state of profound tranquillity, while other islands had been exposed to revolt and insurrection. The brethren have about twelve thousand negroes in their congregations on that island."

Digitized by Google

proper church judicature; and unless there be such peculiar circumstances attending the case as can but seldom happen, it ought to be followed, without delay, by a suspension of the offender from all the privileges of the church, till he repent, and make all the reparation in his power, to the injured party.

Sect. 5. *The plan of the American Society for colonizing the free people of colour recommended, in* 1819.

The following overture was submitted to the Assembly, which, being read and amended, was adopted: *viz.*

The objects and plans of the American Society for Colonizing the Free People of Colour of the United States, having been stated to the General Assembly, and the same having been considered and discussed, the Assembly resolved that, in their opinion, the plan of the Society is benevolent in its design, and if properly supported, and judiciously and vigorously prosecuted, is calculated to be extensively useful to this country and to Africa.

The situation of the people of colour in this country, has frequently attracted the attention of this Assembly. In the distinctive and indelible marks of their colour, and the prejudices of the people, an insuperable obstacle has been placed to the execution of any plan for elevating their character, and placing them on a footing with their brethren of the same common family. In restoring them to the land of their fathers, the Assembly hope that the way may be opened, not only for the accomplishment of that object, but for introdu-

Digitized by Google

cing civilization and Gospel to the benighted nations of Africa.—From the information and statement received, the Assembly believe that the proposed colony in Africa, may be made a powerful auxiliary in the efforts which are making to abolish the iniquitous trafic in slaves, carried on in Africa; and happily calculated to lay the foundation of a gradual emancipation of slaves in our own country, in a legal and constitutional manner, and without violating the rights, or injuring the feelings of our southern brethren. With these views, the Assembly feel it a duty to recommend the American Society for Colonizing the Free People of Colour of the United States, to the patronage and attention of the churches under their care, and to benevolent individuals throughout the union.

Sect. 6. *Report of a committee on the subject of a petition to Congress, in* 1815.

Your committe to whom was referred a petition communicated by the committee of overtures, requesting a renewed application to the Congress of the United States, with respect to the violations of the sabbath occasioned by the transporting and opening of the mail on that sacred day, beg leave to report, that it is the opinion of your committee, that no exertions which can be made for promoting the sanctification of the Lord's Day can exceed the importance of the object.

A due observance of this institution of our holy religion, is the characteristic signature by which God has distinguished his people, and which he has instituted as a covenant sign of their relation to him. His institutions, it becomes us to remem-

Digitized by Google

ber, are not useless forms. They have their foundation in the nature and constitution of things; we cannot, therefore, give up the sign without renouncing the blessing thereby signified. Were this grand pillar of the Christian fabric removed, the whole building would soon fall to the ground. The powerful influence of that day is even now scarce sufficient, as we have many melancholy proofs, to support the cause of truth and vital piety; who then can but foresee the direful consequences of being deprived of its privileges!

These considerations receive a peculiar weight at the present time from existing circumstances. It is doubtless well known to many members of this body, that great exertions are making in various parts of the Union, and particularly in the Eastern States, for promoting the due observance of the Christian Sabbath. To these efforts there are many adversaries; and if this opposition remain armed with national authority, and this Assembly, who first raised the standard of truth, and invited their brethren to the glorious struggle, also forsake them; the prospect is, that the flood-gates of iniquity will be again forced open, and a far greater inundation follow. These circumstances imperiously urge to the measure stated in the petition. But what encouragement, some may say, can we have to renew our application after such a refusal? Your committee are of the opinion, that the very act of petitioning will have no small effect, both to animate the friends, and to weaken the enemies of this cause. But this is not our only hope. Shall we forget that God has the entire controul of the hearts of men, and that those who faithfully pursue the path of duty may, with confidence, rely

Digitized by Google

upon his aid? Nay, we are encouraged to the re-application, by the terms in which the refusal of our former request was given. The reason having ceased to exist on which that refusal was predicated, as far as we have confidence in the sincerity of our rulers, so far we may extend our confidence that they will now give due weight to our remonstrances. How indeed can we doubt the countenance of those in this cause, who declare it to be their belief, "That public policy, pure morality, and undefiled religion, combine in favour of a due observance of the Sabbath?" However weak the practical influence of this truth may be found, we cannot doubt but that it is the language of conviction. The grand experiment by which God has been demonstrating to mankind the destructive nature of infidelity, with regard to society, must force open the eyes even of the blind, to see the fatal tendency of sin, especially in republics, which are founded on the principle, that the law is the supreme power. A free government, therefore, in which existing laws have lost their efficacy, presents to view a government in which the supreme authority lies prostrate under the feet of the lawless and disobedient. In producing this most unhappy state of society, the first effects of iniquity will be exerted to silence those laws and regulations which most powerfully counteract the depraved feelings of the heart; which tend to strengthen the moral sense; and which remind men of their accountability to that tribunal from which there is no appeal. If, therefore, the main spring of moral instruction and moral feeling, is found in a due sanctification of the Sabbath, to destroy its influence, to them so irksome, will be the first effort of the sons of Belial.

Digitized by Google

The spirit of infidelity, which united itself with the French revolution, intuitively pursued this course. Her first and most fatal blow was directed against this sacred institution. By a successful effort here she silenced at once the batteries of truth, and opened the way for the unrestrained practice of her future enormities. To suppose that our rulers will not be influenced by truths so plain, and of which they have avowed their conviction, is to suppose them destitute, not only of the fear of God, but of political wisdom, and even willing to plunge themselves, their friends, and families into all the horrors of anarchy, and unrestrained licentiousness. Wherefore,

Resolved, 1st. That the General Assembly recommend to all the churches and societies in their connexion, to petition the Congress of the United States, that such arrangements may be made as may prevent the transportation and opening of the mail on the Sabbath day.

2ndly. That it be, and it hereby is, earnestly recommended to all the Presbyteries under the care of the General Assembly, to adopt speedy measures to induce the Societies within their respective limits, to circulate petitions on the subject, and having circulated them for signatures to transmit them to Congress by the *first* day of *January* next.

Sect. 7. Extract from the pastoral letter of 1818.

A general movement of Protestant Christendom has taken place; an unusul blessing has descended on the Church of Christ; and we are probably

Digitized by Google

approaching some day of the Son of Man of no usual or ordinary character.—The present, therefore, is no doubt a favourable time, not only for extending the influence, but for advancing the purity of the church; for the extirpation of any errors, and the abolition of any unchristian practices which may have found entrance among us, during the long period of comparative darkness and desertion through which we have passed. And although we do not believe that any thing immoral or vicious is more prevalent now than at some former periods or even as much so, yet the existence of such things at the present time, strikes the minds of serious christians with an appearance of greater deformity, and fills them with more pungent regret as it is exhibited in such dark contrast with that promising and wonderful aspect of things so extensively displayed by the christian world. The free conversation on the state of religion has brought some such things to our view, against which we feel constrained to bear our decided testimony; and we would enter upon this duty with the tenderness and meekness, but at the same time with the firmness and authority, which becomes a Judicatory of the Church of Christ.

The first thing we shall notice is the crime of *Drunkenness*. This crime has at all times been a curse to our country, and has often made lamentable inroads upon our Church. We are convinced that it may be opposed more successfully by prevention than in any other way. When the character of drunkenness is fully formed, the unhappy victim is lost to those motives which ordinarily influence all other classes of men. In this state of things nothing but a miracle of divine grace can ef-

Digitized by Google

fect his reformation. The certain and acknowledged prospect of the wreck of his family, his fortune, and his character; and even of the ruin of his immortal soul, is not sufficient to arrest his course: and yet perhaps the same man may formerly have been in such a state of equilibrium or indecision upon this subject, that the smallest motives might have prevented the formation of a habit, which in its maturity has become so irresistible.—This consideration is certainly sufficient to justify an effort for saving our fellow men from the domination of so destructive a vice. For this purpose we earnestly recommend to the officers and members of our Church to abstain even from the common use of ardent spirits. Such a voluntary privation as this, with its motives publickly avowed, will not be without its effect in cautioning our fellow christians and fellow citizens, against the encroachment of intoxication; and we have the more confidence in recommending this course, as it has already been tried with success in several sections of our Church.

The vice of *Gambling* has also been forced upon our attention. We indeed hope that few, or perhaps none, of our actual professors, have indulged themselves in the practice of what they consider as coming under the denomination of Gambling. But perhaps there are some addicted to this practice who have evinced a predilection for our Church, and forms of worship, and who are not unwilling to receive the word of admonition from us. Such we would earnestly exhort to consider in the most serious manner, the consequences of the course they are pursuing, and the awful lessons which the experience of the world, is every day exhibiting on

Digitized by Google

this subject. But it is further our duty to testify, that all encouragement of lotteries, and purchasing of lottery tickets; all attendance on horse racing, and betting on such, or on any other occasions; and all attempts of whatever kind to acquire gain without giving an equivalent, involve the Gambling principle, and participate in the guilt which attaches to that vice.

On the fashionable, though, as we believe, dangerous amusements, of *Theatrical Exhibitions* and *Dancing*, we deem it necessary to make a few observations. The Theatre we have always considered as a school of immorality. If any person wishes for honest conviction on this subject, let him attend to the character of that mass of matter, which is generally exhibited on the stage. We believe all will agree, that comedies at least, with a few exceptions, are of such a description, that a virtuous and modest person cannot attend the representation of them, without the most painful and embarrassing sensations. If indeed custom has familiarized the scene, and these painful sensations are no longer felt, it only proves that the person in question has lost some of the best sensibilities of our nature; that the strongest safeguard of virtue has been taken down, and that the moral character has undergone a serious depreciation.

With respect to *Dancing*, we think it necessary to observe, that however plausible it may appear to some, it is perhaps not the less dangerous on account of that plausibility. It is not from those things which the world acknowledges to be most wrong, that the greatest danger is to be apprehended to religion, especially as it relates to the young. When the practice is carried to its highest extremes, all

Digitized by Google

admit the consequences to be fatal; and why not then apprehend danger, even from its incipient stages. It is certainly, in all its stages, a fascinating and an infatuating practice. Let it once be introduced, and it is difficult to give it limits. It steals away our precious time, dissipates religious impressions, and hardens the heart. To guard you, beloved brethren, against its wiles and its fascinations, we earnestly recommend that you will consult that sobriety which the sacred pages require. We also trust, that you will attend with the meekness and docility becoming the christian character, to the admonitions on this subject of those whom you have chosen to watch for your souls. And now beloved brethren, that you may be guarded from the dangers that we have pointed out, and from all other dangers which beset the path of life and obstruct our common salvation, and that the great head of the church may have you in his holy keeping is our sincere and affectionate prayer. Amen.

Sect. 8. *The opinion and advice of the Assembly given in relation to the embarrassed state of things, in* 1819.

The General Assembly viewing with deep interest the present state of our country, and more especially the commercial embarrassments which press upon every part of the United States, and the spirit of corrupt and mischievous speculation which is probably to be regarded as both a cause and an effect of these embarrassments—feel it to be their duty to take this notice of the unhappy state of things, and to express their opinion of the proper remedy, The Assembly then are persuaded, that

Digitized by Google

the evils, so general in the prevalence, and so severe in their pressure, primarily on the commercial and manufacturing portions of the community, but in a considerable degree, on all, owe their origin, in a great measure to that spirit of cupidity, of adventurous and unjustifiable speculation, of extravagance and luxury, which so unhappily prevails in our country; and also in no small degree to the want of that kind of education which is calculated to prepare youth for solid usefulness in the church and in civil society. The Assembly therefore are firmly persuaded, that the effectual remedy for these evils, under God, is to be found only in a recurrence to those principles and duties of our holy religion, which are not less conducive to the temporal welfare of men, than to their eternal happiness; and they have no hope, that general prosperity can be restored to our country, until there is a return to those habits of industry, temperance, moderation, economy and general virtue which our common christianity inculcates.

Under these impressions the Assembly would earnestly exhort the churches and people under their care, to take into due consideration the opinions above expressed; to cultivate in themselves, and to endeavour to promote in others, those simple, frugal, and regular pursuits, which cannot fail to exert a most benign influence on the best interest of society; and to train up their children in those principles and habits which will prepare them at once to be useful members of the church and useful citizens. They would especially entreat those individuals and families belonging to their communion, whom God has been pleased to favour with temporal wealth, to consider the peculiar import-

Digitized by Google

ance of their setting an edifying example; so that their whole influence may be employed to discourage fashionable vices and amusements, and to promote the simplicity and purity of christian practice. And the Assembly would earnestly exhort all the ministers in their communion, to make these sentiments a subject of frequent and serious address to the people of their respective pastoral charges; and to endeavour, by all the means in their power, to impress on the minds of their hearers the all important truth, that the religion of Jesus Christ, in its vital power and practical influence, is the best friend of civil society, as well as essential to the well being of man.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE MONIES IN THE HANDS OF THE TRUSTEES OF THE NEW-JERSEY COLLEGE.

Sect. 1. *Lesly's Will.*

AN extract from the will of Mr. James Lesly, deceased; attested by John Broom and John Bingham executors of said Lesly, was introduced and

Digitized by Google

read, and ordered to be recorded on the Minutes of the General Assembly—and is as follows:

Item. "I give and bequeath all the residue of my estate, real and personal, to the trustees of the college of New-Jersey, called Nassau Hall, and to their Successors, to be, by the said Trustees and their successors, constantly kept at interest on good security: and it is my will that the interest arising from the said residue of my estate shall be appropriated to the Education of poor and pious youth of the Presbyterian denomination, for the work of the gospel ministry, and to no other purpose whatsoever: provided nevertheless, that if it should so happen that the said interest should in any year be more than sufficient to pay for the education of such youth, in that year actually educated on this fund, then and in that case the said Trustees may and shall appropriate the surplus of such interest for such year, towards the support of a missionary or missionaries to preach the gospel and administer its ordinances to the frontier inhabitants of these United States; if the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in these states shall judge it necessary to send missionaries to the frontiers in the year in which such surplus shall arise; and provided that such surplus shall not exceed thirty pounds. But if the said surplus shall exceed thirty pounds New-York currency, in that case my will is that thirty pounds of it only be appropriated to the support of missionaries as aforesaid, and that the residue of such surplus be added to the principal sum, and put out at interest with it. And if it shall so happen that the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church aforesaid shall not judge it necessary to send missionaries to the frontiers as aforesaid, in

Digitized by Google

the year in which such surplus shall arise, then it is my will that the whole of such surplus shall be added to the capital or principal sum and put out at interest with it."

A true Copy, examined by
JOHN BROOM,
JOHN BINGHAM, } *Executors.*
New-York, May 7th, 1792.

Sect. 2. *Horton's Will.*

A clause of the will of the late Mr. Azariah Horton, was laid before the Assembly, by Mr. Foster Horton, one of his executors, requesting to be directed, where he should lodge the stock bequeathed in the said clause, agreeably to the intention of the testator.

The clause is in these words following: viz. "Item, I will and direct my said executors, out of the monies of my estate, to purchase the amount of five hundred and thirty-three dollars and thirty-three cents in six per cent. stock of the United States, and that the annual interest thereof be appropriated for ever towards the education of pious youth, according to the discretion of a joint committee of the General Assembly of Presbyterian Ministers, and Trustees of Princeton College in New-Jersey; the said committee to authorize and empower from time to time, a person, to draw and receive said interest for the use and purpose aforesaid."

Whereupon resolved, That the above stock be lodged in the hands of the Trustees of New-Jersey College, in order to be applied in the manner and for the purpose contained in the forecited clause.

Digitized by Google

Sect. 3. *An Extract from the Records of the Board of Trustees of Princeton College.*

1796. It appeared that the committee appointed to attend the meeting of the corporation of Princeton College, relative to certain funds under the controul of this Assembly, were not able to execute the business committed to them; but the following extracts from the records of the corporation was laid before the Assembly: *viz.*

1. *Resolved,* that each of the several funds mentioned in the said report be debited with its proportion of the losses sustained by depreciation, bad debts, and abatement of interest during the war, at the rate of sixty-six per cent. agreeably to the statement of the committee of accounts.

2d. *Resolved,* that the board will appropriate the interest arising on the money deposited with them, by Messrs. Tennent and Davies, in the year 1755, to the education of such poor and pious youth, as shall be nominated by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church—which money, after making the deductions stated in the first resolution, is one hundred and fifty-two pounds six shillings and five pence.

3d. *Resolved,* that the interest arising on the two hundred pounds sterling, heretofore agreed between the Synod and the Board, to be equivalent to three hundred pounds currency, given for the support of an Indian mission, or the support of a youth to be educated, for the purpose of preaching to the Indians, shall be appropriated by the board to the education of a youth to be designated by the General Assembly. This sum to be subject to the same deductions as specified in the last resolution, and which, when thus reduced, is one hundred and two pounds currency.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER III.

OF THE HISTORY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

Sect. 1. *Measures adopted for collecting materials, in* 1791.

THE committee appointed to devise measures for the collecting of materials necessary for a history of the Presbyterian church in America reported,

"That to procure materials for a complete history of the Presbyterian church for the United States from its beginning, the following information will be necessary: *viz.* who were the first ministers in America, from whence they came—the internal and relative state of the churches there, where they fixed themselves, and when—The situation of things so far as it affected the formation and establishment of a Presbyterian church—extracts from royal instructions to governors in the colonies relating to ecclesiastical matters—laws of the colonies affecting religious liberty—accounts of prosecutions in consequence of those laws—when each Presbyterian congregation in the United

Digitized by Google

States was first formed—and its particular history from that period to the present time—what congregations have existed which are now extinct—The causes of their extinction—when Presbyteries were first formed in the United States—when Synods—when the General Assembly.

"If the General Assembly should enjoin upon each of their members to furnish as particularly as may be the history of his own church, it is probable, that materials may be collected without much difficulty—the sooner it is done, the better; as time, accident and the death of ancient people will daily destroy some sources of information—The materials might be brought to the next meeting of the Assembly and deposited with their clerk.

"Your committee would farther subjoin, that the old records of Presbyteries, and Synods should as far as possible be produced—and that Mr. Hazard be applied to for leave to inspect his collection of state papers."

Upon motion, resolved, that it be enjoined upon each Presbytery strictly to order their members to procure all the materials for forming a history of the Presbyterian church in this country, as far as may be in the power of each member and bring in the same to their Presbytery, and that the Presbyteries forward the said collections of materials to the next General Assembly; and that both Presbyteries and members be careful to conform themselves to the directions contained in a minute printed in the extracts from the records of this house on this subject.

Digitized by Google

Sect. 2. Persons appointed to write the history.

Whereas the Assembly, for several years past, have been taking measures to obtain materials for a complete history of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America; which materials, as far as they have obtained, are in the hands of the Stated Clerk; and it seems expedient that the history contemplated, should be entered upon as soon as possible: therefore,

1804.

Resolved, That the Rev. Dr. Ashbel Green, and Mr. Ebenezer Hazard, be, and they hereby are, appointed to write the History of the Presbyterian Church, in the United States of America, under the care of the General Assembly; and to lay a copy thereof, when completed, before the Assembly: that they have the free use of the materials collected; and that the copy right of the History, when finished, shall belong to the said Dr. Green and Mr. Hazard.

AND WHEREAS there are certain Presbyteries and congregations, under the care of the Assembly, that have not yet furnished materials for their history, though often solicited, therefore,

Resolved, That all the Presbyteries and congregations be, and they hereby are, strictly enjoined, to do all in their power to complete their histories as soon as possible, and to forward them without delay, to the said Dr. Green and Mr. Hazard, resident in the City of Philadelphia, who are hereby authorized, if they find it necessary, to write to the Presbyteries and Congregations that may not forward to them the historical documents required;

Digitized by Google

and to urge them to the performance of their duty, and to state to the Assembly the names of those Presbyteries and Congregations, if such there be, who shall not ultimately furnish the information necessary.

And this Assembly do also hereby recommend to all the people under their care, especially gentlemen of literature and leisure, within their bounds, to furnish the gentlemen appointed to this service, with all the information in their power to give, relative to the history in contemplation, that this important work may be completed, in a manner as accurate and satisfactory as possible.

1813. It was stated to the Assembly by Dr. Green in behalf of himself and Ebenezer Hazard, esq. that from a variety of circumstances, they find it impracticable to go on with the History of the Presbyterian Church, which they were appointed to write, by an act of the General Assembly, passed in the year 1804, and in the writing of which, they have made considerable progress, and for its continuance have in their hands many materials. It was, at the same time, requested by these gentlemen, that the Rev. Samuel Miller, D. D. might, if it should seem good to the Assembly, be appointed to receive from them, all the papers, which they possess relative to the History in question, and that he be authorized and requested to complete the same.

Whereupon *Resolved*, That all the papers relative to the History of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, in the hands of Dr. Green and

Digitized by Google

Mr. Hazard, be by them deposited with Dr. Miller, and that he be appointed and directed to continue and complete said History; and that the arrangement in regard to the copy-right of this History (which right has heretofore been assured to Dr. Green and Mr. Hazard) be settled between them and Dr. Miller, as shall be mutually satisfactory to the parties severally.

"*Resolved*, That Dr. Green be associated with
1819. Dr. Miller in writing the History of the Presbyterian Church."

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

A SHORT ACCOUNT

OF THE

MISSIONS

CONDUCTED BY

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

THE Presbyterian Church in this country, was organised at the commencement of the last century. From that early period the Missionary cause began to claim the attention of her ministers. At first, indeed, while this country was but thinly inhabited, the number of preachers small, and their congregations poor, little more was done than to send occasional assistance to such people as requested it from Presbyteries and Synods. Gradually the state of things became more favourable; and the duty of sending the gospel without solicitation to destitute regions, was more sensibly felt, and more easily performed. Our church has always considered missionary labours as an object of importance; which has been pursued sometimes with greater, and at other times with a less degree of zeal.*

The late Synod of New York and Philadelphia, as early as the year 1766, directed that a subscription should be taken, or a collection made, in all their congregations, vacant as well as supplied, for the purpose of raising a fund for sending the gospel to destitute places. The next year they determined

* See a Circular Letter of the Standing Committee of Missions.

Digitized by Google

on an annual collection, and adopted other suitable measures for the accomplishment of their benevolent design.*

The General Assembly, which was constituted by that Synod, met for the first time in Philadelphia, in May 1789. During the sessions of that year, the Missionary cause claimed their particular attention. They directed the four Synods, then existing under their care, to recommend each two missionaries to the next Assembly: and that funds might be prepared to meet the expense expected to be incurred, it was enjoined on all the Presbyteries, to take measures for raising collections in all the congregations within their bounds. Two of the Synods, owing to their remote distance from this city, deemed it best to conduct the Missionary business in a separate capacity. Their conduct was approved by the Assembly. The Synod of New York, and the Synod of Philadelphia complied with the direction, and recommended Missionaries. Four were commissioned, and among them the late Dr. M'Whorter. They were sent "for the purpose of organizing churches, ordaining elders, collecting information respecting the state of religion in the frontier settlements, and proposing the best means for establishing a gospel-ministry among the destitute inhabitants."†

From this time the Missionary business was steadily pursued by the Assembly, until the year 1802, when they appointed a Standing Committee of Missions. The number of their Missionaries varied from year to year, according as more or less could be procured for the service. In 1800, more vigorous and efficient measures were adopted for raising funds for the support of the Missionary cause. Agents were sent out with proper authority to apply to the wealthy and liberal for contributions; and by their exertions a considerable sum was collected, and formed into a permanent fund. At the same time the Rev. Jedidiah Chapman was appointed a stated Missionary, for four years, on the north-western frontiers. He was directed to take up his residence in some convenient place for accomplishing the Assembly's views, and required to perform annually six months Missionary labour on a tour through the destitute settlements, for the purpose of organizing churches, as well as preaching the gospel. It was made the duty of Mr. C. to direct the routes

* See the Records of Synod. † Printed Extracts.

Digitized by Google

of the Missionaries sent to that region, and to give them advice for executing their commissions to the best advantage: and another duty prescribed to him was, to lay before the Assembly annually an account of the religious state of things, the disposition of the inhabitants to receive the word, the number of organized churches, and the prospect afforded for the establishment of more. This Missionary was designed as a common medium of communication between the General Assembly and the frontier inhabitants and the Indian tribes; through whom the Assembly were to receive applications for aid and counsel, and to transmit the communications they might wish to make to the whites, or to the Indians.

The same year the Rev. James Hall was appointed a Missionary to Natchez for several months. Accompanied by the Rev. Messrs. James Bowman and William Montgomery, who had been appointed for the purpose by the Synod of the Carolinas, he executed his commission in an able and satisfactory manner. Sensible of the importance of this place, the Assembly the next year earnestly recommended to the Synod of the Carolinas, to send out one or more Missionaries to visit it; engaging to defray part of the expense, if their funds should prove inadequate.

Desirous of extending their Missionary operations, and rendering them more efficient, the Assembly in 1801, sent down to all the Presbyteries an order to collect and transmit to them such information, as might enable them to apply their funds in the most beneficial manner. The information contemplated embraced the following particulars: The apparent disposition of the Indian tribes on our frontiers for civilization, and for receiving religious instruction; the means that had been used for their benefit, and the success of those means; the state of the frontier settlements of white people, and to what places and persons religious books might be sent for gratuitous distribution; the condition of the blacks, the places where, and the manner in which, it would be most advisable to attempt their instruction; and the names of all such persons as they deemed suitable to be employed as Missionaries to the Indian tribes, to the frontier settlements, and to the destitute portions of the interior.

The next year was distinguished by an important alteration in the manner of conducting the Missionary business. It

Digitized by Google

was now become so extensive, that the Assembly found it would be impossible, amidst the numerous concerns claiming their regard, to devote to it, during the short term of their annual sessions, that time and attention which its successful and extended prosecution demanded. To diminish their business, and to ensure a proper management of the Missionary concern, they appointed, in 1802, a STANDING COMMITTEE OF MISSIONS; prescribing to them the duties to be performed, and clothing them with such powers as were then deemed sufficient.*

Immediately after the rising of the Assembly, the Committee organized themselves, and entered with alacrity on the interesting duties assigned to them. One of their first measures was, a circular letter addressed to all the Presbyteries immediately connected with the Assembly, in the management of the Missionary business; the object of which was to obtain information, in regard to the same points to which the Assembly had previously directed their attention. A circular letter was also prepared and sent by the Committee to Foreign Missionary Societies: communicating to them information in regard to the state of Missionary concerns in our country generally, and particularly in our own church; and soliciting answers to certain questions, from which they hoped to derive useful information to aid them in the management of their important business. Due attention was paid to this letter by the societies to whom it was addressed, and friendly replies were received.

Instructions too for directing the conduct of the Missionaries were prepared at an early period. Among other directions, Missionaries are counselled in these instructions, to preach the gospel in a plain and affectionate manner; but at the same time to be prepared to resist cavil and silence contradiction, whenever they should be called to attempt it. They are directed to attend religious conferences, and to improve every convenient opportunity for giving catechetical instruction. They are directed to avoid all unfriendly censures or reflections on other religious denominations, and to abstain from political and party discussions; and to endeavour to conduct themselves as embassadors from the Prince of peace, and to recommend the gospel to others by a becoming christian example.

* See Missions, Chap. I, Part VI.

Digitized by Google

From their first appointment till the year 1817, when they were constituted a Board of Missions, clothed with full powers to manage the entire concern as they might deem proper, this Committee prosecuted, from year to year, the important business confided to them; reporting annually to the Assembly an account of their proceedings, and recommending the appointment of suitable Missionaries, designating the regions to which they should be sent, and marking out the routes on which they should labour. Under the conduct of the Committee, the Missionary business became more and more extensive; and they had the satisfaction of beholding it constantly increasing in apparent usefulness to the cause of religion. The first year six Missionary appointments were made, and in the year 1816 forty-four.

The north-western part of the state of New York, was the region to which the Assembly first directed the labours of their Missionaries. Subsequently they extended their benevolent aid to the destitute portions of other states. Enlarging from year to year, as their funds increased, and a supply of Missionaries could be obtained, the field of labour, it rapidly widened, till it has embraced destitute places, from the northern extremity of New York to Natchez and New Orleans, and from the eastern shores of the Atlantic to the western banks of the Mississippi.

While the General Assembly were pursuing the Missionary business by the agency of their Standing Committee, some of the Synods, who acted in this important concern in a separate capacity, engaged in it with considerable zeal and industry. The Synods of Virginia and Pittsburg, have distinguished themselves.

The unhappy race of Africans in this country have not been neglected by the Assembly. Feeling for their wretched state of moral degredation, and desirous of conveying to them the heavenly messages of that gospel, which knows no distinctions among men arising from their circumstances in life, or from the complexion of their skin; but contemplating all as sinners, proclaims pardon and reconciliation to all alike, who will receive them as freely offered, whether rich or poor, bond or free, whether descended from Ham or from his brethren; they have at different times made efforts for their instruction

Digitized by Google

and salvation. A man of colour and a regular minister of the gospel, was for some years in succession commissioned, for a part of his time, to labour as a Missionary among the Blacks in different southern states. For the benefit of that same description of people, the Rev. now Dr. John H. Rice, spent, under the direction of the Committee of Missions, several months in the year for some time; and was honoured, it is believed, as the instrument in the hands of God, for blessing not a few of them with a freedom more valuable than that of emancipation from slavery to man; a freedom from the dominion of sin and the thraldom of Satan. Had the prospect of a free and unrestrained exercise to his ministry in the southern states been more inviting, the Rev. Mr. Gloucester, a man of colour, would have been commissioned to preach to the Blacks in that part of the Union. In the existing state of things, when he was first licensed as a preacher, it was judged best to direct his labours for the benefit of that people in the city of Philadelphia. Under the patronage of the Assembly, he has succeeded in collecting a respectable congregation; and by the assistance of the Evangelical Society of that city, and the donations of the liberal, a convenient and decent house of worship has been erected, in which he has successfully ministered to his people for a number of years. The claims of this unhappy race of mankind, will not be neglected by the Assembly.

Missions to the Aborigines of this country commanded the attention of the Presbyterian Church at an early period. The Rev. David Brainard, and the Rev. John Brainard, were both members of the late Synod of New York and Philadelphia. The former, who was so eminently successful among the Indians, derived his support from a society in Scotland. But, to his brother who succeeded him in his mission, the Synod allowed a salary of £30 per annum. In the year 1763, they ordered a collection in all their congregations, for the support of the Indian Mission and the Indian school, and agreed to give to a schoolmaster £30 for that year. During the same sessions they voted £65 for the relief of Mr. Occam, labouring among the Oneida Indians, who received from the society, by whom he was commissioned, too small a sum for his support; and directed certain individuals to write to that society, requesting them to grant their Missionary a more liberal salary. In the year 1766, the Rev. Mr. Beatty and the

Digitized by Google

Rev. Mr. Duffield, having performed a mission among the Indians, on the Muskingum, and among the frontier inhabitants, made so favourable a report of their reception, that the Rev. Messrs. Brainard and Cooper were appointed to spend three months in the summer of 1767, in preaching to the same Indians, and among the inhabitants in the same frontier settlements. Owing to unfavourable reports afterwards received, this mission was not fulfilled. The next year a committee was appointed to draw up a general plan for sending the gospel among the benighted Aborigines of this country; but this too seems not to have resulted in the adoption of more extensive and efficient measures than had been previously pursued.

Missions to the Indians have always claimed more or less the attention of the Presbyterian Church, since the constitution of the General Assembly. It has already been seen, that in the appointment of the Rev. Mr. Chapman, as a Missionary to the northwestern frontier of the state of New York, the Assembly had a reference to the Indian tribes, for whose deplorable condition they sensibly felt. Aware of their wishes on this subject, the Committee of Missions regarded the evangelizing of the pagans on our borders as of primary consideration. In the circular addressed to the Presbyteries in 1802, the first year of their appointment, is found this passage: "Missionaries for the Indians is a great desideratum with the Assembly. The hope of contributing to send the gospel to the heathen tribes, prompted the liberality of many, who have contributed most largely to the funds which the Assembly have at command: and it was with the deepest regret, that the last Assembly found that they had not a single candidate for an Indian Mission. If your Presbytery can nominate one who is well qualified, it will be an important acquisition."

The next year a Missionary was obtained. The Rev. Gideon Blackburn, while attending the General Assembly as a member, was invited to meet the Committee. Finding, in the course of a conversation with him in regard to the Cherokee Indians, that he was willing to engage in a Mission to that people, the Committee recommended his appointment as a Missionary for two months. He was accordingly appointed by the Assembly. The object of his mission, as stated in his commission, was, to carry to that benighted people "the

Digitized by Google

gospel and the arts of civilized life." In accordance with this object, Mr. B. was instructed to establish a school within the territory of the United States, but near the border of the Indian country, for the purpose of affording gratuitous instruction to their children; and he was authorized to employ a schoolmaster to conduct the business of the school, under his direction and superintendence. It was left to the discretion of Mr. B. to determine, whether in the course of his Mission it would be proper to *preach*, as the principal design was "to conciliate the friendship of the Indians, and prepare the way for extensive usefulness among them at a future day." As it was foreseen that the maintenance of this Mission to the Indians, would require a much greater expenditure of money than the funds of the Assembly could afford to be appropriated to one object, Mr. B. was furnished by the Committee with a recommendatory certificate; authorizing him to solicit assistance, and commending him to the liberality of all who were disposed to favour the instruction and evangelizing of the Indians.

Such were the incipient measures adopted by the Committee at the commencement of this Mission. When Mr. Blackburn visited the Indians, he found that they preferred having the school established in their own country; and as they proposed this, it was deemed proper to comply with their wishes. They promised to send their children to the school for three years, by way of experiment; and engaged, if it should succeed according to their expectations, to allow it to be permanently located among them. A schoolmaster was procured, who was willing "to relinquish the enjoyments of civilized life, and remove with his small family into the wilderness, and live among savages."

The expense of this establishment soon became much greater than was expected; so that in the year 1805, although a donation of $300 had a little before been made to it, by the Missionary Society of New Jersey, it became necessary, in order to relieve it from embarrassment, to appropriate for its support not less than $500 more. The number of Indian children in the school, amounted to from 45 to 50; and as they were not only educated, but fed and clothed by the establishment, the expense incurred so increased, that from this year the Assembly annually allowed out of their funds to the amount of $500 for its support. To enable the Missionary to

Digitized by Google

devote more of his time in superintending this important Mission, as well as to encourage and reward his labours, his term of service was gradually increased from two to six months in the year. Still further to assist Mr. Blackburn in maintaining his establishment, the Committee procured and forwarded to him donations in books, blankets, medicine, and clothing. The school flourished for some years. Specimens of the hand writing and of the composition of the Indian children, were at different times presented to the Committee, and by them laid before the Assembly; which were regarded as pleasing evidences of the improvement of the pupils in useful knowledge. From the Governor of Tennessee, as well as from the Presbytery of Union, satisfactory testimonials were received in regard to the manner in which the school was conducted, and the progress made by the Indian children.

The Indians were so highly gratified by the experiment made, and anticipated such great advantages from the education of their children, that they became anxious for the establishment of more schools, and expressed their desire so strongly on the subject, that Mr. Blackburn determined to institute a second school among them at his own risque; relying upon the interposition of divine providence for the means of its support. Previously to the month of May 1806, there were already in that school thirty scholars. The Committee of Missions, while they felt it to be their duty to apprize their Missionary that circumstances would not authorize them to burden the funds of the Assembly, by engaging to support this new establishment, cheerfully aided him by their patronage in the tour which he made through some of the eastern states, for the purpose of collecting money for the school. At his request they also agreed to give their opinion, in regard to the compensation to which he might be entitled for his additional labours; and, for the protection of his character, to insert in their books his accounts for the second, as well as for the first school.

Mr. Blackburn collected on his tour nearly $5500. But the support of the two institutions became too expensive to be sustained by the funds procured. After continuing in the service of the General Assembly till the year 1810, he retired from his Mission; assigning as reasons for his resignation, want of health and an intention of changing the place of his residence.

The letter of Mr. B. announcing his resignation, was re-

Digitized by Google

ceived by the Committee during the sessions of the General Assembly that year; and in reporting on this subject, they lamented that, after so much time had been spent, and such great expenses incurred, in conducting the Mission to the Cherokees, and when the great objects of the Mission appeared to be almost within the reach of the Missionary, the want of health and other causes should compel him to abandon his benevolent labours. By his letter, however, which was read to the Assembly, they were encouraged to hope, "that the fruit of his labours would not be lost, and that a harvest, though retarded, might yet be gathered from the seed sown among the Cherokees."

"To Mr. Blackburn's long, patient, and laborious services, while acting as the Assembly's Missionary," the Committee bore honourable testimony.

Other labourers have gone to reap the harvest among that nation. It was the Committee's intention to prosecute this Mission; but, while they were looking for Missionaries possessing suitable qualifications for the work, the Rev. Mr. Kingsbury, acting under the authority of the Board of Commissioners for foreign Missions, established in New England, passed through this city to occupy the field in which our Missionary had been labouring for so many years. When Mr. K. waited on the Chairman of the Committee, to know whether they had any objections to his Mission to the Cherokees, he was informed that the Committee could not object to his labouring for the benefit of that benighted people; but he was at the same time distinctly apprized of their design to resume the Mission, as soon as providence should be pleased to furnish them with suitable missionaries.

In the year 1814, a Mission was projected for the benefit of the Indians in and about Lewistown, Ohio. The Rev. James Hughs, designing to remove to that State, offered to undertake the Mission; and the Committee, having full confidence in his prudence and judgment, capacity and experience, readily accepted his services. The design of this Mission was to teach the Indian youth the art of cultivating the ground, as well as to instruct them in other branches of knowledge human and divine. For this purpose an attempt was made to procure from government a section of land in the neighbourhood of Lewistown, on which the youth might be

Digitized by Google

employed in the business of agriculture, while they were attending to the instructions of the school. Failing in their application to government, the Committee was authorised by the Assembly, to purchase a sufficient quantity of land for farming: but as Mr. Hughs found, after having prosecuted his Mission two or three years, that the Indians were in an unsettled state, owing to a prevalent disposition among them to remove beyond the Mississippi, it was deemed expedient to give up the Mission.

The Board of Trust of the Western Missionary Society, composed of members of the Synod of Pittsburg, have discovered a commendable zeal, and shown much judgment in the management of Indian Missions. At Sandusky they established a Mission for the benefit of this unfortunate race of men in the year 1806. Their ultimate design was to evangelize the savages: but to facilitate the attainment of this great object, they established a school for the instruction of their children, whom they fed and clothed; and procured land for the purpose of assisting in the support of the establishment, and of teaching the Indians the important business of agriculture. On the farm they had erected the necessary buildings; the school consisted of 30 or 40 scholars; and the Mission was going on in a prosperous way till the late war; when the building, having been burnt and the improvements destroyed by the enemy, the Mission was suspended.

The same Board in consequence of a pressing and personal application from Cornplanter, the chief of the six nations, resolved, in 1814, to establish a Mission among those tribes. The application seemed very remarkable; being, as far as the Board knew, entirely voluntary on the part of the Old Chief. The hand of God was gratefully noticed and acknowledged. Cornplanter requested that the gospel might be sent to his people, and that their children might be instructed as christian children are taught; promising at the same time to use his influence with the Indians, to induce them to comply with such regulations as might be necessary for the establishment and success of the Mission.

The first Missionary, sent in compliance with this request, was affectionately received by the Old Chief and other Indians. He lamented his own and his people's blindness in spiritual things; but expressed a hope, that as he had prayed to the Great Spirit, he was about to bring them out of darkness,

Digitized by Google

and to teach them how to fear and serve God, and keep his Sabbaths. The Indians agreed to provide for their children boarding and lodging, without any expense to the society, and the Chief promised to furnish a school house, a dwelling for the teacher, together with a farm, if it should be judged proper to occupy it.

In such favourable circumstances was this Mission established. The school-master succeeded in gaining the confidence of the Indians. A Missionary was appointed to preach among them a part of the year. The progress of the scholars exceeded the most sanguine expectations of the Board. They had not been under tuition more than eighteen months, before the specimens of their writing were forwarded to the Committee of Missions for inspection. The influence of Mr. Oldham, the teacher, over the Indians, was very propitious. "The Sabbath," state the Board, in one of their communications, "is observed in a very different manner from what it was before; a number of the Indians attend punctually at the school-house, where they meet on the Lord's day for social prayer and reading the scriptures."

The Old Chief manifested a great concern for the success of the Mission, and exerted all his influence in favour of it. On one occasion he addressed Mr. Fairchild, a Missionary, when he had finished his discourse, thus: "I am very glad that we have all met this evening, and that all is well with us. We are much indebted to the Great Spirit for his care over us. I rejoice that he sends the ministers so frequently to visit us; and I cannot be thankful enough that they are taking so much pains with us. I fear they will be discouraged with us: for when they come, they find us so poor, ignorant, and stupid. I hope, however, they will not give us up: and I believe the Great Spirit is among you, and that you will succeed."

The General Assembly manifested their readiness to assist in prosecuting the Missionary establishment at Sandusky; for when it was represented that the institution of a second school among the six nations was important, they agreed to allow annually for its support three hundred dollars, and authorized the Board to locate it wherever they might deem proper, whether the place should fall within the bounds of the Synod of Pittsburg or not. This school, however, has been rendered unnecessary, in consequence of the attention paid to the in-

Digitized by Google

struction of these Indians by another denomination of christians.

In the autumn of 1818, the school at Cornplanter's town, owing to the occurrence of several obstacles, and the removal of a number of Indian families from the town and country round about, was discontinued. To preserve, however, the fruits of the Mission, the Board of Trust endeavoured to persuade a number of the Indian boys, who had made some considerable progress, to prosecute their education; and as an inducement, they offered to bring them into christian society, to clothe and support and instruct them gratuitously. This benevolent offer proving ineffectual, the Board were reluctantly obliged to give up all hopes of further success for the present.

Not discouraged by these unpleasant circumstances, the Board of Trust are still directing their attention to the aborigines of this country. In their last report they informed the Board of Missions, that one of their members, the Rev. Elisha M'Curdy, had been sent to visit the Wyandot Indians on the Sandusky, with a view, if favourable prospects should invite, to establish a Mission among that tribe of savages.

Desirous of carrying on the Missionary business with greater efficacy and to a greater extent, the Assembly of 1818 constituted the Committee into a BOARD OF MISSIONS, increased their number, and enlarged their powers. The Board have now full powers to transact all the business of the Missionary cause; and are only required to make an annual report of their proceedings to the Assembly, and to receive from them any counsel and advice they may be pleased to give. At the same time the Board were authorized and directed to take measures for establishing Auxiliary Missionary Societies throughout the Presbyterian Church.

In compliance with this direction of the Assembly, the Board, soon after their regular organization, prepared and published an address to all our churches; recommending the formation of one or more Auxiliary Missionary Societies within the limits of each Presbytery, and the establishment of Missionary Associations in each congregation auxiliary to the societies: and to facilitate the operation of the plan, they published in connexion with their address, draughts of constitutions for the societies and the associations. This plan has received the particular approbation of the Assembly; who

Digitized by Google

have repeatedly and warmly recommended it to the notice of the Presbyteries and churches. The Synod of Virginia, who had previously conducted the Missionary business in a separate capacity, have directed their Presbyteries to organize societies on the plan proposed by the Board. Presbyteries, belonging to other Synods, have become auxiliary in this important concern; and other auxiliary societies have been formed in several places. Should this plan be more generally adopted; should all the Presbyteries act on it with vigour; and should numerous associations be formed in our congregations; it will be the means of introducing greater unity in the operations of our Church in this all-important concern, and of carrying them to an extent far beyond what they have ever yet reached. How desirable is it that the Church should concentrate her resources and her energies, in order to convey the blessings of salvation to the destitute, both in our own land and among the pagans, who are perishing for want of the bread and the water of life!

The same year in which the Board of Missions was constituted, the Assembly adopted measures that have resulted in the establishment of THE UNITED FOREIGN MISSIONARY SOCIETY. Believing that a new society for conducting foreign Missions, composed of members belonging to the Reformed Dutch Church, the Associate Reformed Church, and of other churches holding the same creed, as well as of members belonging to their own church, might be formed; the General Assembly appointed a committee to correspond with those churches. The proposition met with such a cordial reception from the Supreme Judicatories of our sister churches, that the committee were enabled to report to the next Assembly, the constitution which had been prepared for the society, embracing members from the three denominations, and all others who may wish to unite with them.

The object of this society is to spread the gospel among the Indians of North America, the inhabitants of Mexico and South America, and in other portions of the heathen and anti-christian world. No alteration can be made in the Constitution without the consent of the highest judicatories of the three denominations; and for their information, the Board of Managers are required by the constitution to lay before them their annual report. This society hold their annual meetings in the city of New York, in the month of May; and select their Missionaries from the three churches indiscriminately.

Digitized by Google

At an early period of their operations the Managers contemplated South America as an inviting field for Missionary labour; and in execution of their design had engaged two young men to visit different sections of that interesting portion of the globe, for the purpose of ascertaining the moral and religious condition of the inhabitants, and the prospects that might offer for the successful establishment of a Protestant Mission. But, having afterwards learnt from correspondence with intelligent individuals, who were well acquainted with the state of affairs in the places contemplated, and the watchful jealousy of the established religion, that the prospects were too discouraging, they resolved to relinguish their design for the present, and wait for more favourable openings of divine providence. They, however, still keep their eye on that portion of our globe, and hold a correspondence with the American consul at Valparaiso, for the purpose of obtaining information in regard to the probability of success in the establishment of a Protestant Mission in Chili or the adjacent country, and the probable expense that would be incurred in conducting it.

Two young men, licensed preachers of the gospel, being commissioned as Agents by the Board, went, in May last, to the Missouri Territory, for the purpose of examining the state of the Indian tribes, and selecting a proper spot for a Missionary station. Information has just been received from the Corresponding Secretary of the society, that Mr. Chapman, who has returned from his tour, reports that he was well received by the Indians, and that a covenant has been made with them. A Missionary establishment among the Osages will, therefore, be immediately undertaken by the Board of Managers; and the establishment, when completed, will embrace not only ministers of the gospel, to instruct them in the knowledge of divine things, but other persons, both male and female, capable of teaching them the art of farming, and other elementary branches of knowledge, calculated to improve domestic life, and bring them into a state of civilization.

The prospects of this infant society are flattering. Considering the resources on which they may draw, it is reasonable to expect that their operations will constantly increase; and that, under their cultivation, blest with the dew of heaven, the wilderness will blossom as the rose, and the solitary place be made glad.

Digitized by Google

When the Committee of Missions commenced their labours, they found the fields demanding cultivation exceedingly extensive. Wherever they directed their eyes to the frontiers of this country, they beheld vast regions of moral desolation. Among the inhabitants they saw many who had formerly enjoyed the means of grace; some in whose hearts dwelt the principles of true religion; and others who had been instructed in the great doctrines of our common salvation. To cherish and preserve from extinction these seeds of knowledge and of grace, was deemed important. It was supposed that even occasional discourses preached to people, in such circumstances, would produce beneficial effects. Influenced by this consideration, the Committee, while they had vast regions to supply, and but few Missionaries at command, were induced to prescribe to them extensive routes; looking forward to the time, when more favourable circumstances would enable them to circumscribe their itinerations within narrower bounds. At an early period of their labours, they were, however, aware of the advantages that would result from confining their Missionaries within such limits, as would afford them opportunities for preaching frequently in the same places, and to the same audiences. Their opinion on this point they expressed to the Assembly in their first report; but stating, at the same time, that as the field demanding cultivation was so exceedingly large, the cry of the destitute for relief so pressing, and the Missionaries so few, they deemed it best, in view of all circumstances, to prescribe to the Missionaries extensive routes.

The result has sanctioned the correctness of the Committee's judgment. Sparks of religion, which might otherwise have perished, have been preserved alive; the hopes of the pious have been encouraged to look forward to better days, when they would be favoured with more frequent opportunities of hearing the word of life; and the thoughtless have been kept from falling into utter forgetfulness of the very form of religion.

It has been the wish and the purpose of the Committee, as it now is, of the Board of Missions, to form circuits of narrower limits, and to station in them suitable Missionaries. In this way, it is believed, numerous congregations might be organized and cherished, until they should acquire sufficient strength to support the gospel without assistance. But, while

Digitized by Google

this is contemplated as a desirable plan of operation for a part of the Missionaries that may be employed by the Assembly's funds, it is still deemed proper to continue to prescribe to others more extensive routes. Difficulties have opposed the execution of the former part of the plan, so that it has not been acted on as fully as was designed. The cry of distress is heard from all quarters; and different sections of the church expect to have attention paid to their applications for Missionary aid. But the principal difficulty has arrisen from inability to procure a succession of suitable Missionaries to occupy the different stations. A region cultivated one year, is left to barrenness the next, for want of a labourer. And not unfrequently are the Board obliged, in prescribing routes, to comply with the inclination, or govern themselves by the situations, of the Missionaries at command.

But this difficulty, it is hoped, will be removed in the course of time. The Theological Seminary of the General Assembly, has furnished a number of valuable Missionaries. To that institution the Board are looking for a succession of well instructed youth, who, animated by a Missionary zeal, will devote at least a portion of their time, to carry the messages of grace to the destitute and perishing. The supply that may be expected from the Seminary, together with what may be derived from former sources, will, we trust, greatly facilitate and increase our Missionary operations.

It is matter of pleasing reflection, that the attention of the Presbyterian Church, was, at so early a period, turned to the Missionary business, and that she has prosecuted it with growing zeal. Her labours have been amply rewarded. She now beholds her Presbyteries and her Synods, spreading their numerous congregations over regions, where formerly her Missionaries passed rapidly along, blowing the trumpet of the gospel, and proclaiming to the scattered inhabitants the tidings of salvation.

God has been pleased to smile upon the labours of our Missionaries. They have been honoured as the instruments of preserving infant churches, of establishing new congregations, of reclaiming many sinners from the error of their ways, and of comforting and edifying the pious. The success attending their labours has been for some years past greatly increasing. It furnishes matter to our church for

Digitized by Google

thanksgiving and praise to Almighty God, and abundant encouragement to persevere in her work and labour of love.

The Presbyterian Church has done well in comparison with other churches in this country. But has she done her duty? So numerous are her congregations that an annual contribution of one quarter dollar from each individual, would yield an ample revenue for carrying on all the Assembly's operations in favour of the Redeemer's cause, to a much greater extent than they are at present. If such funds were at command, Missionaries, it may be said, could not be procured in sufficient numbers to occupy them. But let it be remembered, that the Assembly need funds for the support of the Seminary, and of young men while prosecuting their studies for the ministry, as well as for the support of Missions.

If our church had done her duty fully, years ago would she have established her Theological Seminary; and from that sacred fountain richer and wider streams would have flowed forth to water her tender and precious plants, and made her beautiful and delightful as the garden of the Lord. Many a waste place might have been reclaimed from barrenness; springs of water might have burst forth in the desert; the wilderness might have budded and blossomed as the rose; and where now the voice of impiety prevails, and shocks the pious ear with profane cursing and swearing, songs of praise to our Immanuel might have been sung.

Reader, put the question to yourself. Have you done your duty? Have you contributed according to your ability, or used your influence in persuading others to replenish the treasury of the Lord?

To the cause of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and our Saviour, should be consecrated the talents of the learned, the wisdom of the wise, the wealth of the rich, the mites of the poor, the faith and prayers of all. Let the Presbyterian Church call forth and combine all her energies in the work of her Lord and Master: and then, favoured with his gracious and effectual aid, the results will be such as to surpass the most sanguine expectations. The blessing of unborn generations will descend upon her. Let every hand act; let every heart breathe out the prayer, "Thy kingdom come."

Digitized by Google

INDEX.

A.

PAGE.

Accused to have due notice 323
Act of Incorporation 192
Adjournment, rule about 321
Albany Presbytery of, plan of correspondence with the Northern Associate Presbytery . . 309
Synod of, plan of correspondence, &c. . 310
Appeal may be made from the Presbytery to the Assembly 321
rule about, when the appellant does not appear 331
improper conduct in regard to . . 332
who may not vote in cases of 332
persons having scruples about . . . 321
Assembly General, constitution of . . 13—15, 38
organization of . . . . 16—18
mode of doing business . 18—30
officers of . . . . . 30—36
attendance on 76, 77
Address to the ministers, &c. of the Presbytery of Abingdon . 134
letter of, to Rev. D. Rice . 148
give advice about the present state of things 355
may order a new trial . . 325
Association General, of Connecticut, plan of union with altered 292

Digitized by Google

PAGE.
Association General, of New Hampshire, plan of union 303
altered 304
of Massachusetts . . . 305
Associate Reformed Church 312

B.

Baptism, cases of . . . . . 94—98
not invalidated by the unworthiness of a minister 94
engagements to be required . . 95
invalid when administered by Unitarians . 96
to be administered to children of slaves 96—98
persons having scruples about . . 98
qualifications of parents for . . 108, 329
Baptised children to be assembled . . . 111
a reference about . . . 327
report of a committee on the subject of disciplining 328
indefinitely postponed . . 329
Bank notes 186
Bible classes recommended 108
aid of requested 185
Board of Trust of the Synod of Ohio . . . 212

C.

Certificates, a rule about 116
Churches sister, their judgments to be respected 336
Charges should be specific 320
Children, rules about catechizing . . . 73, 74
Clerk permanent 30
stated . . . . . 31—35
temporary . . . . . ib.
Committees appointed by the Assembly . . 19—23
rules relating to . . . . ib.—ib.
Confession of Faith to be circulated . . . 75
scripture proofs . . 125, 126
what editions to be purchased 158
Constitution, measures preparatory to . . . 120
adopted 122
amendments to 151
alterations to 156
to be respected in conducting trials of 320
Convention of Committees, &c. 119
Vermont, plan of union . . . 300

Digitized by Google

PAGE.
Creeds, utility of 135
Creed of Rev. H. B. condemned 129
Cumberland, persons styling themselves Presbytery of 157

D.

Delegates to the Associations, how chosen . . 307
compensation of 308
to carry printed extracts . . . 308
Directors, mode of choosing . . . 265—267
Divinity, time of studying 128

E.

Education of pious youth recommended . . 221
Presbyteries to report in writing . . 224
recommendation in regard to funds for 225
General Board of, determined on . . 226
constitution of . . 228
Elders from vacant congregations . . . 44
may resign their official relation to a congregation 319
unconstitutionally elected 322
Excommunication the higher 68
distinct from deposition . . 71
Extracts, printed rules about 80

F.

Fund Missionary 159, Resolutions about 159, plan for managing 161, annual collections for 167, exertions for increasing it 167, instructions in regard to collections 168
Commissioners', plan for 171
injunction relating to . 175
Permanent 169
Seminary's 177
annual collection for . . . 186
societies for aiding it recommended 178
plan for such . . 178
Female Associations recommended . . 182
Widows' 188
Subscription papers 184
Forms of Bequests 187

G.

Gospel plan of the Rev. W. C. Davis condemned 144

Digitized by Google

PAGE.

H.

History of the Presbyterian Church . . . 361
materials for . . ib.
persons appointed to write . . 363

I.

Intemperance, measures to prevent . . . 113
Impulses, immediate, opinion about . . . 151
Intolerance, testimony against 337

L.

Law suits, prevention of 112
Libraries, congregational, recommended . . 78

M.

Marriage, cases of . . . . . 99—106
M. Adow, &c. letter to 139
Mail, the running of 348
Ministers without charges 60
how divested of their office . . . 69
deposed to be published 71
support of 78, 272
having civil offices 274
should read portions of printed extracts 275
how to act in regard to duellists . . 275
should promote prayer meetings . . 276
should refrain from offering ardent spirits 277
should endeavour to repress intemperance 278
travelling 278
Ministry qualifications of, candidates for . 77, 318
diligence in 79
rule about recommending candidates for 323
Missionaries may administer ordinances . . 278
must regard their instructions . . 279
Missions, Domestic 202
recommendation about . . 76
contributions for . . . 80
directions relating to . . 205
Standing Committee of . . 202
Presbyteries and Synods not to interfere with instructions of . 207
Board of, constituted . . 208

Digitized by Google

PAGE.

Missions, Domestic plan of recommended . 213—215
Oneida Presbytery referred to 214
Missions Foreign 216
Missionary Society, Foreign, constitution of . . 217
amendments to . 219
Missionary business, Synod of the Carolinas resign 208
Moderator of the Assembly, his duties 16—19, 24—28

O.

Ordination sine titulo . . . . . 48, 65—68

P.

Plan of union of the Synod of New York and Philadelphia 117
Poor, care of recommended 111
Presbyteries constituted 52, Abingdon 53, Albany 58, Baltimore 54, Carlisle 55, Columbia 57, Geneva 58, Huntingdon 56, Hanover 53, Lexington 54, Oneida 58, Philadelphia 55, Transylvania 53
duties of . . . . . 61—72
how to dismiss a minister 62
not to interfere with each other . 60, 61
to pay due regard to order in receiving candidates 318
have a right to receive members . 324
Professors, mode of choosing 265
Psalmody 313

R.

Reformed Dutch Church 311
Registers to be kept 92
Regulations about foreign ministers . . 280—290
Methodist ministers . . . 294
Reports on the state of religion to be written . . 82
rules about . . . . . 83—86
forms for 87, 88
special injunctions about . . . 89
to be made to the Board of Missions . 90
Rice Rev. D. letter to 148
Rules, general, of the Assembly . . . 24—27
particular of do. 27, 28
about calling a pastor 333
Rule about a new trial 323

Digitized by Google

PAGE.

S.

Sabbath, persons violating 107
Schoolmasters, rule about 112
Scholarship, rule relating to 183
Seminary, Theological, proposed 231
one determined on . . . 234
the plan for 239
design of 239, power of the Assembly 243, directors 244, professors 246, attainments 250, devotion 253, students 255, library 257, funds 258, location 260, agreement with the trustees of the college of New Jersey 261
Agents, &c. . . 269—271
Sessional records 72
Slavery, opinion of the Synod of New York and Philadelphia about 338
of the Assembly . . 339—341
Society, American Colonization, recommended . 347
Societies, moral 111
Standards of our Church, adherence to recommended 140—142
Students, a rule relating to . . . . . 62—65
Synods constituted, Albany 40, 41, the Carolinas 38, 41, Geneva 41, Kentucky 40, 42, 44, New York and Philadelphia 37, N. Carolina 42, Ohio 42, Philadelphia 38, Pittsburg 39, S. Carolina and Georgia 42, Tennessee . . 44
books of 46
Presbyteries to be divided by . . . 44
Presbyteries how to be received by . 48, 49
powers of a commission of . . . 45
unconstitutional act of a 47
may censure Presbyteries for receiving members improperly 324
may not try a minister unless, &c. . . 333

T.

Testimony of a man and his wife, when to be taken 114
before a session sufficient in cases of reference 115
case of 72

Digitized by Google

PAGE.
Tract societies recommended 50
Treasurer of the Trustees 35, 36
Trustees, act for incorporating 192
mode of choosing 198
mode of intercourse between the Assembly, and 200
Trustees of the College of New Jersey, monies in their hands 357

U.

Union between Presbyterians and Congregationalists on the frontiers plan of 297
published 299
Universalists not to be admitted to sealing ordinances 92, 93
Vices condemned 351

W.

Widows' fund recommended 81
account of 188
Will, Lesley's 357
Horton's 359



Digitized by Google