

Proceedings
Of the New-York State Convention of Universalists, 1851

The New-York State Convention of Universalists, according to adjournment, commenced its annual session at Canton, St. Lawrence Co., on Wednesday morning, May 28, 1851—the meetings of council being held in the Baptist Church.

ORGANIZATION

In the absence of the Moderator and Clerk of the last session, Bro. Pitt Morse called the Convention to order. At his request Br. O. [Obadiah] Whiston invoked the Divine blessing upon the deliberations of the Council.

The roll being made out, it was found that the following brethren were members of the Council:

<i>Associations</i>	<i>Clerical Delegates</i>	<i>Lay Delegates</i>
Allegany	O. ¹ B. Sharp	
Black River	Pitt Morse	T. A. Granger
	J. H. Stewart	S. J. M. Putnam
Buffalo	A. G. Laurie	
Cayuga	J. M. Peebles	
	H. L. Hayward	
Central	E. Francis	
	J. Potter	
Chenango		H. Balcom
		J. Shaddock
Genesee	J. S. Brown	
	U. M. Fisk	
Mohawk River	T. J. Whitcomb	
	A. Peck	
New-York	E. H. Chapin	J. V. Moore
	O. Whiston	G. L. Demarest
Ontario	O. Roberts	E. B. Dewey
	G. W. Montgomery	
St. Lawrence	J. W. Bailey	A. Goss
	B. Hall	A. Tomson

Chautauque, Hudson River, Niagara, Otsego, and Steuben not represented.

The Convention proceeded to ballot for Moderator and Clerk for the time being; whereupon Br. Pitt Morse, of Henderson was chosen Moderator, and Br. G. [Gerhardus] L. Demarest, of Williamsville, Clerk.

The Minutes of the last session were read and approved.

¹ should be I., for Ichabod Blakeslee Sharp

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SUNDAY SCHOOL COMMITTEE.

The following Resolution was adopted.—

Resolved, That in addition to the Committees to be appointed by the Moderator at each session of the Convention, there shall be appointed a Committee on Sunday Schools, whose duty it shall be to submit to the Convention resolutions for public discussion at such periods of the session as may be deemed expedient, and to nominate a suitable person to deliver the Occasional Address on Sunday Schools and the Religious Education of Youth at the next annual session.

COMMITTEES.

The Moderator appointed the following Committees:

On Nomination—Brs. [George Washington] Montgomery, [Eben] Francis, and [Henry] Roberts.

On the Universalist Relief Fund—Brs. [Edwin Hubbell] Chapin, Whiston, and Fisk.

On Sunday Schools—Brs. [J. Vreeland] Moore, [John S.] Brown, and [Thomas Jefferson] Whitcomb.

On the State of the Church—Brs. Montgomery, [John H.] Stewart, and [A. G.] Laurie.

On Missionary and Tract Efforts—Brs. [Henry] L. Hayward, [John Temple] Goodrich, and Fisk.

On Reforms—Brs. Francis, [James Wilson] Bailey, and Roberts

On Education—Brs. T. J. [Thomas Jefferson] Sawyer, (of Clinton,) [Alfred] Peck, and Whiston.

INVITATION

An invitation was received from the Universalist Society of Hudson, to hold the next annual session of the Convention in that city: Referred to the Committee on Pomination [Nomination].

RELIEF FUND REPORT

The Seventh Annual Report of the Trustees of the New-York Universalist Relief Fund, with the Treasurer's Account, was presented and referred to the Committee on the Fund.

The Report and Account are as flows:—

Seventh Annual Report

Of the Trustees of the New-York Universalist Relief Fund.

To the Council of the New-York State Convention of Universalists, to be convened at Canton, St. Lawrence County, on Wednesday, May 28, 1851.

The Trustees of the New-York Universalist Relief Fund, since their last Annual Report to the Convention, have approved six applications for aid:—

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The *first* is the personal application of Rev. Jason Lewis, now residing in Homer, Potter County, State of Pennsylvania. Br. Lewis claims to be entitled to relief as an indigent clergyman, belonging to the Allegany Association, and in fellowship with the New-York State Convention. He states that said Association embraces within its territorial limits, the whole of Allegany Co., N.Y., the largest part of Cattaraugus Co., N.Y., and so much of the adjoining counties of Pennsylvania, as shall be demanded by the wishes of the ministers and Societies located there. Based on this statement, his application is presented to the Board. The necessitous and diseased condition of Br. Lewis as fully set forth in his application, is avouched by the officers of the county wherein he resides, and by his physician. The Board recommend a donation of fifty dollars to be paid to his order in June, 1851, provided the Convention are of the opinion (the Board would ask a decision) that a residence in the State of Pennsylvania does not dissolve a fellowship with the New-York State Convention.

The *second* is the personal application of Mrs. Polly Hayward, widow of the late Rev. Isaac Hayward, of the Otsego Association. Mrs. Hayward received aid from the fund by a vote of the Convention, in 1849. She now asks a small donation to aid in the support of her family, having a daughter enfeebled by disease and partially helpless. The Board recommend an appropriation of fifty dollars to be paid to her order in June, 1851.

The *third* is the personal application of Rev. Samuel A. Skeelee, of Cowlesville, N.Y., and a member of the Buffalo Association. Br. Skeelee has heretofore received aid from the fund, is eighty years old and very infirm. The Board recommend that the sum of one hundred dollars—same as last year—be paid to his order, in two equal installments, in June and November, 1851.

The *fourth* is the application of Rev. F. M. [Francis Milton] Alvord, Clerk of the Chautauque Association, in behalf of Julius Savillion Eaton, orphan child of the late Rev. Joseph Eaton, of the Chautauque Association. It is stated that the boy and his guardian continue in indigent circumstances, which call for relief. The Board recommend that the sum of fifty dollars for his support be paid to the order of Walter Mumford, in June 1851.

The *fifth* is the application of Rev. G. [Gideon] S. Gowdy, in behalf of Mrs. Abigail Morton, widow of the late Rev. Calvin Morton, of the Allegany Association. The Board are informed that her situation is unchanged, and that she requires relief from the hand of charity—the recommend that the sum of fifty dollars be paid to her order in June, 1851.

The *sixth* is the application of the Rev. J. M. [John Mather] Austin, in behalf of the Rev. C. S. [Charles Starr] Brown, of Harford, Cortland Co., N.Y., and a member of the Cayuga Association. Br. Brown is represented to

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be in indigent circumstances, and suffering from a chronic disease that almost wholly disqualifies him from exertion of every kind. His claim has been presented as that of one of the most devoted, faithful and exemplary preachers in the denomination for more than twenty years, and in every regard entitled to a gratuity from the fund. The Board recommend that the sum of one hundred dollars be paid for his support to his order, payable in equal instalments in June and November, 1851.

The Treasurer's report herewith transmitted shows an unexpended balance of three hundred and thirty-nine dollars and five cents. This with the receipt of interest during the year will be sufficient to pay the appropriations recommended in this report, and leave a balance in the treasury to met the first payment of the next year.

[The account of Abner Chichester, Treasurer of the New York Universalist Relief Fund, is omitted here.]

In conclusion, the Board would ask the notice of the Convention to the provisions of the devise constituting the basis of the "Relief Fund," and thereby diffuse a more general knowledge of the necessity of an explicit statement of the indigence of applicants. The object of this fund is to benefit and relieve sick and infirm clergymen of the Universalist faith, and the widows and orphans of deceased clergymen of the Universalist Church, who previous to their death, were in fellowship with the Convention of the State of New-York. Applications are annually presented without any assurance that the parties are *now* in indigent circumstances, reliance being placed on the statement of previous years as evidence of present need. This inattention to the provisions of the Charity is often embarrassing to the Board, and may lead to a misapplication of funds specially designed for the relief of those "that have none to help." The Board will hereafter require a strict compliance with the following forms of evidence: Besides the names of the parties in full, it should be stated in what town and county the reside, to what Association the clergyman belonged or belongs, and in what place he resided at the time of his death. That the applicants are in indigent circumstances and require relief from the hand of charity.

These facts and statements should be satisfactorily avouched by a well known and accredited Universalist clergyman, by the officers of the town or county, or by other well known and creditable citizens, whose certificates duly signed, should always accompany the application.

Respectfully submitted,
By order of the Board,
JACOB HARSEN, President

New-York, May 23, 1851

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(The remainder of the proceedings of the Convention were not received in season for this week's paper. They will appear in our next.)

Christian Ambassador, Auburn NY, Sat. 14 Jun 1851

(Concluded from last week.)

SABBATH SCHOOL SECRETARY

The following resolution was unanimously adopted:

Resolved, That this Convention will, at each annual session, appoint a Sabbath School Secretary, whose duty it shall be to receive and report to the Convention, the statistics of Sunday Schools, Bible Classes, &c., with suggestions tending to their improvement, and the promotion of the religious education of children and youth.

Br. G. L. Demarest, under this resolution, was appointed the Sabbath School Secretary for the year ensuing.

THE STATE OF THE CHURCH

Br. J. M. Austin, from the Committee on the State of the Church, appointed at the last session, presented a Report which was read, and referred back to the committee for amendment.

Subsequently it was reported complete, and ordered to be placed on file.

The Committee charged with the publication of the proceedings was instructed to prepare and publish with the minutes a condensed statement of the contents of the Report.

PAPER AND BOOK ESTABLISHMENT

The following Preamble and Resolutions were adopted:

Whereas, this council has learned from the Report of the Committee on the State of the Church, that a proposition has been made by the proprietors of the Universalist Book and Paper Establishment, to place the ownership of that concern, in certain circumstances, in the hands of this Convention, eventually to be managed exclusively for the benefit of the denomination, therefore

Resolved, That this Convention accepts with gratitude the proposition of the proprietors of the said establishment, to place the ownership thereof in the hands of the Convention on the terms stated.

Resolved, That Br. G. W. Montgomery be appointed the Agent of this Convention to act in its behalf with the Board of Trustees of said establishment, agreeably to the suggestion of the Committee on the State of the Church.

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Resolved, That this Convention affectionately and earnestly urges upon the Universalists of New-York, the great importance of rendering to the Christian Ambassador the united patronage of the denomination in this State, and of generally subscribing therefor.

NOMINATIONS.

Br. Francis from the Committee on Nomination, reported that in regard to the place of adjournment, applications have been made by the friends at Newport, Auburn, and Hudson. They recommended that the city of Hudson be the place for the next annual session of the Convention. The recommendation was adopted.

The same committee recommended that Br. Day K. Lee, of Williamsburgh, be chosen to preach the next Occasional Sermon, with power to appoint a substitute. The recommendation was adopted.

The same committee recommended that the following brethren be chosen to the United States Convention of Universalists, to be held in the city of Boston, in September next, with power to appoint substitutes and fill vacancies: Brs. Wm. S. Balch, *New-York*; J. M. Austin, *Auburn*; G. W. Montgomery, *Rochester*; J. T. Goodrich, *Canton*, clerical delegates. Brs. E. B. Dewey, *Manchester Centre*; A. White, *Utica*; J. [Josiah] Barber, *Auburn*; T. A. Granger, *Champion*; B. Ellis, *New-York*; George Moore, *Buffalo*; lay delegates. The recommendation was adopted.

REPORT ON REFORMS

Br. Francis from the Committee on Reforms appointed at the last session, presented a Report which was read and adopted. It is appended hereto.

The same committee recommended the following resolution, which was adopted:

Resolved, That the Committee on Reforms appointed at the present session, be authorized and instructed to appoint, if expedient, a delegate on the part of this body to the Peace Convention, to be held during the year ensuing in the city of London.

PUBLICATION OF PROCEEDINGS.

The following Resolutions were adopted:

Resolved, That at each annual session of the Convention a collection be taken up for the publication of its proceedings; that for the present 850 copies thereof shall be printed; that these shall be distributed as follows:

To each minister in the fellowship of this Convention, [?] copies.

To each Universalist Sunday School in the State, 3 copies.

To the Standing Clerk of each Association in the fellowship of this Convention, 5 copies.

To the Standing Clerk of each sister State Convention, 3 copies.

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To the Standing Clerk of the United States Convention of Universalists, 10 copies.

To the Secretary of the Universalist Historical Society, 5 copies.

To the Editor of each Universalist periodical published in the United States, 3 copies.

To the Standing Clerk of this Convention, the copies remaining.

Resolved, That at each annual session of the Convention a Committee of one shall be appointed to superintend the publication of the minutes.

Resolved, That the publication of the proceedings of the present session shall include the minutes of the Sabbath School Association, and the Constitution and Standing Rules of this Convention.

Br. G. L. Demarest was appointed the committee for the year ensuing under the second resolution.

(The amount collected for the above purpose at this session, was \$31.50.)

RULES OF FELLOWSHIP

Br. W. S. Balch, of New-York, from the Committee appointed at the last session, to whom was referred the Report of the Standing Clerk, and also a certain preamble and recommendation on the subject of Fellowship offered at the last session, made the following Report, which was adopted, after amendment, as follows:

"Your Committee have no additional information to communicate concerning the names and residences of the preachers belonging to our denomination in this State. This work has been performed by your Standing Committee on the State of the Church.

"Upon the more important matter entrusted to them they report that they most cordially agree with the spirit of the preamble and first article under their consideration. They believe the time has come when some uniform measures should be adopted, upon which the fellowship of the Convention may be obtained by those desiring it, and retained by such as have hitherto enjoyed it. They therefore recommend the adoption of the following articles as the basis on which the fellowship of this body shall depend:

"Art. 1. Any person to be in the fellowship of this Convention as a preacher, shall reside within the bounds of the State of New-York, and be in full fellowship with some Association duly organized and duly received into its fellowship.

"Art. 2. Such preacher to receive or retain the fellowship of this body, shall give satisfactory evidence to the Committee of Fellowship of the Association within the limits of which he shall reside, or unto which he shall remove, by signing these Articles, or otherwise assenting to them, that he is a believer in the truth of Divine Revelation, and receives the Holy Scriptures

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of the Old and New Testament[s], as the paramount rule of Christian faith and practice. He shall also sustain a good moral character.

"Art. 3. No person shall retain the fellowship of this Convention who, for the space of one year, ceases to preach the Gospel—to make it the business of his life, unless prevented by ill health or other physical disability."

APPROPRIATIONS FROM RELIEF FUND, ETC.

Br. Chapin, from the Committee on the Universalist Relief Fund, presented a Report which was accepted, as follows:

"Having examined the Account of the Treasurer of the Universalist Relief Fund, they find it correct.

"As the case of Br. Lewis involves a question of great importance, they beg leave respectfully to refer it to the decision of the Council.

"They recommend the adoption of the following Resolutions:

"*Resolved*, That the Treasurer of the New-York Relief Fund be, and he is hereby authorized to pay the sum of fifty dollars to the order of Mrs. Polly Hayward, widow of the late Rev. Isaac Hayward, of the Otsego Association, for her benefit, agreeably to the recommendation of the Board of Trustees.

"*Resolved*, That the Treasurer of the New-York Relief Fund be, and he is hereby authorized to pay the sum of one hundred dollars, in equal instalments, in June and November, 1851, to the order of Rev. Samuel A. Skeele, of Cowlesville, (Buffalo Association), for his benefit, agreeably to the recommendation of the Board of Trustees.

"*Resolved*, That the Treasurer of the Relief Fund be, and he hereby is authorized to pay the sum of fifty dollars, to the order of Walter Mumford, for the support of Julius Savillion Eaton, son of the late Rev. Joseph Eaton, of the Chautauque Association, agreeably to the recommendation of the Board of Trustees.

"*Resolved*, That the Treasurer of the Relief Fund be, and he hereby is authorized to pay the sum of fifty dollars to the order of Mrs. Abigail Morton, widow of the late Rev. Calvin Morton, of the Allegany Association, for her benefit, agreeably to the recommendation of the Board.

"*Resolved*, That the Treasurer of the Relief Fund be, and he hereby is authorized to pay the sum of Rev. C. S. Brown of Harford (Cayuga Association,) for his benefit, the sum of one hundred dollars, in two equal instalments, in June and November, 1851, agreeably to the recommendation of the Board of Trustees.

"*Resolved*, That the Trustees of the Relief Fund be advised to require of all applicants for the said fund that they comply fully with the provisions set forth in their report to this Convention."

In regard to the case of Br. Lewis, the following Resolution was adopted by the Council:

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Resolved, That ministers residing out of the State of New-York, are not properly in the fellowship of this Convention.

The Resolutions recommended by the Committee on the Relief Fund were then severally taken up, and unanimously adopted.

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT.

The following Resolution was laid on the table, to be considered at the next annual session:

Resolved, That the Constitution of this Convention be amended so as to provide that the annual session be commenced on the fourth Tuesday in August.

THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL, ETC.

Br. E. Francis, from the Committee on the Theological School, appointed at the last session, presented a report which was accepted. By this Report the Council was advised that the Committee, agreeably to the instructions given them, had opened a correspondence with Br. T. J. Sawyer, and made arrangements by which a class under his charge was commenced at Clinton, Sept. 23, 1850. The collection proposed by the Convention to be taken up in our churches was not called for till February, 1851. In answer to the call, but eight congregations in the State, and one in Rhode Island, had forwarded contributions to the Treasurer. The amount received by him in all amounted to \$___. This sum still remains in his hands. The school must cease at the close of the present term, unless the means for its support are in some way furnished.

The following Resolution was adopted:

Resolved, That a Committee of five be appointed, who shall take into consideration the entire educational interests of the denomination in this State, both literary and theological, and report to the Convention at its next session, or sooner through our religious paper, if they deem it expedient.

Brs. Francis, Montgomery, J. M. Austin, Potter, and Eddy, were appointed that Committee.

The same Committee were authorized to dispose of monies raised or to be raised for the Theological School, as they may deem expedient.

COMMITTEE OF CORRESPONDENCE.

Br. Montgomery, from the Committee of Correspondence appointed at the last session, reported that no communications had been received by the Committee. The report was accepted.

Brs. T. J. Sawyer, G. W. Montgomery, and S. [Shaler] J. Hillyer were appointed the Committee of Correspondence for the year ensuing.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

The following Resolution was adopted unanimously and cordially:

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Resolved, That the grateful acknowledgments of this Convention are due and hereby tendered to the friends in Canton for the generous hospitalities extended to the members of this Council and other visitors to the village on this occasion.

Thanks were also tendered to the Baptist Church for the use of their meeting-house, and to the Methodist Church for the offer of theirs; and Br. J. T. Goodrich was requested to convey the acknowledgments of the Convention, in suitable terms, to the churches for their christian courtesy.

The thanks of the Convention were also tendered to Br. Laurie for his Occasional Address, and he was requested to furnish a copy for publication in the Christian Ambassador.

MEMORIALS.

The following Resolutions were adopted:

Resolved, That Br. Sawyer be requested to publish in the Christian Ambassador before transmission for entry on the records of this Convention, the memorial of our late Br. Stephen R. Smith, which he was appointed at the last session to prepare.

Resolved, That Br. William S. Balch be requested to prepare a brief memorial of the life and services of our late Br. Menzies Rayner, for entry upon the records of the Convention.

Resolved, That Br. G. W. Montgomery be requested to prepare a like memorial of our late Br. S. [Stephen] Miles.

MUTUAL RELIEF SOCIETY

The following Resolution was adopted:

Resolved, That Brs. Balch and Laurie be a Committee to take into consideration the means by which a Mutual Relief Society, composed of the Universalist ministers of the State of New-York, may be formed, for the support of the widows and orphans of deceased clergymen who had been connected with the Society.

ADJOURNMENT

The Convention adjourned, to meet in the City of Hudson on the last Wednesday in May, 1852.

P. MORSE, *Moderator*

G. L. Demarest, *Clerk*.

Christian Ambassador, Auburn NY, Sat. 21 Jun 1851