

therefore hereby appoint a Committee to take these chapters of the Confession of Faith under their careful consideration, with a view to determine what can safely be done to remove these difficulties, and to report their views, and the result of their deliberations to the next Synod.

It was moved in amendment by Dr. Willis, seconded by Mr. Bayne,

That the Synod having considered the Overture, declare their continued sense of the excellence of their subordinate standards, and of the importance of those parts thereof, which affirm the duty of the civil magistrate to recognise the Christian light where it shines, and to support and encourage the Christian truth in contradistinction to demoralizing error; and consider, that many of the exceptions taken to those portions of our standards originate in needless misapprehensions of the sense in which the said doctrinal articles have, all along been held by the Reformed Presbyterian Church, and which has already by this Church itself been explained in the testimonies it has issued and its recorded resolutions: That the Synod therefore cannot contemplate with much hope, the issue of their labours, in any further attempt that this Synod might make to satisfy the alleged scruples of candidates for admission to office, or the calls made for explanation by those who after vows, have made inquiry: But inasmuch as some of the parties pressing for this, declare generally that their object is not to change or alter the received standards, but in the *bona fide* sense of the term to have enunciated in other words the doctrine referred to: The Synod appoint a committee to consider whether any exegetical or declaratory note may be appended to the question in the formula respecting the Confession of Faith proposed to candidates for office; but hereby strictly limit the powers of the committee to said design.

Further, in reference to any case that may already have come before Presbyteries, of candidates for spiritual office seeking relief to their alleged conscientious scruples, in the way of being allowed to give a qualified assent to the said portion of our confession: The Synod, feel that it will be as inconvenient for Presbyteries themselves, as perilous to the public testimony maintained by this Church, to allow an absolute power of discretion to local judicatories: The Synod do, however, in the spirit of candid consideration, allow the Presbytery before which such case may occur, having first assured themselves of the attachment of the candidate to the doctrines of this Church in general, and to its testimony for the headship of Christ over nations as well as the Church, to transmit to the committee to be appointed as aforesaid, a particular statement of the circumstances; and if said committee, or a majority thereof, shall be satisfied to the same effect concerning said candidate, or applicant for license or ordination, the assent of such individuals, may be accepted with an accompanying explanation; so that the difficulties alleged, being of the kind herein exclusively referred to, shall not hinder their license or appointment to offices within this Church.

After discussion, a vote was taken, when there voted for the motion, 11; for the amendment, 29; declined voting, 3.

The amendment was accordingly declared to be carried, and the following Committee were appointed for carrying it out, viz:—

The Moderator, Dr. Willis, Mr. Gale, Mr. Bayne, Mr. Robb, Mr. Harris, Mr. McMurray, Mr. Roger, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Stark, ministers; Mr. Davidson, Mr. Ferrier, Mr. McLellan, Mr. Elder, Mr. Osborne, Mr. Clark, elders; Dr. Willis and Mr. Gale to be Conveners.

The Synod was then closed with the blessing.

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