

Minutes of the New-York State Convention of Universalists

SYRACUSE, Aug. 23d, 1864

The Convention was organized by the election of Rev. T.J. Sawyer, Moderator, and Rev. I.M. Atwood, Sessional Clerk. The following delegates were present:

Allegany—Rev. E.M. Whitney

Black River—George Wood

Buffalo—Rev. G.S. Gowdy, Rev. W.B. Cook, George A. Moore

Cayuga—Rev. J.H. Harter, Dr. H. [Horatio] Robinson, John Boynton

Central—Rev. T.D. Cook, Rev. A.H. Marshall, S.H. Hinckley

Chenango—Rev. W.M. De Long, [Rev.] R. O. Williams, Benjamin Hodges

Chautauque—Alvin Drake

Genesee—Rev. H.C. De Long

Hudson River—Amasa Copp

Mohawk—E. [Ely] T. Marsh, J.J. Wheeler

New York—Rev. T.J. Sawyer, D.D., Rev. L.J. Fletcher, N. [Norman] Van

Nostrand

Niagara—J.D. Cooper, J.M. Chrysler

Ontario—Rev. W.W. Dean, Rev. I.M. Atwood, D. [Daniel] Kenyon

Otsego—Rev. S.R. Ward, J.W. Cronkhite, Myron Eldred

Steuben—Rev. I.K. Richardson, Rev. A. Countryman, J.H. Stevens

St. Lawrence—Rev. E. Fisher, D.D., Rev. J. S. Lee

Dr. Sawyer presented the Reports of the Trustees and Treasurer of the Relief Fund, which were referred to E. Fisher, E.T. Marsh and W.M. De Long, with the duty of nominating a successor to C. Barstow, resigned.

Rev. L.J. Fletcher, [Rev.] R.O. Williams and John Boynton were appointed to nominate Standing Committees; and W.W. Dean, S.R. Ward and B. Hodges, to nominate delegates to the United States Convention, Executive Committee, Place of Adjournment and Preacher of Occasional Sermon.

Tuesday, 2, P.M.

Elected Rev. H.C. De Long, Assistant Clerk. Listened to verbal reports of affairs in different Associations, which, if they did not encourage, ought to incite us to better efforts. The reports elicited very interesting and wholesome remarks from Br. J.W. Cronkhite, Dr. Fisher, Dr. Sawyer, Prof. J.S. Lee and L.J. Fletcher.

Rev. G.W. Montgomery read the Report of the Publication Committee, which was referred to E. Fisher, J.W. Cronkhite and H. Robinson.

Committee on Appeals reported that no business had come before them. Report accepted.

The following nominations for Standing Committees were approved:

On Sunday Schools—Revs. L.J. Fletcher, A. Saxe, J.M. Pullman

On the State of the Church: Revs. E.G. Brooks, J.J. Hartzell, N. Snell

On Reforms—Revs. Moses Ballou, R. Fisk, A.A. Thayer

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On Education—Revs. E. Fisher, D.D., T.J. Sawyer, D.D., D.K. Lee  
On Complaints—Revs. W.W. Dean, W.M. De Long, R. O. Williams  
On Missionary and Local Enterprise—G.W. Barnes, S.R. Ward, T.D. Cook

Wednesday, 9, A.M.

Moderator in the chair. United in prayer with Rev. L.J. Fletcher. Report of Special Committee on Relief Fund was presented by Br. E.T. Marsh, as follows:

*Resolved*, That we sanction the recommendations made by the Trustees of the Harsen Fund, excepting as follows: That we sanction an appropriation of fifty dollars for the widow [Frances Maine Aspinwall] of Rev. J. [Joseph] A. Aspinwall; and that we recommend and authorize, if the trustees concur, they payment of one hundred dollars in addition to the sum already recommended, to the widow [Eliza Whitcomb Bailey] of Rev. J.[Jacob] Whitney, making her appropriation \$200.

The remaining appropriations will then be:

To Mrs. Alice C. Halleck, for her husband...\$150  
To Widow Jerusha Smith.....\$75  
To Widow of Rev. J.W. Bailey.....\$200  
To Mrs. Chapin (late Mrs. Martha Smith) \$80  
To Rev. I. [Ichabod] B. Sharp.....\$200  
To Rev. George W. Montgomery.....\$200  
To Rev. Thomas J. Whitcomb.....\$200

to be paid in October and April next.

*Resolved*, That the trustees be requested, so far as in their judgment advisable, to invest any monies in their hands in United States Securities.

*Resolved*, That Wm. Tucker, of New York city, be chosen a trustee in place of C. Barstow, resigned.

*Resolved*, That all applicants for relief shall hereafter be required to present in each application a statement of the amount and description of property or claims, if any, held by the person desiring aid; of any means of support such person may possess; of the debts due from him or her, if any; and of the number and description of persons belonging to the family or dependent upon it. Report adopted.

Ely T. Marsh, C.W. Tomlinson and J.S. Lee, were appointed a committee to investigate the relations of the Clinton Liberal Institute to this body; committee reported as follows:

*Resolved*, That the trustees of the Clinton Liberal Institute be requested to furnish to this convention an annual Report stating its financial and general condition, and to embody in he Report for next year information respecting the number of trustees and the method of constituting the Board. Report adopted.

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*Voted*, That the chairman of the Committee on the State of the Church, Rev. D.K. Lee, be requested to make out his report for publication.

Wednesday, 2, P.M.

The committee to whom was referred the Report of the Publication Committee offered the following resolutions, which, after discussion, were adopted:

*Resolved*, That the Publication Committee be advised to raise the subscription-price of the AMBASSADOR to \$2.50, strictly in advance.

That, inasmuch as the agent of the AMBASSADOR has received but a trifle for his services during the year 1863, and should receive some further compensation, the sum of two hundred and fifty dollars be allowed and paid to him.

That, to meet losses arising from the increase in the price of paper during the current year, a sum, not exceeding one thousand dollars, be assigned, from which the Publication Committee be authorized to make good such losses to the extent of that sum.

That, as the prospects indicate the agent will receive no compensation for his services during the current year, a sum not exceeding two hundred and fifty dollars be paid him by the (?) for said services, if any means of payment shall exist in the resources of the Office.

Rev. L. J. Fletcher offered the following resolution which was unanimously adopted:

*Whereas*, By the report of the Publication Committee it is made to appear that the AMBASSADOR needs a better support, therefore [be it]

*Resolved*, That we, the clergymen and lay delegates in council assembled, do hereby agree to bring this fact before the congregations with which we are connected, on the first Sunday in October next, or at least on some Sunday in that month, and seek by our most earnest efforts to increase the subscription list of our paper, and so far as possible obtain pre-payment for the year; and we request the editor of the said AMBASSADOR to urge all the clergymen of the State to unite with us in that work.

The Council ratified the following nominations:

For Executive Committee.—Dr. H. [Horatio] Robinson, Rev. T. D. Cook, Rev. G. W. Montgomery, Rev. L. J. Fletcher, Geo. A. Moore.

Delegates to the United States Convention.—Clerical.—Rev[s]. Dr. Fisher, W.M. De Long, S.R. Ward, L.J. Fletcher, I.M. Atwood. Lay.—Dr. Chas. Ball, R. Simmons, L. Amsden, J.W. Shipman, N. Van Nostrand, J.P. Powers, E.T. Marsh, J.W. Cronkhite, Amasa Copp, J.W. Stevens.

Preacher of Occasional Sermon.—Rev. E. [Elbridge] G. Brooks.

Place of Adjournment—left with Standing Clerk.

Rev. C. W. Tomlinson offered the report on missionary and tract enterprise, which was adopted.

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Thursday, 9 A.M.

United in prayer with Dr. Fisher. Rev[s]. T.D. Cook, L.J. Fletcher, and I.M. Atwood were appointed a Committee to examine and report upon the "Plan" of organization submitted at the United States Convention in Portland. They subsequently reported as follows:

That Sec. 4 of the "Plan for the Organization of Churches" should be so amended that the Church shall appoint vestrymen.

That Sec. 3 of the "Plan for the Organization of State Conventions" should be so amended as to vest the appointment of Committees in the Convention rather than in the Executive Committee.

That provision should be made for the composition of the State Convention; and we recommend that it be composed of delegates from the Associations.

That Sec. 8 of the same "Plan" seems to us unnecessary, or at least to need modification.

That if the Plan can be modified in accordance with the foregoing suggestions, we should [would] be inclined to recommend its approval by our delegates to the United States Convention. Report adopted.

Prof. J.S. Lee presented the Report of the Committee on Education, which was adopted and will be found under division "D."

This report was made a foundation of extended remarks on the general subject, with particular reference to the needs of our Theological School, by Rev. Dr. Fisher, Rev. Dr. Sawyer and [Rev.] W.S. Balch.

Thursday, 2, P.M.

In the absence of the moderator Dr. H. Robinson was called to the chair for the remainder of the session. Rev. W.W. Dean presented the following resolution, which was unanimously adopted:

*Resolved*, that while we bow submissively to the hand of Providence in the removal from among us during the past year by death, of our brethren, Rev. Jacob Whitney, and Rev. J. [James] W. Bailey, formerly Standing Clerk of this body, we still feel it is but just to their memory to express our appreciation of their fidelity to the cause of truth while they lived, and our regret at their departure; and we tender to their respective families our sincere sympathy in their bereavement.

*Voted*, Thanks to our brethren in Syracuse for their hearty hospitality.

THOS. J. SAWYER, D.D., Moderator

I. M. ATWOOD, Clerk

The following clergymen were present:

From New York—I. [Isaac] M. Atwood, G. V. Bowen, W. W. Clayton, F. D. Cook, W. [Rev. William] B. Cook, O. [Orello] Cone, A. [Asa] Countryman, S. [Stephen] Crane, W.M. [Rev. Williams Millins] De Long, H. C. De Long, W. W. Dean, E. [Rev. Ebenezer] Fisher, D.D., L.J. [Rev. Luther Jacobs] Fletcher,

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G.S. [Rev. Gideon] Gowdy, J.H. [Rev. Jacob] Harter, Prof. J.S. [John Stebbins] Lee, G.W. [Rev. George Washington] Montgomery, A.A. Marshall, R.H. [Rev. Royal Henry] Pullman, W.P. Payne, I.K. [Rev. Isaac] Richardson, T.J. [Rev. Thomas Jefferson] Sawyer, D.D., A. [Rev. Asa] Saxe, J.R. Sage, C.W. [Rev. Charles] Tomlinson, A. Tibbetts, A.A. [Rev. Aaron] Thayer, S.R. [Rev. Samuel Roland] Ward, R.O. [Rev. Rufus] Williams, E.M. Whitney.

From Vermont—W.S. Balch, H. Classon.

From Massachusetts—J.T. Powers.

From New Hampshire—A.J. [Rev. Andrew Jackson] Canfield.

From Rhode Island—C. Flewhrer [Rev. Charles Fluhrer?]

From Pennsylvania—J.T. [Rev. John Temple] Goodrich, R. Lousing.

The Convention was well attended; every Association in the State being represented.

Sermons were preached by Revs. A.J. Canfield, T.J. Sawyer, D.D., G.W. Montgomery, L.J. Fletcher, and Dr. E. Fisher. The services closed with the administration of the Lord's Supper, Rev. A. Saxe and I.M. Atwood presiding at the table.

*Christian Ambassador*, New York NY, Sat. 10 Sep 1864

Transcribed with notes added on 8 Oct 2013 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY

## Minutes of the New-York State Convention of Universalists

### Convention Reports

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The following are the various reports made to our Convention at its late session, and referred to in the proceedings published last week:

#### MISSIONARY AND TRACT ENTERPRISE

*To the New York State Convention of Universalists:*

Your committee to whom was submitted the "Missionary and Tract" interest, would respectfully report, that, like similar committees in preceding years, they have ben embarrassed by the absence of any data by which they could be guided. There has been no organized effort in either of these departments, except that which is represented by the New York CHRISTIAN AMBASSADOR. This was to be effected. The time was not propitious. Whilst so large a proportion of our societies were weakened by the state of the country, little co-operation could exist among them in the work of cultivating waste districts, and opening new territories.

Formerly your body, and its dependent organizations, encouraged the appointment and support of ministering brethren to perform, specially or exclusively, the work of missionaries; and the four-page tract was one of the instrumentalities with which these were armed. If any such missionaries are now in the field, your committee have not been made aware of the fact. Such labor seems to be wholly suspended; whilst diligent effort to obtain the old style of tracts, has revealed the circumstance that our publishers, finding the sale inadequate to refund their cost, have ceased to issue them.

These agencies being now inactive, a favorable opportunity is presented to weigh their advantages as compared with other methods, and your committee would respectfully suggest that the Convention would do well to give the subject, at this session, its serious consideration. When we reflect how all our other denominational interests are more or less dependent upon this for their perpetuity, we find cause for deep lament that it is suffered to languish for [even] an hour.

In suggesting the remodeling of our whole system of missions and tracts, we raise no question of the wisdom of those who devised and executed the old. Means have their justification in the circumstances to which they are adapted. Their re-adjustment, or the adoption of new, is demanded by the changes of time.

To newly settled regions, and to districts where bands of believers are weak and widely separated, the old system of missionary labor no doubt would yet be of considerable service. But it is well worth our inquiry, whether our denomination in this state has not arrived at a stage of growth, and is not surrounded by social conditions which demand a change. Our records show that formerly many of our ablest clergymen were regularly engaged in the missionary service. But of late it is notorious that such can be secured only with a view to a brief respite from pastoral labor, or for the

restoration of impaired health. Those who have ability such as would adapt them to the present demands in waste districts, are generally sought after as pastors, whilst most of our pastors derive no inconsiderable share of their income from occasional services, rendered in a surrounding territory, varying in its radius from five to thirty miles.

Thus the pastor of a parish is brought into relations, more or less intimate, with the regions adjacent. He has opportunities to learn their special needs, which could never fall to the lot of the official missionary, whose ministries must be extended over several counties, and whose visits at any given point must necessarily be brief and infrequent. And when we consider that the wide field and regular appointments of the missionary, must leave the scattered bands still dependent upon the nearest pastor for services, in the chamber of sickness and the house of death where, beyond all others, attachments are formed and means of influence gained, it becomes even more obvious that the pastor is the best missionary.

Your committee rejoice in being able to report that not a few of our pastors have been aware of this fact, and have devoted themselves to the work as opportunity has offered. Already, dormant societies have been awakened by this means, and our cause has begun to feel its strength in neighborhoods where none had ventured to speak in its behalf. Congregations have been gathered to listen to those, the nearness of whose residence has made them previously known, and given their teachings responsible character, where few or none would have heard the preaching of the faith from the lips of a stranger, however eloquent.

Experience has taught us that it is sheer folly for any power in our denomination to announce *law* for the government of its liberty-loving clergymen or societies. But if this Convention would meekly *suggest* to the clergymen in its fellowship that they each preach at least twelve times per year in the destitute regions, contiguous to their respective parishes, it is probable that many who have not yet done so would be induced to obey the Macedonian call so constantly sounding in our ears. Twelve times per year would be little compared with the demand; and we know of those who joyfully multiply that number; but even so little labor as that will be productive of good where now all is waste.

The settled pastor, and the congregation over which he is placed, have a personal interest in such missionary preaching. The almost inevitable tendency is to their own strengthening. Five, and even ten miles from home, the preacher gains the audience of some who need only proper awakening, to make them regular attendants upon his Sabbath ministries. That clergyman can hardly be said to do the work assigned him by his parish, however faithful in other regards, who fails thus to strengthen the outposts. Manifestly, also, a congregation gains strength, courage and zeal



from the proximity of others of like faith; and the pastor is caring for his own flock when he gives reasonable attention to the multiplication of folds in its vicinity.

The effectiveness of this system of missions would be greatly enhanced, by the annual or semi-annual union of two or more neighboring pastors, in the appointment of meetings, to be held day and evening at some suitable season of the year, at the most promising points of their customary missionary work. Let an afternoon and evening be assigned to each locality—the morning being spent in reaching the place—and proper notice given in advance; let the preaching be with reference to the spiritual welfare of the hearers, rather than to display the preacher's eloquence or learning, and a week or fortnight of such labor will convince the most skeptical that the pastor is the only missionary generally required.

The present system of conferences might well be supplanted by this. Fewer large meetings might be held; but the vastly greater number of smaller ones, where the clergymen present would know their work and act in concert, would reach and benefit a more extensive territory. No one can be unaware of the circumstance that where numerous clergymen, between whom little personal acquaintance exists, are brought together, some are placed under unnatural restraint in their pulpit labors, and others are tempted to undue ambition to shine; so that the preaching lacks spirit on the one hand, and adaptedness on the other, and effectiveness on both. All this would be obviated in the system proposed. Two or three clergymen, intimate in their friendships, might justly be expected, under such circumstances, to forget each other's presence so far as to enable them to preach with an eye single to the spread of gospel truth and grace.

Even in this respect, the workings of our plan are not problematical. The readers of the *Trumpet and Freeman* may remember that during the last year, our good Br. G.V. Maxham gave, through its columns, an account of three such missionary tours in company with different brethren, and that he took the occasion to commend the course to the consideration of our clergymen generally. His advice had been anticipated; and members of this Convention will bear testimony to their own experience of the value of such concert of labor.

*Tracts.*—The four-paged tract has been made odious by the uses to which it has so generally been subjected. Its character can never be redeemed. But cheap reading for missionary use, and even for use in our established churches, can not be dispensed with, except to the serious detriment of religion. It is needed to-day more than ever—the inflated prices which prevail placing large volumes beyond the reach of many who might otherwise purchase.

How shall we obtain it? Publishers have generally found the investment it involves but a poor business transaction, the sales depending too largely upon local interest or individual importunity.

Evidently the cheapest pamphlet or tract can reach a sale proportioned to the more weighty volume, only by organized effort. But organized effort does not necessarily involve organizations specially designed for that work. It might be profitable to inquire whether, as a denomination, we have not had, not too much organization, but too many organizations. Be that as it may, the circulation of or religious publications requires nothing new in that fertile field. Our primitive organizations—our churches, societies and Sabbath Schools—are abundantly sufficient. It is not machinery that we lack, but a perception of our duties and the will to perform them.

Even in this time of high prices, pamphlets of twenty-four pages, with printed covers, similar to those issued in New York five years since by Thatcher and Hutchinson, can be furnished at ten cents, wholesale. Dropping the name of *tract*, these could be made the vehicles of denominational instruction; and publishers only need to be secured against loss, to induce them to embark in the enterprise. Can we not give that security?

What church or society can not appropriate ten dollars annually for the gratuitous circulation of such pamphlets in its own vicinity? How little effort would be required to double that amount? If the regular funds of the church furnish no such surplus, the certainty that the distribution would be made close to their own doors, would serve to induce the members to make special contribution for this purpose. This would be but a small beginning, it is true; but the two thousand dollars per annum, which the two hundred societies of the state would thus employ to carry the light of heaven to darkened souls under the very shadows of their own church-spires, would soon produce results which would greatly enlarge the appropriations. Such pamphlets would increase believers, and awaken the indifferent, thus swelling the number by whom the outlay is to be made.

We are possessed by an unaccountable blindness. If a farmer wishes to reap a larger harvest, he either sows a larger field or cultivates better the old one. If we wish to raise a larger sum, we tax more heavily—a course which the farmer knows will exhaust his land. It will exhaust us. We should cultivate better and more widely. If we can not bring the people, by our simple invitation, to our temples of worship, let us go to them. Carry the light of heaven to their homes, and it will soon shine in their hearts and energize their lives.

Bequests and donations to churches, schools and colleges are frequent. Would they were more so. But let us see to it that we do not begin at the wrong end. Whilst we seek to replenish the rivers, let us not suffer the little

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brooks to dry up. A church is generously remembered in the will of a friend. His bequest will realize the church, say fifty dollars, to apply upon the salary of the pastor. That is well. But would not another do better to donate or will that church an equal amount to scatter annually our denominational books, papers and tracts, within a radius of six miles of the church? The first would lessen the amount to be raised for the support of the ministry; but the second would place scores more of worshippers in the pews, who would quicken the zeal and help to bear the burdens of the church.

Thus we have already the enginery of an efficient missionary system. It needs only to be set in operation. We claim for our plan simplicity and naturalness. We believe it would prove effective. There being none other in operation, and the times being unfavorable to anything more complicated or centralized, we deem its immediate trial practicable and fitting.

Space will not permit that we enter at large upon the claims of the CHRISTIAN AMBASSADOR. This is the less to be regretted since all we have said relative to denominational reading applies in full force to that ably conducted sheet. In this age, the newspaper is second to scarce any other means of instruction or entertainment. The church without such a journal as its organ must die. The family that does not receive a religious visitant of this character, must inevitably suffer religious death. The printing-press has made readers of us all, and our reading will determine the subjects which interest us. Whilst the political sheet is everywhere, and journals of art, of science and of agriculture are regularly received by the poorest families of the land, the religious journal can not be excluded from any home without encouraging the tendency of the time to seek *last* "the kingdom of God and his righteousness."

Yet these secular sheets are suffered to exclude the religious. The expense of a weekly paper whose tendency is to inflame the basest passions by its coarse engravings and bestial narratives, is often made the excuse for declining to subscribe for a religious paper for the family. More frequently its conflict with the basest schemes of political parties, bars its admittance. O "tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon!"

As a denomination, we must support the AMBASSADOR, or suffer not only disgrace, but decline. This session of the Convention shall not pass without witnessing some efficient action in its behalf. All which is respectfully submitted.

CHAS. W. TOMLINSON  
D. BALLOU  
F.M. ALVORD.

AMBASSADOR ESTABLISHMENT

The Publication Committee beg leave to submit the following report:

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The financial transactions as well as the condition of the AMBASSADOR establishment for the year 1863, are exhibited in the statement which follows, drawn from the report made by the agent Br. N. Van Nostrand, to the Committee:

### RECEIPTS FOR 1863.

Received for Subscriptions to the AMBASSADOR	\$7,877.20
Received for Advertising	325.90
Received for Sale of Furniture and Postage Stamps	19.73
Cash on hand Jan. 1, 1863	428.90
	<u>\$8,651.73</u>

### DISBURSEMENTS

Paid to Agent, according to Contract	\$5,222.70
Paid to Dr. Sawyer as Editor	1,250.00
Paid for Print Paper in excess of Contract	262.44
Paid for Carrying Papers	272.22
Paid for Commissions and Premiums	258.07
Paid for Postage \$73.78      Office fixtures \$32.66	106.44
Paid for Freight on goods from Auburn	20.80
Paid for Expenses to and from Auburn	14.73
Paid for Packing boxes, labor and carting at Auburn	12.12
Paid for Discount on uncurrent money \$4.81      Directory \$3	7.81
Paid for Blank books, \$8.77      Money returned \$2.75      Binding \$6.17	17.69
Expense of Committee, \$77.49      Counterfeit money, \$10	87.49
Committee's Circular, \$4.42      Waddell's Circular, \$13	17.42
Cash on hand Jan. 1, 1864	1,101.80
	<u>\$8,651.73</u>

### ASSETTS. [sic]

Due from subscribers on vol. 9, \$527.37      On vol. 10, \$1,159.69	\$1,687.06
On vol. 11, \$1,777.20      On vol. 12, \$2,052.64      On vol. 13, \$3,074.58	\$6,904.42
	<u>\$8,591.48</u>
Due for advertising \$215.14      Office furniture \$100	315.14
Add Cash on hand Jan. 1, 1864	1,101.80
Total Assets	<u>\$10,008.42</u>
Liability, Jan. 1, 1864 for advance payments	538.60
Nett	<u>\$9,469.82</u>

At the beginning of the year 1863, 5,760 copies of the AMBASSADOR were printed. But as this number was found too large, the aggregate was lessened, until it decreased to 4,900 copies at the close of the year. The discontinuances for the year 1863 were 977, and the additions were 381—making a nett loss of 659 subscribers. This is a somewhat discouraging fact; in ordinary times it would be thought very much so. It is far less so, in these days of momentous events, because the firm and strong ground taken by the AMBASSADOR for the Government and the Union, for liberty and right, is mainly the cause of lessening the subscription list. To suffer for this reason is an honor, never a disgrace. The loss therefore is not so discouraging as it might otherwise be.

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A review of the transactions for the year shows that the AMBASSADOR paid all its expenses, and had a surplus on hand of \$1,101.80 and debts due from subscribers to the amount of \$3,074.58—a sum total of \$4,176.38. It is true that a portion of the income for the year was derived from the payment of debts owing on previous volumes; yet even this deduction, a fair profit was made, of which the Convention has in good part been deprived by the culpable negligence of delinquent subscribers. It is the old story, oft repeated, yet none the less the fact that has hitherto defeated the enterprize, so far as income is concerned.

There is, however, another consideration in relation to the financial condition of the AMBASSADOR for 1863, that may somewhat lessen any favorable view that may be taken of it. In the report made to the Committee by the agent, the following statement occurs: "I have received for my services as agent the sum of \$5,222.70, and after all expenses are paid, I have left the sum of \$65.16 for my labor for the year; and according to the letter of agreement, I should be charged \$280 for commissions and premiums. This would be a loss to me of \$214.84. This will be a question for the Convention, or the Committee, or both, to determine whether I shall receive any more than \$65.16 for my year's services, or whether I shall be at a loss of \$214.84 and my year's labor. I have done the best that I could for the interests of the paper and the cause we all love and wish to see prosper." The reason for this state of things is, that after the contract was made, the price of paper, of printing materials, and of labor, rapidly increased, until it swallowed the entire amount due the agent for his services. It certainly would be hard for the agent to lose his year of faithful work and to pay money from his own pocket, especially when caused by no fault on his part. Undoubtedly, the enhanced cost has grown out of the condition of the country and of its efforts to put down a rebellion of treason and despotism. The contract of the agent therefore failed to secure him against loss, because events transpired which he could not foresee and over which he had no control. In this state of things, your Committee feel it a duty to present the subject to the attention of the Convention, and urge its consideration in the light of justice and right.

To make preparations for publishing the AMBASSADOR, for the year 1864, your Committee met in the city of New York, Oct. 7, 1863. After fully discussing all the points at issue, it finally decided to engage Dr. Sawyer as editor at a salary of \$1250. It was also decided to contract with Br. Van Nostrand to publish the paper for the year 1864, at the cost of \$6,592.56. By this contract, he was to furnish print-paper, composition, press-work, and pay postage, commissions, premiums, rent, folding, mailing, pens, ink, blank-bills, [and] pencils, and perform all the duties of agent. The Committee ascertained that first-class establishments would not have done

the work without a considerable advance on the price we agreed to pay Br. Van Nostrand.

By the half yearly report of the agent, ending with the first day of July last, we are able to offer some statements in regard to the present condition of the AMBASSADOR. The number of subscribers was then about 5,000. It has been kept at that number by the generous aid of the league which was formed in New York city for the purpose of increasing the circulation of the AMBASSADOR. The amount of money received from all sources, including donations of \$50 each from Brs. L. Smith and P.T. Barnum, and several other sums of one and two dollars, is \$5,642.53, which, with the balance on hand Jan. 1, 1864 of \$1,101.80, makes the sum of \$6,744.33. The amount paid to the editor, and to the agent on contract, and for contingent expenses, is \$4,091.47, leaving a balance of \$2,652.86. This balance is largely met by liabilities to advance-pay subscribers, which reach the sum of \$1,924.18. As bearing on the prospects of the AMBASSADOR, the following extract from the agent's half yearly report seems pertinent: "It will be seen by my report of the 1st of Jan. last, that I have received for my labor during the year 1863, \$65.16; and for the first six months in this year, after paying actual expenses, I am out of pocket \$144.02; and if the present high price of paper (26 cents per lb.) continues, the loss to me in publishing the AMBASSADOR the next six months, will be some hundreds of dollars, not allowing anything for my own labor. My estimate for publishing the paper for 1864, was based upon the actual cost, at that time, of print-paper, and upon the idea that other expenses would continue at about the same price. But every thing has advanced; and print-paper more than anything else, it now costing us \$35.06 per week more for this one item, than it did when we made the contract. I should [would] have done well for myself and for the AMBASSADOR, had prices remained as they were."

Under the circumstances here presented, we are met by two grave questions: 1. Will the Convention permit our faithful agent, who, as we have reason to believe, has conducted the affairs of the AMBASSADOR economically, to lose by his connection therewith, through no fault of his own? 2. What can be done to carry the AMBASSADOR through the present crisis? In relation to the first question it is the opinion of you Committee, that justice would require the Convention to do what it can to secure the agent from loss, and to give him some compensation for his labor. In regard to the second question, it is to feared that, as things now are, with prices continually advancing, the AMBASSADOR cannot live another year without an addition to its income. There are several ways in which this may be effected. 1. By lessening the size of the paper, and occasionally omitting a number. 2. By doubling the subscription list. 3. By increasing the price to at least \$3 per year. The last of these seems the most hopeful, as it is the most easily

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accomplished. Many religious as well as political journals, have already taken this step, having been impelled to it by the fact that they must do so or die. It is very easy to say, that no change may be necessary, because prices may suddenly fall. But no reliance can be placed on such a supposition, since they are as likely to increase as to fall. However, it is not with what may be, but with what is actually before us, that we are to deal. That something more must be done, to take the AMBASSADOR through the war, to the more prosperous times when peace shall again dwell in our beloved land, must be evident to every reflecting mind. It is the opinion of your Committee, that whoever may direct the affairs of the AMBASSADOR for the coming year, should have careful instructions on these points, from the Convention.

The AMBASSADOR speaks for itself, as to its appearance and the ability with which it is conducted. Both editor and agent have the entire confidence of the Committee. All of which is respectfully submitted.

GEO. W. MONTGOMERY  
Clerk of the Com.  
T. D. COOK.  
GEO. A MOORE.

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### EDUCATION.

The Committee on Education would respectfully report: That the general condition of the schools under the control of the denomination within the State remains much the same as at the date of the last report.

The Clinton Institute has been under the care of Mr. H. Dearborn and Miss Ellen R. White, during the past year. The number and quality of the students in both departments will compare very favorably with previous years. The Institution is out of debt, and besides the two commodious and substantial buildings for the Male and Female Departments, holds about \$7,000, the interest on which goes annually to defray the expenses of the Institution. It has enjoyed the confidence of its patrons to an eminent degree, and it is a source of deep regret that both Principals have resigned; Miss White, from the state of her health, being unable to perform the arduous duties of her station; and Mr. Dearborn having been appointed Professor of Latin in Tufts College. We learn, however, that their places are to be filled before the commencement of the fall term.

The Academic and Collegiate Department of St. Lawrence University at Canton has had the usual number of students during the year, sixty-eight being the greatest number in any single term. Classes have been formed in the regular collegiate course, though none have yet graduated. One class is expected to complete the course in one year more. We have a good number of permanent students pursuing the regular course connected with the

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Institution, and the prospects for the future were never better than at the present time, notwithstanding the depressing effects of the war, and the deranged condition of the finances of the country, taking away our young men of military age, and preventing others from devoting their attention to education.

The great variety of studies pursued makes the labors of the two Professors very arduous. Indeed, the three Professors connected with the Literary and Theological Departments, are performing the duty of five or six teachers in most other institutions, but the finances of the University will not permit an addition to be made to their number at present. Fifty thousand dollars are needed to carry out the plans of the founders of the Collegiate Department; but the condition of the country forbids any special effort being made now, and while other objects are engaging the attention of the friends of denominational education. In the meantime, the trustees will collect old subscriptions, and obtain new ones, as opportunity may present. An increase of students will increase the funds, and in this way can the patrons of the school aid it.

The Theological School is still under the charge of Rev. Dr. E. Fisher. A class of three graduated in July, making the whole number of graduates for four years, twenty-five, while ten more have left the school who took a partial course. Nearly all these are now laboring in the field. For obvious reasons the number of students now connected with the school is small. Another class will enter at the commencement of a new term in September. However small the number of students, the three classes must all be maintained, requiring the services of two Professors, at least, all the time [full time], in order that justice be done them. Now they receive the instructions of one Professor, and another only one third of the time.

There are funds enough barely to sustain one Professor and pay incidental expenses. All other services must be paid from transient sources. An offer of \$5,000 has been made by an unknown individual on the condition that \$20,000 in addition be raised to endow another professorship and thus meet the imperative wants of the institution. \$3,500 of this sum have been subscribed, leaving \$16,500 to be secured in order to comply with the conditions on which the bequest was made. We need not say that it is all-important that this be secured as promptly and with as little expense in obtaining and collecting the subscription as possible. The Committee has no definite plan of action to suggest for your consideration, but would recommend that the Convention take action on the subject immediately.

We ask you, Universalists of New York, to consider this subject seriously. Do not let the only Theological School in the nation,



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*Christian Ambassador*, New York NY, Sat. 17 Sep 1864

Transcribed with notes added on 8 Oct 2013 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY