

ABSTRACT

FROM THE MINUTES OF THE SYNOD OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NOVA SCOTIA.

1842.

Pictou Church, July 12, 1842.

The Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia met, after a sermon by the Rev. Robert Blackwood, the Moderator, from 2-Tim. ii, 23. *And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. Thou, therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Christ Jesus;*—and was constituted.

The Presbytery of Pictou reported that Mr. Peter G. MacGregor, Preacher of the Gospel, has been ordained to the pastoral charge of the congregation of Guysborough, and that his name has been added to the Roll of the Presbytery.

The Presbytery of Truro reported that Mr. George Christie has been ordained to the pastoral charge of the congregation of Gay's River, since the last meeting of Synod, and that his name has been added to the Presbytery Roll.

Ordered, that the names of these brethren be added to the Roll of the Synod. Their names being called they were present.

The Rev. William MacCulloch was chosen Moderator.

Committees were appointed, and a part of the evening soderant was spent in devotional exercises.

The Clerk informed the Synod that the Rev. Alexander Baikie, of York, Livingston County, in the state of New York, had entrusted to his care for presentation to the Synod, a pamphlet on the exclusive use of inspired psalmody in the public worship of God. The Clerk was ordered to convey to Mr. Baikie, an expression of their grateful acknowledgement of the gift.

July 13.

Transmitted through the Committee of Bills and Overtures, and read an overture from the Rev. John I. Baxter, respecting the representation of vacant congregations in Church Courts by one elder. The overture was sent down to the several Presbyteries for further consideration, with injunction to report thereupon to the Synod at its next meeting.

Transmitted through the Committee of Bills and Overtures, and read a reference from the Presbytery of Pictou respecting a case of scandal which had occurred in Little Harbour. Extracts were read from the minutes of Pictou Presbytery, containing a full account of their proceedings in the business. After reasoning, it was agreed to remit the case to the Presbytery of Pictou, with instructions to take up the case *de novo*,—to receive evidence, and examine witnesses;—and if no proof is adduced to exculpate the accused, the Presbytery is farther instructed to delay administering to him sealing ordinances for a time;—and if, after a reasonable period has elapsed, no additional information is obtained in the course of Divine Providence, the Presbytery is discharged from administering to him the seals of the covenant until he offer his oath of purgation;—and, if at any time the Presbytery should deem it expedient to administer to the accused that solemn oath, they are

enjoined to proceed in the matter with the utmost prudence and solemnity, according to the rules and discipline of the Church.

Transmitted through the Committee of Bills and Overtures and read, a reference from the Presbytery of Truro, respecting the memorial from several members of the Session of Onslow, praying the Presbytery to give an expression of its views regarding the request of Miss Mary B. Staples, a communicant, who, in consequence of extreme and protracted illness, has been unable, for many years, to attend public ordinances, that the Session would devise means by which she may be enabled to partake of the Lord's Supper at her own residence.

After reasoning, the following Resolution was put, seconded and passed:

That while the Synod deeply sympathize with the said Mary B. Staples in her affliction, they cannot give their sanction to a measure which has such a tendency to pave the way for the introduction of private communion into the church.

The Rev. Thomas S. Crowe requested that his dissent from this resolution should be entered upon the minutes of Synod.

The Rev. Mr. Traiter, convener of the Committee appointed at last meeting of Synod to correspond with the Committee of the Synod of Nova Scotia in connection with the Church of Scotland, respecting a union, gave a verbal report of the proceedings of the Committee, and then laid upon the table copies of the letters which had passed between him and the Rev. John Scott, convener of the other Committee. The correspondence was read, and the decision of the Committee approved.

On motion, it was Resolved, 1. That this Synod still considers a union of the two Presbyterian Bodies in this Province, on Scriptural principles, and on terms of perfect equality, and adhering to the same standards of faith and practice, as exceedingly desirable; and regret that so little progress has been made in the matter.

2. That a Committee be appointed for the purpose of holding personal intercourse with any similar Committee who may have been appointed by the other Presbyterian Body in this Province on the subject of the Union, with instructions to embrace every opportunity which may be afforded them for carrying this resolution into effect.

3. That the same brethren who composed the former Committee, together with the Rev. James Smith and the Rev. John Kier, be a committee in terms of the preceding resolution.

July 14.

The Committee on union was enjoined to prepare a draft of a basis on union, to be submitted to the consideration of this Synod at as early an hour as possible during the present year.

The Committee appointed to audit the Treasurer's accounts, reported that they have attended to that duty, and find that they have been accurately kept, and that there is in the hands of the Treasurer the sum of £84 10s 6d.

Received and read a communication from the corresponding Secretary of the General Conference of the Congregational Churches in Maine, U. S., soliciting a friendly correspondence, either by delegates or letters, as may best suit the circumstances and convenience of this Synod.

The Committee of the Domestic Missionary Society were appointed a committee of correspondence, to whom the communication was referred, with instructions to forward a respectful and affectionate reply to it, and to open a friendly and christian correspondence with other evangelical denominations; as Providence may afford them opportunities.

Transmitted through the committee on Bills and Overtures, and read, a memorial from the Rev. Hugh Dunbar, praying that the Synod would take into consideration the serious disappointment and severe loss which he has sustained, in consequence of the evasion of the congregation of Tatamagouche, over which the Rev. Robert Blackwood presides, to remunerate him for services performed in that congregation, according to appointment of Presbytery, and to grant to him such deliverance as the justice of the case merits.

After reasoning, the Synod agreed to issue the following deliverance, viz:—

The Synod consider a balance justly due to the Rev. Hugh Dunbar, from the congregation of Tatamagouche, over which the Rev. Robert Blackwood presides; and though they are aware that the said Rev. Hugh Dunbar is suffering much inconvenience from the want of the money; yet they cannot consistently appropriate the public funds of the Synod for the liquidation of this debt; and considering the interests of religion as involved in this case, the Synod will adopt prompt measures to secure to Mr Dunbar the payment of the sum, and enjoin the Presbytery of Pictou to carry this resolution into effect.

The Committee, appointed to examine Presbytery minutes, reported that they have examined the minutes of the Presbyteries of Turro and Pictou, and find that they have been accurately kept, and that business has been regularly conducted; and that the minutes of Prince Edward Island have not been laid before them.

The Committee on Union with the Synod of Nova Scotia, in connection with the Church of Scotland, submitted the draft of a basis of union which they had prepared. The several propositions contained in it were discussed *seriatim*. After reasoning, the draft with a few alterations and amendments was adopted. It is as follows:

Pictou Church, July 13, 1842.

The Committee appointed by the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia, at its recent meeting, to draw up a basis of union between the two bodies of Presbyterians in this Province, agree to Report as follows, viz:

1. That the great object of the proposed Union shall be, the advancement of pure and undefiled religion, by promoting a greater degree of purity, and conformity to the word of God; both in doctrine and discipline, than at present exists in either body.

2. That any Union which may take place must be upon terms of perfect equality.

3. That while the body which united may hold friendly correspondence with other churches, and regard all who are similarly constituted with themselves, and hold to the same standard of faith and practice, as sister churches; all foreign jurisdiction, and interference with its proceedings, must be disclaimed, for the following reasons:

First—It is inconsistent with the funda-

mental principles of Presbyterianism to be directly or indirectly subject to the interference of any body in which we are not duly represented.

Secondly—Such interference is unnecessary, and calculated to do evil rather than good.

4. That the Westminster Confession of Faith, with the Larger and Shorter Catechism, be gained by the united body as the Confession of their Faith—it being always understood, however, that the subject upon which this Synod differs from the Westminster Confession of Faith, as exhibited in our public standards, be made a matter of mutual forbearance.

5. That as regards the name or designation of the United Body, and the mode of carrying the Union into effect, the Committee agree to the suggestions of the Rev. Mr. Scott, in his letter of August 27, 1841, addressed to the Rev. Thomas Trotter.

The report of the Rev. Mr. Campbell, to whom the memorial from a number of the members of the congregation of Merigomish had been referred, was received and read. The diligence of Mr. Campbell was approved. The report with some alterations and amendments was adopted. It is as follows:

The first evil of which the memorialists complain, is the frequent dispensation of sealing ordinances to persons of loose behaviour; especially to those who neglect the regular observance of family worship. That this evil does exist, to some extent, in many of our congregations, cannot be denied. For its removal, so far as practicable, it is recommended to the Synod to enjoin upon the office bearers of the Church to exercise increased diligence and faithfulness, in directing, both publicly and privately, the attention of those entrusted to their care, to the importance of this subject; and to refuse sealing ordinances to all those who, after a first and second admonition, do not exhibit satisfactory evidence of reformation and amendment.

Respecting the second evil of which the memorialists complain, viz: the pernicious tendencies and melancholy consequences of promiscuous assemblies and night reveling; it is recommended to the Synod to enjoin upon ministers and elders the exercise of prudent and affectionate diligence and faithfulness in the suppression of the irregularities and other great evils which arise from the unnecessary mingling of the members of the church with the men of the world, either for recreations in themselves innocent, or for purposes of doubtful or dangerous tendency.

The third subject of complaint contained in the memorial is, "that Church censurers are confined almost exclusively to the transgression of one of the commandments of the moral law; and that that transgression is, in many congregations, rebuked only in presence of the Session." It is recommended to the Synod to issue a deliverance on this point, to the following effect, viz:—all notorious and scandalous sins are to be rebuked in the presence of the members of the Church usually assembling at the place and for the purpose of public worship.

The Rev. John MacKinlay was requested to prepare and publish an affectionate address to the members of the Church upon the subjects to which the above report refers, and upon several other irregularities which still exist in our body.

The Committee appointed to correspond with the United Associate Synod of Scotland, for the purpose of obtaining two preachers from that body, reported, that, since our meeting of this Synod, they received a letter in reply to their former communication. The letter was read. The Commit-

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toe farther reported that, to this letter, they returned a suitable reply, to which, however, no answer has yet been received. The diligence of the Committee was approved, and the same brethren were continued a Committee for the purposes of their original appointment.

Transmitted through the Committee of Bills and Overtures, and read an overture from the Rev. Wm. MacCulloch, "on competing calls." After reasoning, the overture was amended and adopted. It is as follows:

"In cases of competing calls, all the calls shall be forwarded, as speedily as possible, to the Presbytery within whose bounds the candidate is, for the time being, labouring; and that at the first convenient opportunity, they shall be presented to the said candidate, whose choice shall decide the matter, unless special reasons shall appear for acting otherwise.

July 15,

The report of the committee appointed at last meeting of Synod to make enquiries and adopt measures respecting the Pictou Academy, was received and read. The diligence of the Committee was approved.

Received and read a letter from the Rev. John Spritt addressed to the late Moderator. Agreed that the matter to which this letter refers, be considered, when the Synod shall have under their consideration the distribution of the funds at their disposal.

Accounts of the state of the Theological fund, and of the funds accruing to this Synod from the estate of the late Mrs. Dick, were received.

The Committees to whom the management of these funds was entrusted, were instructed, in consequence of the monetary embarrassments of the country, to take, as far as possible, security upon landed property for their investments.

The usual votes were then voted to the Professor of Divinity, to the Clerk of the Synod, and for defraying the expenses of printing the abstract of the Synod minutes. It was agreed further that the sum of five pounds be granted to Mrs. Dripps, Widow of the late Rev. Matthew Dripps, of Shelburne. Also that the sum of £15 be placed in the hands of the Presbytery of Pictou to be applied, if said Presbytery shall deem such application expedient, for the purpose of assisting in arranging the affairs of the Rev. John C. Sinclair—also that the sum of five pounds be appropriated to the

purchase of books for the Theological Library. The Roll was then called and the names of those members of Synod who were absent without leave were marked. Whereupon it was moved and seconded that those brethren who have left this meeting of Synod irregularly be cited to appear at the bar of it in Synod at its next regular meeting and be dealt with according to the Rules and disciplines of the Church. The motion was afterwards withdrawn. The next meeting of Synod was appointed to be held in the Rev. John MacKislay's Church, on the second Tuesday of July, 1843, at 4 o'clock P. M.

Concluded with prayer and the Apostolic benediction.

Extracted from the minutes of Synod, by
JAMES ROSS, Synod Clerk.

SYNOD FUND.
RECEIPTS.

1842	July 8, Balance on hand.	£17 5 2
	Contributions from Windsor & Newport,	5 10 0
	Do Musquodoboit,	3 0 0
	11 Do Pictou,	5 10 0
	12 Do Londonderry,	1 10 0
	Do Economy,	3 0 0
	Do Guysborough,	0 0 0
	13 Do East River,	4 6 0
	14 Do Onslow & Brookfield,	2 0 0
	Do Douglas,	1 10 0
	Do Truro,	3 0 0
	D4 Upper Sett. E. River,	4 2 4
	Do St. Mary's,	3 10 0
	Do Stewiascke,	3 15 0
	Do West River,	5 0 0
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EXPENDITURE.

1842	April 15,	Paid for Printing,	£1 5 0
	July 15,	Do For Cardles,	0 2 0
		Do For the Professor of Divinity,	30 0 0
		Do Synod Clerk,	5 0 0
		Do Mrs. Dripps,	5 0 0
		Do Rev. J. C. Sinclair,	15 0 0
		Do Books for the Divinity Library,	5 0 0
		Balance in Treasurer's hands,	3 11 6
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