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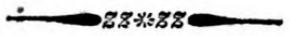
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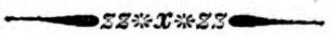
John Richmond
MINUTES
OF THE *London*
from J. Hall
3. 11
HUDSON RIVER

BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,

Maintaining inviolably the important doctrines of three equal persons in the Godhead ; eternal and personal election ; original sin ; particular redemption ; free justification by the righteousness of Christ imputed ; the absolute necessity of the spirit's operation ; efficacious grace in regeneration ; the obligation of believers to attend to all the precepts of scripture ; the final perseverance of real believers ; the resurrection of the dead ; the general judgment of the last day ; the eternal happiness of the righteous, and the everlasting misery of such as die impenitent ; the baptism of believers by immersion ; and the independence of their respective churches.



CONVENED IN THE
BAPTIST MEETING HOUSE,
IN THE CITY OF TROY,
ON THE 27th, 28th AND 29th OF AUGUST, 1817.



TROY, N. Y.
PRINTED FOR THE ASSOCIATION, BY
F. ADANCOURT.

1817.



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OF THE

HUDSON RIVER BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,

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WEDNESDAY, 27th AUGUST.

1. AT ten o'clock, A. M. brother JOHN WILLIAMS preached the Introductory Sermon, from 2 Cor. iii. 9. "For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory."

2. After sermon, the business of the Association was introduced; when brother ARCHIBALD MACLAY was chosen Moderator, and CHARLES G. SOMMERS, Clerk.

3. The ministering brethren present, in good standing in their own Churches and Associations, were affectionately invited to a seat with us.

Adjourned till 4 o'clock P. M.

Met pursuant to adjournment.

Prayer, by brother JOSHUA BRADLEY.

1. Letters from the Churches were read.

| CHURCHES. | MINISTERS AND MESSENGERS. | Baptised. | Received by letter. | Dismissed. | Excluded. | Restored. | Deceased. | Total. |
|------------------------------|--|-----------|---------------------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------|
| Poughkeepsie, | Lewis Leonard,* Daniel Williams, James Wilson, Daniel H. Barnes,* Abraham Mills, | 12 | | 5 | 1 | | 3 | 83 |
| | John Williams,* Thomas Hewitt, William Williams, Edward Probyn, Thomas Purser, Leonard Bleecker, John Withington, William Colgate, Joshua Gilbert, | | | | | | | |
| Fayette street, New-York, | Archibald Maclay,* Thomas Stokes, Wm. T. Burlingham, Stephen Lounsberry, Jacob H. Brouner,* William Sing, Caleb Willis, Robert K. Foster, John W. Pearce, | 54 | 21 | 9 | 6 | 2 | 5 | 458 |
| Mulberry-st. New-York, | Avery Briggs,* Ebenezer Rand, William Whitings, Benjamin Smith. | 75 | 16 | 5 | 5 | | 1 | 338 |
| Mt. Pleasant, | Charles G. Sommers,* Francis Wayland,* Henry Faxon,† Silas Covell, James Henderson, Platt Titus, Thomas Skelding, Nathaniel Jacobs, Asa Sheldon, Ebenezer Wilson, Anthony Goodspeed, George Squires, William West, Isaac V. Powelson. | 34 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 74 |
| Hudson, | | 38 | 1 | 1 | | | 3 | 84 |
| Troy, | | 60 | 19 | 5 | 1 | | | 230 |
| | TOTAL, | 273 | 58 | 26 | 14 | 3 | 13 | 1267 |

N. B. Ministers names are marked with an* Licensed preachers, thus†.

2. The Circular Letter written by brother Sommers was read, and brethren Williams, Leonard and Bradley, with the author, were appointed a committee of revision.

3. *Resolved*, That the Association appoint a prayer meeting to-morrow morning, at 7 o'clock A. M.

Adjourned till nine o'clock to-morrow morning.

Prayer by brother Briggs.

— 222 —

THURSDAY, AUGUST 28th.

Met agreeable to adjournment.—Prayer by brother Chace.

1. The Circular Letter was returned by the Committee, and adopted.

2. The Corresponding Letter, written by brother Maclay, was read and approved.

3. *Resolved*, To recommend to the Churches, that they take an annual collection in each Church, for the benefit of the Education Society; and that said collections be transmitted by their Messengers to the Association.

4. *Resolved*, That a collection be taken for the Education Society, at the next meeting of the Association, exclusive of the collections from the individual churches; and that brother Sommers preach a sermon on the occasion.

5. Received communications from the following Associations :

| ASSOCIATIONS. | MESSENGERS. | LETTER. | MINUTES. |
|---------------|--|---------|-----------|
| Warren, | William Everit, | do. | do. 1816. |
| Shaftsbury, | { Brethren Willey, Olmstead, Hisman, and Brown.** } | do. | do. 1817. |
| Philadelphia, | { Brethren Montan- ye,** Staughton** and Billings.** } | do. | do. 1816. |
| Warwick, | { Breth. Perkins,** Lathrop ** and El- lis.** } | do. | do. |
| Saratoga, | { Brethren Lee,** Swain** and Stil- well.** } | do. | do. 1817. |
| Hartford, | { Brethren Bab- cock,** Blake- ley,** Keech** & Martin.** } | do. | do. 1816. |
| Boston, | { Breth. Winchell** Sharp** and Lin- coln.** } | do. | do. 1816. |
| Franklin, | { Brethren Sawin,** Spaulding** and Wright.** } | do. | do. 1817. |

*Messengers whose names are marked thus** were not present.

6. The Association have learned with pleasure, that the subject of the Education Society, continues to excite a lively interest in the Churches. The following sums were received, viz:

| | | |
|--|------|---------|
| From Baptist Church in Fayette-Street, New-York, | \$21 | 50 |
| do. do. do. in Mulberry-Street, do. - - - | | |
| do. do. do. in Mount Pleasant, - - - | 6 | 56 |
| do. do. do. in Poughkeepsie, - - - | 6 | 31 |
| do. do. do. in Hudson, - - - | | |
| do. do. do. in Troy,* - - - | 20 | 12 |
| | | <hr/> |
| | | \$54 49 |
| Discount on notes. - - - | | 70 |
| | | <hr/> |
| BALANCE. - - - | | \$53 70 |
| | | <hr/> |

7. *Resolved*, That we acknowledge the receipt of Minutes from the Charleston Association, and transmit to them our Minutes, as an expression of our high esteem for that body, and wish to continue correspondence.

8. Appointed the following brethren, messengers to Corresponding Associations :

To Warren, brethren Briggs, Hoyle and Sommers.

To Shaftsbury, — Bradley, Covell and Sommers.

To Philadelphia, — Maclay, Chace and Bleecker.

To Hartford, — Wilson, Briggs and Leonard.

To Boston, — Briggs, Hoyle and Sommers.

To Franklin, — Bradley, Wayland and Sommers.

To Saratoga, — Bradley, Skelding, Maclay, Bleecker and Sommers.

To Rensselaerville — Bradley, Olmstead, Harris and Sommers.

To Warwick — Leonard and Wilson.

To Charleston — Talmadge and Willey.

9. *Resolved*, That we open a correspondence with the Otsego, Madison, Cayuga, Black-River, Chemung, Ontario and Holland-Purchase Associations, and that brethren Olmstead, Wayland, Willey and Sommers, be our Messengers.

10. *Resolved*, That the Annual Meeting of this Association, be changed from the last to the first Wednesday in August.

11. *Resolved*, That the next Association be held in the Meeting House of the Baptist Church in Mulberry-Street, in New-York, at three o'clock, P. M.

12. *Resolved*, That brother Leonard preach the Introductory Sermon next year; in case of failure, brother Briggs.

13. *Resolved*, That brother Maclay write the Circular Letter, and brother Brouner, the Corresponding.

14. *Resolved*, That brethren Sommers, Wayland, Titus and Skelding, be a Committee to superintend the printing and distribution of the Minutes.

* Amount collected after sermon delivered by A. Maclay, from Jo. 3, 29.

15. *Resolved*, To print one thousand Copies, and that one copy of the last Report of the Education Society, be forwarded with the Minutes, to each Association.

16. *Resolved*, That brother Brouner preach this afternoon, and brother Leonard in the evening.

17. *Resolved*, That the Association appoint a prayer meeting to-morrow morning at 7 o'clock, A. M.

Adjourned till four o'clock, P. M.

Prayer by brother Benjamin Sawin.

Met pursuant to adjournment.—Prayer by brother Leonard Bleeker.

1. *Resolved*, That the Association recommend the continuation of the Monthly Missionary Prayer Meeting.

2. *Resolved*, That the Association have with great pleasure read the Annual Report, of that great National Institution, the American Bible Society; and recommend, that the churches unite themselves to an Institution so much calculated to promote the Redeemer's Kingdom.

3. *Resolved*, That the Association acknowledge with pleasure the receipt of the following communication, from the Secretary of the Foreign Missionary Society.

“RESPECTED BRETHREN,

“AT the meeting of the Convention of the Baptist Board for Foreign Missions, the following resolution was unanimously passed.

“*That the thanks of this Convention be presented to the Associations, Societies, and Churches that have contributed to the funds of the Institution, with a view of aiding in the diffusion of the knowledge of the Lord Jesus* The Corresponding Secretary is requested to communicate to them this resolve, accompanied with the hope and persuasion that they will continue to abound in the service.”

With the liveliest satisfaction this Resolution is offered for your affectionate acceptance. The Report of the Convention and Board, now in the press, will be forwarded as early as practicable. Your zeal and piety will provide the earliest and most efficient channels for its circulation.

Among the articles which the Report will more particularly exhibit, you will be gratified to learn, that the meeting of the Convention has been distinguished by an uninterrupted and exalted harmony, by the spirit of fervent prayer, and jealousy for the Lord of Hosts.

Our sister White, who accompanied brother Hough and family to India, is married to Rev. Mr. Rowe of the Serampore mission, and is settled at Digah, nearly 400 miles up the river Ganges, where she superintends a growing and important female seminary. Brother Hough and family have arrived at Rangoon, to the joy of brother and sister Judson. Two additional young missionaries from New-England, have been appointed to go out and join them. Brother Ranaldson has been chosen a missionary to officiate in

New-Orleans and its vicinity, and brethren Peck and Welch to commence a Western mission, to be extended as Providence shall direct, to the Indian tribes. Its commencement will be at or near St. Louis, on the western banks of the Mississippi. Brother Rice has requested the sentiment of the Convention as to the propriety of his sailing immediately for India. The opinion was unanimous and decided, that, owing to the high importance of his services, he ought to remain longer in the United States. Should he visit you, you will, I am convinced, receive him as a brother beloved for the Saviour's sake.

I am, your brother and servant,

WM. STAUGHTON,

PHILADELPHIA, 23 May, 1817.

Cor. Sec. of the Board."

4. It is with pleasure the Association learn, that the Exposition of the Old Testament by Dr. Gill, now publishing by Mr. Woodward, of Philadelphia, will soon be completed, and feeling a strong desire that this highly important work should be generally circulated, they beg leave to recommend it to the particular attention of the Churches.

5. *Resolved*, That brethren Maclay, Leonard, Brouner and Sommers be a Committee to devise a plan for supplying the destitute places on the Hudson River, with the Word of Life.

Adjourned till to-morrow morning at nine o'clock, A. M.

Prayer by brother Sommers.

Met pursuant to adjournment.

Prayer by brother Withington.

1. *Resolved*, That this Association having taken into serious consideration, the destitute state of several villages on the Hudson River; they recommend to the churches composing this Association, to relinquish their claims to their respective Ministers for two weeks at a time, so as to supply such destitute place or places with preaching, for one year.

2. *Resolved*, That brethren Titus and Sommers be a committee in Troy, and brethren Williams, Maclay, Withington and Stokes, in New-York; to apply to their respective Missionary Societies for pecuniary assistance in the accomplishment of the above plan.

3. *Resolved*, That brethren Leonard, Perkins, Smith and Williams, be a committee to ascertain the most eligible place, and make such arrangements as may appear to them necessary.

4. *Resolved*, That brethren Skelding and Withington, be appointed to draw on the Missionary Societies in Troy and New-York, for such sums as may from time to time be required, should they concur in the measures recommended by the Association.

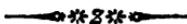
The business of the Association being satisfactorily brought to a close, the Moderator addressed the Assembly in an appropriate and solemn manner.

Adjourned. Prayer by brother Sommers.

ARCHIBALD MACLAY, *Moderator.*

CHARLES G. SOMMERS, *Clerk.*

CIRCULAR LETTER.



The Ministers and Messengers of the Hudson River Baptist Association, convened in the city of Troy, on the 27th, 28th and 29th of August, 1817.

TO THE CHURCHES THEY REPRESENT.

BELOVED BRETHREN,

THE return of this second Anniversary reminds us of the flight of time, which like a resistless torrent, is sweeping away the monuments of human glory, and the family of man. An admonition so truly solemn, cannot fail to excite in our bosoms the liveliest gratitude to the Father of Mercies, that we are permitted again to meet you in an associated capacity. We sincerely pray that grace, mercy and peace may rest upon you, and that your's may be the high satisfaction, ever to abound in the work of the Lord. That with your loins girt about, and your lamps burning: having terminated your mortal career, you may welcome the sound, that bids you enter into the joy of your Lord.

In an age like the present, when the power of Jehovah is displayed in the conversion of sinners, and multitudes from the east and the west, are coming to acknowledge the reign, and bow to the sceptre of Messiah; we feel a solicitude to render our Annual Epistle, instructive as well as edifying to the disciples of our ascended Redeemer.

Professing a belief in the important Doctrine of "Eternal and Personal Election," it becomes us, to support that doctrine by such arguments, as may tend to silence objectors, and assist you to meet and destroy the sophistry of those, who may attempt to seduce you from the faith once delivered to the Saints.

The principal cause of separation between the real christian and many nominal professors, is found to consist in their different apprehensions of the plan of Salvation by Jesus Christ. The one declares, in the language of Scripture, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."^[a] The other believes that obedience to the moral law, superadded to the righteousness of Christ, constitutes the ground of acceptance with God.—But with the first we are constrained to think, that the pardon of sin is an act of grace, irrespective of merit or demerit in the creature, and that the appointment of Christ Jesus to the office of a Mediator, is an evidence of God's everlasting love to his people. The page of inspiration abounds with passages, which describe the Salvation of the Elect, as resulting from the sovereign, unconditional and eternal love of Jehovah. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."^[b] The Apostle Paul declares concerning the Thessalonians: "But we are bound to give thanks alway to

^a Ephes. 2. 8. 9.

^b 2 Tim. 1. 9.

B

God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth.”[c] “According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love : having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.”[d] Against this doctrine numerous objections are raised, and some are of opinion that it ought not to be promulgated, admitting it to be true, because they view it as opposed to the compassion of God, and think that a belief of it, is not only prejudicial to the growth of christian graces, but serves to destroy the true motive to moral excellence. It is further alledged, that the doctrine of election is a secret, and lies far beyond the capacity of man to comprehend. But this is frivolous and without foundation. The doctrine is written on the page of inspiration as with a sunbeam, and it is in the power of every real believer to ascertain for himself his election of God.[e] Since this doctrine is so clearly revealed in the Bible, it is presumptuous to deny it, we ought rather to rejoice in the discovery, and contemplate it as it really is; the first link in the golden chain of a sinner’s Salvation. It is our desire, by the subsequent pages to weaken the prejudices, by answering some of the objections urged against the sublime and scriptural doctrine of Election.

Question 1. Does not the unconditional election of some, imply the eternal reprobation of the rest ?

Answer. Nothing is more abhorrent to our best feelings and at variance with our clearest convictions of the divine character, than to suppose that God has created millions of immortals, with no other design than to render them eternally miserable. It is granted that to choose some, is to leave the rest; but there is obviously a difference between creating men for the special purpose of making them miserable, and leaving them to reap the fruits of their voluntary corruption.[f] The Apostle Paul has anticipated this objection, in his epistle to the Romans. “Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.”[g] Jehovah was under no obligation to choose any, but would have remained eternally just had the whole of our race descended to the gulf of interminable despair. This doctrine supposes the exercise of sovereignty on the part of God, and here we acknowledge, is laid the eternal basis, upon which is raised the imperishable fabric of our hope. Let no reasonable man object to the sovereignty of God in Election, because this would equally militate against the economy of Providence, and so God would be unjust because he has made a difference between the Plebeian and the Prince, or because all are not rich, or possessed of talents such as have immortal souls. *c* 2d Thess. 2. 13. *d* Ephes. 1. 4. 5. *e* 1 Thess. 1. 4. Ephes. 1. 3. *f*. Galatians 6. 7. 8. *g* Romans 9. 14. 15. 16.

talized the names of Locke, of Newton or of Boyle. We might with equal propriety object to the sovereignty of God in choosing David, the youngest and most unlikely of all the sons of Jesse, to sway the sceptre of Israel.[*h*] Or because Saul of Tarsus, and not Gamaliel, was chosen, to preach amongst the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. They were, it is believed, equally just in the sight of God, but if any difference existed, it must have been in favor of the latter. No reason therefore can be assigned which better explains the divine sovereignty in the selection of Saul : or of thousands, who like him, were far from righteousness, than this, "even so father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight."[*i*] Now if the sovereignty of God stands connected with the harmony & glory of his moral government, by parity of reasoning it must be a part of the plan of redemption, because providence and grace mutually operate for the accomplishment of the same grand design. The election of some to eternal life, does no more obscure the idea of God's justice, than the appointment of Cyrus, rather than some other, to demolish the Babylonish empire, to emancipate the captive sons of Israel, and rebuild the temple.[*k*]

Question 2. Is not the doctrine of Election contrary to the divine attributes of love and mercy ?

Answer. If it is a disparagement to the mercy of God that he has power to save all, yet leaves some to perish ; it must also be unmerciful in God, to behold the temporal distress of any of his creatures, without so much as alleviating their misery, while it is in his power to banish all their sorrow and render them completely happy. Why are the tears of the distracted mourner permitted to flow ? Why do we hear the cries extorted by the keen pangs of disease ? Is it because the difficulty of raising the dead, or of healing the sick is greater now, than in the Apostolic age ? Or is there less reason for such a display of mercy ? Men are the same now as then, their pains are as acute, and their cries as piercing. But here we discover the sovereignty of an allwise and holy God. But it may be said, the cases are not parallel, because God has not promised to remove the present sorrows of man, whereas the means have been appointed, to bring men to the knowledge of the truth, and to Heaven. That God has not promised to make men completely happy in this world, does not prove that he has not power to do so ; now if it is admitted that God has power to make all men equally happy & yet permits some to be the subjects of unmitigated sorrow, it proves to a demonstration that God is a sovereign, and does as seemeth him good amongst the inhabitants of the earth. The Gospel is no farther a means of salvation than it is applied by the Holy Spirit. Did not Christ and his Apostles, with all the power of eloquence and clearness of demonstration, preach the gospel to the Jews who perished in the ruins of Jerusalem. If hearing the gospel was all that was necessary ; they heard it in all its purity and glory, as it sounded from the lips of the immaculate

h P. alms. 78. 70. 71. *1* Sam. 16. 12. *i* Matt. 11. 26. *k* Isaiah 54. 23. 45. 1. 4.

Jesus. Why were they not saved? But if it is conceded, that merely hearing the gospel is not sufficient, but an application of it to the heart is necessary to conversion, then it follows, that the salvation of a sinner is not a human, but a divine work. Now if this is the work of God, independent of human agency, and it appears that all who hear the gospel are not saved; what does this prove, but that as the wind bloweth where it listeth, so the Holy Spirit works by the instrumentality of the gospel, "to will and to do, of his own good pleasure." [T] One is pricked in the heart, while another equally attentive to the means of grace, and perhaps more moral; remains careless and hardened in sin. The different success of the gospel at various places and at different times in the same place, delivered by the same preacher and to the same audience, most clearly exhibits the sovereignty of divine grace, and proves beyond contradiction, that the conversion of sinners, is, "according to his purpose and grace," as to the subjects themselves, and also as to the time of their change, and the means by which it is to be accomplished. Now according to the divine and sovereign plan of redemption, we are informed in the Apocalyptic writings, that God has determined to save a great multitude, which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues: [m] it must therefore be obvious, that the doctrine of election is not contrary to the Scriptural idea of the mercy of God. Had not some been chosen; all must have perished, and it is undeniable, that a doctrine which secures the salvation of an innumerable multitude, is more compatible with the mercy and love of God, than a doctrine which reduces the salvation of all to an uncertainty.

Question 3. Is not the doctrine of Election calculated to deter men from endeavoring to be holy?

Answer. Provided an acknowledgement of this doctrine prevents men from becoming holy, then a denial of it must of course produce an opposite effect, and so, by denying the doctrine of election, men become more capable of holiness. But is not the contrary a fact of notoriety? None are more decidedly opposed to the doctrine of election than the men of the world. Does this make them more holy? Do they abandon the practices of dishonesty, of drunkenness, of profanity? Not until convinced that they are under the condemnatory sentence of the law, and that the wrath of God abideth upon them. Then, and only then, are they found to forsake sin and turn unto the Lord.

If I am of the number of the non-elect (is the language of some) of what advantage are all my endeavors for salvation? And if I am elected, why should I strive and labor to attain that, which by an immutable decree of Jehovah, is already secured to me? An objection like this cannot arise in the mind of a true believer; correctly instructed in the doctrines of the Bible, because it is his earnest desire to obey the command of God, "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: For it is God which worketh in

1 Philippians 2. 13. m Rev. 7. 9.

you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." *Phil. 2. 12. 13.* Here, we at once discover the end and the means comprehended in the same decree.

To say that the doctrine of election has a tendency to discourage, and drive men to despair, is preposterous in the extreme, because as we have already stated, it determines the salvation of a very great multitude; and no one positively knows but he is one of that number. Besides we are at a loss to perceive, how this doctrine tends to discourage the contrite soul, any more than those passages of Scripture which speak of the great difficulties that attend salvation. The following are examples, "Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." [n] "Many be called, but few chosen." [o] To this we may add, that nothing appears to us more calculated to promote sincere repentance, and genuine devotedness to God, than that astonishing display of sovereign mercy which appears in our own salvation, while thousands are left to perish. We trace the same sovereignty through every part of the divine providence, and are led to exclaim with surprise and gratitude; why were we not born before the flood? Why not amongst the idolatrous tribes of Asia? Why were we ever made to hear the voice, and accept of the mercy of God? And can only resolve it into the predetermining counsel of Him, "who doth as it seemeth him good amidst the armies of Heaven, and the inhabitants of the earth."

Question 4. Does not the doctrine of God's sovereignty in election destroy the moral obligation of man?

Answer. It is not more difficult to reconcile the obligation of man to be holy, with the doctrine of election, than to reconcile the immutability of God with the efficacy of prayer; yet prayer is evidently a duty enjoined upon every christian. There is then no more reason for rejecting the doctrine of election, than the doctrine of divine unchangeableness, which even reason teaches us to believe. Besides, men do not argue against the sovereignty of God on subjects of less importance. There are comparatively but few, who deny that the special will of God controuls the affairs of providence, and determines the period of human existence. But who would be so unreasonable as to say, because I do not know whether God has decreed that I shall live to see old age, or die in youth; I will not take food to preserve life, nor medicine to remove disease? Or, because it is concealed from me whether I shall prosper in the world or not; I will remain inattentive to the means of procuring wealth. Certainly the reason is equally forcible in both cases. Now the obligation of man to hate sin, and to practice holiness, arises out of the particular nature of each. If sin is hateful and injurious, which reason and scripture combine to prove; then, it ought to be repented of and forsaken. If holi-

n *Math. 7. 13. 14.* o *Math. 20. 16.*

is lovely and profitable; then all rational beings must admit the importance of being holy. The obligation of man to be holy may be proved from his relation to God, his great Creator, who has an undeniable right to demand a perfect subjection to his own most righteous laws. Nor do the special designs of God in the plan of redemption destroy the obligation to obedience, any more than the special favors bestowed upon one man in a nation, will exonerate the rest from their obligation to obey the common laws. If the doctrine of election will absolve the finally impenitent from the charge of guilt, for the same reason Judas would be innocent in betraying the "Son of Man." But neither the sins of Judas, nor the guilt of those who perish, is to be attributed to the grace of God in saving some, but is to be viewed as wilful transgression, for which the wrath of God is justly poured out upon the workers of iniquity. "Tribulation and anguish to every soul of man that worketh evil." [p] Not as an act of mere sovereignty; but because they have sinned. Hence the declaration of the Prophet, "Hast thou not procured this unto thyself, in that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God?" [q] The avenging justice of Jehovah can only appear in rewarding men according to their deeds; judging by the law by which they are criminated, as there would be no justice in punishing the innocent. But if it appears that man is really a sinner, and that sin is not his misfortune, but his choice: then his condemnation is just. "The wages of sin is death." [r] It will always be found an easy task to load any truth with misrepresentation, and to misconstrue the plainest exposition; but whatever may be alledged against the decrees of God, it nevertheless remains an irrefutable proposition, that "whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." [s] And yet it is equally plain, that no man is condemned because God decreed it, but because he is a sinner.

Question 5. If a man is sovereignly elected, will not this secure his salvation, though he should continue in sin?

Answer. The Lord Jesus has indeed declared, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." [t] But the means are as certainly determined as the end. Hence, when the Apostle Paul on his voyage to Rome, was in danger of shipwreck: he animated his companions with the assurance, that there should not be the loss of any man's life, only of the vessel. For said he, "there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, saying, fear not, Paul, thou must be brought before Cæsar: and lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee." [u] Nevertheless, Paul was attentive to the means of preservation: for when some endeavored to save themselves by abandoning the vessel, Paul said to the centurion, "except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved." This same Apostle, with all the ardour of christian confidence, declared his belief, that nothing could separate him

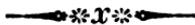
p Rom. 3. 9. q Jerem. 2. 17. r Rom. 6. 23. s Rom. 8. 29.
t John 10. 28. u. Acts 27. 23. 24.

from the love of God.[v] Yet he "kept under his body," he contended against principalities, & powers, & exhorted his brethren to abstain even from the appearance of evil: believing as he did, that grace in the heart was not only a regulating and conquering, but a transforming principle. It is as much decreed, that the elect shall be awakened to a sense of their guilt and danger; to earnest prayer for renewing and sanctifying grace, and to a diligent use of the proper means; as that they shall finally be saved: nor is there any decree which determines that they may continue in sin, unconverted and regardless of divine things; and yet enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. The very idea of election is connected with the accomplishment of the end proposed; that the elect should be "a peculiar people, zealous of good works." [w] While therefore we believe that the vicarious life and death of Jesus, constitutes the ground of our justification; we do not deny that his holy example was the pattern of our sanctification, and that no man, however splendid his talents, however respectable his standing as a professor of religion, will ever be saved, if he is found to cherish in his heart, the principles of covetousness, pride, revenge, love of the world. These the religion of Jesus condemns in every form and degree. It forbids the indulgence of them even in thought, and commands them to be strangled as the offspring of darkness.

Now, dear brethren, we affectionately exhort you, by the purity of this doctrine; by the sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the glorious hope of your calling; be careful to depart from iniquity. Deny yourselves of all ungodliness, and by crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts; demonstrate to the world that you "are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." [x] Remember, dear brethren! you are bound by the highest possible obligations, to "perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord." You are "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation." [y] Let therefore your watchful, exemplary and pious deportment, evince the divine reality of your faith. The world will draw their conclusions respecting religion, more from our spirit and conduct, than from our creed; strive therefore, as in a mirror, to display the virtues of Him, who, "hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."

AMEN.

ARCHIBALD MACLAY, Moderator.
CHARLES G. SOMMERS, Clerk.



CORRESPONDING LETTER.

Of the *Hudson River Baptist Association* to the several Associations with whom they correspond.

BELoved BRETHREN,

CONVINCED that you feel a deep interest in all that concerns the peace and prosperity of Zion, and in whatever tends

• Rom. 8. 38. 39. • Tit. 2. 14. x John 1. 13. y 1 Pet. 2. 9.

to advance the Redeemer's Kingdom, you cannot view with indifference those mighty movements which, in our day, are made by the christian world to diffuse the light of divine truth, and spread the knowledge of salvation through Christ crucified, among the nations. An irresistible impulse has been given to the operations of Bible Societies. The oracles of God are circulating in a great variety of languages, with unexampled rapidity. Christians of all denominations, it should seem, with one consent agree to put their fellow men in possession of the sacred Scriptures, without noise or comment; and in this God-like measure we trust you take an active part. The Missionaries of the cross have already unfurled the banners of the Prince of Peace in every quarter of the Globe. Multitudes of the grossest idolaters have submitted to his sceptre, become the subjects of his grace, and now worship him as "Lord of all:" and we presume the period can be at no great distance, when "all the ends of the world shall remember, and turn unto the Lord; and when all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before him." It is pleasing to reflect that of late, in many sections of our own beloved and highly favored country, God has poured out his Spirit, displayed his omnipotent power to save, and rendered the place of his feet glorious. The wilderness and the solitary places have been made glad, and the desert to bud and blossom as the rose. These goings of our God in his sanctuary, these displays of his matchless grace, we trust, have filled our hearts with admiring gratitude, and occasioned a song of thanksgiving to his blessed name. May our unceasing prayer ever be, "Let the whole earth be filled with HIS glory!" The river which makes glad the City of our God is flowing in new channels, winding its course among humble valleys, refreshing thirsty deserts, and enriching with his choicest blessings the most distant climes and nations, until, agreeably to divine prediction, "the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the whole earth." It will doubtless be gratifying to you, to be informed, that during the past year, the Lord, in infinite mercy, has been pleased to pour out his Spirit on the churches composing our infant Association, and has rendered his word effectual for the salvation of many precious souls; so that we have been constrained "to thank God and take courage." The business of our present session has been conducted with the utmost harmony and brotherly love, and we have found by sweet experience the truth of that declaration: "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity; for there, the Lord commandeth the blessing, even life forever more!"

We solicit, dear Brethren, the continuance of your correspondence, and shall always be happy to hear of the prosperity of the cause of Jesus among you; and may you ever be found "standing fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel!"

ARCHIBALD MACLAY, *Moderator.*
CHARLES G. SOMMERS, *Clerk.*



MINUTES

Minutes proceed

OF THE

HUDSON RIVER BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,

HELD IN THE BAPTIST MEETING-HOUSE,

AT MOUNT-PLEASANT, WESTCHESTER COUNTY, (N. Y.)

On the 4th and 5th of August, 1819.



1. AT ten o'clock A. M. the introductory sermon was delivered by brother JOHN STANFORD, from Acts xxviii. 15. "*Whom, when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage.*"
2. The Association was then organized by choosing brother JOHN STANFORD, Moderator, and brother AVERY BRIGGS, Clerk.
3. Prayer introductory to business by the Moderator.
4. After an interim of a few minutes appointed brother WEBB to preach at four o'clock this afternoon.
5. *Resolved*, That visiting ministers and delegates present from other Associations, be invited to a seat with us. When brethren Perkins, Webb, Griffiths, Smitzer and Fiveash took their seats.
6. Proceeded to read the letters from the Churches composing this Association, and took the following minutes.

N. B: The names of ordained ministers are in SMALL CAPITALS, of licensed preachers in *italics*.

| CHURCHES. | MESSENGERS. | Baptized. | Rec'd by let. | Dismissed. | Excluded. | Restored. | Deceased. | Total. |
|--------------------------|--|-----------|---------------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------|
| Poughkeepsie. | LEWIS LEONARD, | 1 | 1 | 7 | | | 1 | 72 |
| | DANIEL H. BARNES, | | | | | | | |
| | William Plummer, Alfred Raymond. | | | | | | | |
| Fayette-Street, N. Y. | JOHN WILLIAMS, | 20 | 13 | 11 | 5 | | 2 | 481 |
| | JOHN STANFORD, | | | | | | | |
| | Thomas Garniss, | | | | | | | |
| | William Colgate, | | | | | | | |
| | Thomas Purser, | | | | | | | |
| | Joshua Gilbert, William Butler, Leonard Bleeker, | | | | | | | |
| <i>Carried forward</i> | | 21 | 14 | 18 | 5 | | 3 | 553 |

A

| CHURCHES. | MESSENGERS. | Baptized. | Met by let. | Dismissed. | Excluded. | Retired. | Deceased. |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------|------------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| | <i>Brought forward.</i> | 21 | 14 | 18 | 5 | | |
| Mulberry-Street, N. Y. | ARCHIBALD MACLAY, | 35 | 17 | 3 | 12 | | |
| | Thomas Stokes, | | | | | | |
| | Edward Probyn, | | | | | | |
| | William Winterton, | | | | | | |
| | Charles Postley, | | | | | | |
| Mount-Pleasant, | Nathaniel Price, | | | | | | |
| | S. V. D. Moore, | | | | | | |
| | Joseph Saunders, | | | | | | |
| | Charles Brooks, | | | | | | |
| | JACOB H. BROUNER, | 1 | 3 | 3 | 3 | | |
| Hudson, | Caleb Willis, | | | | | | |
| | George Fitlar, | | | | | | |
| | Mark Yale, | | | | | | |
| | William Mangham, | | | | | | |
| | Daniel Dellanoy, | | | | | | |
| Troy, | Robert K. Foster, | | | | | | |
| | AVERY BRIGGS, | | | 5 | | | |
| | William Sturges, | | | | | | |
| | Samuel Gifford, | | | | | | |
| | CHARLES G SOMMERS, | 46 | 9 | 6 | 4 | | 2 |
| Albany,* King-Street, C. S.* | John Henderson, | | | | | | |
| | Thomas Shrimpton, | | | | | | |
| | Thomas Skelding, | | | | | | |
| | Josiah Convers, | | | | | | |
| | Nathaniel Jacobs, | | | | | | |
| Isaac V. Powelson, | | | | | | | |
| JOHN FINLAY, | | | | | | | |
| — Crocker, | | | | | | | |
| NATHANIEL FINCH. | | | | | | | |
| | Total. | 103 | 48 | 30 | 24 | | 11 |

* Added this session.

7. On motion, *Resolved*, That any church wishing to join this Association shall now have opportunity to present their request: Whereupon messengers delegated from the First Baptist Church in Albany, and also from the Baptist Church in King-Street, C. S. presented letters of application.

8. *Resolved*, That brethren WILLIAMS, MACLAY and LEONARD be a Committee to examine the application of the Church in Albany, and that brethren BROUNER, Butler and Stokes be a similar Committee on the application of the Church in King-Street.

9. The Circular letter, prepared by brother AVERY BRIGGS, and the Corresponding letter written by brother LEWIS LEONARD, were read and referred to a committee of revision composed of brethren PERKINS, MACLAY and FINLAY.

10. *Resolved*, That we adjourn until 3 o'clock this afternoon.— Prayer by brother FIVEASH.



At 3 o'clock met pursuant to adjournment. Prayer by brother **CARRITHS**.

1. The committee, to whom the request of the Albany Church was referred, reported favourably: Whereupon

Resolved, That said Church be received into this body. The right hand of fellowship was then presented to JOHN FINLAY, its Pastor, by the Moderator in behalf of this Association.

2. The committee, appointed to examine the application of the Church in King-Street, C. S. made a report, recommending its reception: Whereupon

Resolved, That said Church be received into union with this Association. The right hand of fellowship was presented to NATHANIEL FISCH, its Pastor, by the Moderator.

3. Received communications from corresponding associations as follows, viz. Shaftsbury; Philadelphia; Warwick, AARON PERKINS, *Messenger*; Hartford; Boston; New London; Cayuga.

At 4 o'clock brother WEBB preached according to appointment, from 1 Cor. xv. 28: after which the business of the Association was resumed.

4. Appointed brethren WILLIAMS, Raymond, Stokes and Probyn, a committee to examine the minutes of the corresponding associations.

5. Appointed messengers to sister associations: as follows, viz. to Warren, brother BRIGGS. Shaftsbury, brethren SOMMERS and FINLAY. Philadelphia, brethren WILLIAMS and Stokes. Warwick, brethren LEONARD, BRIGGS and FINLAY. Hartford, brethren MACLAY, LEONARD, PERKINS and Raymond. Boston, brother BRIGGS. Frank-*lin*, brother BRIGGS to convey minutes. Rensselaerville, brethren SOMMERS and Shrimpton. Charleston, Hon. Matthias B. Talmadge and brother Elijah Lewis. Cayuga, brother BRADLEY.

6. *Resolved*, That three sermons be preached to-morrow, 1st at 10 o'clock A. M. by brother FINLAY; 2d at 3 o'clock P. M. by brother BRIGGS; 3d at evening by brother WILLIAMS.

7. Appointed a prayer-meeting to-morrow morning at sun-rise.—Adjourned. Prayer by brother FINCH.

At evening brother MACLAY according to appointment preached a sermon for the benefit of the Education Society, in the Presbyterian Meeting-House, the use of which had been politely tendered by that Society, and a collection was taken up, amounting to \$14 32.

Thursday Morning.

Met pursuant to adjournment. Prayer by brother PERKINS.

1. The committee to whom was referred the Circular and Corresponding letters report, that they beg leave to recommend their adoption without alteration. Upon which

Resolved, That the Corresponding and Circular letters be adopted by the Association.

2. The committee appointed to examine the communications from

corresponding associations report, that they recommend the insertion in our minutes of the following note taken from the minutes of the Warwick association: viz.

Whereas persons of evil principles and character, frequently impose on the churches and on the public as Ministers of the gospel; we recommend that no person be received and countenanced as a preacher without satisfactory credentials.

3. Our Secretary laid before us an interesting communication from the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions. Whereupon,

Resolved, That we duly appreciate and are highly gratified with the unwearied exertions of the Board to promote the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom in the world, and at the same time assure them, that we most cordially reciprocate with them in their labour of love, and earnestly pray, that their pious efforts may not be in vain in the Lord.

4. *Resolved*, That the next anniversary of this Association be held in the Baptist Meeting-House at Albany, on the 1st Wednesday in August, 1820.

5. *Resolved*, That brother WILLIAMS be appointed to preach the introductory sermon, and in case of failure brother LEONARD.

6. Appointed brother WILLIAMS to write the circular, and brother FINLAY, the corresponding.

7. *Resolved*, That brother BRIGGS be appointed to superintend the printing and distribution of the minutes.

Adjourned to meet immediately after sermon in the afternoon.—
Prayer by brother Smitzer.

At 10 o'clock A. M. brother FINLAY preached from Isa. xlix. 3.
At 3 o'clock P. M. brother BRIGGS preached from Mat. xi. 6. After divine service sung an Hymn and proceeded to business.

1. In consequence of a communication from the President and Trustees of the Bap. Theo. Seminary of New-York,

Resolved, That this Association learn with much pleasure the exertion and success of that institution, and recommend to the Churches connected with us to make annual contributions for the future promotion of this important object.

2. *Resolved*, That we recommend to the Churches composing this body, to continue their laudable exertions to promote the Foreign and Domestic Mission Societies, by annual collections or otherwise.

3. *Resolved*, That we learn with pleasure, that the recommendation contained in the Minutes of the last session, viz. "that collections be made for foreign and home Missions and for the Education societies," had not been neglected, and that all the churches have contributed something to aid in promoting these important objects, according to the spirit of that recommendation. Some churches transmitted their money through one channel and some through another. The following sums were all that were transmitted to the Association, viz.

| | | | |
|------------------------------|---|---|---------|
| Poughkeepsie, for education, | - | - | \$4.37½ |
| Mount-Pleasant, do. | - | - | 5 0 |
| Foreign Mission, | - | - | 1 47 |
| Domestic Mission, | - | - | 4 50 |
| Troy, for Foreign Mission, | - | - | 20 17 |
| Home Mission, | - | - | 13 0 |

4. *Resolved*, That monthly concert of prayer so extensively observed throughout the christian world be recommended to this body, and the churches are hereby desired to join with their brethren in prayer to Almighty God for the spread of the gospel, on the afternoon or evening of the first Monday in every month.

5. *Resolved*, That brother LEONARD be appointed to preach a sermon at our next anniversary, on Wednesday evening, for the benefit of the Baptist Theo. Seminary of the state of New-York.

6. *Resolved*, That the thanks of this Association be tendered to the Presbyterian society in this place, for the polite offer which they made of the use of their Meeting-House whenever it might be desired during the session; and that brother WILLIAMS be appointed to communicate this resolution.

The business of the association being closed, an appropriate and fervent address was made to the Throne of Grace, by brother MACLAY.

At evening brother WILLIAMS preached according to appointment, from Luke xv. 10.

CIRCULAR LETTER.

The Elders and Brethren of the several Baptist Churches belonging to the Hudson River Baptist Association, met at Mount-Pleasant, Westchester County, August 5, 1819.

To the Churches with whom they are connected.

BELOVED BRETHREN.

It is your privilege to live in a period peculiarly interesting to the friends of Zion.

At no time, since the Apostolic age, have more united and vigorous efforts been made, to extend the boundaries, and promote the interests of the Redeemer's Kingdom, than are now making; and at no period, since the age of miracles, have such efforts been crowned with greater success and encouraged by fairer prospects.

It is unnecessary to give a detail of the operations and success of Bible, of Missionary, and Religious Tract Societies and of Sabbath School Associations. These you will find exhibited in the periodical publications of the day, in the most pleasing and encouraging point of view.

Christians of different denominations appear to be awaking from the long slumber and apathy of past ages, and cherishing a deep sense of their duty to combined exertion to send the Gospel, which bringeth sal-

vation, to the remotest sections of the Earth. And the success, which has hitherto attended their exertion, certainly encourages the delightful hope, that the era is not far distant, when the "Angels shall fly through the midst of Heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach, to them that dwell upon the Earth, and unto every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people. Which the wilderness and solitary places shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose."

Already have the Scriptures, in whole or in part, been translated into more than thirty languages, of the East, and more than fifty Missionary Stations have been established on the Continent of Asia, where the heralds of Messiah are planting the standard, and unfurling the banners of the Cross. Nor have the destitute portions of our own Country been neglected. The word of life has been communicated to them, and Missionaries are continually going forth to explain and enforce the doctrines of sacred truth, and to excite their attention to the things, which belong to their eternal peace and welfare.

Nor has their labour been in vain, nor strength spent for nought. Extensive revivals have been enjoyed in many of the Churches, and though, in our own immediate vicinity, fewer have been translated out of the Kingdom of Satan into the Kingdom of God's dear Son during the past year, than in some former years; yet, in a general and extensive sense, Zion is in great prosperity. Her "doctrine is dropping, like rain, and distilling, like the dew, like the small rain, upon the tender herb, and showers upon the grass. Waters are breaking out in the wilderness, and streams in the desert." In view of these things, have we not abundant cause to exclaim, with wonder "what has God wrought" and to acknowledge with gratitude "it is the LORD's doing and it is marvellous in our eyes." Cold indeed, must be the heart, and lifeless the tongue, that will not join in celebrating the glorious triumphs of the present day, in anthems of praise and hallelujahs to the LORD.

But while we would magnify and bless the name of the Most High, for the prosperity of Zion, the increase of the Churches, and the extension of the Redeemer's reign; have we no cause for humiliation and prayer. Are all the enemies of the truth silent and inactive? Is no dark, portentous cloud beginning to discover itself in our religious hemisphere, which is fitted to alarm? YEs.—Infidelity and skepticism are rapidly progressing. The doctrines of the Divine nature of our LORD, and the future punishment of the finally impenitent, are not merely assailed, but openly denied.

If the present may emphatically be called a day of religious activity it is no less certain that it is also a day of apostacy from the faith, of abounding iniquity, and prevailing error. Have we not reason to believe, that the time has already arrived, characterised in prophetic Scripture by "a falling away;" when not only the openly vicious and avowed enemies of the truth, but its professed friends also, having the form of godliness but denying the power thereof, will no longer "endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts, heap unto themselves teachers

having itching ears, and turn away from the truth, and are turned unto fables."

It has ever been the object of the adversary of our souls to mar the beauty, weaken the strength and disturb the order and harmony of the Church. This he effects by various means, but by none more successfully than by introducing heresies and sowing discord among the Brethren. We would not unnecessarily call off your attention from more pleasing considerations, nor prematurely sound the alarm, but when the essential doctrines of the Gospel, doctrines, which constitute the very basis of the christian Religion, are not regarded as of much importance, perhaps called in question and even denied by those, who still claim to be called Christians; is it not time that we be apprized of our danger, roused from criminal supineness, and on our guard, lest we also be carried away with dissimulation; and moved from our steadfastness in the faith.

From considerations like these, it will not, it is believed, be deemed unimportant or premature to institute an inquiry after some of the efficient causes of errors, and to prescribe some effectual means of escaping them. It is not our design to give you a long or metaphysical disquisition on this subject, but only to make some few obvious and practical remarks, which may, through the Divine blessing, tend to advance your growth in grace, and in the knowledge of our LORD and Saviour Jesus Christ.

And may we not recognise, among the principal avenues to heresy and delusion, a want of greater watchfulness, more devout and fervent prayer, and an affectionate exercise of brotherly love? An immediate and assiduous attention to these duties, therefore, permit us particularly to recommend as highly important and beneficial. The term watchfulness, it may not be improper to remark, will here be used in its most general and extensive application. A careful attention to the principal instances of defection from the Faith, which have occurred in the christian Church, will be found, we trust, sufficient to convince even the most skeptical, that most of these defections may be traced in their incipient stages to a neglect of watchfulness. As you appreciate then, the peace and harmony of the Church, the glory of God, and an escape from error, watch against pride. It is a prolific source of heresy. It is opposed to that christian charity, which "exalteth not itself, and is not puffed up," and effectually destroys that sense of dependance on the necessary teachings and illuminating influence of the Holy Spirit, which the Scriptures inculcate.

Through the pride of his heart, "vain man would be wise," saith Job, "though born like the wild ass's colt." It is through the influence of this same unfriendly passion, that human reason, unaided by the light of divine truth, is thought competent to investigate and comprehend every doctrine, that it is important to believe. With this persuasion, how many peruse the sacred scriptures, previously determining to believe nothing, which does not perfectly accord with this false standard. Thus, through pride, the doctrines of the Gospel are arraigned at the bar of human reason as the sole arbiter of polemic divinity, and approv-

ed or condemned according to its decision. But what can be more preposterous or fatal, yea, what more contrary to sound reason itself, than such a procedure. Is it, let it be asked, a dictate of boasted reason, that, because it is the acknowledged umpire of things within the sphere of its cognizance, that it must also necessarily be such concerning those things, which are above the sphere of its operations? And are not some of the doctrines of the scriptures, though not contrary to, yet above the sphere of the operations of reason? Can nothing be revealed to us from Heaven the truth of which shall be made to depend, not on the inductions of reason, but on the authenticity of such Revelation; and as such claim to be received by Faith.

Not to mention the Divinity of Christ, are not the efficacy of his blood to atone for sin—the resurrection from the dead—and the justification of believers, through faith, doctrines of the Gospel evidently of this character? Can reason, with all its power, fully comprehend or account for these doctrines, and ought any other evidence of their truth to be required or assigned, than that God has evidently revealed them? Think not then, dear Brethren, more highly of yourselves than you ought to think. Cherish a deep and humbling sense of the weakness, fallibility and limited power of the human intellect, and of the importance and necessity of the divine teachings of the Holy Ghost. Beware lest any spoil you through the pride of human reasonings and philosophy, falsely so called, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of this world, and not after Christ; for the scriptures assure us that the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God, and after that, in the wisdom of God, the world, through wisdom, knew not God, and it pleased Him, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe. Again, would you avoid the avenues to error, carefully watch against a criminal conformity to the world, its maxims, pleasures and pursuits. These will lead you astray from God, and expose you to the temptations and snares of the adversary. For the same important end, watch against either a neglect of, or careless attendance upon the ordinances of God's house, particularly of public worship in the sanctuary, and of the Lord's supper. These are especially designed for the instruction and edification of God's people and if we duly and prayerfully wait upon the Lord in them we may reasonably expect that He will manifest Himself unto us as He does not unto the world and preserve us from falling. Especially would we exhort you to be watchful over your lives, conversation and deportment, to cultivate personal and habitual piety toward God, and to cherish an impressive sense of your accountability to Him as well for your sentiments as behavior, remembering that the day is rapidly advancing, when in the light of eternity and by the unerring standard of truth, all the various and discordant opinions of men must be tried. Such a looking unto and waiting for the coming of our Lord and Saviour, when our faith and practice must pass the ordeal of critical investigation, and a retribution be made according to the merit or demerit of character, will tend to destroy that glare of worldly consideration, in which false doctrines and heresies are so much inwarp, and thus prove an effectual antidote against them.

Again may we not assign as another cause of prevailing error, that Christians are no more fervent and persevering in prayer to the God of all grace and consolation for a blessing on the means of grace and for the instructive and sanctifying operation of His good Spirit. The interests of the Redeemer's Kingdom should be near our hearts, and we should be deeply concerned, when the enemies of the Church are rapidly increasing around us, setting up their ensigns and trophies, and making such unhappy progress in desolating the House of God. A sense of our ignorance, weakness and dependance, and of the fulness there is in God of wisdom and strength ought surely to lead us to a throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in every time of need, and to inspire us with a fervency and perseverance in our prayers which will insure success. And will He, who permitted Jacob to prevail with Him, and who led, protected and preserved Israel, like a flock, suffer those, who cry unto Him day and night, that they may be kept holy and blameless unto the coming of Christ, to be carried away through the error of the wicked, and moved from their steadfastness in the faith? It is impossible. God is faithful and has never said to the seed of Jacob seek ye my face in vain. Let then impending danger, your own insufficiency, and absolutely dependance on God; and, especially, let the encouraging examples and assurances offered in scripture stimulate all that profess GODLINESS to make known their request to God, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving: And He, who sitteth in the circle of the Heavens, shall shortly bruise Satan under your feet and cause the Kingdom of Christ and the doctrines of grace to advance triumphantly over delusion, superstition and ignorance.—

Finally: Be diligent in the exercise of brotherly love.—Love is certainly one of the noblest passions of our nature, and when under the guidance of reason and religion, it powerfully prompts us to promote the best interests of mankind.

“*Sirs, ye are Brethren,*” said Moses to the discordant Israelites in Egypt, with a design to strengthen the bonds of friendship and affection. We would therefore earnestly enforce the duty of brotherly love. It is the bond of perfectness. The cement of christian fellowship. The commencement of Heaven on Earth: And it will oppose an efficient barrier against the overwhelming torrent of heresy and error.

Opposed to brotherly love are *Ambition*, which aims to be highest—*Pride*, which owns no obligations—*Envy*, which can bear no superior—*Jealousy*, that apprehends affronts and injuries which were never intended—*Anger*, which refuses to deliberate—*Avarice*, which withholds the portion that misery claims—*Selfishness*, which knows no wants but its own—and *sensual Pleasure*, which intoxicates the senses, and drowns the understanding. Against these, which are predominant features in our corrupted natures, we exhort you ever to be guarded. Let love be without dissimulation. Approve the things that are excellent. Be studious to please, and know that the prosperity of Zion is, in a great measure, dependant upon the exercise of Christian love.

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The influence, which the cherishing of the kindly affections of christian charity, meekness and benevolence towards our Brethren will have on our lives, temper and disposition of heart, is of the most pleasing and salutary nature. It eminently promotes sanctification and growth in grace, stimulates to prayer, and prepares for spiritual intercourse and communion with God. The falling away of such would constitute a strange phenomenon, which we shall never anticipate. Their hearts are effectually secured against the attacks of the adversary. By the armory of the Gospel, they are prepared to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the Saints. Their weapons are not carnal, but mighty to the pulling down of strong holds. Omnipotence itself is engaged in their protection, and Divine goodness ensures success. But the exercise of brotherly love has not a more powerful or salutary effect, in preserving from error, on those who exercise it, than it does on those to whom it is exercised. It inspires an affectionate tenderness to those who have erred, and a persevering attempt to enlighten, instruct and reclaim them. Convince them that love to their souls and the cause of the Redeemer is the only motive that induces you to such assiduous exertion for their good, and you may reasonably hope that such labours of love will be crowned with success.—Remember that you are Christians, and particularly contemplate the adorable Jesus, the pattern of human perfection and walk in his example. Consider with what solicitude he sought to recover those, who were lost, and to bring back those who had wandered. Let his love to us, so unmerited, so unbounded, excite our utmost love to him, and let that love be manifested, by every suitable method to reclaim his children, when they err. May the same mind be in you, which was also in Him, whose meat and whose drink it was to do the will of his Father, and who went about doing good. Add therefore to your faith, knowledge, temperance, patience; to these add godliness; and to godliness, charity. For if these things be in you and abound, they will effectually preserve you from error, and evince that ye are not barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

JOHN STANFORD, *Moderator.*
AVERY BRIGGS, *Clerk.*

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CORRESPONDING LETTER,

*From the Hudson River Baptist Association, to the several Associations
with whom they correspond.*

BELoved FATHERS, AND BRETHREN,

The countenances, and counsel of your messengers, have afforded us much real satisfaction; and the tidings you announce through the medium of your minutes and letters, have been as cold water to a thirsty soul: and we should do violence to our feelings, not to recip-

recate with you, in such correspondence. You will therefore receive the messenger we have appointed, and the minutes we have transmitted, as a grateful return for your labour of love.

In perusing your communications, we find many things adopted by your respective bodies, in which we take a deep interest. We more especially refer to your pious recommendations to the churches, devoutly to join in the monthly concert of prayer, and liberally to contribute to the support of the education, foreign and domestic missionary societies. These are institutions of more than ordinary importance. The former has a special reference to the two latter; while each in our humble opinion, tend greatly to facilitate the growth and happiness of our churches, and the long expected triumph of the gospel, throughout the world.

You will perceive by our minutes, that those worthy examples have not been wholly forgotten by us. They have occupied a place in our deliberations; they have shared in our liberalities; they still dwell in our hearts, and have our most fervent supplications for their prosperity and final success.

Never was there a period when opportunities of doing good to Zion were more numerous than at the present. Every quarter of the globe, with almost irresistible eloquence, cries, "come over and help us." The messengers of salvation may employ all their time and all their talents, in breaking to a starving multitude, the bread of life. The opulent may without prodigality, appropriate fortunes, to promote objects of unquestionable charity. The widow with her mite, may now approach the treasury of the Lord, in the full assurance, that there are multitudes where necessities will justify a contribution, even from penury and want. While all who love our Lord Jesus Christ, if they can do no more, are imperiously called upon to pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth, as it is heaven." Such a state of things not only demands our united energies, but claims our highest gratitude; "for verily many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see and have not seen them, and to hear those things which ye hear and have not heard them." They tilled the soil, and sowed the good seed; it is ours to gather the harvest. "And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal; that both he that soweth, and he that reapeth, may rejoice together." Let us not therefore be weary in well doing, but strive together for the faith of the gospel, until we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. We are happy to learn from well authenticated documents, that the churches composing the different associations of our denomination, (with few exceptions) remain steadfast in the faith, and practice, once delivered to the saints. A large proportion of them are blessed with a faithful, evangelical ministry, and in a number of instances these have been considerable extensive revivals, the year past: These are indications that the Lord has not forgotten to be gracious, and inspire the hope, that future prosperity awaits us.

It would have been grateful to our feelings, to have contributed to your pleasure, by presenting you a history of more than ordinary accessions to the churches composing this fraternity. But it is not with us, in this respect, as it has been in some seasons past; yet God has not left himself without a witness; refreshing showers of grace, have been enjoyed by some of the churches; others have experienced a more gradual increase, while a spirit of unanimity, and christian charity, without one exception, prevails through the whole body. We know of no other strife among us, but to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

Our present session has been propitious. We trust the spirit of the Lord has presided in our councils, assisted in our deliberations, and will bless this anniversary, to our growth in grace, and mutual edification. And now, dear brethren, we most sincerely desire an interest in your prayers, and a continuation of your interesting correspondence, and heartily commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all those which are sanctified.

In behalf of the Association,

JOHN STANFORD, *Moderator.*

AVERY BRIGGS, *Clerk.*



ASHBEL STODDARD, *Printer, Hudson.*