

N. Y. State Convention

The annual session of the New York State Convention of Universalists convened in the city of Troy August 25th, 1863, and was called to order by N.H. Benson, Clerk of the last session. The roll was called when the following delegates responded to their names:

Clerical	Lay
	Buffalo Association.
W. B. Cook	
J. H. Hartzell	
	Cayuga.
S. Crane	H. Boynton
J. H. Harter	
	Central.
T. D. Cook	
D. Skinner, D.D.	
	Chenango.
D. Ballou	C. Cole
	Genesee.
C. Cravens	
A. B. Raymond	
	Hudson River.
J. N. Parker	J. Braman
J. M. Pullman	N. H. Benson
	Mohawk.
B. F. Peck	E. T. Marsh
E. D. Hayne	J. J. Wheeler
	New York.
H. Blanchard	G. W. Barnes
H. Lyon	N. Van Nostrand
	Niagara.
R. Fisk, Jun.	
N. Snell	
	Ontario.
G. W. Montgomery	___ Decker
A. Saxe	R. Simmons
	Otsego.
S. R. Ward	W. H. Morgan
C. W. Tomlinson	
	St. Lawrence.
H. Bisbee	Wells Knapp
E. Fisher, D.D.	

N. Y. State Convention

The council proceeded to the election of officers, Revs. H. Lyon and S. Crane acting as tellers.

Gilbert W. Barnes, Esq., of Mount Vernon, Westchester Co., was elected Moderator, and N. H. Benson, of Troy, Clerk of the Session, and on motion, S. Crane was made Assistant Clerk.

The minutes of last session were read. The reading of the Constitution and Rules of Order was dispensed with. On motion, H. Lyon, J. N. Parker, and D. Skinner were appointed a committee on unfinished business, and W. B. Cook, L. R. Ward, and J. M. Pullman Committee on Nominations.

On motion, *Voted*—That all ministering brethren present be invited to participate in the deliberations of the Convention.

REPORT OF THE PUBLISHING COMMITTEE.

Executive Committee of the *Ambassador* Establishment, through Rev. G. W. Montgomery, submitted the following report:

The Publication Committee beg to submit the following report: That the financial condition of the *Ambassador* establishment, for the year 1862, will be seen in the statement we have drawn from the reports of the agents, Brs. Harter, of Auburn, and Lyon, of New York. [This lengthy report is not included here.]

This financial statement clearly shows that the amount of money received has barely sufficed to support the *Ambassador*, while the nett profits, fairly and honestly earned, which the Convention should have enjoyed as its income, remain in the hands of those who have been willing to receive the paper without performing their part of the contract—or, in other words, without the intention or will to pay for it. Under such circumstances, it is a source of thankfulness, that the *Ambassador* had a sufficient number of thoughtful subscribers to permit it to be alive, at the close of the year. In the report for 1861, the committee say—“ There is strong hope, based on the assumption that the subscribers will at least be moderately faithful, that the *Ambassador* will reach the end of the year 1862 free from debt.” This hope was accomplished. Perhaps this is all we could have expected. In these times, to live is a success. Scores of religious, as well as political, journals have failed of that success, and have been swept into oblivion.

Yet the sums due from subscribers have been constantly increasing, until they amounted, on the first day of January last, to \$8,495.58. At the session of the Convention in 1862, the committee were authorized to collect these debts by due course of law. We were desirous of immediately obeying this instruction. But as events determined that there would be a change in the agency, for the year 1863, it was thought best to defer action until a new agent had been appointed. It appears, however, that the new agent has not yet carried out the instructions given him. The following extract from his semi-annual report gives his reason therefor: “I have somewhat

N. Y. State Convention

changed my mind since January last. The difficulty of finding out who are the ones to proceed against, and the expense attending that course, render it difficult to do exactly what is best. There have been several old debts received, that could not have been collected by force, and the attempt would have resulted in the loss of the debts and the expenses of the attempt of the enforcement of their collection. There are cases, no doubt, where the law could be used to advantage to ourselves and to that of our debtors—to us, by getting what is our just due, and to the debtor, by making him honest.”

The committee held a session in Auburn, Oct. 21, 1862, for the purpose of making arrangements to publish the *Ambassador* for the year 1863. In defence to the feeling manifested in the last meeting of the Convention, and especially by the committee appointed to examine the annual report of the Publication Committee, that a change in editorial department was desirable, we voted to address a specified number of brethren on this subject, and to obtain their terms for editing the *Ambassador*, either at Auburn, Utica or New York. The committee then adjourned to await the result of these inquiries. When we again met, Nov. 18, 1862, we received the unconditional resignation of Br. J. M. [John Mather] Austin, who for twelve years had so ably conducted the *Ambassador*. On our part, this resignation was accepted with unfeigned regret, for many reasons, and especially as it was the united opinion of the committee that to disturb existing arrangements before the times became more settled, would be a hazardous experiment. It determined, however, the question of a change in location. It was ascertained that the person selected by the unanimous vote of the committee to be the editor of the *Ambassador* could not be induced to reside in Auburn. During the remainder of this session, and the one subsequently held, Dec. 16, 1862, the subject of removing the *Ambassador* either to Utica or New York was thoroughly considered in all its bearings, and was finally decided in favor of New York.

Notwithstanding the Convention had uniformly voted against a change, yet as the question had been forced upon the committee, they felt authorized to decide on the most feasible place. They therefore selected New York, and for various reasons, the most important of which was, that the expenses would be comparatively lessened by the liberal proposition made by Br. [Norman] Van Nostrand, and by dispensing with one of the offices. By this decision, a sufficient sum would be saved to prevent the increased cost in other directions from making the aggregate expenses greater than in previous years.

Your committee elected Br. T. J. [Thomas Jefferson] Sawyer as the editor, at a salary of \$1,250 per year, with the proviso that his entire time must be devoted to the interests of the *Ambassador*. Br. N. Van Nostrand was selected as the agent and publisher, on his agreement to publish five

N. Y. State Convention

thousand copies of the *Ambassador* for \$5,000, and \$1 for each additional copy. In this agreement, he was to furnish paper, provided it did not exceed \$3.75 per ream, and the committee agree to allow all that he might pay above that sum as an extra charge. He also bound himself to remit \$280 for premiums and commissions, and also \$275 on account of lessened composition, in consequence of reducing the size of the *Ambassador*.

The question of retaining or reducing the original size of the *Ambassador* commanded the anxious and protracted attention of the committee. It was ascertained that paper, for which they were then paying \$3.25 per ream, would cost for the next year \$7 per ream. This increased cost, they felt sure, would ruin the *Ambassador*. It was also ascertained that the form to which it was proposed to be reduced would cost \$5.14 per ream, and could be had for nothing less. They were also confronted by the fact, that scores of religious papers had disappeared under the pressure of the times, and felt very certain that our denominational papers would be obliged to lessen their size or die. And the times have forced them either to this result, or to intermit their numbers from time to time. The committee, therefore, unanimously voted to cut the *Ambassador* down to its present size, as the only mode of preserving its existence. Though this action caused much dissatisfaction, yet your committee believed, as they still believe, that the measure was the only one they could adopt with safety. The whole question presented only two aspects: Shall we reduce the *Ambassador*, and thus continue its publication? or shall we retain the old form, and bury it at the close of 1863, beneath a heavy and unprovided-for debt. Right or wrong, your committee did not hesitate in their decision.

From the semi-annual report of the agent, we learn the financial condition and prospects of the *Ambassador* up to the 1st of July last. The receipts for the half-year were \$5618.59. The expenditures were \$3,831.63, leaving \$1,786.96 as the balance on hand. The agent also states that his contract has thus far cost him \$180.64 more than he has received under the agreement, while he has had for his services only the pleasure of laboring for the common good. The decrease of subscribers, during the six months, numbers 726, with the farther addition of 150 which were to be taken off on the 1st of July, according to orders received—making the total number 876. The additions were 207. The nett loss, therefore, is 699. The agent remarks, "that quite a number have discontinued on account of the pressure of the times, and inability to pay for the paper." Your committee do not presume to have a knowledge of all the causes that have resulted in this reduction of the list. They may be permitted, however, to say, that the decided and very able position which the *Ambassador* has taken against the rebellion, and in favor of the Union and the enforcement of the laws of the land, will account for a large percentage of the loss.

N. Y. State Convention

In conclusion, your committee express the hope that the *Ambassador* will be able to meet all its liabilities for the present year, and reach Jan. 1, 1864, free from debt. We think that the receipts of money due on past years and the present year will accomplish this result. Beyond this, they have no well-grounded expectation that a surplus will remain for the Convention.

GEO. W. MONTGOMERY
(for the committee)

On motion, the above report was referred to a special committee consisting of E. [Ely] T. Marsh, Esq., Rev. R. Fisk, Jun., and Rev. J. W. Bailey. At a subsequent period of the session, this committee reported as follows:

The undersigned committee to whom was referred the report of the Publication Committee, respectfully submit the following report.

That they have examined its financial statements and find them correct. They are pleased to learn that the Committee of Publication have been able to sustain the paper, through all the difficulties and embarrassments of the past year, without incurring debts. Judging from the semi-annual report of the publishing agent, which has been submitted to us, we think the paper as not conducted, will be able to show a balance sheet in its favor at the end of the present year. We believe the *Ambassador* establishment may be made not only self-sustaining, but a source of revenue to the Convention, if our people generally throughout the State will take that interest in its welfare, which seems to us their duty, and more especially if our clergy will call the attention of their congregations to its claims, and exert themselves to increase its circulation. We remember how hopefully the paper was launched upon the public, as the property of this Convention, and how much good was anticipated from the funds it would put into our hands. The paper has now been published a number of years in this manner, without accumulating any available surplus. Its chief assets are debts due the establishment.

This failure we believe is much of it due to the want of interest manifested by our clergymen generally, in the welfare of the paper. We are unable to account for such a state of things. Surely the *Ambassador*, circulating among the members of their societies, will aid them in their pastoral work, and make their embers more liberal and enlightened, and more ready to aid them in the work and enterprise of our denomination. We are happy to believe that there are some among our clergy, that are doing all they can, and are meeting fully their responsibilities in this respect. Should all our clergymen take that interest they should in the success of the *Ambassador*, by writing for its columns, and obtaining for it subscribers, and should our people generally respond with proper zeal to their efforts, we see no reason why the *Ambassador*, as our paper, should not obtain a high

N. Y. State Convention

degree of prosperity, and be the means of doing us much good as a Christian people. We therefore submit the following resolutions:

Resolved, That this Convention earnestly calls upon the clergy of the state, annually at least, and oftener if they think proper, to present the claims of our paper to their respective societies.

Resolved, That the clergy be requested to contribute to the pages of our paper, occasional articles that will add to the interest and variety of its contents.

E. T. MARSH,
R. FISK, Jun., } Committee
J. W. BAILEY

RESOLUTIONS ON THE STATE OF THE COUNTRY

Rev. T. J. Sawyer. D.D., submitted the following resolutions on the state of the country which were unanimously adopted:

Resolved, That it is with pain we as a Christian body have to record the continuance of the wicked and bloody rebellion now waged against the integrity and Government of our country.

Resolved, That in this gigantic rebellion, with all its outrages and its immense waste of life and treasure, we recognize the natural outgrowth of the great and chronic wrong of human slavery, which, while it violates the whole spirit of our blessed religion, is equally at war with the genius of our political institutions, the civilization of the age and the material prosperity of the land, and which by making slaves of some makes tyrants of others, and reduces the rest of the community to a state of ignorance, poverty and civil and social insignificance and worthlessness.

Resolved, That we hail with delight the important victories which have recently crowned our national arms, and that while we render devout thanksgiving to God for past successes, we earnestly invoke the continuation of His favor till every foe shall be subdued, our Union restored, and permanent peace established.

Resolved, That we tender our heartfelt gratitude to our brave army and navy for their devotion to the cause of civil freedom and the interests and honor of their country, for the steady courage they have ever manifested, and the spirit of noble self-sacrifice which on so many bloody fields has reflected the highest lustre upon our national arms.

Resolved, That we express our tenderest sympathy with the many households which have been darkened and the many hearts made sad by the bereavement and sorrows occasioned by this unholy war, and we earnestly pray that the consolations of our blessed religion may be abundantly ministered to them all.

Resolved, That while in common with all good men we mourn the ravages of war, we recognize this great struggle as at once the means of punishment

N. Y. State Convention

and purification, and see in the distance, as the fruit of our present sufferings and sacrifices, the nation cleansed of its foulest blot, redeemed from its greatest curse, and fitted for a career of prosperity, honor and usefulness hitherto impossible.

Resolved, That from motives of humanity and to save effusion of blood, we earnestly call upon our national rulers to press forward the war with all their energy to a successful issue—the entire suppression of the rebellion and the restoration of the Union.

Resolved, That we invoke the sympathy and aid of every good citizen and especially of every Universalist in the support of the righteous cause of the country and the maintenance of civil liberty.

Resolved, That since slavery is the source of this rebellion, we believe no peace can be permanent till slavery is stripped of its power and utterly destroyed; we therefore call upon the President to carry into effect his just and beneficent proclamation of January 1, 1863, and give freedom to three millions of our fellow beings hitherto held in bondage.

REPORT ON THE STATE OF THE CHURCH

Rev. H. Blanchard, in behalf of the Committee on the State of the Church, submitted the following report:

To the New York State Convention of Universalists, Troy, N.Y., August 25th, 1863.

The undersigned having been appointed a committee to report on the condition of the Church at the session of your body in 1862, beg leave to submit the following report:

In the month of May the chairman of the committee published in the *Ambassador*, a circular to the pastors and clerks of the Universalist societies, in the State of New York, in order that he might gain certain definite information which would serve as a basis of the present report. Although he has repeated his request for information, three or four times, not half of the societies have responded, but, as will be seen, a sufficient number have done so, to make the committee feel that they can speak with assurance concerning the condition of the denomination, within the limits of the State.

The information received has been tabulated as follows:

N. Y. State Convention

PLACE	PASTOR	No. of Families	Average Attendance	Communicants
[01] Afton	A. B. Hervey	75	125	110
[02] Aurora	W. B. Cook	40	150	None
[03] Bristol	J. W. Bailey	80	200	None
[04] Brooklyn 1st	H. Blanchard	85	200	135
[05] Brooklyn 2d	H. Peters		300	70
[06] Brooklyn 3d	F. Magwire		160	16
[07] Brooklyn 4th	L. J. Fletcher	45	125	60
[08] Buffalo	J. J. Hartzell	100	360	70
[09] Burrville	J. H. Stewart	52	150	None
[10] Clarendon		36	125	29
[11] Clifton Springs	I. M. Atwood	50	115	30
[12] Columbus	T. A. Jackson	65	115	12
[13] Cortland	S. Crane	20	50	30
[14] Cooperstown	C. W. Tomlinson	86	120	52
[15] Dexter	J. H. Stewart	46	115	None
[16] E. Smithville	D. Ballou	50	150	10
[17] Fly Creek	C. W. Tomlinson	74	100	36
[18] Fort Plain	H. H. Baker	40	150	None
[19] Frankfort		20	75	
[20] Friendship	F. M. Alvord	30	90	None
[21] Geneva	A. Countryman	35	70	None
[22] Greenwood	I. K. Richardson	26	100	60
[23] Lebanon	O. K. Crosby	30	75	
[24] Lockport	Richard Fisk		175	45
[25] Mohawk		52	175	
[26] Morris	T. A. Jackson	50	110	None
[27] Mount Vernon	S. T. Aldrich	40	100	14
[28] McLean	S. Crane		90	
[29] Nunda	D. C. Tomlinson		60	15
[30] Oxford	D. Ballou	30	90	30
[31] Orangeville	H. Lyon		70	27
[32] Pamelia	J. H. Stewart	24	50	None
[33] Poland		22	60	None
[34] Portageville	D. C. Tomlinson	25	60	20
[35] Potsdam	F. E. Hicks	75	175	13
[36] Ridgeway	N. Snell	50	130	None
[37] Rochester	A. Saxe	150	300	86
[38] Southold	R. Lansing	30	75	
[39] Syracuse	A. A. Thayer		125	None
[40] Utica	T. D. Cook	125	200	75
[41] Watertown	E. W. Reynolds	75	300	80
[42] NY Broadway	E. H. Chapin			
[43] NY 20th St.	E. G. Brooks		300	80
[44] NY Bleecker St.	Moses Ballou		400	
[45] NY 2d Ave.	G. T. Flanders		280	75

N. Y. State Convention

Relations with other societies	Is Universalism gaining?	Do you favor one service?	Loss of attendance on acc. of war	Do you favor a Liturgie?
[01] Friendly	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
[02] Friendly	Yes	No	None	Yes
[03] Good	Decidedly	Yes	No	No
[04] Friendly	Decidedly	Yes	a few	Yes
[05] Friendly	Decidedly	Yes	a few	
[06]				
[07] Friendly	Decidedly	Yes		
[08] Good	Decidedly		None	Yes
[09] Indiff'rent	Decidedly	Yes		Yes
[10] Not good	Decidedly	Yes	None	Yes
[11] Not good	Decidedly	Yes	Some	
[12]	Decidedly	Yes	None	
[13] Not good				
[14] Friendly	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
[15]				
[16]	Yes	No		
[17] Friendly	Yes		None	
[18] Fraternal	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
[19]	Rapidly		None	
[20] Fair	Yes	Yes	Yes	
[21] Indiff'rent	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
[22] Very friendly	Yes	Yes	None	No
[23]	Yes	Yes	None	
[24] Mod. cord.	Yes	Yes	very few	Yes
[25]	Yes		None	
[26] None	Yes	Yes	None	
[27] Civil	Yes		No	No
[28]	Yes			
[29]				
[30] Good	Holds its own	Yes	None	Yes
[31]			a few	
[32]				
[33] Good	Yes			Yes
[34]				
[35] Pleasant	Yes	Yes	None	No
[36] Very pleasant	Yes	Yes	One	Yes
[37] None	Yes	Yes	Lost but gain more	Yes
[38] Good	Yes		No	No
[39]				
[40] Good	Yes	Yes	a few	
[41] Very Fd'ly	Yes	Yes	20 families but gained as many	
[42]				
[43]				
[44]				
[45]				

N. Y. State Convention

From these statistics it will appear that Universalism is very decidedly gaining in the respect of the community. The testimony of our correspondents in regard to this fact is exceedingly emphatic.

We find, however, that in some places, there is still much unexpressed dislike, but we can be quite content with a change which is shown by the marked contrast between former denunciation and present silence. These places are not many. Bigotry is very rapidly dying out. Our denomination wins respect from all others. There is no fact more evident than this, in our survey of the condition of the Church. The clergy of the cities find ample reason for belief that their views, even when not accepted, are respected. We believe that the majority of men in other denominations to-day, are Universalist in faith, because believing in final universal salvation. Very many of our laymen occupy honorable positions in all walks of life, and exercise a noble influence in winning regard for their religious opinions. Very many of our clergy are widely known and honored. Our colleges and schools are also creating a feeling of respect for our denomination. Our own State, therefore, is helped by our sister societies in other States, and it is with great pleasure, we record the fact of our increasing influence.

Our ministers, we learn, are very generally on friendly terms with their brother clergymen, and we feel assured therefore, that the day is past even with the clerical body, generally more bigoted than the laity, when our brethren were esteemed as friends, but not regarded as Christians.

One great cause of this fraternal feeling is the present war. Chaplains of all denominations have met as brethren, in the camp or in the field of battle. We have faith that the relations of our clergy with those of other denominations, will become even more fraternal than they are now.

We find that in many places there are no organizations of communicants. In Bristol, for instance, the Quaker element prevents such an organization. Our esteem for the Friends is so great, that while we regret their dislike to the ordinance of the supper [e.g. the Last Supper] yet we can bear with it kindly. We fear that in some places, the absence from the communion table is a result of spiritual indifference. We received from our brethren many earnest statements concerning the lack of spiritual life in their congregations. These pastors respect and love their people, but miss sympathy with the deepest feelings of their souls.

We desire to call the attention of our societies, to the expression of opinion concerning the one service a day for the church, and the second for the Sunday School, to be found in our tabular statement. At Afton, the new plan of one service is very successful. At Friendship the attendance at the one service is much better than when it was the custom to hold two. Br. E. G. Pettengill, a layman of Clarendon, to whom we are indebted for an excellent letter, is very decided in the expression of his approbation of the

N. Y. State Convention

one service system. He is now for the second time the superintendent of the school, his first term being that of ten years. Our brother A. Saxe, of Rochester, is also very earnest in his advocacy of this system. Indeed, wherever we talk with those who are believers in the usefulness of the Sunday School, we find concurrence with our own views, that we shall prosper more rapidly with the one service for adults, and one for the children, than under the old system.

It is our unpleasant duty to record the fact that at Ford's Bush, our society has suspended services, on account of its opposition to the war. We trust that there is no other instance of such suspension. Our churches generally have not suffered much on this account. Where men have left, others loving liberty and a manly ministry have come in. At Watertown, for instance, twenty pew holders gave up their seats. Twenty other men, far more noble in their treatment of a clergyman, took their places.

We are decidedly of the opinion that our denomination gains by such losses. We believe that many persons do not fellowship with our societies in many places, because these are known to be of the kind which detects political preaching in all discussions of great questions of the day. Our letters confirm us in the opinion that such loss is gain. Instead of deploring such withdrawals in themselves, we only regret that the avowed belief in the fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man, has not made such men different from what they are. We are taught, however, that the faith of such has been only of the lip and not of the heart. We are thankful to hear that our pastors are so nobly sustained as a general rule.

In some places, such as Smithville Flats, Preston, N. Norwich and Sherburne, the societies are inactive. It will be the duty of the associations to which such belong, to see to it that some effort is made towards resuscitation. We here state our conviction that efforts are being made towards building churches before our friends are sufficiently numerous. At Newburgh, for instance, an edifice was erected and quite a sum of money collected, and now the church is sold and the incipient society scattered. Such premature efforts injure us in the regard of the community.

With regard to the introduction of a liturgical service, we find that a majority of the clergy favor, but the societies generally disapprove. We are ourselves of the opinion that some simple responsive service will be liked after a trial, and will conduce to the impressiveness of the sanctuary service. Written prayers will not be acceptable, though even for such, as a part of the service, we believe there is good argument. At present, however, we find it impracticable to alter our simple, and to us, somewhat bald service.

We are glad to be able to record the fact of a change in the style of preaching. We beg our brethren not to misunderstand this statement. We do not wish to condemn. We dread any appearance of presumption. But we

N. Y. State Convention

sincerely believe that we need a change of style in preaching, in order to meet the wants of the times. There is still need of presentation of arguments in favor of our distinctive doctrine, but there is still greater need of making men love Christ. There are more believers in final, universal salvation, than loving followers of Jesus of Nazareth. It is a great pleasure to bear testimony to the fact of the great worth of our people and of our pastors as men. We remember what our brother, J. S. Dennis, said while missionary in Massachusetts, to the effect that while he found some of the meanest of men among Universalists, he found some of the noblest. We may properly point to our people as the fruits of our faith—to our pastors as worthy, honorable men. It is true, nevertheless, that we have great need of a more educated ministry than now we have. The statement is carefully weighed and can be substantiated by many of our brethren. The simplicity of our doctrine allowed good but uneducated men to preach it, and we suffer now, therefore, from the presence of such. One of the best men in the clergy we ever knew, himself deplored his own lack of preparation for the pulpit, and that of many of his excellent brethren. This lack of education has caused a certain style of preaching which we solemnly believe needs reformation.

Our present progress is largely owing to the recruits to the ministry who have come prepared for their work. Our preaching is more devotional and less polemical. "Our religion is becoming more popular and respectable in this community," writes a brother, "and the reason is our people are becoming *less dogmatical* and *more spiritual*. I number among my hearers, at times some of the most respectable families in the city, of other sects."

We are glad, therefore, to read the words of our brethren who are yearning for deeper spiritual life. We are profoundly grateful for the accession to our ministry of such young men as the majority of those whom Canton has given. Our younger clergy will favorably with those of any denomination. The change of style in preaching so much desired will, ere long, through their influence, prevail. Honoring the fathers in the faith for their fidelity, we are to go on as our souls are led by the Holy Spirit. We are to hear all earnest, scholarly men. We are not to settle questions by saying they lead to infidelity. We are to heed the changed condition of our times, and so, loving all Christians and cultivating fraternal relations, we are to speak our word of comfort and inspiration.

We believe that the denomination can do a noble work. We have a large number of hearers and a large number of clergy. Our distinctive faith is more glorious than that of any other sect. Our name, expressive of that great doctrine, is as excellent as that which any sect has borne. But we are to remember that we are only a segment of a great Church, and that when we shall have gained the victory over the horrible dogma of endless

N. Y. State Convention

punishment, our work as a sect will be done. Our work as Christians will not have been accomplished. Meanwhile we can best increase our influence by the largest tolerance. Let us not feel that even wide divergences of opinion should separate us if we are united in the simple apostolic faith of belief in Christ. Our distinctive faith will be advocated in different ways by different men.

For this grand faith is being and will be preached not merely on the authority of any book, precious as that may be, but also as the utterance of the Creator himself in the souls of his children. It will be but a part of a faith not yet old, which the world shall one day accept. It will always be the good news of Jesus of Nazareth, but the grand teaching of that same Master concerning God's constant presence, of the soul's priceless worth, of the life eternal here, will be themes as loved and dwelt upon as that of the glorious consummation of a race finally redeemed.

Towards that day we as a denomination can be helpers. We ask, therefore, for widest toleration of opinions—for the strength which union of earnest souls can give—for an educated ministry and a more spiritual preaching. We need only these to make us the noblest and most influential sect in Christendom.

To the end that this report may be accepted as the work of your committee, even if not adopted as the expression of your views as a convention, we submit the following resolutions for your consideration.

HENRY BLANCHARD
THEO. D. COOK
CHAS. W. TOMLINSON

Resolved, That the pastors of our societies are urged to greater labor in the direction of increasing the number of avowed professors of faith in Christ as the authorized teacher and helper of man, and that it its expedient for such to follow up pulpit efforts by personal conversations in the homes.

Resolved, That as workers for the great Church of which Christ is the head, we do most earnestly invite the co-operation of all Christians whatever may be their denominational names, and that while we believe in the need of our special doctrinal preaching, it is our Christian duty to acknowledge the great worth of our brother Christians in their noble work for the good of men, and to speak of their faith in the spirit of charity.

Resolved, That it is expedient to devote the second religious service of each Sunday to the interests of the Sunday School, and that we therefore urge it upon the various societies and associations to consider this resolution.

Resolved, That we gladly acknowledge the fidelity of pastors and people to the great cause of freedom in this crisis of the nation, and fraternally urge

N. Y. State Convention

all absentees from the church to consider the obligations of a common brotherhood of men.

Resolved, That we hail with joy, the indications of cravings on the part of pastors and people for a deeper spiritual life, and that we urge upon all our ministers the preaching of Christ in his character as great example and of the constant witnessing of the Holy Spirit with the spirits of his children.

DEATH OF A. CHICHESTER, ESQ., AND DR. J. HARSEN

Rev. H. Lyon submitted the following preamble and resolution which was unanimously adopted.

Whereas, It has pleased the all-wise Disposer of events, to remove from us, during the past year, Dr. Jacob Harsen and Abner Chichester, Esq., late trustees of the Relief Fund, the former having been president, and the latter treasurer from its first establishment,

Resolved, That we hereby express our deep sense of the invaluable services gratuitously rendered by them through so many years, and tender our sympathies to their respective families. And

Whereas, Dr. Jacob Harsen generously left a legacy of ten thousand dollars to be added to the fund founded by his honored father, we do hereby gratefully acknowledge our obligations for the distinguished favor shown us, and which shall gladden the hearts, by contributing to relieve the wants of the worn out laborers in our cause, and their widows and orphans,

Resolved, That the trustees on receiving the above named legacy be authorized to invest the same, with any other funds in their possession, so far as they may deem judicious for the benefit of the fund.

EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY.

On motion, the standing clerk was directed to call a meeting of the Educational Society, on the second day of the session of the next State Convention, at 2 o'clock, P.M.

On motion, Rev. H. Lyon was made a committee to collect the books and documents, &c, belonging to the Educational Society, and submit a report to the next Convention.

REPORT ON THE MISSIONARY AND TRACT ENTERPRISE

William H. Morgan presented the report of the Committee on Missionary and Tract Enterprise, which was accepted and the committee discharged.

Your committee to whom was referred the subject of "Missionary and Tract Enterprise" would respectfully submit the following:

There having been no action upon these subjects, under the direct auspices of the Convention, no available channels have been open to the committee to obtain statistics, although much has been done through individual effort in the missionary cause.

N. Y. State Convention

It must be apparent to all, that abundant opportunities are presented for a successful missionary work within the bounds of the Convention; not only in new fields, but more especially in stimulating to renewed life and activity the numerous societies throughout the State now entirely destitute of preaching, or supplied only at long intervals.

Numerous are the localities in which effective work has been done in by-gone years, and memorials remain showing that the ground has been once broken for the rearing of temples of our religious faith in the hearts of the people. These localities demand our first and special attention, and it is believed that in most instances the now scattered members could be reunited, and the doctrines we profess received a glad welcome, and in time a good support.

As an example: in two of the leading counties of the State, that have particularly engaged the Committee's attention, there are thirteen societies without pastors, with nine houses of worship which are seldom opened.

Whether it were best to appoint missionaries, authorized and sent forth with a guarantee from the Convention to supply all deficiencies of a necessary income, is a question for the consideration of your body. A more effective working organization of the Convention would make it one of more practical importance. The maintenance of existing societies, which are fast becoming disorganized through want of attention from the denomination, is a matter of much concern, and, if possible, some plan of operations should be entered upon for their preservation. The establishment of a system of circuit preaching might be made of profitable application in our own, as it is in other denominations.

The "Tract Enterprise" is even more deficient in subject matter out of which to prepare a report than the one previously considered. Little has been done of a general character, for a printed dissemination of our views, except through the columns of the *Christian Ambassador*, and in the present condition of affairs it would seem most judicious to put all of our available means, and apply all of our denominational energies, to the work of making it, in size and influence, worthy of the large, vigorous, and growing denomination it represents.

Although many narrow-minded individuals (who were probably born five hundred years later than they should have been) have manifested a spirit akin to anything else rather than Universalism, and withdrawn their support from the paper, because of the commendably patriotic tone of its columns, yet there are large numbers unalienated from a hearty interest in our cause, by any such illiberal and shameful spirit, who *should* and *would* sustain the *Ambassador*, were the matter brought to their notice, and its claims presented as they might be.

N. Y. State Convention

Our clergy throughout the State ought, each and every one, to constitute themselves agents for advancing its interests and increasing its number of subscribers. By a little active effort on the part of each, the subscription list might soon be sufficiently increased to warrant an enlargement of the sheet, and the paper thus made a grand missionary and powerful tract, circulating in thousands of families throughout the State.

Those of our ministering brethren who complain of its present appearance can, by co-operating in a general effort, easily remove all cause of dissatisfaction in these respects, and the very bigotry of those who have withdrawn their subscriptions on account of its unconditional loyalty—not only to the Government of our country, but to gospel principles, made a means of enlisting the sympathies and support of those now indifferent to its demands. Action on the part of the convention in these premises could not fail to be productive of good.

While the committee doubt the efficiency of issuing tracts for the perusal of adults, as productive of any results adequate to the expenditures required for their circulation, they believe that much good might be accomplished through the agency of embellished tract publications for circulation in Sabbath Schools, and among the young, and that their sale would be sufficiently large to warrant their issue.

In a full hope that the coming year will be propitious for the promotion of the enterprises forming the subject of this report, and enable a more satisfactory return to be made of work accomplished through this instrumentality, we subscribe ourselves,

L. L. BRIGGS,
R. H. PULLMAN, } Committee
A. A. THAYER

The conduct of the *Christian Ambassador* having been under consideration, it was on motion

Resolved, That this Convention appreciating the difficulties under which the present editor of the *Christian Ambassador* has been compelled to labor, heartily approves the elevated loyalty of the paper, and trusts that he will continue to make it faithful to those principles of human liberty which are the necessary outgrowth of our distinctive faith.

Resolved, That we hail with pleasure the prospect of an enlargement of the paper, upon the commencement of the next volume, and call upon our people, to give their zealous support that this end may be secured.

DEATH OF REV. M. B. SMITH

Rev. A. Saxe offered the following resolutions on the death of Rev. M. [Moses] B. Smith, which were adopted by a rising [standing] vote.

N. Y. State Convention

Whereas, It has pleased our heavenly Father, to remove brother M. b. Smith from the ranks of our ministry, and give him, we trust, a place among the saints in the immortal land; therefore,

Resolved, That while we bow in resignation to the divine will, whose behests are always wisest and for the best, yet in the departure of our beloved brother, we find cause for deep sorrow, since our ministry has lost a man of Christian character, of earnest love for our faith, and of hearty desires for its promotion. According to his ability, he faithfully labored for the advancement of Christian truth, gave to it the best thoughts of his strong and well disciplined mind and strengthened it by his religious life. We have therefore sincere reasons for mourning his absence from our ranks.

Resolved, That the death of our beloved brother should admonish us that our days are numbered, and therefore should incite us to renewed love for, and faithfulness in our duty to, the cause of universal grace, that when we shall be called upon to join the sainted band of worthies, among whom are numbered Reese, Porter, Ackley, and S.R. and M.B. Smith, Whittemore, Ballou, and scores of dearly beloved brothers, we may have the satisfaction of remembering that we have not been unfaithful to the interests of Christianity as the hope of the world.

Resolved, That we tender our sincere sympathy to the widow [Melissa] and son of our departed brother, and mourn with them in their bereavement, and pray that the precious faith which sustained him may yield them abundant consolation, and enable them to bow in humble resignation to the gracious will of God.

REPORT ON NOMINATIONS.

The Committee on Nominations submitted their report, which was adopted as follows:

COMMITTEES.

Committee on the State of the Church—Rev. D.H. Lee, Rev. C. Cravens, Rev. H.H. Baker. On Sunday Schools—Rev. B. Peters, Rev. A. Saxe, Rev. I.K. Richardson. On the Missionary and Tract Enterprise—Rev. C.W. Tomlinson, Rev. F.M. Alvord, Rev. D. Ballou. On Reforms—Rev. E. Fisher D.D., Rev. R. Fisk Jr., Rev. S. Crane. On Education—Rev. T.J. Sawyer D.D., Rev. D. Skinner D.D., Rev. J.S. Lee. On Complaints and Appeals—Rev. G.W. Montgomery, Rev. Moses Ballou, G.W. Barnes.

TRUSTEES OF RELIEF FUND.

Permanent Trustees of the Relief Fund—Thomas Crane, of New York, Caleb Barstow of Brooklyn.

DELEGATES.

Delegates to the United States Convention—*Clerical*: T.J. Sawyer, R. Fiske Jr., D.H. Lee, H. Blanchard, C.W. Tomlinson.—*Lay*: C.T. Cooper, N. Cheney,

N. Y. State Convention

James Cooper, N. Van Nostrand, B.W. Williams, J.J. Van Zandt, A.C. Barnes, G.W. Barnes, Norman Smith, A.D. Brown.

PREACHER FOR 1864.

Preacher of Occasional Sermon—Rev. Moses Ballou. Place of Adjournment—At the call of the Standing Clerk on three months' notice. Executive Committee of *Ambassador* Establishment—Rev. T.D. Cook, Rev. G.W. Montgomery, Rev. D. Lyon, Geo. A. Moore, Charles Bemis.

RAISING OF FUNDS.

On motion Rev. A. Saxe, H. Lyon and C.W. Tomlinson, were made a committee to devise a plan for raising funds for the use of the Convention, who reported the following resolutions which were adopted:

Resolved.—That this Convention recommend to the associations under its jurisdiction, that at their next sessions, they adopt some permanent plan by which to raise, annually, a sum adequate to defray the expenses incurred by their delegates in attending the sessions of this Convention, and the further sum of fifteen dollars or more each to meet the expenses of delegates from this body to the United States Convention.

Resolved.—That this latter sum be annually forwarded to the treasurer of this Convention, and by him distributed *pro rata* among the delegates; provided always that no greater sum shall be paid them than the actual cost of attendance.

Resolved.—That inasmuch as this action cannot be had in season to meet the necessities of delegates to the next ensuing session of the United States Convention, we recommend all the societies in the State, to take collections for the purpose at some Sabbath in September prox., and forward the amount so collected to the Standing Clerk of the Convention.

THE RELIEF FUND.

N.H. Benson, in behalf of the Trustees of the Harsen Relief Fund, submitted the action of the trustees in relation to donations, as follows:

At a meeting held July 11th, 1863, at the *Ambassador* office, in the city of New York, composed of Stephen Van Schaack, Esq., of New York, permanent trustee of the Universalist Relief Fund, and Rev. E. Fisher, of Canton, and N. H. Benson, of Troy, trustees *ex-officio*, Rev. E. Fisher was appointed president *pro tem*, and N.H. Benson, secretary *pro tem*, when the following claims for relief were presented and acted upon, to wit:

Rev. J.W. Bailey, of Lima, presented the claim of Mrs. Jerusha Smith, widow of the late Elijah Smith, of Bloomfield, Ontario Co., for the sum of one hundred dollars. After consideration, voted to recommend that seventy-five dollars (\$75) be paid to Mrs. Smith, in October, 1863.

Rev. D.C. Tomlinson, of Nunda, presented the claim of Mrs. Aspinwall, widow of the late J.A. [Joseph Aikin] Aspinwall [who had children], for two

N. Y. State Convention

hundred dollars. After consideration, voted to recommend that one hundred and fifty dollars (\$150) be paid to Mrs. Aspinwall, in two equal payments, in October, 1863 and April, 1864.

Rev. F.M. Alvord, of Friendship, presented the claim of Rev. I. B. [Ichabod Blakeslee] Sharpe, of Hume, Allegany Co., for one hundred dollars. After consideration, voted to recommend that one hundred dollars (\$100) be paid to Rev. I. B. Sharpe, in two equal payments, in October 1863 and April 1864.

Rev. T.J. Sawyer, D.D., of New York, presented the claim of Rev. B.B. Halleck, of New York, for one hundred dollars. After consideration, voted to recommend that one hundred dollars (\$100) be paid to Mrs. Halleck, in two equal payments, in October 1863 and April 1864.

The above recommendations are submitted to the Convention, confident that the members will vote the appropriation called for, or make such alterations as may be just and in accordance with the designs of the founder and other donors of the Relief Fund.

E. FISHER, President
N.H. BENSON, Secretary

This report was referred to a special committee consisting of Rev. A. Saxe, Rev. H. Lyon and N. Van Nostrand, Esq., who subsequently reported that in accordance with the recommendations contained in the action of the trustees of the Harsen Relief Fund, we submit the following resolutions, which were adopted:

Resolved, That \$75 be paid from said fund to the order of Mrs. Jerusha Smith in October, 1863.

Resolved, That \$150 be paid to the order of Mrs. Aspinwall, widow of the late Rev. J.A. Aspinwall, one half in October, 1863 and the remainder in April, 1864.

Resolved, That \$100 be paid to the order of Mrs. B.B. Halleck, for the benefit of Rev. B.B. Halleck, one half in October, 1863 and the remainder in April, 1864.

A. SAXE,
H. LYON, } Committee
N. VAN NOSTRAND

N. Y. State Convention

Afternoon session.—Met pursuant to adjournment. The minutes of the morning session were read and approved.

The Committee on Unfinished Business reported: "That the report of the Committee, consisting of Rev. E.G. Brooks, E. Fisher and G.W. Montgomery, on Constitutions and Rules of Order for this body, was all the unfinished business requiring the action of the committee." The report was accepted and the committee discharged.

CONSTITUTION AND RULES.

Rev. E. Fisher in behalf of the committee, to whom was referred the two plans of organization of the State Convention, with Constitution and By-laws, which were submitted at the session of 1862, presented the following report:

To the New York State Convention of Universalists:

Your committee to whom was referred the Convention in 1862, have had the matter under consideration, and the undersigned ask leave to present the following report:

The results sought by the Convention, and which your committee were desired to secure, by the proposed reorganization, "were to make the Convention more effective, and to enable it to be a power in the land."

It was understood that to secure these purposes, the Convention should have ample power, and that it should be able to establish uniformity with regard to fellowship and discipline. The undersigned prepared and presented to the Convention in 1862, a Constitution which, if adopted and carried into effect, would it is admitted have produced those results. But many objections are made to the principles therein embodied, and there seems to be no prospect that the Convention will adopt them. There is an evident determination on the part of some of the associations not to relinquish their present power of control, with regard to fellowship and ordination.

So long as they retain that power, the influence of the Convention is advisory only, and may be disregarded at will by the associations.

Such being the case, no constitution can ensure uniformity, since real power can be imparted to the Convention only by taking it from the associations. So far as we can see, advisory resolutions can as well be passed, and will be as effective, under the present constitution, as under any conceivable form.

Your committee believe that so long as this disposition of the associations remains, there is very little ground on which to build a hope for that thorough uniformity and effectiveness which the Convention desires to secure, since we believe it will not be possible at present, to invest the Convention with any real power in the premises.

We respectfully ask leave, therefore, to report back to the Convention the two constitutions committed to us, and respectfully ask to be discharged

N. Y. State Convention

from the farther consideration of the subject, since in our judgment no principles can be effective in the case, excepting those embodied in our report of last year.

With respect, we submit this, as our report.

E. G. BROOKS

E. FISHER

New York, July 15, 1863

MINORITY REPORT.

Rev. G. W. Montgomery submitted the following minority report:

The undersigned, minority of the Committee appointed by the Convention of 1862, to consider the two forms of By-Laws presented to that body, begs leave to present the following report:

In Corresponding with the Chairman of the committee, I was informed that the majority would report back to the Convention, the form of By-Laws they had previously framed; and that they should [would] do so, with the conviction that those By-Laws were best calculated to secure an effective organization, and therefore to advance the prosperity of the denomination. From this conclusion I most respectfully dissent. Though I hesitate to differ from the matured culture and judgment of my associates, yet I am compelled to believe that the proposed form of government will injuriously affect our progress. Even admitting it to be the best form of By-Laws that can be adopted, its enforcement at the present time would be harmful, since so many of the ministry and laity are unprepared for the radical change it proposes to institute.

The plan is to my mind objectionable, both in regard to some of its details and its principle. Not only is it faulty in its neglect to provide for the rights of appeal, in cases of discipline, but by creating a central committee, which is to have sole power over fellowship, ordination and discipline, in the State, an onerous and unnecessary expense is rendered necessary. The applicant for ordination must personally appear before this committee for examination, though the entire length of the State may be between them, or he cannot receive the highest seal of fellowship. And after he has been at the expense of obtaining their sanction, there must be an ordaining council to re-examine him, and this too, not at the time of ordination, but a week previous thereto. The same objection exists in regard to cases of trial; for in such cases the committee must come together, in order to discharge their duty. Nearly, if not quite all of this expense is avoided, by the present arrangement of the exercise of these powers, by several local bodies.

Nor is it less worthy of careful thought, that cases of discipline are now confined to the particular association in which they may occur, while, under the proposed plan, every case is brought before the whole State, through its central committee. The evils growing out of these cases are sufficiently well

N. Y. State Convention

known, to make it desirable to confine them within the narrowest limits possible.

These and other objections, it may be said, refer to matters of detail, which may be altered without affecting the vital point in the proposed plan of by-laws. This is indeed true. Yet these objections, connected with the defectiveness of that vital point, prove that it would be best to reject the plan altogether, and adopt the associational basis in the reorganization of the Convention.

The distribution of power into several bodies, instead of gathering it into one body, is a safeguard against centralization. And centralization always leads to the abuse of power, whether in political or ecclesiastical organizations. I honestly believe that the exercise of so many powers in the hands of one committee for the whole State will inevitably lead to trouble. It is not now the question, whether these powers will always be in the hands of Christian men, and that therefore we need not fear that they will abuse them. But the question is, shall we provide such checks and balances on the administration of these powers, that aspiring men cannot abuse them. Even Christian men love power, and if by legal arrangements, power insensibly accumulates in their grasp, the love of its exercise keeps pace with it, while resistance to its abrogation grows deeper and stronger. No fact in history is plainer than this. The only safe mode, therefore, is to guard liberty as well as order, in such an organization, that neither the good nor the evil can abuse it.

There is also a widely-spread, and I think well-founded fear, that the proposed change will annihilate the associations. It will take from them all authority, and make them simply social gatherings. With their present arrangement, they call ministers and delegates together, because there is power to do whatever business may come before them. These, together with those who come to enjoy the services, make up annual reunions in various localities, that have been and are of inestimable importance to the denomination, by creating and preserving Christian feeling and zeal for the faith. This conviction is the result of thirty years' experience. But remove from them the central tie of authority, and I believe they would dwindle into insignificant bodies, with but little if any influence.

These and other reasons compel me to believe, that the plan of associational representation, and of dividing the power of fellowship, ordination and discipline among the several associations, under the supervision of the Convention, is best calculated to afford the widest organization, and at the same time preserve the most harmony and the largest prosperity in the denomination. I therefore recommend the adoption of the draft of by-laws which I offered at the last session of the Convention— at least so far as their vital points are concerned. They may be, and

N. Y. State Convention

doubtless are, imperfect in detail, and in some respects, may be too stringent in application, and may therefore need careful revision. Should the Convention see fit to adopt them, I hope that they may receive a rigid inspection.

All of which is respectfully submitted,

G. W. MONTGOMERY.

On motion, the old constitution was read and referred to Rev. A. Saxe, T.J. Sawyer and D. Skinner for revision.

Evening Session.—Met pursuant to adjournment. Rev. J.W. Bailey, on account of ill health, tendered his resignation as Standing Clerk of this Convention, which on motion was accepted, and a vote of thanks returned for his past services.

Rev. C.W. Tomlinson was unanimously elected, to fill the place of Standing Clerk, made vacant by the resignation of Rev. Mr. Bailey.

CONCLUSION.

Resolved, That we tender our sincere thanks to the friends in Troy, for their kind hospitality in entertaining the members of this Convention.

Voted that the clerk prepare the minutes for publication in the *Christian Ambassador*. Adjourned.

G. W. Barnes, Mod.

N. H. Benson, Clerk

Ministers present: J.W. [James Wilson] Bailey, H.H. Baker, D. Ballou, H. [Henry] Blanchard, D.L. Bennett, A.J. [Andrew Jackson] Canfield, T.D. [Theodore Dwight] Cook, W. [William] B. Cook, S. [Stephen] Crane, C. [Charles] Cravens, S. Crosby, O. [Orello] Cone, G.H. Deere, A.B. Ellis, E. [Ebenezer] Fisher, D.D., R. [Richmond] Fisk, J. [Jacob] H. Harter, J.H. [Jonas Hazard] Hartzell, C.D. Haynes, R. Lansing, H. [Henry] Lyon, G.W. [George Washington] Montgomery, J.N. Parker, F.B. [Francis Benson] Peck, J.M. [James Minton] Pullman, A.B. Raymond, I.K. Richardson, J.R. Sage, T.J. [Thomas Jefferson] Sawyer, D.D., A. [Asa] Saxe, D. [Dolphus] Skinner, D.D., N. [Nelson] Snell, C. [Charles] W. Tomlinson, S.R. [Samuel Roland] Ward, J. [Jacob] Whitney.

NOTE.—We are obliged to omit the amended Constitution, and shall insert it in our next number. Ed.

Christian Ambassador, New York NY, Sat. 17 Oct 1863

N. Y. State Convention

Constitution

Of the NEW YORK STATE CONVENTION OF UNIVERSALISTS, as amended at the Session of that body, in Troy, August 26th, 1863.

PREAMBLE.

In order to more thoroughly perfect the unity of, and give greater efficiency to, the Denomination of Universalists in the State of New York, we adopt the following—

CONSTITUTION.

ARTICLE I—TITLE.

This body shall be known and distinguished by the name of the NEW YORK STATE CONVENTION OF UNIVERSALISTS.

ARTICLE II—HOW CONSTITUTED.

1. This Convention shall be composed of delegates, chosen annually by the Universalist Associations of the State of New York. Each Association shall be entitled to four delegates, two of whom shall be ministerial, and two lay.

2. The council thus formed, may judge of elections, returns and qualifications of its own members, and may reprove or expel a member for just cause.

3. Ten delegates shall be necessary to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business; but a less number may adjourn from time to time.

ARTICLE III—TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING.

1. The sessions of the Convention shall be holden on the fourth Tuesday in August, and the following Wednesday and Thursday, annually, and in such place as may be designated at the previous session, or announced, in the interim, by the Standing Clerk. Special sessions may be called at the discretion of the Moderator and Standing Clerk, on the application of two or more members of the Council.

2. The Convention may adjourn from day to day, until its business shall be completed.

ARTICLE IV.

1. The officers of the Convention shall consist of a Moderator, Sessional Clerk, Standing Clerk, Treasurer and an Executive Committee of five, who shall have charge of the business of the Convention, each to be elected by ballot.

2. The Moderator (who shall be elected immediately after the first roll of members is made) shall preside over the meetings of the session, preserve order and facilitate the accomplishment of the business of the Convention.

N. Y. State Convention

3. The Sessional Clerk (who shall be chosen immediately after the first roll of members is made) shall keep a full and faithful record of the proceedings of the Convention, and prepare for the Standing Clerk a copy of the same, for insertion in the Record Book. He shall prepare for publication whatever portion of the minutes the Convention shall order to be published, but shall not make the Standing Clerk dependent upon any printed account for his copy for the Book of Records. He shall transmit to the Recording Secretary of the United States Convention of Universalists, a certified copy of the list of delegates from this body to that.

4. The Standing Clerk shall faithfully enter the minutes received from the Sessional Clerk in the Book of Records, and certify the accuracy of his copy. It shall be his duty to notify the meetings of the Conventions, through the denominational papers. He may be chosen at any meeting of this body, and shall continue in office till a successor be appointed; and in case of his death or resignation, the last Sessional Clerk shall be empowered to obtain the Book of Records, and to perform the duties of his office till the vacancy be supplied.

5. The Treasurer shall give bonds with sureties, to be approved by the Executive Committee for the faithful performance of his duties. He shall receive and have custody of all monies, securities and other property belonging to the Convention, which he shall keep and disburse under the direction of the Executive Committee. He shall accurately enter in the books of the Convention an account of its financial transactions, and render a report of the same and of the property of the Convention, audited by a committee appointed for that purpose, to the Council at its Annual Session.

ARTICLE V—POWERS.

1. The Convention shall have jurisdiction over the Associations in its Fellowship, and may from time to time, enact such laws for regulating the relations of these Associations as the general good shall require.

2. It shall have power to decide all cases of dispute and difficulty which may occur between Associations and to receive and try all cases of appeal made to it by societies or preachers, who may be aggrieved by the action or inaction of the Association to which they may belong. The Convention, however, shall have no power to inflict any other penalty than the withdrawal of Fellowship.

3. Letters of Fellowship may be granted by the several Associations to such brethren only as are desirous of entering the ministry and have proved themselves worthy of it; and shall authorize the holders of such Letters to preach, but not to administer any Christian ordinance, except in cases of emergency, until after Ordination—provided that the applicants shall first subscribe to the following Declaration of Faith:

N. Y. State Convention

ART. 1. We believe that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments contain a special revelation of the character of God, and of the duty, interest and final destination of mankind.

ART. 2. We believe that there is one God, whose nature is love, revealed in one Lord Jesus Christ, by one Holy Spirit of Grace, who will finally restore the whole family of mankind to holiness and happiness.

ART. 3. We believe that holiness and true happiness are inseparably connected, and that believers ought to be careful to maintain order and practice good works; for these things are good and profitable unto men.

4. Such Letters of Fellowship shall be valid for eighteen months, and no longer, unless confirmed by the seal of Ordination; it being understood, however, that unordained Clergymen moving from other States into this jurisdiction, with credentials provided for in Section 5, of this Art., and whose Letters are of older date than eighteen months, shall have an extension of ten months in which to apply for ordination.

5. The Associations shall grant their Fellowship to Ordained or Unordained Clergymen moving into the State or moving from one Association to another in the State, provided that such Clergymen shall bring certificates that they were, at the time of their removal, in regular fellowship and good standing in the body from which they have removed, and that they comply with the conditions of Fellowship prescribed in section three of this Article. It being understood that it shall be the duty of a Clergyman removing from this State into the jurisdiction of any other Universalist body, to ask for a certificate transferring his membership to said body, and he shall remain amenable to the Association from which he removes, until such transfer is made.

6. Each Association may confer Ordination as the final seal of fitness for the ministry, on those who have its fellowship—provided that ordination shall not be conferred until one year after Fellowship, except in cases of emergency, whether granted in this State or any other—and provided also, that Ordination shall not be conferred until the Committee of Fellowship and Ordination shall have inquired into the literary, moral and religious qualifications of the candidate, by direct, personal examination, as well as otherwise.

7. Each Association shall, on full and satisfactory proof of the dereliction and misconduct of any Clergyman in its connection, withdraw its Fellowship and discountenance the labors of such person—provided, however, that the person charged with offences shall have a full and fair trial. Both the accusing and the accused parties have the right of appeal to the Convention. In case of an appeal, it shall be the duty of the Association to forthwith forward a written report of the case, including the testimony, pro and con, to the Committee on Appeals.

N. Y. State Convention

8. The Convention reserves the right to direct any Association to institute proceedings in regard to any of its Clergymen or Societies against whom charges may have been preferred in the Council of the Convention.

9. The Convention shall have the right to demand reports, either written or oral, from the delegates, relative to the condition of the cause in their respective Associations, to receive requests for ordination, provided they do not infringe the rules and regulations of the Association to which the applicant may belong, and grant or refuse such application, as may be deemed proper, and to adopt or recommend such measures as shall be deemed necessary for the spread of truth, the promotion of piety, and the prosperity of Zion at large.

ARTICLE VI—COMMITTEES.

The Convention shall appoint, annually, the following Standing Committees:

- 1st. A Committee on the Sunday School interest.
- 2d. A Committee on the condition of the Church.
- 3d. A Committee on Missionary and Tract Enterprise.
- 4th. A Committee on Reforms.
- 5th. A Committee on Education.

To these, and all other Committees which may be deemed necessary, from time to time, the Convention shall have authority to confer such power as shall be deemed proper, to carry out the objects for which they are chosen. Each Committee shall make a faithful report of its doings at the time it may be instructed to do so.

Christian Ambassador, New York NY, Sat. 24 Oct 1863

Transcribed with notes added in Jun 2013 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY