

New York State Convention

The New York State Convention of Universalists met at Middleport, Niagara Co., August 28, 1866.

The following delegates were found to be present:

Allegany Association: Rev. E.W. [Elhanan Winchester] Reynolds, Rev. L. Paine, Mr. G. W. Fries.

Buffalo: Rev. J.H. [Jonas Hazard] Hartzell, Mr. C. Spencer.

Black River: Rev. R.H. [Royal Henry] Pullman, Rev. L. [Luther] Rice, Mr. Elam Brown.

Central: Rev. D. [Dolphus] Skinner, D.D., Rev. W.P. Hayne, Mrs. L.W. Brown.

Cayuga: Rev. R. [Richmond] Fisk, Mr. Jesse Babcock.

Chenango: Mr. Daniel Hodges.

Chautauqua: Rev. L. George, Rev. D.C. O'Daniels, Mr. E. Crosby, Mr. S. Harrington.

Genesee: Rev. C. [Charles] Cravens, Mr. S.P. Whitcomb, Mr. Ammon Smith.

Mohawk River: Rev. T.D. [Theodore Dwight] Cook, Mr. J. W. Cronkhite, Mr. Ely T. Marsh.

Niagara: Rev. D.C. [DeWitt Clinton] Tomlinson, Rev. J.J. Austin, Mr. Levi Hard, Mr. Elliott Lewis.

New York: Rev. G. [Gerhardus] L. Demarest, Rev. J. G. [John Glass] Bartholomew, Mr. N. [Norman] Van Nostrand.

Otsego: Rev. W.W. Clayton, Mr. A. Devendorf.

Ontario: Rev. A. [Asa] Saxe, Rev. W.W. Lovejoy, Mr. Alex. Martin, Mr. A.L. Vanduzen.

St. Lawrence: Rev. J.S. [John Stebbins] Lee, Rev. E. [Ebenezer] Fisher, D.D.

Rev. G. L. Demarest, of New York, was chosen Moderator; Mr. E.T. Marsh, of Mohawk River, Clerk; Rev. J.S. Lee, of St. Lawrence, Assistant Clerk.

Rev. G.W. [George Washington] Montgomery, Committee on the State of Churches, absent on account of sickness, was requested to prepare his report for publication.

The Trustees of the Universalist Relief Fund reported as follows:

22D ANNUAL REPORT OF THE NEW YORK UNIVERSALIST RELIEF FUND..

To the New York Convention of Universalists, to be convened in Middleport, Niagara Co., August 28, 1866:

The Trustees of the New York Universalist Relief Fund, met at the office of the CHRISTIAN AMBASSADOR, on Tuesday, August 21, 1866.

Present: S. [Stephen] Van Schaack, Thomas Crane, and William Tucker.

New York State Convention

The following-named persons applied for relief, and we recommend that the amount voted for each be paid, half next October, and the remainder next April, 1867:

Rev. N. [Nathaniel] Stacy	\$200
[Frances Maine,] Widow of the Rev. J.A. [Joseph Aikin] Aspinwall	175
Rev. I.B. [Ichabod Blakeslee] Sharp	175
Rev. Thomas J. Whitcomb	175
Widow of Rev. Elijah Smith	100
Rev. George W. Montgomery	200
[Jerusha,] Widow of Rev. Jacob Whitney	175
[Eliza Whitcomb,] Widow of Rev. J.W. [James Wilson] Bailey	175
Mrs. A.C. Hallock, wife of the Rev. B. [Benjamin] B. Hallock	200
Rev. Henry Lyon	175
Rev. D.C. O'Daniels	150
Rev. F.M. [Francis Milton] Alvord	175

Rev. B. [Benjamin] S. Hobbs also applied for relief.

According to the proceedings of the Trustees, he has not applied for assistance since 1858, and therefore we hesitated to comply with his request, as we are not in possession of the knowledge we require, to enable us to act as we did in the foregoing cases.

We consequently wish the Convention to examine the case of the applicant, and if it shall think favorably of the same, we recommend that *one hundred dollars* be given to him, half in October next, and the rest in April next, 1867.

We have received *five* more applications than we did last year; and as we intended to use the interest of the *fund* only, we recommended less sums to all the applicants of last year, but one.

According to the Treasurer's Report, which will accompany this, we have a balance on hand of \$907.96, which, with the Bonds and Mortgages and Treasury notes, \$29,200, amounts to \$30,107.96.

Yours, respectfully,

S. VAN SCHAACK
President and Secretary

The New York Universalist Relief Fund 1865

Oct. 4	To cash paid	Rev. Nath'l Stacy	\$125
"	"	Mrs. F. Aspenwall [Aspinwall]	100
"	"	Rev. J. [I.] B. Sharp	100
"	"	Mrs. T. J. Whitcomb	100
"	"	Mrs. Jerusha Smith	50
"	"	Rev. Geo. W. Montgomery	125

New York State Convention

"	" Mrs. J. A. Whitney	100
"	" Eliza W. Bailey	100
Nov. 23 1866	" Mrs. J. A. Whitney	100
Jan. 23	" Mrs. F. Aspenwall	100
" 29	" Rev. G. W. Montgomery	125
March 26	" Mrs. E. W. Bailey	100
"	" Jerusha Smith	50
Apl. 5	" Rev. Nath'l. Stacy	125
"	" Rev. J. [I.] B. Sharp	100
"	" Rev. Thos. J. Whitcomb	100
Aug. 16	" \$500 U. S. Treasury Bond 105c	525
"	" Balance	907.96
Total		\$3,032.96

[The lengthy report of Thomas Crane, Treasurer, is not given here.]

The Report was referred to a Committee, consisting of Rev. D.C. Tomlinson, Rev. E. Fisher, D.D., and Mr. N. Van Nostrand, who subsequently reported as follows:

The Committee on the Report of the Universalist Relief Fund recommend that the sum of \$200 be appropriated to the relief of Rev. D.C. O'Daniels, instead of the sum recommended in the report; and that the other appropriations advised by the Trustees be approved.

The Committee have been unable to determine whether Rev. B.S. Hobbs is in fellowship with the State Convention. This committee subsequently reported the following resolutions, which were adopted:

Resolved, That in the judgment of this Convention it is desirable that the Charter of the St. Lawrence University be so amended by the Legislature of the State of New York, that all vacancies in the Board of Trustees of said University, which now exist or may hereafter occur, shall be filled by the election of this Convention.

Resolved, That Rev. R. Fisk, E.T. Marsh, Esq., and W.C.H. Waddell, Esq., be a committee to take the proper preliminary steps, and to procure such change in the Charter as may effect such purpose, at the next session of the Legislature.

Resolved, That this Convention earnestly recommend to the Universalist Denomination in this State that we put forth a united effort to raise for the benefit of the St. Lawrence University the sum of \$25,000, and that we pledge ourselves to that work for the year 1867; and that we further

New York State Convention

recommend to the Executive Committee of said University the appointment of a competent agent for this work.

Article 2, Section 1, of the Constitution of the Convention was amended so as to read as follows:

This Convention shall be composed of delegates chosen annually by the Universalist Associations of the State of New York, and by the Western Universalist Sabbath School Convention, the Central Universalist Sabbath School Convention, and any other duly organized Universalist Sabbath School Convention hereafter formed in this State, which may receive the sanction of the State Convention. Each Association shall be entitled to four delegates, two ministerial and two lay; and each Sabbath School Convention shall be entitled to three delegates.

The following resolution was adopted:

Resolved, That the Committee having in charge the amendment to the charter of the St. Lawrence University, be instructed to ask the Legislature of the State likewise to change the Charter of the Clinton Liberal Institute so as to give control thereof to this Convention, by empowering it to fill all vacancies that may hereafter occur in the Board of Trustees.

The Executive Committee presented its report as follows:

To the New York State Convention:

RECEIPTS

Subscription list of the AMBASSADOR	\$8,536.62
Advertising	1,174.69
Cash on hand	<u>1,687.52</u>
	\$11,348.83

DISBURSEMENTS

Paid Agent for one year	\$4,650.00
For 1863	250.00
For 1864	250.00
For losses in 1864	783.43
Printing paper and cartage	3,247.22
Paid Editor	1,250.00
Money returned to subscribers	10.50
Extra postage	.70
Extra Premiums	11.08
Extra Commissions	31.65
Carrying papers	270.23
1,000 Extra papers	9.85
Mail Books for 1866	8.06
Government Tax for 1866	3.33
Canada postage—1866	2.65

New York State Convention

Affidavit	.50
Stationery for Convention	.35
Cash on hand	569.28
	\$11,348.83

ASSETS.

Due from subscribers	\$12,024.85
Due for advertising	281.46
Office furniture	100.00
Cash on hand	569.28
	\$12,975.59
Deduct liabilities	796.31
Net assets	\$12,179.28

From the above statement of the agent of the AMBASSADOR, we are pleased to report that at the commencement of the year 1866, there was a surplus, although a small one, of the sum of \$569.28.

The Executive Committee at their first meeting in Cortland, held immediately after their appointment, resolved to carry out the instructions of the State Convention, which had been passed by that body at their Annual Session in Cortland. They resolved that as soon as the then existing contract for printing paper had expired, to have an improved quality of paper, and at the commencement of the year 1866 to enlarge it to the size of the *Universalist*.

At their next meeting, in October following, they made arrangements to carry those instructions into effect. Under the uncertain state of the market as to the price of printing paper, and the prospects of the price being reduced, they deemed it inexpedient to let the furnishing of the printing paper by contract, but left it to the agent to carry out the instructions of the Committee in regard to its quality. If the quality has not come up to the expectations of some, we believe he has done the best he could. We employed Bro. N. Van Nostrand as Agent for the paper, at a salary of \$1,500 for the year. He has to furnish his own clerk, hire, fold and mail the papers, furnish all twine, paste, wrapping-paper, blocks, brasses, tacks, printer's ink and roller.

They thought it best that the Editorship of the paper should remain impersonal, and that several of our ablest men be employed to write for the paper, and that the salary \$1,250 heretofore paid to one man as Editor, should be divided among them. How well we have succeeded we must leave to the Convention and our denomination at large to judge. We have done the best we could under all the difficulties we had to contend with, and hope that its increased size and improved appearance will please our people. We

New York State Convention

were well aware that these improvements would involve an increased cost in its publication, and that, for the paper to sustain itself, it must receive from the public an increased patronage. But we were determined to try the experiment of giving the public an improved article, in the reasonable expectation that there would be and increased demand for it.

We have been sorely disappointed in the numbers which have been added to our subscription list. The net increase to July 1st, 1866 is only 174. This is not what it should be, and not the state of things we must have, if our denomination wishes its organ to live and be a source of pleasure and profit to them. We think that if our clergymen and the leading men of our faith would take an interest in the welfare of the AMBASSADOR, and go to work for it in earnest, soon a very different state of things would exist. The good of our common cause, which the paper seeks to uphold, and their love of our faith, demand of them an immediate effort to place the paper beyond the contingency of a failure. What say the brethren to our appeal for the paper? Will they take hold and go to work, and before the close of the present year add thousands to our list? In former years there were published between eight and nine thousand copies. We should now have ten thousand. That would place the financial condition of the paper in such a state that it could be furnished to each subscriber at the sum of \$2 or less for the year.

From the semi-annual statement of our Agent, made on the first of last July, we have the following facts:

Due advance Paying Superintendent,		\$2,429.03
Deduct from this amount:		
Cash on hand:	\$1,528.77	
Due for advertising,	<u>\$809.25</u>	
		<u>1,838.02</u>
Which leaves a deficit of		\$591.01

To meet this state of things, we have due from delinquent subscribers the sum of \$9,366.95. This is the millstone that hangs about our necks. Could each of those delinquents be made to fully realize how important to us those little sums are, which each one of them owes us, it does seem that they would be prompted to make immediate payment, and thereby relieve us from all present embarrassment, and all anxiety for the future welfare of the paper. Some of it has been due many, many years, and justice and honor alike demand that what they owe us should be promptly paid. Will those whom this report shall reach take heed and be warned in time.

Our Agent further reports—"We are printing only 4,584 copies, having lost in six months 218 and gained 392—making a net gain of 174. The cost of publishing the paper is largely increased over the years immediately preceding—the item of composition alone being increased for the six months

New York State Convention

past \$650, or \$25 per week. I should recommend to the Committee the purchase of type, and to have the composition done under its own supervision, or that of its agents, by which means, I think, a considerable saving could be effected."

We would recommend these suggestions to the consideration of the Convention and our successors.

We have made what efforts we could to collect the outstanding indebtedness. We find on comparison, that on the first of July, 1866, we have reduced it \$423.70 from what the amount was the year previous.

We would recommend to the Convention that the Executive Committee be authorized to fill vacancies that may happen in the Board during the recess of the State Convention, by death or any other cause, and that the Convention make the removal from the State a vacancy in the Board.

The Report was referred to a special committee, consisting of Rev. E.W. Reynolds, Rev. A. Saxe, and Rev. R. Fisk, who subsequently reported resolutions, which, after much discussion, were amended by the substitution of the following, and thus amended, adopted:

Resolved, That the CHRISTIAN AMBASSADOR, as the property of this Convention and of the Universalist denomination in this state, is justly entitled to the earnest sympathy and support of all our clergy and laity, that its recent enlargement and editorial improvement are creditable to those who are now entrusted with its management; that in view of the reverses incident to the war and especially those growing out of its uncompromising fidelity to the Union, in the days of our peril, we have no just reason to regard its present critical condition as hopeless, but that by the renewed, united and energetic effort of those who ought to be its friends, in extending its circulation, it may speedily be placed above embarrassment and be made an honor to the denomination, both in mechanical perfection and literary character.

Resolved, That we hereby pledge ourselves to such renewed efforts in behalf of the AMBASSADOR, and will thereby endeavor to speedily double its circulation by good, advance paying subscribers.

Resolved, That the Executive Committee of the AMBASSADOR establishment be and are hereby requested to secure at once such additional editorial aid as may be necessary to make it fully equal if not superior in excellence to the majority of its religious contemporaries, and that its managers place prominently, earnestly and frequently before its patrons its sacred and imperative claims to the support of the denomination.

Resolved, That the editors of the AMBASSADOR be requested to hereafter report from time to time in the columns thereof, the increase of its subscriptions and the names of such person or persons as are active in its behalf, and the results of their labors, and also the particular societies,

New York State Convention

neighborhoods, or post offices which represent, locally, a spirit worthy of emulation in this important work.

Resolved, That if, at any time during the coming year, the AMBASSADOR be not self-sustaining, the Executive Committee be empowered to dispose of it in a manner they may deem most agreeable to the wishes of the Universalists of the State.

The Council passed a vote of thanks to the friends at Middleport of all denominations, whose hospitalities were enjoyed by the Convention; and to the Methodist Church for the free use of its meeting-house.

Adjourned.

G. L. DEMAREST, *Moderator*.

E.T. Marsh, *Clerk*.

J.S. Lee, *Assistant Clerk*.

The following resolution was adopted:

Whereas, We recognize in the work proposed by the General Convention through its Missionary Board, one of the most important to which we can as a people give our labor and money; and

Whereas, The efforts made in this State for the Missionary Fund by the Agent of the Board, Rev. D.C. Tomlinson, have been eminently successful, so far as the field has been canvassed, therefore—

Resolved, That we urge on this vital work, and call upon the people to sustain our hands in this endeavor to extend the domain of our influence and faith.

The Occasional Sermon was, by special appointment, delivered on Wednesday morning, by Rev. R. Fisk.

On Wednesday afternoon, by assignment, the Report of the Committee on Education, Rev. J.S. Lee, and that of the Committee on the Missionary and Tract Enterprise, Rev. T.D. Cook, were read.

The following appointments were made:

Delegates to the General Convention: Rev. D. Skinner, D.D., Rev. E. Fisher, D.D., Rev. T.J. Whitcomb, Rev. R.H. Pullman, Rev. I. [Isaac] George, Hon. Horace Greeley, Mr. J. Lewis Grant, Mr. R.D. Murray, Mr. W.S. Fenn, Mr. N. Van Nostrand, Mr. Solomon Drullard, Mr. G.W. Fries, Mr. L. Harrington, Dr. Seward (of Syracuse).

Preacher of the next Occasional Sermon: Rev. J.G. Bartholomew.

Committee on Sunday Schools: Rev. A.J. [Andrew Jackson] Canfield.

Committee on the Missionary and Tract Enterprise: Rev. C. [Charles] Fluhrer.

Committee on Reforms: Rev. U.M. Fisk.

Committee on the State of the Church: Rev. G.L. Demarest.

New York State Convention

Committee on Complaints and Appeals: Rev. J.H. Hartzell, Mr. W.S. Fenn, Mr. J. [John] J. Van Zandt.

Executive Committee: Rev. A. Saxe, Rev. J.G. Bartholomew, Mr. E.W. Crowell, Mr. E.T. Marsh, Rev. E.G. [Elbridge Gerry] Brooks.

Place of adjournment: Rochester.

A Committee, consisting of Rev. E. Fisher, D.D., Rev. R.H. Pullman, and Mr. G.W. Fries, was appointed to compare the Constitution with that of the General Convention, and report what changes are necessary to harmonize the former with the latter. This Committee reported to following amendment of Article 6, Section 7, which was adopted:

It shall be the duty of the associations to make immediate report of such withdrawal to the Standing Clerk of the State Convention. And the State Convention hereby declares the action of Associations to be final, unless an appeal is made.

The following resolution was adopted:

Resolved, That this Convention enjoin upon our ministers in this State the duty of presenting yearly, in sermon or address, the claims of the missionary, theological, and literary enterprises of the denomination, and of taking up collections and subscriptions in aid of the same.

The Standing Clerk was instructed to procure 500 copies of the Charter, Constitution, and Rules of Order of the State Convention, the Constitution of the General Convention, and the Rules of the Trustees of the Relief Fund.

The amendments to its Constitution proposed by the General Convention were approved.

The Committee of last year on Freedmen's Relief reported, with a recommendation which was adopted, as follows:

The Freedmen's Relief Committee respectfully report: That the Committee at as early a day as practicable after the meeting of the Convention, a year ago, engaged the Rev. W.W. Clayton to take the field as agent for collecting funds for the relief and education of the freedmen. His labor was confined to our denomination in the State. The funds were to be used through the Freedmen's Association of New York. He was to receive 30 per cent of the amount collected for his compensation. This was the per cent allowed to all agents by the Freedman's Association, who were at large to canvass the State among all denominations, while our agent was confined to one denomination.

Our people, upon the question, were in the main cold, and just at the time were but little disposed to give for it, the work not having been organized and the methods and objects sufficiently known and developed for our people to take a very lively part in contributing for it. The agent found

New York State Convention

but few ready to give, and spent some three months and a half in canvassing in various parts of the State, hoping and expecting in every new field opened to receive increased contributions. But finding that the collections would not warrant the further prosecution of the agency, and in as much as the New York Freedmen's Association at about this time changed its method by forming town and county auxiliary societies, thereby forcing all traveling agents to withdraw, the agent left the field with the following results: whole amount collected, \$731.

The amount of expenses and money required by the agent for living during the time amounted to \$481. The amount paid into the Association for the cause, was \$250. In settling with the agent, a note was given by him to the Committee, of \$261.30, to make up the deficiency between the amount paid in, and the 70 per cent due from collections necessarily used by the agent for his own and his family's immediate wants.

The Committee would report that in their opinion the agent did the best he was able under the adverse circumstances of the times, and regret to report that he came out of his agency a loser in the amount of the note given your committee.

The Committee respectfully recommend that the said not be cancelled.

A.A. THAYER
D.C. TOMLINSON
R. FISK

Christian Ambassador, New York NY, Sat. 22 Sep 1866

Transcribed with notes added on 1 Sep 2013 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY