

5
MEETING OF PRESBYTERY.

On Wednesday evening the 26th inst. the United Presbytery of Upper Canada met in the Presbyterian Church in York, and continued their deliberations on the following days. The session has been peculiarly interesting and important. Among other important business transacted by the Presbytery, was the formation of an Auxiliary Missionary Society for the Home District, and the establishment of a Literary and Theological Seminary, for the education of young men of piety and ability for the gospel ministry, as soon as circumstances will permit.

The following is an outline of the transactions.

The Rev. William Smart being in the chair—It was moved by the Rev. William Jenkins and seconded by Mr. Henderson,

1. That seriously impressed with the deplorable and destitute state of many parts of the country, in regard of public preaching and the administration of the ordinances of the gospel, it is deemed highly necessary and important to form a Missionary Society, in connection with the Presbytery of Upper Canada, for the Home District.

2. Moved by the Rev. Robert Boyd and seconded by the Rev. William Bell,

That as the preaching of the gospel is the great means of salvation, sanctioned by the Holy Spirit and the experience of the church in all ages, it becomes the solemn duty of professing christians to promote the increase of the Redeemer's kingdom, and to encourage the preaching of the gospel by donations and otherwise.

3. Moved by the Rev. Robert McDowall and seconded by Mr. McLellan,

That the Presbytery viewing the influence of the ministerial character in their immediate congregations and neighbourhoods, do particularly recommend to their brethren the formation of Auxiliary and Branch Societies throughout the Province.

4. Moved by the Rev. Peter Gordon and seconded by Jesse Ketchum, Esq.

That the following constitution be adopted for the government of the Society.

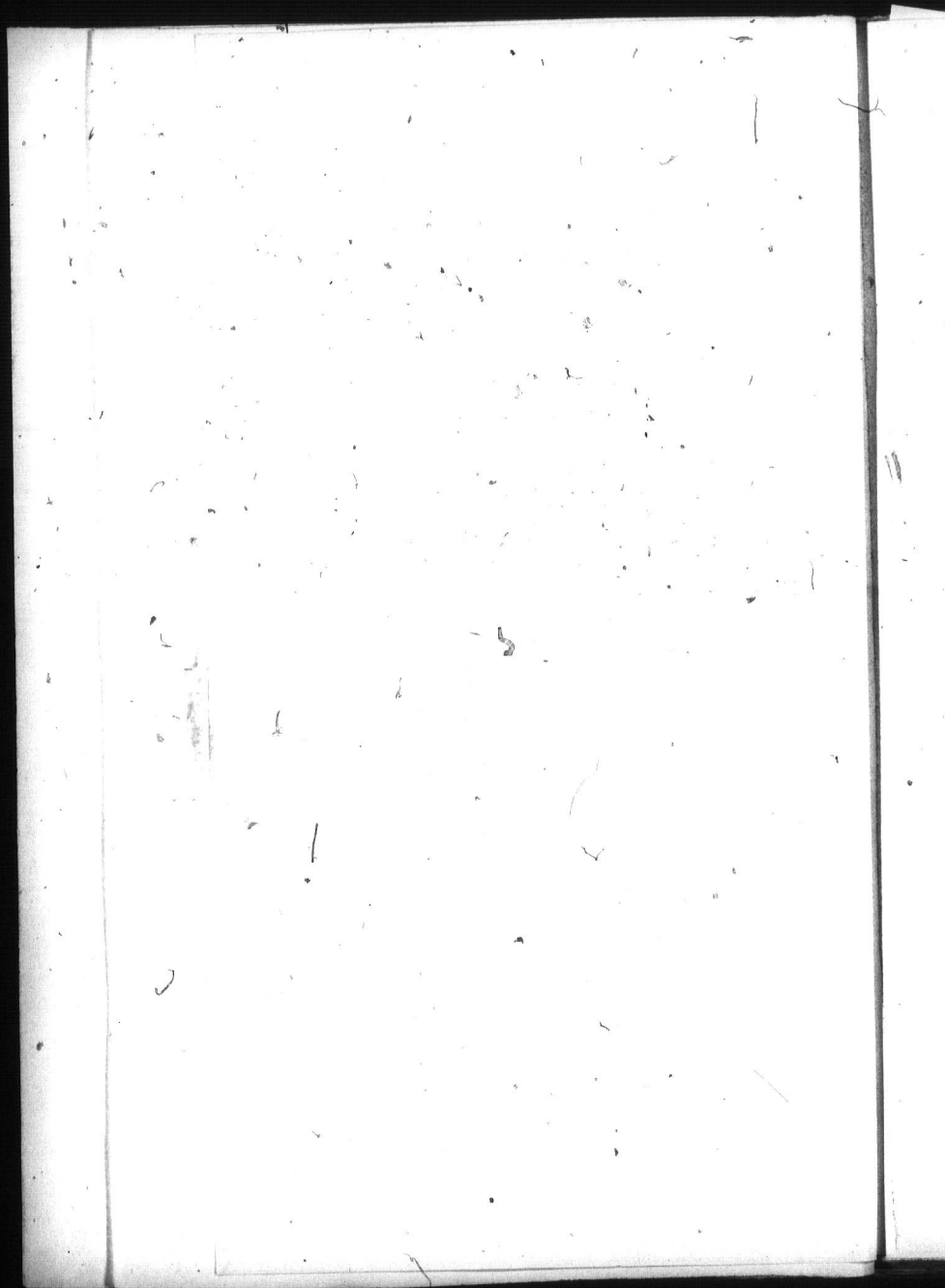
I. The object of the Society is to assist the Parent Society in the spread of the gospel or to act by itself as circumstances may direct.

II. The business of the Society shall be conducted by a President, three Vice Presidents, a Treasurer, a Secretary and at least seven managers, to be elected annually, five of whom shall form a quorum.

III. Each subscriber of five shillings or upwards shall be a member of the Society.

III. The funds of the Society shall be employed in supplying with the ordinances of religion the neighbouring country—the surplus if any to be transmitted to the treasurer of the Upper Canada Home Missionary Society.

V. The annual meeting of the Society shall be held in York on the first Wednesday in September, at which the transactions of the Society shall be laid before it; a copy of which shall be transmitted to the Parent Society.



11. The committee shall meet once in three months, or oftener if necessary. It will be their duty to promote subscriptions and to encourage the formation of Branch Societies throughout the country.

12. Moved by the Rev. Andrew Bell and seconded by Mr. Ross.—That the following gentlemen be requested to accept of the following appointments.

James Ketchum, Esq. President.

Messrs. Ross, Kennedy and McLellan, Vice Presidents.

Mr. Drummond, Treasurer.

Rev. James Harris, Secretary.

Committee.

Messrs. McClashen, Henderson, Ewart, A. Armstrong, Sheppard, Rogers, Tallfree and Polly.

The following are the resolutions which were adopted with regard to the Seminary.

1. Moved by the Rev. William Bell and seconded by the Rev. Robert McDowell.

That in the present growing and improving state of the country it is not only highly important to the prosperity and stability of civil society and social order, but also to the character and usefulness of the Christian Church, that an intelligent and cultivated ministry should be promoted and encouraged.

2. Moved by the Rev. Andrew Bell and seconded by the Rev. Robert Boyd.

That in the opinion of this Presbytery it becomes necessary to adopt measures for the erection of a public seminary of education for such as are designed for the Christian Ministry in order that Ministers adapted to the necessities of the country may be increased and the wants of our churches supplied.

3. Moved by the Rev. William Jenkins and seconded by the Rev. Peter Gordon.

That the Presbytery do most earnestly recommend, to their ministers and congregations to make the most strenuous exertions to forward an object so vitally important to the well being of society and the best interests of the church of Christ, and that they in the meantime take the subject into their immediate and serious consideration, and forward their views to the next meeting of Presbytery.

4. Moved by the Rev. James Harris and seconded by the Rev. William Bell.

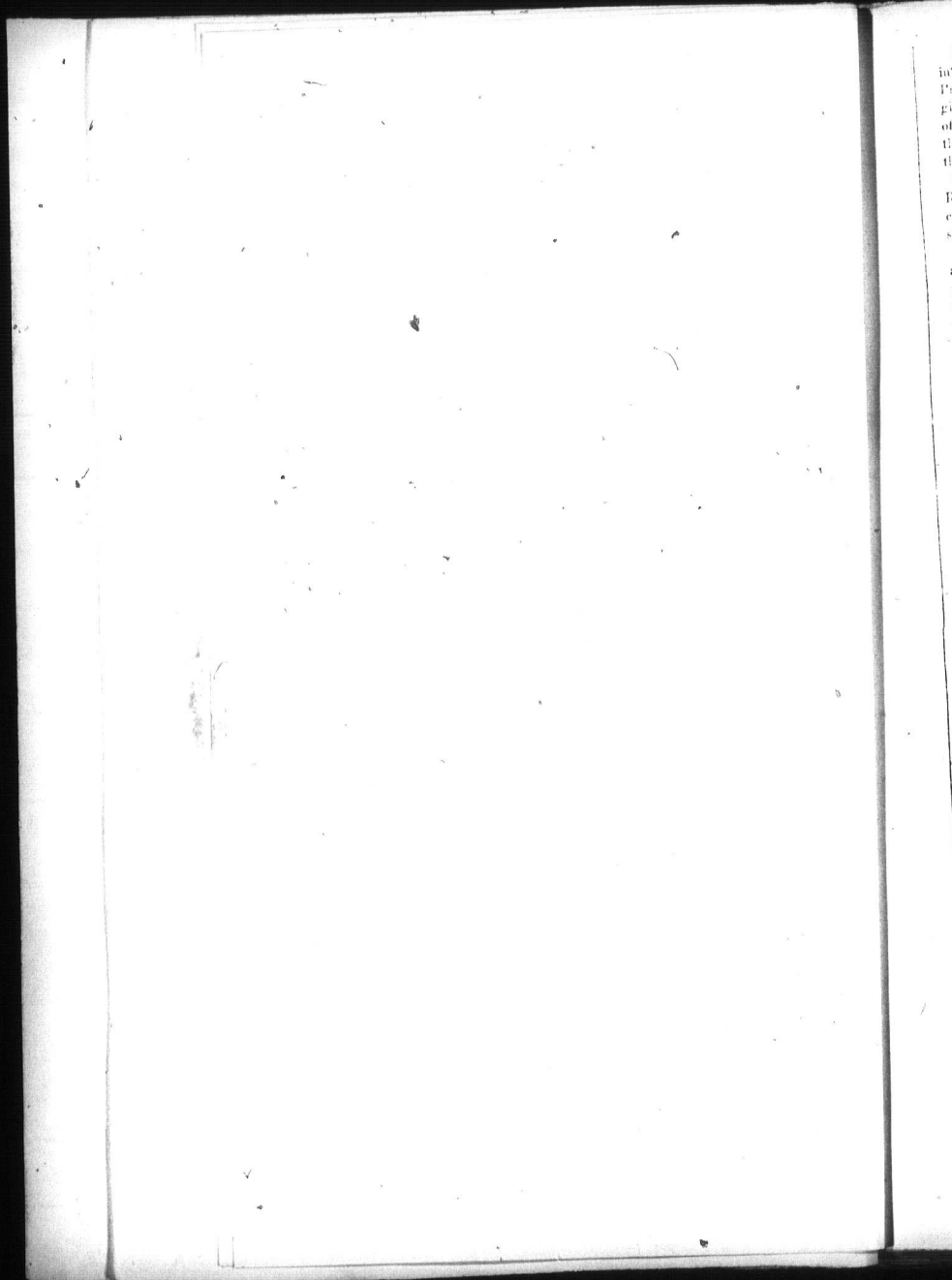
That the Presbytery from their knowledge of the disposition and ability of the community at large cannot but express their confident hope that they will be supported and encouraged in their present attempt by the wealthy and the liberal of every class.

5. Moved by the Rev. Robert McDowell and seconded by the Rev. James Harris.

That the Rev. Messrs. W. Bell, Boyd and Smart be a corresponding committee to carry the views of the Presbytery into effect, and make such arrangement as may be in their power, and report to the Presbytery at their next meeting.

On the following day when the Presbytery met, its attention was called to the system of education at present pursued in this province, which was admitted on all hands to be extremely defective. A short discussion produced the following resolutions.

1. That the Presbytery feels deeply interested in the progress of knowledge and the cultivation of those sciences which are calculated to render the youth of this province virtuous and intelligent.



II. That in order to promote in the highest degree the interests of education a respectful application from this Presbytery be made to the different branches of the Legislature praying that the present system of management of the district and common schools may be amended and these institutions put upon such a footing as will render them more efficient.

III. That this desirable object may be accomplished the Revs. Messrs. W. Bell, Jenkins, Harris and A. Bell be a committee to draw a petition to the Legislature and take such other steps as may be necessary.

The Rev. Robert McBowell being about to proceed on a mission through the upper part of the province, was directed by the Presbytery to preach and to administer the ordinances of the gospel, especially in the more destitute neighbourhoods—to make enquiries where preaching was most wanted—to promote the formation of auxiliary societies, and to organize congregations where necessary.

The Rev. Peter Gordon from the University of Glasgow having fulfilled his mission at Cobourg, Port Hope and other places in their neighbourhood, with great acceptance, was requested by the Presbytery to re-occupy the same station as soon as an arrangement for that purpose could be made.

Mr. McMillan, a pious young man of promising abilities having applied for advice on the subject of engaging in the gospel ministry, the Presbytery after a long but satisfactory examination unanimously agreed to receive him as a student, and till other means are provided, his studies are to be directed by the Rev. Mr. Harris, of York. This young man being well acquainted with the Gaelic language, it is hoped that he will be a valuable acquisition to one of those settlements in which his countrymen are numerous.

Among other important information communicated to the Presbytery, it was pleasing to find that in almost every congregation there are pious young men desirous of becoming the heralds of salvation as soon as they can obtain the necessary preparation.

It was gratifying to learn that multitudes in various parts of the province are looking to the Presbytery to supply them with religious instruction. At the same time it is painful to reflect that their petitions could not be granted till a further supply of faithful missionaries can be obtained.

In all the deliberations of the Presbytery the utmost unanimity and brotherly affection prevailed, and this meeting will long be remembered as a season of peculiar enjoyment. Its beneficial results to the souls of many will not be confined to time, but extend even to eternity.

The next meeting is to be held at Prescott on the 2nd Monday in January, 1830. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper is to be administered to the church there on the preceding day.

Rev. Wm. Mearns preached by the Presbytery Sept. 1st from Luke 27, 29.