

Minutes of the N. Y. Convention

The Convention of Universalists of the State of New York, met agreeably to adjournment, in the Universalist church in Fort Plain, on Wednesday, May 25th, 1842, and organized the Council by appointing Br. S. R. [Stephen Rensselaer] Smith, Moderator, and Brs. J. A. [Joseph Aikin] Aspinwall and M. [Moses] B. Smith, Clerks. The roll of delegates being called, the following persons answered to their names, and took seats as members of the Council.

ASSOCIATIONS	PREACHERS	LAYMEN
Black River	P. Morse O. Wilcox	R. D. Murray R. Fitch
Cayuga	T. J. Whitcomb A. G. Clarke	
Central	E. M. Woolley A. B. Grosh	E. Gray
Chenango	E. E. Guild J. S. Sherburne	J. R. Gilliman J. Shattuck
Hudson River	S. R. Smith J. A. Aspinwall	S. W. Britton D. M. Moore
Mohawk	D. Skinner J. D. Hicks	D. Brayton
New York	W. S. Ballou J. K. Ingalls	W. A. Conant
Niagara	M. B. Smith	Roswell Starr
Ontario	O. Ackley	
Otsego	J. Potter O. Whiston	W. Parke A. Snyder
St. Lawrence	W. H. Waggoner B. Hall	

Total, 20 ministerial, and 12 lay delegates.

Read and adopted the minutes of the last session. Heard and adopted the Reports of the Committee of General Correspondence—"No complaint;" and that on Ordination—"No application." Appointed Brs. [Obadiah] Whiston, [Job] Potter and [Pitt] Morse a Committee to prepare the business of the Convention; Brs. M. B. Smith, [Oliver] Wilcox and Ballou, Committee on adjournment; Brs. [Aaron Bort] Grosh, Guild and J. A. Aspinwall, Committee to report delegates to the U.S. Convention; Brs. S. R. Smith, Grosh and Potter, Committee of Correspondence; Brs. Grosh, [Clement F.] Lefevre and Aspinwall, Committee on Ordination; Brs. Morse, Ingalls and [Obadiah] Whiston, to select a preacher of the next occasional sermon; and Br. Grosh to prepare and publish the Minutes, with a request to our other periodicals to copy the same.

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The following Resolutions were offered, discussed, amended and passed as follows, together with the Preamble of the fourth in order.

1. Resolved, That this Council approves the taking of immediate steps for forming a State Sunday School Association, and recommends that a meeting for that purpose be held in the city of Utica, on the second Wednesday in August, next; and that each Sunday school in the State send one delegate to represent it in said meeting. Adopted unanimously.

2. Resolved, That the Standing Clerks of the several Associations in the bounds of this Convention be requested to address letters *forthwith* to the Clerks of the different societies within their limits, requesting such statistical information as they can furnish; and after having obtained as much and as correct information as they are able to procure thus and otherwise, that said Standing Clerks report it, before the 1st day of August next, to the Standing Clerk of the New York State Convention. Adopted unanimously.

3. Resolved, That this Convention approves the appointment of the Committee appointed at the last meeting of the United States Convention, to draft a plan for the more effected organization of our denomination. Adopted *nem. con.*

4. Whereas the spirit of the present age requires constant improvement in every thing which can alleviate human misery, or exalt human nature in the scale of intelligence and enjoyment—and whereas the permanent interests of the sacred cause of true religion are evidently promoted by the general diffusion of the light of evidence through every department of society—and whereas our growing denomination is evidently deficient in facilities for communicating scientific and theological knowledge to the extent which may be attained by united and vigorous action, therefore

Resolved, That this body earnestly recommend the adoption of measures calculated to call out our latent energies for the establishment and endowment of a COLLEGE, which shall meet the wants of the rising generation in every department of useful knowledge, by converting “the Clinton Liberal Institute” into such College, and thereby superseding its present Constitution and greatly extending its power of doing good, and by such other means and measures as our concentrated energies and experience may direct, and our ability warrant.—Adopted unanimously.

Unanimously requested Br. S. R. Smith to furnish a copy of his excellent occasional sermon for publication. The reports of the Committee on adjournment was amended, and then adopted, to meet next year in Cooperstown. Adopted the following reports of the proper Committees—Br. Woolley to preach the next occasional sermon; Delegates to the U. S. Convention—Brs. J. K. Ingalls, J. A. Aspinwall, Dr. T. [Timothy] Clowes and M. B. Smith, ministers;—and W. A. Conant, New York; S. W. Britton, Troy; Benjamin Hyde, Harford; L. Barker, Clinton; Ellery Corey, Cooperstown, and

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John B. Lee, Albion, laymen—with power to appoint substitutes and fill vacancies.

Adjourned at the close of public services, on Thursday afternoon, to met again on Cooperstown, Otsego county, on the last Wednesday in May, 1843.

S. R. SMITH, Moderator

J. A. Aspinwall

} Clerks

M. B. Smith

Visiting ministering brethren present.—J. T. [John Temple] Goodrich, G. S. Abbott, Oxford; A. O. Warren, McDonough; J. H. Cook, Exeter; J. S. Kibbe, Constantia; H. [Henry] L. Hayward, Champion; T. Clowes, Clinton; H. [Henry] Lyon, Braman's Corners; C. M. Patterson, Porter's Corners; W. J. Goss, Clockville; H. Bowen, Deerfield; C. F. Lefevre, Hudson; A. C. Barray, Fort Plain; H. [Harvey] Boughton, Watertown; Z. [Zenas] Cook, Hamilton; Grosvenor Swan, Collinsville; H. Belding, Clarkesville; J. Ward, [Stanstead?], Lower Canada; S. P. Landers, Worcester, Mass.;—19 total, including delegates 39.

Public Services. Sermons were preached by Brs. S. R. Smith (occasional,) Boughton, Lefevre, W. S. Ballou, Skinner, Grosh (installation,) and Clowes (recognition of the church, etc.,)—they were assisted in the services by Brs. Boughton, Woolley, Ward, Whitcomb, Waggoner, Morse, Potter, Wilcox.

The installation of Br. A. [Alfred] C. Barray, as Pastor of the church and society at Fort Plain, took place on Thursday afternoon. There was an original hymn by Br. D. K. [Day Kellogg] Lee, sermon as above, installing prayer by Br. Morse, charge by Br. S. R. Smith and right hand of fellowship by Br. Potter. On Thursday evening, after the sermon as above, baptism by affusion [i.e. pouring water, not immersion] was performed by Dr. Clowes on Brs. A. C. Barray and C. M. Patterson, and on two females. The church was recognized and fellowshipped by Br. Morse through the Pastor, and the Lord's supper administered by Brs. Morse and Potter.

REMARKS—This session of our State Convention was one of the most pleasant and harmonious we ever attended. The minutes will show the business done; but not all that was considered. Of that business a few remarks may be necessary.

The attendance of our delegations is not as good as it should be—and this year it will be seen three Associations were not represented at all in our council—that 16 lay delegates and 8 ministerial delegates were not present in person, nor by substitute. The remedy for this evil is in our Associations. It is believed that if they will promptly pay the bare expenses of their

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delegates, a better attendance can be had. The sacrifice of time will be cheerfully made, when that of travelling expenses is not superadded. The same remarks will apply to *all* our delegations.

From the number of verbal and written requests on the subject, the Council were led to adopt immediate measures for a meeting to form a Sunday School Association in our State. It is generally felt that these schools will be the nurseries of our societies and churches, and of our choice—that they may be made most pleasurable, interesting and useful to the rising generation—but even on the single motive of self defence, and the preservation of our children from the insidious influence of such schools among our opposers, they are worthy our attention and care. This Association of teachers and friends of Sunday Schools, will lead to improvements in their management, in their class books, their libraries, and their results. Let delegates, then, be sent us recommended, and let all others, who feel an interest in the subject, attend and encourage the meeting by their presence.

The subject of statistics, though a *dry* one, was felt to be *too important* to pass it by without an effort to improve our action upon it. Absolute correctness can never be expected in a constantly increasing denomination. All we can ever hope for, is an *approximation* toward the truth. And even this can only be attained to any great degree, after repeated and persevering efforts—by gathering, first, the most obvious and well known facts and details, and guessing at the rest or as near as may be; and second, by noting the changes that take place as they occur, and correcting our first guesses, as fast as we become acquainted with the errors made in them. And the sooner we *begin* this work, the earlier will we be able to approach very nearly to correctness. Our very errors in the first start, will goad us on to corrections; and the practice of collecting information, be an incentive to a better and more regular organization of our societies, that the desired information may be more readily obtained. Let us, then, be gin now—NOW—and let us *persevere* in the work, despite of all deficiencies, *errors* and discouragements.

It will be seen that we approve the appointment of a Committee by the U.S. Convention, to draft a plan of organization for our whole denomination. We need something more uniform, more efficient. We understand that the report of that Committee will have to be submitted to all our Conventions and Associations, before it is finally adopted, and therefore have approved the appointments.

It was cheering to notice the more general conviction that enough had been *said* about our contemplated College. Every member of the Council seemed to feel that a determinate and decisive proposition should be laid before the public, and steps taken to carry it out forthwith. We adopted the

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proposition; and now leave it to the proper persons to carry it out. We hope (though we did not feel that it would be decorous in us to say so in our *public* proceedings,) that the State will at once be districted, and agents be employed in each district, to collect subscriptions, to make of Clinton Liberal Institute a College. It *can* be done—it *should* be done—we believe it **MUST** and **WILL** be done.

It only remains to say, what, from its invariable occurrence may seem superfluous, that our proceedings were very harmonious—the services of the sanctuary, interesting and profitable, were listened to with devout attention by a crowded auditory; and the hospitality of the friends in Fort Plain left us nothing to desire. The music of the choir was excellent. Our parting was the only painful part of the Convention—and even that served to remind us that we were to meet again in the great Convention above, where parting shall be no more. Till then, and then, and evermore, may God bless you all.

Per order,

A. B. GROSH

Evangelical Magazine & Gospel Advocate, Utica NY, Fri. 10 Jun 1842

Transcribed with notes added on 14 Oct 2012 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY