

THE STATE CONVENTION

The following Report of the doings of the Convention in Rochester was, for the most part, prepared during the session. We re-arrange it so as to give the work of the Council by itself—following the order of business rather than the chronological order. There were so many reports submitted, which we are requested to give entire, that our labor was much abridged. It was a very interesting Convention—the largest State Convention that ever met in New York, so we were told. The church was crowded at every session of public service; and the Council was in session while meetings were in progress. A great amount of useful work was done. The Report will show—

That the State Convention assumes the powers of Fellowship and Discipline;

That renewed efforts will be made to have the Trustees of the St. Lawrence University and Clinton Liberal Institute chosen by the Convention;

That the Divinity School is not to be removed.

For the details and for other matters, read the Report, as follows:—

A clear day, and not excessively warm, welcomed the opening session of the Convention, Tuesday morning. We are told that the number present is unusually large, as the business of organization is never attended by any save those especially interested. We count eighty persons, and the number rapidly increasing, we counted two hundred before the hour of noon. The preliminary meeting at the steps of the church—the introduction of brethren, the shaking of hands, the fraternal congratulations—always a strongly interesting prelude to the final business of our public gathering—was pleasant indeed.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE COUNCIL

The Organization

The Council came to order by the appointment of Rev. E. [Edmund] R. Ottaway [Ottoway] as Chairman; and after the reading of the list of delegates, organized permanently in the choice of Rev. I. [Isaac] George, Moderator, and Rev. J.M. [James Minton] Pullman, Secretary; and the Council was ready for business. Revs. A. [Asa] Saxe, E.R. Ottaway and G.W. [George Washington] Montgomery were appointed a Committee on Public Services.

The Question of Discipline

Dr. [Ebenezer] Fisher, remarking that in the matter of Fellowship and Discipline, the Convention is not in harmony with the requirement [obliterated] the matter be referred to a Special Committee to report. The Moderator appointed Drs. Fisher and [Dolphus] Skinner and Rev. L.C. [Lewis Cresaba] Browne to act in that capacity. A call was then made for a report from the several Associations, as to the action each had taken in regard to the question of surrendering the power of Fellowship, Discipline and

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Ordination to the State Convention. In the result, it appeared that six Associations had voted to make the surrender; two had deferred action; and two had taken no action. There was, therefore, no formal action adverse to the change, on the part of the Associations. The matter was then placed in the hands of the Special Committee.

The reading of the Minutes of the last Annual Session being made, the Moderator appointed Revs. R. [Richmond] Fisk, J.M. Pullman and Mr. E. [Ely] T. Marsh a Committee on Unfinished Business. Said Committee at once reported that the only unfinished business was the action of the Committee in regard to the Amendment of the Charter of the Divinity School and the St. Lawrence University. The following brethren were made a Committee on Nominations: Revs. F.M. [Francis Milton] Alvord, C. [Chester] C. Richardson, and J.M. [John Mather] Austin. The Committee on Complaints and Appeals reported that no matter had come before them for action during the year.

Report on the Paper Establishment

Rev. A. Saxe, in behalf of the Executive Committee on the publication of THE AMBASSADOR, submitted an elaborate report which, we doubt not, will appear in full in these columns. It rehearsed the difficulties under which the financial condition of the paper had suffered; stated, in detail, the plan on which its business had managed since the opening of the year; and announced an encouraging financial condition at the present time. Should the income of the paper continue the same as at present, and the current expenses remain the same, there is an earning of not less than \$1500 for the year, above all costs. And the Committee submitted resolutions, which will appear in another connection.

Revs. R. Fisk, E.R. Ottaway [Ottaway] and J.J. Austin were appointed a Special Committee to consider the Report, and to report to the Convention.

TUESDAY AFTERNOON, AUGUST 27.

Report on Sunday Schools.

The brevity and compactness of this Report enable us to give it entire in this connection. The reading of it was the first business of the Tuesday afternoon session.

To the Members of the Universalist Convention of the State of New-York,
assembled at Rochester, August 27, 1867:

BRETHREN:—After leaving home for the August vacation, I first learned that you would expect a report from me on Sunday Schools. Being without any elaborate materials for such a document, perhaps my wisest course would be to let the occasion pass in silence. But as such silence might be construed into lack of interest on this important subject, I will try to present for your consideration a few facts concerning our work with those whom God has placed peculiarly in our charge, and into whose care the faith we love must soon be committed.

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It is a very natural and providential arrangement of society, that provides persons of age and experience for the task of sober prudence in human affairs. Long years of faithful service and unflagging zeal are required in order to bring men in accordance with the events of their time, and enable them to impart something of themselves to the history in which they live. Yet they must lose their courage at last. And while these men are passing off the stage of action, there comes upon the platform a company of girls and boys, governed by tendencies and fancies rather than fixed ideas. These young people are interesting and important; for the character of the young is God's prophesy of what the future is to be. If there could be a perfect understanding of this primal power and possibility—the raw material of human nature—then, since our influence is increased in proportion to the plastic condition of those upon whom it is directed, something more than a *shadowy* conception might be obtained of what the coming years may have in store for us as a denomination. I will briefly set forth the amount of material that we have; also how it has heretofore been treated; and how, in my judgment, it *ought* to be used.

In the State of New-York we have 146 organized Societies. Only 37 of these report flourishing Sunday-Schools, but as only 42 have reported at all, the number without schools, being 5, stands at about one-eighth of the whole. Of the remaining 104 Societies, it is likely the proportion without Schools would prove very much greater—perhaps one-half. Sixteen large towns and cities report as follows:—Teachers, 355; Pupils, 2012; Average Attendance, 1,482; Books in Libraries, 9,793. Thirteen smaller towns report 664 Scholars and 94 Teachers. Eleven of them report the Average Attendance, 413. Fifteen such report 1,692 Books in Libraries.

Thus the whole number of Schools that have reported contain an aggregate of 449 Teachers, and 2,676 Scholars, with an Average Attendance of 1,982, and 11,485 Library Books. If we add to this the 52 other Schools that probably exist, but have not responded to the Secretary's appeal for statistics, and place their average number of pupils at 30, we obtain a total of 4,236 children in the Universalist Sunday Schools of the great State of New-York, with a population of not far from four million souls, in open accordance with Christianity and claimed by us as rapidly tending towards Liberal views thereof.

Our ideal "Church of the Future" has often been portrayed by the lips and pens of eloquent men, but the organized *material* whereof to make it *real* is not so plentiful as prudent forethought might, with reason, desire. Still, it must not be despised; nor should the faithful labors of those who have made it what it is, be lightly esteemed. Good men and noble women have given themselves to this cause with a zeal that merited the highest praise; but it cannot be denied that our people, as a whole, have been, to say the least,

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too thoughtless of its persistent claims. Our most brilliant preachers, with a few honorable exceptions, appear to consider the Sunday School merely as an appendage to their parishes that can be left to take care of itself, without any serious dereliction of duty. The prominent members of our churches are guilty of still more culpable negligence in not personally attending to the religious education of their children, and especially in so arranging Sunday services that the lambs of the flock get only crumbs from the bread of life.

A more serious mistake, however, is made by most of those who attempt to write books for the children to study or read. Silliness is not simplicity, but in many of the lesson books for Sunday Schools, the two are strangely confounded. Less than half a dozen writers among us have produced anything in this department of literature that both children and teachers would not willingly let die.

Aside from special instruction the most efficient public educator of the people is the Newspaper. But, while agents are sent into every hamlet for the purpose of extending the circulation of religious periodicals, the Universalists of the Empire State, with all their intelligence and wealth, have not a single paper devoted to the interest of Sunday Schools, and put forth for the moral improvement of the young. There is material enough in our churches for full ten thousand Sunday School pupils, and plenty of talent to teach them in such a way that no "outside influences" will ever be able to alienate them from the faith of their fathers. This material not heretofore been treated with [?] watchfulness which enlightened enterprise demands.

These facts sufficiently indicate what ought to be the direction of our earliest efforts. Preachers, people, and teachers should apply themselves more earnestly to the duty of organizing the children into Schools, and the Schools should have half the Sunday services devoted to their welfare. A Sunday school paper made up of the best talent, and tastefully illustrated, together with an equitable system of Sunday School representation in the State Convention, would be of great benefit to the Cause, and also prove to those who are already engaged therein that the denomination at large is interested in their work, and will not suffer it to be in vain.

All of which is fraternally submitted,
A.J. [Andrew Jackson] Canfield, Com. on Sunday Schools

The Charters of the Schools

Rev. R. Fisk, Chairman of the Committee to procure an Act of the Legislature, amending the Charters of the St. Lawrence University and Clinton Liberal Institute, so as to give the Convention the power to elect Trustees in said schools, submitted a majority report, stating that the Committee took the necessary steps, and the bills to effect the proposed change in said Charters were brought forward in the Legislature last winter,

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and meeting with opposition from the Trustees of said schools were dropped. But in his report Mr. Fisk gave a statistical history of the origin of the Clinton Liberal Institute, and showed by the records of the Convention, that said school had, years ago, surrendered its unsectarian character, and become by consent of all interested, a Universalist, denominational Seminary, and by right belongs to the Convention—said Convention through its special agents, after having twice accepted said school from the hands of the Trustees, had saved the Institution from bankruptcy by raising funds to pay its debts;—and therefore, Mr. Fisk claimed that said school belonging thus to this body, this body ought to have the power to elect all future Trustees to fill vacancies, and is entitled to the change proposed in the resolutions to amend its Charter. Mr. Fisk stated that the Committee, of which he is Chairman, committed a great mistake in going to the Legislature without conferring with the Trustees of said school beforehand, and gave as the reason why this course did not occur to the Committee, that said Committee had no intimation that there would be any objection to the change from any quarter.

Mr. Waddell, one of the same Committee, submitted a brief minority report, covering the ground simply that the majority of the Committee erred in not taking the course of which Mr. Fisk speaks above and acknowledges as an error. Mr. Waddell concurred in the report of the majority, but had prepared his, before seeing the said majority report, not knowing said report would concur in his views.

Rev. D. Skinner, one of the Trustees of the Clinton Liberal Institute, replied to the Report of Mr. Fisk, giving some account of the first movement in 1831 for establishing a Literary Institution in the State that should be conducted on liberal principles, and free from the narrow sectarian influences that generally controlled, at that time, nearly all the academic and higher schools of the State, turning them into engines of proselyting sectarians, who abused the power and privileges given them in the control of these schools, and rendering it unsafe for us to send our sons and daughters to them. His first article, published in the *[Evangelical] Magazine and [Gospel] Advocate* in the Spring of that year, on the subject, was followed by others from Rev. S.R. Smith, A.B. Grosh and others' pens besides his own, and in consequence, by the action of the State Convention of Universalists and the Associations of the State, the Central Association going so far as to appoint a Board of fifteen Trustees for the Institution, and by its agent, Rev. S.R. Smith soliciting funds for the erection of buildings. In 1832, the main edifice of stone for the Institute was erected at Clinton at an expense of about \$9,000. But the Board of Trustees appointed all over the State could never get a quorum together till a part resigned and new and

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additional ones, residing in the neighborhood of the School, were chosen in their place.

A Constitution, *entirely unsectarian*, was adopted and a Charter obtained, and the school was continued with various success for thirteen years, till 1845, but always with more or less embarrassment for want of funds. Various efforts were made to obtain funds by Brs. Smith, Potter, Tuttle, and Browne. That year and for a number thereafter, Dr. Sawyer took charge as Principal. The Constitution was somewhat changed, a Theological class was taught by Dr. Sawyer, and the Universalist Convention took the school under its patronage. A handsome and commodious Seminary for young Ladies was erected at a large cost, and though much needed, served to absorb all and more than all the funds these several agents had collected, and involved the Institute in a large debt besides. There were no means at the command of the Trustees for keeping up the school and liquidating the debt, or even *paying its interest*; and thus it was sinking deeper and deeper into the mire. Tho' many were being educated, and the school was doing good under the patronage of the denomination, this Convention having the privilege of nominating its Trustees; yet it was evident that unless something could be done to relieve it of debt, it must soon be sold. In 1857, the Convention appointed a committee of three to meet with the Trustees of the Institute, and see if some means could not be devised for liquidating the debt, then amounting to between \$11,000 and \$12,000. The meeting was held in September of that year, and resolutions passed after learning the amount of debts owed by the Institute, appointing an Agent for each of the sixteen Associations in the State to solicit subscriptions and donations for paying the debt.

At that time, or immediately after, the terrible monetary crisis of 1857 occurred, and after getting their circulars and subscription papers out, these agents were obliged to suspend all further operations till the panic passed by. By the spring following (1858) the panic had greatly subsided and he (Mr. Skinner), appointed for the Central Association, began to move in the work, and called on the other Agents to commence operations, as the creditors could not be put off. A few of these agents began, made some efforts, but all but one soon gave it up as a hopeless task; and even Dr. Sawyer said it was "useless farther to contend against tide and wind—the Institute had failed and must go down—we may as well let her slide!" But Mr. Skinner said, "No! we have not yet *tried* to save it. Don't let us give up until we have tried;" and he went to work in the Associations, and in the city of New-York, both in public and in private, and for the space of two years and upward, he ceased not to work till he had *raised* and *collected* not only the \$12,000 to pay the entire debt, but \$18,000, thus enabling him to repair both buildings throughout, procure excellent Philosophical Apparatus, build a

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Gymnasium and Barn, and secure an excellent corps of Teachers, Male and Female; and from that time the school has flourished.

Thus it will be seen that the school was established and built by Universalists, has been mainly patronized by Universalists; employing almost all Universalist Teachers, and all the Trustees are Universalists, and it is as far *denominational* as it ought to be and can safely be made so, consistent with its receiving its due proportion of the State Literature Fund from the Regents of the University, treating as it does its pupils of all denominations with equal favor and courtesy. But as the funds for building, furnishing, endowing and keeping up the school, were furnished not by this Convention, but by the liberality of individuals, and it has always been called and known as the *Liberal Institute*, without anything narrowly *sectarian* about it, the [?] thought, and will think, when the move was made to confine the election of Trustees exclusively to this ecclesiastical Council, it was both inconsistent and unwise—that it would seem to be setting an example of narrowness and sectarianism that would be seized upon by other denominations, and made a pretext and justification of *their* appointing the Trustees of all other similar institutions by *their ecclesiastical Councils* of Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, &c, &c., and might ultimately deprive us of our share of the Literature Fund of the State. While, therefore they concede that the election of the Trustees of the St. Lawrence University might very properly be committed entirely to this Convention, for the reason that our denominational Theological School forms one department of that institution, they certainly think this should not be done with the *Clinton Liberal Institute*.

The discussion assumed a somewhat irregular form. Questions were put to Dr. Skinner, he consenting, and answering in the best of temper. In time, the discussion took the regular shape.

Dr. Fisher thought that the State Schools, especially those at Canton, should be in form as well as in effect, denominational Schools. There must be no ground of fear that the time may come when the character of the Schools shall be changed. Let this Convention have control of them, and confidence in their denominational character is strengthened. Universalists who give their money are entitled to this amount of assurance. Without this, they will hesitate to give. The discussion was continued by Revs. T.D. Cook, L.C. Browne, R. Fisk, D. Ballou, I. George, Mr. E.T. Marsh, and many other brethren. The subject was continued to the evening session. The subject was *thoroughly* discussed. It resulted in the passage of the following resolution:—

Resolved, That R. Fisk, E.T. Marsh and W.C.H. Waddell be a Committee to take the proper steps to secure from the Legislature of the State of New York an act so amending the charters of the St. Lawrence University and the Clinton Liberal Institute, as to authorize this State Convention to fill all

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vacancies which may exist, or which may hereafter exist, in the Boards of Trustees of said institutions; and that said Committee be instructed to confer with the Trustees of the Institution as to the best mode of accomplishing these measures, prior to making any application to the Legislature.

Report on Clinton School

We give entire Dr. Skinner's brief report in regard to the condition of the above School—

ANNUAL REPORT

This is a first class Academy or High School, under the direction of the Regents of the University of the State of New York, founded in 1832; and the large stone edifice for the Male Department was erected that year in the northern part of the village of Clinton. The beautiful and commodious edifice for the Female Department was erected a number of years thereafter, in the southern part of the village, about half a mile from the Male Department, overlooking the Oriskam [Oriskany] valley and fronting Hamilton College on its opposite slope.

The School is now in a most prosperous and flourishing condition. Professor E.E. Spalding, A.M., is principal of the Male Department, and Miss C.U. Weld, of the Female Department, assisted in each by an able and full corps of experienced teachers. The instruction is thorough, the discipline mild and parental but firm; and a healthy moral and social influence pervades the School and boarding departments. Whole numbers of students for the past year, 248: Gentlemen, 152, Ladies, 96. Attendance, Fall Term, 135; Winter Term, 152; Summer Term, 122.

The prospects for the ensuing year are encouraging. The financial report for the past year is as follows:—Value of Real Estate, Lots, Buildings, Furniture, Library and Philosophical Apparatus, same as last year, about \$42,500; Bank Stock and United States Securities, drawing interest, \$7,500; value of the whole property, \$50,000. Total receipts for the year ending July, 1867, \$24,387.87; total expenditures for [same] already paid out, \$22,432.26; other expenses for repairs going on, estimated about \$1,200. About \$1,400 have [sic] been paid for coal for the coming winter; and the Treasurer thinks, after all bills payable and receivable are settled and paid, there will remain in the Treasury about \$2,000.

D. SKINNER, *President*

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WEDNESDAY MORNING

After reading the Minutes of the preceding day, the Committee's report on the Harsen fund was submitted, and statement was made of the several appropriations made. The report was accepted and put on file. The first business in order was the Report of Committee on "The Ambassador."

The document placed in the hands of this Committee contained the following resolutions submitting a new plan of operation to the Convention; and as these resolutions were the subject matter on which the Special Committee were to act and report, we give them here:—

Whereas, It appears from the report of the Publishing Agent that THE AMBASSADOR is meeting with financial success, promising that its income shall exceed its expenses the current year; and

Whereas, This Convention seeks to enlarge the sphere and usefulness of the paper, making it in all respects a first-class religious journal; therefore,

Resolved, That we recommend that this Convention take immediate steps to secure such financial guarantee as will warrant the enlargement of the paper; the adoption of a general system of correspondence, greater variety in its contents, including more of secular and miscellaneous reading—in a word, to make THE AMBASSADOR second to no religious journal in the land.

Resolved, That the Executive Committee be authorized to raise a sum of not less than \$50,000, in shares of \$100 each, to be paid in ten equal annual instalments; and all income of the paper, over and above current expenses, shall be devoted to the payment of this loan.

To prevent misapprehension we may say here, that the Executive Committee deemed it expedient to modify the last resolution, and make the loan \$15,000, to be paid in three equal instalments. This was on the ground that three years was ample time to accomplish the end. The Special Committee, through Rev. Fisk, made their report Wednesday morning, submitting a series of resolutions, which were acted upon, one by one. The first was as follows:—

Resolved, That in view of the great spiritual interests of our people and the need of the promulgation of the great moral precepts of Christ to the world, this Convention most heartily endorses the independence and resolute loyalty of THE AMBASSADOR to intellectual and civil liberty, and its fidelity to the cause of temperance for the past year.

The discussion which followed was chiefly distinguished for its good temper. It appeared that probably no two persons would conduct a paper precisely alike: some would temper the phraseology in certain cases; others would take particular pains to keep the tone of the paper fully up to the "demands of the age;" and see that in regard to liberty and temperance it gave no uncertain sound; but no one would make any abatement of *principle*—would let down a solitary peg in this regard to gain favor in any

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quarter. The resolution was then passed, and without a dissenting vote, so far as we could hear.

The next resolution occasioned a call for more specific information—the details on which the statement is based. The facts were given, and the resolution passed as follows:—

Resolved, That the Convention expresses deep satisfaction in view of the improved and promising financial condition and prospects of THE AMBASSADOR; and hereby thanks the Executive Committee for the zeal, judgment and persistence they have shown in the discharge of their difficult duties.

The third resolution was passed without debate, as follows:—

Resolved, That a religious paper which shall in size and literary character command the attention and respect, not only of the Empire State, but of our country, to a greater extent than any past similar publication of Universalists, is the most vital, and next to the need of more clergymen, the most immediate necessity of the cause we seek to advance.

The fourth resolution enlisted little discussion, but quickened no small degree of zeal, and bore fruit on the spot, as follows:—

Resolved, That the plan suggested by the Executive Committee for the enlargement and literary improvement of THE AMBASSADOR be approved by the Convention; and that they be authorized to proceed to the undertaking of such enlargement and improvement based on their proposed method of raising \$15,000 in three years.

By special vote the plan proposed in the fourth resolution was referred to the Executive Committee, with instructions to proceed at once to carrying the same into effect. Rev. J.G. Bartholomew, in behalf of said Committee, began then and there. We have not room for details—we give results; a fourth part of the sum was raised on the spot and the assurance came from various sources, that the raising of the loan does not give occasion for a reasonable doubt.

The Occasional Sermon

At 10 o'clock, A.M., the Council adjourned to the church to hear the Occasional Sermon. After the preliminary devotional services, the President introduced to the Council and the large congregation the preacher—Rev. J.G. Bartholomew. The sermon was listened to in rapt attention, and elicited the highest encomiums from the brethren. It appeared in full in our last, and was ready for distribution the day after its delivery.

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WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON.

Report on the State of the Church.

Rev. C.W. Tomlinson of Syracuse, Chairman of Committee on the State of the Church, submitted a report showing a good degree of prosperity in the Churches in this State, complaining of the great want of educated ministers, and recommending several plans for assisting young men to an education for the ministry. The report is too long for insertion in this connection, but will appear soon.

Report on Missionary and Tract Enterprise.

In behalf of the Committee, Rev. C. [Charles] Fluhrer submitted the following Report:—

To the New-York State Convention of Universalists:

BRETHREN:—Your Committee on “Missionary and Tract Enterprise” has been at some pains to gather statistics, showing the amount of work done in the State during the past year, that they might be presented for your consideration in tangible form; but the difficulty of obtaining complete statistics concerning the Universalist denomination, in our present unorganized condition, is by no means inconsiderable, as all who have attempted a task of this kind can testify. Nevertheless I have gathered the following acts, which may give you a tolerably correct idea of the present condition of the Missionary and Tract Enterprise in our midst.

We have no State Missionary organization. But during the past year much has been done toward raising money for the \$100,000 authorized by the General convention of 1865. The amount secured by this State is now about \$18,700, of which \$10,700 have been paid into the hands of the General Board, in New-York city, about \$7,000 are yet uncollected—most of this sum having been subscribed in annual payments. In a short time steps will be taken to collect the payments which are due.

The Missionary Board has voted \$4,000 to the Society in Clinton, and \$2,000 to the Society at Little Falls—to be applied in the erection of Church-edifices.

Thirty Students in the Canton Theological School have received aid from this fund. The aggregate amount paid for this purpose during the year is \$2,500. The Principal of that school has stated that had it not been for this assistance, his present class would hardly have numbered more than five members.

So much for the State Missionary work in general.

In different portions of the State, considerable Missionary enterprise has been manifested. Through the energy of Rev. R.H. Pullman, late of Fulton, a Missionary Society, embracing Oswego County, was established two or three years ago, and is still in operation. It consists of all the Universalists in Oswego County who contribute one dollar annually to its support. Under its

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auspices, meetings are held from time to time in localities which are destitute of regular preaching. Rev. W.N. Barber is now doing Missionary work within its limits.

A similar scheme has been adopted by the Niagara Association, which, in addition to the annual contributions, has a Ballou Missionary Fund of \$3,500—donated for that purpose by the late Stephen Ballou of Lockport. The Niagara Missionary Society has just commenced a vigorous campaign, and has appointed Rev. J.J. Austin its Missionary. The revival of our cause in Albion and in other villages within its jurisdiction, are the fruits of its labor.

During the year, a promising Society has been organized in Cohoes, through the efforts of a Missionary organization connected with the Troy Church. Our New-York city friends have also continued their Missionary work in Harlem.

The Central Sunday School Association has also appointed a Missionary, Br. J.A. Dobson, to revive slumbering Societies and establish Sunday Schools within its jurisdiction. Your Committee is not acquainted with the results of this movement.

It is possible that other Missionary work, entitled to mention in this report, has been accomplished in different quarters of the State; but this is all which has come to your Committee's notice.

From the above statement, it will be seen that the Missionary Spirit is alive within our borders. Meagre though these results are, when we consider the magnitude of our State, and the limited facilities which we have at our command, they are truly encouraging.

We need three essential things in order to accomplish a more satisfactory Missionary work:—1st, Practical methods of labor; 2d, Money, 3d, Men.

Our great want is [a] thorough, effective, uniform method of labor. As things are at present, Missionary work is left to the option of individuals whose zeal prompts them to labor for the cause outside of their limited spheres. If this Convention could designate a practical and efficient method, your Committee is satisfied that the money and men would be forthcoming, and our banner would be planted in hostile camps and waste places.

Our faith, from its very nature is aggressive. The history of our denomination is a history of aggression. Our fathers were Missionaries, who proclaimed the glorious principles of our religion whenever they could obtain a hearing. We owe very much of what we are to-day, to their zealous Missionary labors. It should be our care not only to keep the interests which we have inherited, but to add to them. The times are propitious. In every community there is a large unorganized liberal sentiment, which has been developed by the spirit of the age. All we need do, is to present our faith entire, so that it will be understood, and we shall behold increased numbers flocking to our standard. Especially should it be our aim to plant our cause

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in growing places, and centres of business. If it must be abandoned anywhere, let it be abandoned in localities which have ceased to become such. Fellow laborers, the field is ready for harvest.

In regard to the Tract Enterprise, your Committee has not been able to learn much. Our chapter is much like the famous one concerning snakes in Ireland:—There are no snakes in Ireland. We have no Tract enterprise to speak of. Indeed, your Committee doubts the efficacy of Tracts. Most people have a decided aversion to them; very few read them when they are presented. I strongly suspect that most of the money and labor devoted to this work could be more efficiently expended. THE AMBASSADOR is undoubtedly the best tract which we can circulate. The Rhode Island Convention of Universalists has prepared a Catechism, which in some localities has been circulated as a tract. It is a complete and brief statement of our views and forms as a religious denomination, and gives more information to the inquirer than any ordinary tract can convey. Your Committee recommend its general use, not only in our Churches and Sunday Schools, but as a Missionary agent.

Respectfully submitted,
CHAS. FLUHRER

Com. on Missionary and Tract Enterprise

THURSDAY MORNING.

Proposed Removal of Theological School.

The question of removing the Theological School to some more central point in the State, was argued and opposed by different brethren; and was discussed a great length. Finally a motion to indefinitely postpone the matter was carried. And so the matter is now settled. The School will remain where it is.

Re-organization.

The Committee to report in regard to such changes as are needed to bring the Convention into harmony with the United States Constitution, submitted the plan of a new Constitution and By-Laws, which, after slight modifications, was adopted. The length of this document is such that we cannot give it in this connection. It will appear soon. We may say here that the Constitution gives the State Constitution a permanent Board of Officers, and puts into their hands the power of Fellowship, Ordination and Discipline. The following offices [officers] were chosen as the first business:—

President—Rev. L.C. BROWNE.

Secretary—Rev. A. SAXE

Clerk—Rev. J.M. PULLMAN

Treasurer—Rev. JAMES CUSHING

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Committee on Fellowship, Ordination and Discipline—Revs. D. Skinner, I. George, G.W. Montgomery, E.G. Brooks, Hons. E. [Ezra] Graves, L.J. Bigelow, P.H. Bitely.

Other Committees.

We give in this connection the other Committees and officers chosen before the re-organization, but re-asserted:—

Executive Committee—Revs. A. Saxe, J.G. Bartholomew, E.G. Brooks, Brs. E.W. Crowell and E.T. Marsh.

Place of next meeting: Utica.

Preacher of Occasional Sermon: Rev. G.W. Montgomery.

The Council elected the following delegates to the United States General Convention of Universalists, to be held in the city of Baltimore commencing on the 17th day of September:

E.H. [Edwin Hubbell] Chapin, D.D., E. Fisher, D.D., Dolphus Skinner, D.D., R. Fisk, J.M. Pullman, *clerical*. D.D.T. Marshall, New-York; L. Amsden, Malone; W.A. Conant, Huntington; Richard Bullymore,, Buffalo; L. Dewey, Clifton Springs; N.H. Benson, Troy; True E. Pettengill, Clarendon; L. J. Bigelow, Watertown; J.W. Cronkhite, Little Falls, *lay*.

The following Standing Committees were appointed:

Education, Rev. E. Fisher, D.D.; *Sunday Schools*, Rev. D. Ballou; *Missionary Enterprise*, Rev. L.C. Browne; *Reform*, Rev. E.W. [Elhanan Winchester] Fuller; *State of the Church*, Rev. J.J. Austin; *Complaints and Appeals*, Rev. G.W. Montgomery, Brs. R. Milliman, H. Robinson.

The Fund for the University.

Rev. D.C. Tomlinson introduced a resolution to the effect that the St. Lawrence University should be made a first-class College; that a sum of \$100,000 is needed, and should be raised. He supported the resolution in an earnest speech. He said that it is quite as easy to raise the large sum as the smaller; and that if the great importance of the undertaking is clearly presented, brethren will come forward. He believed it an easier task to raise \$100,000 than \$25,000; for the magnitude of the call indicates the magnitude of the enterprise, and enlists sympathy and zeal in the same proportion. The resolution was passed.

The Canada West Association was admitted to the Fellowship of the Convention—this on the report of a special Committee to consider an application from our Canada brethren.

Resolutions thanking the brethren and other citizens for their abundant hospitality, and thanking the Trustees of the Methodist Church for permitting the Council to use their Vestry, were passed; and, by vote, the session closed.

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LIST OF DELEGATES AND MINISTERS.

Alleghany [Allegany] Association—E.W. Fuller, F.M. [Francis Milton] Alvord, *clerical*; W.H. King, Martin Scott, *lay*. *Buffalo*—C. [Chester] C. Richardson, G. [Gideon] S. Gowdy, *clerical*; George A. Moore, David Ransom, *lay*. *Black River*—C.B. Lombard, D.C. Tomlinson, *clerical*; W. Goodell, *lay*. *Cayuga*—R. Fisk, John M. Austin, *clerical*; H. [Horatio] Robinson, M.D., *lay*. *Central*—D. Skinner, T.D. Cook, *clerical*; D.A. Brainard, *lay*. *Chautauqua*—I. [Isaac] George, I. Adams, *clerical*; W.W. Billings, A. Drake, *lay*. *Chenango*—Wm. M. De Long, *clerical*; James H. Fox, S.L. Morgan, *lay*. *Genesee*—S. [Stephen] Crane, C. [Charles] Cravens, *clerical*; H. Jordan, *lay*. *Hudson River*—J.M. Pullman, *clerical*; Amasa Copp, *lay*. *Mohawk*—E. [Ely] T. Marsh, L.O. Gay, *lay*. *New York*—J.G. [Jonathan Glass] Bartholomew, G.H. Emerson, *clerical*; S.B. Forbush, W.C.H. Waddell, *lay*. *Niagara*—J.J. Austin, E. [Ebenezer] Hathaway, *clerical*; A. Freeman, Ira Congdon, *lay*. *Ontario*—E. [Edmund] R. [Ottoway], Chas. Fluhrer, *clerical*; W. Scott Hicks, P.D. Feller, *lay*. *Otsego*—W.W. Clayton, *clerical*. *Steuben*—P.H. Bitely, Miles Powell, *lay*. *St. Lawrence*—E. Fisher, L.C. Browne, *clerical*; L. [Levi] B. Storrs, D. Robertson, *lay*. *N.Y. Central Sunday School Convention*—D. Ballou, *clerical*.

In addition to those named above, the following clergymen were present:—

New York—W.E. Manley, W. [William] B. Cook, A.H. Marshall, J.H. [Jonas Hazard] Hartzell; N. [Nelson] Snell, T.J. [Thomas Jefferson] Whitcomb, H.H. Baker, F.S. Bacon, C. [Charles] W. Tomlinson, A.A. Leighton, W. [William] N. Van De Mark, E.M. Lester, H.B. Howell, A. [Asa] Saxe, Geo. W. Montgomery, N. [Nathaniel] Stacy, W.W. Lovejoy, W.I. Hallock, R.L. Rice, J.R. Sage, W.T. Clarke (Unitarian).

J.T. [John Temple] Goodrich, *Philadelphia, Pa.*, W.W. Dean, *Washington, D.C.*, R.H. [Royal Henry] Pullman, *Peoria, Ill.*, David Leavitt, *Cherry Valley, C.W.* [Canada West], P.S. Hare, *Bloomfield, C.W.*

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PUBLIC RELIGIOUS SERVICES.

Sermon by Rev. J.M. Pullman.

The business of the Council prevented our attendance at the Church Tuesday evening, to hear the sermon from our Troy brother, Rev. J.M. Pullman. We therefore take a sketch of the same from the *Express*, one of the local papers:

The sermon at the Universalist church Tuesday evening was delivered by Rev. J.M. Pullman, of Troy, and was attended by a good audience. It was an able and impressive discourse from the 17th verse of the 17th chapter of Luke: "And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed ? but where are the nine?"

It would be a curious revelation if the hearts of all could be opened and their thoughts on religion clearly seen. For what purpose do the great majority of men and women attend religious services? Some do so from an idea that such service is respectable; some from an impulse of duty; some for the gratification of æsthetic tastes. How small a proportion of the professedly religious are so from deep and heartfelt gratitude to God for his blessings. This gratitude is the main spring of religious life, which nothing else can supersede. As in Christ's time, of the many who consciously or unconsciously enjoy the blessings of religious training, and the humanizing and civilizing influences it brings, the great majority do not think to turn back and give the glory to God. And of those who do, now as then, they are more apt to be those from whom we should least expect thankfulness. The proud Jews who gloried in their ancestry, when they were healed of leprosy took it as a matter of course; but the Samaritan when he was healed came back running and leaping and praising God. This strikingly shows the effects of a cold, dull and formal religion in hardening the heart and rendering it insensible to the divine blessings. Such a religion is worse than none, because it dulls the conscience without satisfying the soul. Thus the publicans and sinners followed Christ, while the proud Pharisees and learned Scribes refused to acknowledge him.

Our lives are full of blessings, and the thankful heart finds them in every lot, no matter how poor or unenviable it may seem. Often the thankful heart finds cause for deepest gratitude in the trials and disappointments at which others murmur. These disappointments and afflictions purify the soul, and give it the deep, calm rest, so that it is often better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting and mirth.

If small particles of iron are mixed with sand, you cannot separate them. Your clumsy fingers, feeling in the mass, may not find that there is any iron there. But take a magnet and sweep through this sand, and every particle is drawn toward it. So the unthankful heart, passing through life, fails to

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discover any mercies or any blessings for which to praise God, while the thankful heart finds them everywhere. Only the iron is God's sand is gold.

The duty of gratitude to God was forcibly illustrated, but the fact was kept clear that religious observances should not be coldly pursued as a mere form or duty, but should spring spontaneously from the rejoicing heart of God's children towards their kind Father.

Sermon by the Rev. G.H. Emerson.

Wednesday afternoon a sermon was preached by Rev. G. [George] H. Emerson, in the course of which an attempt was made to trace a parallel between the mysteries recognized in physical nature, and those involved in Christian faith. Science not less than Faith—the intellect not less than the heart—has its problems.

Sermon by Dr. Dolphus Skinner.

On Wednesday evening, Dr. Skinner preached to a crowded congregation. The text was Matt. xiii. 27: "Sir, didst thou not sow good seed in thy field? From whence than hath it tares?" The Saviour often spoke in metaphors and parables. He could thus often more pointedly and effectually, and with less offence, reprove vice, rebuke iniquity, point a moral, illustrate truth, forecast history, or point to civil and ecclesiastical changes and revolutions. Parables were not intended to teach particular and sectarian doctrine.

The parable of the Wheat and Tares is commonly understood and explained to represent the good and the bad, saints and sinners, believers and unbelievers—the former being the wheat and the latter the tares. This is evidently not the meaning. As it is said, the enemy that sowed the tares is the devil, this must make the devil the creator and author of a large part of mankind; whereas the Bible teaches that God hath made of one blood all nations of men—that he is the Father of the spirits of all flesh. If this devil is the father of a part, to him and him only do they owe allegiance. God can have no claim on them. We are commanded, "Children, obey your parents in all things." Some have supposed that by tares the vices and evil habits of men were intended. This, though not liable to the grave objections of the first-named construction, is believed to be unwarranted by the parables and its connections and the scope of the subject embraced. The Saviour was consistent, connected and consecutive in all his teachings. When rightly understood there is a harmony and a beauty in all he said.

This parable was but the consistent continuation of the subject embraced in the previous parables of the chapter. By reading them all in connection it will be seen that the sower and the seed, the mustard-seed of the field, the leaven of the lump, and the wheat and tares are all connected teachings on the same general subject—the propagation of the Gospel and its results. The field was the world of mankind, the soil was the human heart.

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The first parable shows the importance of the right condition of the soil; that by the wayside, where the enemy may catch away that which was sown; the stony soil where there is no depth to give permanency to the growth; the thorny ground, where the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word; and the good soil yielding abundantly, all illustrate and enforce this truth. The parable of the wheat and tares presents the same field and soil, the same sower and seed, but brings to view new circumstances, new elements, and a new condition of things, showing new obstacles in the way of the Gospel, new difficulties in the way of its success, and that after the good seed is sown and has taken root, other and bad seed may be sown in the same field, on the same soil, by an enemy, while men are asleep; and thus greater evils, because more durable, would result than could arise from the condition of the soil set forth in the first parable.

The doctrines and teachings of Jesus were pure, uncorrupted truth (wheat), without an admixture of error or falsehood (tares). Wheat can never become tares, nor tares become wheat. They are generically and specifically different, having not a common but different origins; whereas man has a common origin. Christ's Gospel never produces tares nor bad fruit; a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, nor a corrupt tree good fruit. The sower of the good seed is Christ, the Son of Man. The tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil. We read of the devil that he was a liar from the beginning, and the father of lies. If, then, the devil is the father of lies, lies or false doctrines, [so] are his children or offspring. But some will say if he sows tares, propagates false doctrines, he must have a personal existence, and as such must be recognized. And hence they adopt Milton's theory, that he was once a holy archangel in heaven, sinned there and rebelled, was cast out and sent down to the bottomless pit in hell—that somehow, he has contrived to escape so far as to be at large now, and all over the world, tempting mankind to sin, and engaged in all kinds of mischief; that otherwise it is impossible to account for the sin of our first parents, or the sowing of these numerous tares among the wheat. In answer to this the speaker asked, "If it is impossible to account for the sin of poor, ignorant, earthly Adam and Eve, without the subtle machinations of a crafty, fallen angel to tempt them, how will you account for the sin and fall of a high and holy archangel in the presence of God in heaven, where nothing impure or unholy can come, without a still higher and more subtle power or agent to tempt *him*? The truth is, this story of fallen angels and a personal devil is mythical, unauthoritative, unreasonable, fabulous. The voice of inspiration tells us that "every man is tempted when he drawn away of his own lust, and

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enticed; then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."

The Gospel, as taught by Christ and his inspired apostles, was uncorrupted—the pure wheat of the kingdom; and so it remained during the primitive age of the Gospel. But when the Roman empire and the heathen world were converted nominally to the Christian faith, and its profession became popular, and pride and fashion and worldliness and ambition put on its robes, bad men became its teachers, and all manner of corrupt doctrines and pernicious principles were propagated in the Church. Men slept, and the enemy sowed tares among the wheat—that enemy (or devil) whose name is lust—"the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life." Men, corrupt men, became ambitious of place and power. They longed to wear holy lawn, wield the crosier, and wear the triple crown. They subverted the pure Gospel, overslaughed it with the corrupt stream of error, overtopped the wheat with a rank growth of tares. In the ignorance of the people and the darkness of the ages following, almost all of the original simplicity and purity of the Gospel was lost sight of; and the long dark night of papal error and corruption followed.

But the time of harvest at length was nigh; the tares were becoming ripe for the harvest; the sharp sickle must be thrust in for the reaping process. Providence had indicated this for a number of generations. The Waldenses and Albigenses, the martyrs John Huss and Jerome of Prague, had uttered their testimony against the corruptions of the Church. They were among the first of the angels (messengers) sent forth as reapers at "the end of the world;" (*aion*, or age, not *kosmos*, world,) for every *age* has its harvest of wheat and tares, truth and error, to be gathered. At length Luther, Melancthon, Züinglius, and a host of other angels engaged in the work, came into the field, and the work of harvesting and burning the tares went on with more vigor. Luther, a monk, brought up in the bosom of the Romish Church, on discovering the abominable wickedness growing out of the sale of Indulgences, or the license of committing sins of the blackest dye, for money, protested against it, revealed the iniquity to the Pope—supposing *he* would condemn it; instead of which he sanctioned or justified it, and condemned Luther for exposing it. This opened the eyes of Luther, and he discovered and exposed and protested against other Romish and Popish errors and crimes, till a host of reformers with him joined in the protest, and were sustained therein by the political power and influence of the Elector of Saxony.

Thus the Reformation, which was the time of harvest, or reaping process, of that world or age, was inaugurated and rapidly progressed. It is still going on. Luther and his co-laborers did but *begin* the good work. There are many tares yet to be exterminated, bound by the strong cords of truth,

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and cast into the fires of investigation and consumed—many more truths yet to be found that have long been buried under the vast accumulation of tares that have covered them. Many of these tares, if not *sown*, have been *retained*, by Protestants. But they must not be spared for that reason. Christ says, "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up."

The indignation and agony of the Papal Church, with the bitter persecutions, denunciations and outlawry against Luther and his fellow-laborers, were the verification of the words of the parable, "There shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."

In this great work, begun by Luther and his co-adjutors [coadjutors], Murray, and Winchester, and Ballou, and Channing, have noble done their part; and with them and other faithful angel reapers, we must faithfully do our part; that when our work is done we may hear the approving voice of the Master saying, "Well done, good and faithful servants, enter into the joy of the Lord."

"Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun, in the kingdom of their Father," not only denotes the triumph and glory and honor of the great fundamental truths of the Gospel, but equally that of the angel messengers engaged in sowing them, and in the work of the harvest.

Sermon by Rev. R. Fisk.

[On] Thursday morning a sermon was preached by Rev. R. Fisk. The text was I Cor. xii.6: "And there are diversities of operations; but it is the same God which worketh in all." The subject was "Right Ideas." The question raised was, What is the *test* of "Right Ideas?" By what criterion may we know that our ideas are true? They have two characteristics, Usefulness and Hopefulness. These are the watchwords of Christianity. Religion watches; science helps; the Christian religion does both. Science makes Nature the servant of man; and it shows the uses of the mind, not less than the uses of the steam engine. Science contributes to the Christian end in two ways: Negatively, by accounting for much that is called moral evil—sin—by referring to physiological causes; by showing in what particulars food, clothing, shelter, disease, disordered nerves act upon the mind and soul; and Positively, by showing that there *is* a vital relation between the body and the soul, and by showing, in many particulars, what that relation is. Science has changed revery [reverie] into specific thought, and put man into intelligible relations with the world around him. Science alone explains physical nature; it explains in part, and Christianity in part, the moral nature; but Christianity alone explains the spiritual nature. The two voices of Science and Christianity assert charity, justice and restoration; their united testimony gives the test of Right Ideas. Such is a condensed

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statement of the salient points of the sermon; but no report can do it justice.

Sermon by Rev. Mr. Hartzell.

In the afternoon of Thursday, a sermon was preached by Rev. J.H. Hartzell of Buffalo, following which the Communion Service was observed. We can only indicate the general character of the sermon. Its subject was Religious Progress. Progress is a law of the universe; but it is also a fact in human history—indeed in all history; the globe, physical nature and man's progress. And there is no reaction; what seems to be such is but the gathering up of nature's forces for a fresh and more vigorous start. In fact, progress is not even arrested. It was not in the Dark Ages. It forces itself in all directions—into metaphysics, and into contradictory creeds. But the march is silent. There is somewhat divine in every creed. No one mind takes in all of Christianity. Calvin, Luther, Channing, Ballou—each represents a segment; each has a specialty. Progress glows in representative men like Robertson of the Episcopal, and Bushnell of the Calvinistic Church. It is a power, and must triumph. The work Christianity must in the end be complete.

Conferences.

On the mornings of Thursday and Friday, while the Council was in session in the Methodist vestry, Prayer and Conference Meetings were held in the church. Of these we can speak only by report—not being able to be present. The united testimony is that they were excellent in every particular—strong in thought, and fervent in praise. The venerable Father Stacy was present; and the brethren had the great privilege of hearing fresh this aged servant of our Church. His reminiscences of the olden time, before the days of railroads, were graphic indeed. It was a benediction to see and hear him.

From a multitude of brethren we have the assurance that in numbers, zeal and denominational work, this Convention has had no superior, and few equals. The hospitalities of our brethren were taxed to the utmost; but they proved equal to the ordeal. The best spirit prevailed. Good was attempted; we know that good was done. And though the truth appeared that there "are diversities of operations," it also appeared that there is but one spirit. God bless and prosper every good word, every wise resolution, and every Christian purpose!

Christian Ambassador, New York NY, Sat. 7 Sep 1867

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REPORT ON THE STATE OF THE CHURCH.

To the New-York State Convention of Universalists:

BRETHREN—The subjoined note reached me at a period much later than its date;—so late as to render other arrangements than that which it proposes impossible:

Milford, Mass., June 26, 1867

DEAR BR. TOMLINSON,—I had entirely forgotten, until I opened this week's AMBASSADOR, that I was made, last year, the Committee of the New-York State Convention on the State of the Church. And now my "expatriation" [to another state] prevents the fulfillment of the duty assigned. As you are receiving the reports of the Societies and pastors, will you not make up a report as my substitute? Topics will readily suggest themselves. I suggest as one, the duty and policy of conformity to the law of the General Convention as to Fellowship and discipline, and of adopting a rule assuming jurisdiction. Yours in Christian love,

G. [Gerhardus] L. Demarest

Had this request been received at an earlier date, nothing could have induced compliance. If being already burdened with work would not have warranted refusal, the circumstances that I had quite recently performed this office, would have been sufficient justification. But time would not suffice to seek for another; and the Convention is asked to regard this report as simply a possible improvement on the absence of any.

The statistical returns referred to in the above note, have proved of little service in judging of the condition of the Church at large. Less than a third of the Societies have made any report whatever; and as this is the first year such reports have been called for, nearly all those which attempted to comply, found it impossible to furnish many of the items desired, because no adequate records had been kept. At best, we can only regard these reports as promises of reliable information to be gathered in future years. The work has been well begun, and will prove of great advantage, even if pursued no farther than once to learn the actual status of the various churches, societies and clergymen at present in our fellowship.

Not a few who have failed to report, have urged that the blanks were on too extended a scale, sought too much unimportant information, and imposed too heavy a labor upon clergymen and clerks. Be it so; but were they therefore warranted in returning no report whatever? How easy to have furnished the few simple items which such deemed sufficient! But how much more commendable the course of those who, whilst agreeing with these in opinion, diligently collected all possible information, and transmitted it with suggestions that a more limited range be adopted in the future! Surely the history of our denomination can have left none unimpressed with the conviction that we need more system in our administration, and if, like

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new converts generally, our earlier attempts be characterized by unwarrantable zeal, a little patience should be extended, in the confidence that experience will soon set aright.

From the returns made, we can simply gather the general facts, so patent to all from common observation, that we are experiencing the quickenings of a new life. Inactive parishes abound; but these have been lessened in number within the past year; whilst in those which have never lost their devotion, zeal is displaying new ardor and Christian enterprise is essaying new tasks. From the Hudson [River] to the [Great] lakes, our larger churches are enjoying a prosperity which, if not so demonstrative, is less superficial than that whose absence may interpret to indicate decay.

Even to our inactive Societies is due some mitigation of censure. Most of them, in their best days, were only able to secure the partial services of a clergyman, jointly with others. Many were simply common territory for those who preached by the way-side. From such services—our circumstances not permitting any more direct and efficient to follow—what other results could have been expected than those we have realized? Our astonishment should be that many of these, after a whole decade—in some instances nearly two decades—of sleep, awake to ask where young men can be found who will come dwell among them and minister at their altars. Slowly the Theological School is answering the question. No well-prepared graduate has gone begging for a place. The demand is far in excess of the supply.

But it must be understood that it is a demand for an educated, as well as consecrated, ministry; and an education of to-day, not of yesterday. He who, however qualified at first, shall fail to keep pace with the increasing enlightenment of the general mind, must not be surprised if he find even vacant pulpits, and pulpits not blessed with the support of this world's wealth, closed to his ministrations. In life's secular departments, enterprise and fidelity are demanded. Shall we expect success in our spiritual concerns on any easier terms?

At the risk of invading the province of another Committee, there should be pardoned to this report some suggestions on the indispensableness of missionary work in the advancement of our denominational interests. Not of the customary description of missionary operations would we here treat; but of the conversion of each pastor into a temporary missionary. We cannot spare from pastoral duties enough clergymen to answer the earnest calls for missionary services; and if we could, it would be questionable policy to open new fields into which we could not afterwards send permanent laborers.

But there are important points in our State—cities, and large and thrifty towns—where bands of believers, already respectable in numbers and character, are anxious to build themselves up, and become self-sustaining

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parishes. Where these are accessible from our centres of strength, they surely should receive some practical aid and material encouragement; and these can be rendered them by concert of action on the part of pastors, and friendly forbearance on that of Societies. Monthly—in some cases semi-monthly—preaching may be enjoyed for a year or two by such infant parishes, the pastors who reside within convenient distances successively devoting a Sabbath to their service. Usually, only one Sabbath per year need be spent by each clergyman in such labor of love, and on that day he may have his home pulpit supplied by some one of that growing class who do not give all their time and talents [i.e. full-time employment] to the ministry; or his parish may relinquish claim upon him for that day, in view of the common benefit to be subserved. This plan would have the additional advantage—impossible to be over-estimated—of developing a community of feeling among contiguous parishes, and fostering that denominational sentiment so indispensable to the integrity of Zion. Our Unitarian friends have already added several churches by this method, and we should profit by their experience.

Concentration of such labor would be required to produce permanent results. Better only one point in a dozen Counties receive such service during any given year, and that one cared for to the utmost, that it may then sustain a pastor of its own, than that twenty points receive fitful and indifferent service for however prolonged a period. Our error in the past, has been diffused surface-culture. We should now put in the sub-soil plough, though we expend our resources in a single field.

But the inquiry will be pressed, How are we to furnish pastors for the parishes when thus created? Older churches are without pastors, and the demand far exceeds the supply.

Undoubtedly this need of clergymen is one of the most pressing we have to provide for. Looking over many fields, which are white to the harvest, with so few to garner the rich yield; beholding others rank with the weeds of a vain philosophy, and few who have skill to uproot them and sow the good seed of the kingdom in their stead, the time-old cry for laborers must be our cry to the Lord of the Vineyard. How shall it be met? Not by folding our hands and waiting. "God helps those who help themselves." Our Conventions may do something to provide for the education of young men for the ministry. They may furnish schools and some pecuniary aid. But the Conventions cannot seek out young men to be educated; neither can they provide for the support of a fourth of the number our wants require. If the people want ministers, manifestly the people must provide the men, and provide for their educational training. The task of such provision must be as widely imposed as possible.

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Fondness for one's own bantlings is certainly a forgivable offence, and you will pardon a reference to a plan of County organization recently set forth in the columns of THE AMBASSADOR. That in many counties of the State, an organization, with memberships at one dollar per annum, for the support of young men at Canton is practicable, few who know the State will call in question; and your Committee is doubly fortified in his opinion by the approval which the plan has received in localities where the need is greatest.

But if it be objected that the multiplication of machinery would be too great, our sixteen Associations already existing, and not generally pressed with too weighty cares—destined soon, in the estimation of some, Othello like, to see their "occupation gone," by not having Committees on Fellowship and Discipline to present their annual reports of "No Business,"—might be made the executors of trusts for this purpose. With no additional machinery, simply becoming incorporated bodies, they could do a local work of this kind, for which the State Convention, much more than the General Convention, is too cumbrous and unwieldy. By memberships, and by bequests which they could easily encourage, there is not an Association in the State which could not be represented by one or more students at Canton, on terms honorable to their beneficiaries and profitable to the local interests of our faith. When New York shall have even her sixteen annually graduated at our Theological School, we shall see our waste places being converted into gardens of the Lord's planting.

No paper upon the State of the Church would be worthy of reception at this time, should it fail to take notice of the increasing tendency to loosen the hold which faith has upon the personal Christ. That liberal religious ideas are in the ascendant in intelligent communities, is a fact which even Orthodox authorities admit. Old religious connections are not just breaking up; they are already broken up. The interpretations which the fathers gave to Christianity, have silently dropped out of the faith of their children. But because they *dropped* out,—the mind having grown too large to retain them,—and were not *expelled* by the superior force of other positive views, Christianity itself temporarily shares the fate of its interpretations. Men dispute the claim of Christ because they have found wanting the claims of his expounders.

Nothing strange is it that in such a crisis, philosophy should come in to supply the answers to the soul's importunate questionings. Nothing strange is it that not a few who had held our own faith, making boast of its independence of inquiry, should give head to that philosophy. Nothing strange that even clergymen among us should be won by the glitter of this nineteenth century Platonism. Minds nominally accepting the same faith have approached it from different directions, and they see it in different

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relations. Hence new views will affect them diversely, strengthening the convictions of some and disturbing those of others.

No nervous anxiety should possess us that our ministerial ranks are here and there made to suffer by defection in the interests of this Christianity without Christ, or that the charm of assumed "progress" wins from us laymen we would gladly have retained. There is other work for us in this crisis than having our head turned into waters and our eyes into "fountains of tears," that we may "weep day and night" over the desolation. We must cease our reproaches and criminations, and "acquit us like men" in this contest for Christ. Not for an instant forgetting our traditional endorsement of progress, we must be able to show that all true progress is along the path which Jesus has indicated. With the truest reverence for our denominational fathers, we must be governed in our preaching by the apostolic formula of "diversities of administration, but the same Lord." Luther's preaching was indispensable in its time; it would be of little avail now. Murray's and Ballou's were mighty to the pulling down of the strongholds of creeds that imprisoned and tortured human souls. But we live in a time when the human soul is rioting in the sense of its new-gotten liberties and needs to be guided to the freedom of law. We are called to new issues, and we must meet them with new methods.

Upon the Universalist denomination pre-eminently devolves this task. By all our past history, by many even of our accustomed methods of defence, we are qualified for the work. We occupy a position more favorable in this hour than any other body of Christians, and our opportunities make peremptory the Divine call. The traditional policy of the Unitarian Church of America makes its relations to the Sacred Scriptures at best equivocal. Hence it is eminently disqualified, notwithstanding any resemblance of its faith in other respects to our own, to stay this flood of assumed naturalism which would sweep over the land. But to nothing has the Universalist Church in this country been more persistently attached, than to its faith in the divine authority of the Bible. We have endured the charge of the orthodox, on the one hand, of perversion of its sense, and that of the liberal, on the other, of foolish devotion to its letter.

But we have opposed the horrible doctrines of the creeds on this ground, among others: that they *were* horrible. We have plead for our gospel *because* it was good tidings. We have urged our faith because it was demanded by the God-given instincts of the soul. We have insisted that the beneficent Creator would not mock the affections he has bestowed; that the Father of spirits would not, fiend-like, trample under foot the tenderest yearnings of his children. Finding in the Divine Word direct statement of our faith, we have yet striven to show how that faith is demanded by the general principles of the Gospel.

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These two circumstances invest us with an influence in the present critical period which it will be criminal if we do not employ. Maintaining our allegiance to the Scriptures, our mission is to exhibit Scripture, reason and the soul in happy concord. We must show how Jesus and the apostles find the foundations for faith in the soul, in nature and in providence; how, not their assertion, but the lilies of the field, the fowls of the air, the sun, the rains, the affections of the heart, the word that is "nigh" us yearning for utterance, are God-chosen, daily witnesses of his truth. Whilst others are leaving Jesus that they may attain truth through philosophy, it will be ours to exhibit the philosopher's principle of harmony as the ultimate appeal of Jesus in the vindication of his truth—to present the Spirit of Truth as the Christian guide in the discovery of those "many things" which the world's unprepared state caused Jesus to leave, at the last, unsaid.

Thus much we owe,—owe as a denomination,—to those whose naturalism we condemn. Their revolt against Orthodoxy was invited, necessitated, by reason and the soul. By reason and the soul we must be prepared to vindicate the authority of Jesus. Our defence of the Gospel must be on its merits, not on its accompaniments. If others can be satisfied to cite prophecy and miracle in its behalf, we must show that it is the word "written, not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not on tablets of stone, but on the fleshly tablets of the heart." Sitting with Jesus, we must listen to the harmonies of nature and spirit which he addresses as the tests of truth and the guides to progress. *This*, if there is any virtue in our past defences of our faith; if there is any merit in Thos. Dick's celebrated argument for immortality and the Divine existence, is the Christian creed. This, rightly discerned, will arrest the hands uplifted in mad attempts to dislodge Christianity from the proud position it has won; and show all progress to be in the path which Jesus has marked.

The treatment of the topic indicated in the notes requesting the preparation of this report, has been rendered necessary by the action already taken by our Associations. That Fellowship and Ordination shall henceforth be vested only in the State Convention, is the fixed purpose; and congratulation on the result rather than argument for its attempt belongs to this hour. With this measure of manifest justice and fitness adopted with such unanimity as it evidently is to be, it is ardently hoped, and confidently believed, we shall be incomparably more harmonious in our operations and effective in our labors.

All of which is respectfully submitted,

CHAS. W. TOMLINSON

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THE AMBASSADOR ENTERPRISE

The Plan for the enlargement and improvement of THE AMBASSADOR meets with great favor. We are strong in the faith, that a vigorous and determined effort on the part of the friends of the paper will carry that plan into thorough operation. To make its meaning plain, we may say that it simply asks, If the equivalent of five hundred persons will not cheerfully consent to be individually assessed in a sum not exceeding \$10 a year for three years, the money thus raised to be not a gift but a Loan, and to be refunded as fast as the income of the paper, above current expenses, will permit? We say the *equivalent* of five hundred person; for if any brother, blessed with means, says he will be good for three, or five, or ten assessments, he would of course be permitted to do so. And we ask those of our friends whose incomes are large, to consider the matter in this light. Who will say, Count for me ten, five, three, or two?

The Plan is nothing new in newspaper enterprise. Very few journals, secular or religious, get a firm financial footing without first investing capital. A secular paper is about to be started but a few rods from this office, which must sink \$50,000 before a cent of income is realized. To make a good paper when patronage will warrant is not the business method. The public say, "Give us a good paper, and we will patronize it." That is the plan on which the Congregationalists have begun their new organ—*The Advance*. A paper worthy of patronage first; then the patronage. The success of THE AMBASSADOR in its present size, and present outlay, is assured. But this does not answer the wish or the purpose of the Convention. The object is to put \$5,000 a year, over and above the present expenditure, into the enlargement, editorship and other intellectual qualities of the paper. One man cannot do all that needs to be done to make a paper such as the age demands. We want a variety of minds, a variety of intellect, a variety of culture; we need several persons—each representing some specialty of thought, reform or denominational interest, to give strength to THE AMBASSADOR. The Committee say, and the Convention appears to approve the saying—that this AMBASSADOR enterprise cannot be second in importance to any denominational interest. The government asked the people to loan it money, and it pays 7-30 interest. We ask you, friends of this journal, to loan us \$5000 a year for three years, and we promise you a better interest—as good a paper as *many* minds acting under a single mind can make, with great mechanical improvements. If four thousand new paying subscribers come the first year, you will not be called upon for the second or third installment. If but half of the \$5000 is needed, the second year, but the half will be called for. But our poorest expectation assures us that at the end of the third year the income of the paper shall exceed its current expenses; and the word of the Convention is pledged, that all earnings above the sum shall go for the payment of the Loan.

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Now are there not 500 Universalists in New York, and elsewhere, friendly enough to so important an enterprise, to risk \$10 a year? The risk seems to us small; but the work it will achieve is great. It will at once place THE AMBASSADOR among the large, able and influential religious journals.

THE AMBASSADOR will, of course, reflect in its editorial columns the thought and the manner of its editor in chief. But brethren of different views on the "minor" points, and on questions of reform, and public policy, will find the columns of the paper open. *We will take no liberty in this regard that shall not be given to others.* We stipulate literary fitness and good temper as the only condition. Is that not fair? Can any one differing from the editor reasonably ask more? THE AMBASSADOR shall be true to what all agree is essential Universalism. Within this limit, liberty is our motto.

Now, brethren, *to the work at once.* In ten weeks, at most, we should be ready. We ask our ministers to lay this matter before their people. We ask our zealous laymen to give us their help. Go to such as can afford the loan (and keep in mind that we seek only a *loan*—we are not begging), lay the matter before them. And forward names at once. *Procrastination will be fatal.* The year is rapidly closing. What we do we must do now.

Send names to either of the Executive Committee, or to the publisher or editor of THE AMBASSADOR. The money will be returned if the plan is not adopted. But we are confident of success. Who will respond by return mail?

Christian Ambassador, New York NY, Sat. 14 Sep 1867

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