

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.

ASHEEL STODDARD, Printer, Hudson.

MINUTES

OF THE HUDSON RIVER BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,

Held in Albany,

On the 2d and 3d August, 1820.

1. At 10 o'clock A. M. the introductory sermon was delivered by brother John Williams, from 2d Cor. iv. 7: "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."

2. The Association was then organized, by choosing brother JOHN WILLIAMS, Moderator, and brother CHARLES G. SOMMERS, Clerk.

3. After an interim of 10 minutes, proceeded to business.

Resolved, That ministering brethren present be invited to a seat with us; when brethren Wayland, Harriss, Olmstead, Stoughton, Rice, Spaulding, Herrick, Martin, Steers, Williams, N. Paul and Powel, took their seats.

4. 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.	Replied.	Rec'd by let.	Dismissed.	Excluded.	Restored.	Deceased.	Total.
Poughkeepsie.	LEWIS LEONARD, Alfred Raymond,	18		2			1	57
	JOHN WILLIAMS, Wm. Colgate,	7	17	9	4	4	6	490
Dayette-Street. N. Y.	Joshua Gilbert, Leonard Bleeker, John Cauldwell, John Bowen, Thomas Hewit,							
	ARCHIBALD MACLAY, John Sears, Thomas Day, jun. Wm. D. Murphey, Thomas Lane, William Winterton, John Watts,	29	11	19	18		4	425
Mulberry-Street. N. Y.	Joel Tay, John Tiel, Stephen Lounsbery, Elijah Lewis, Nathaniel Price, George Wilson, Wm. T. Burlington, Thomas Stokes,							
Mount-Pleasant.	JACOB H. BROWNER, Caleb Willis,			2	1		2	71
	<i>Carried forward</i>	57	30	22	23	4	13	1071

CHURCHES.	MESSENGERS.	Baptized.	Rec'd by let.	Dismissed.	Excluded.	Restored.	Deceased.	Total.
	<i>Brought forward</i>	57	28	32	23	4	13	1073
Hudson.	HOWARD MALCOM,	6	7	11	7			92
	Wm. Sturges,							
	Deac. Wm. Whiting,							
	Deac. Samuel Gifford,							
Troy.	BENJAMIN HILDRETH,	10	6	18	7		3	27
	CHARLES G. SOMMERS,							
	Platt Titus,							
	Silas Covel,							
Albany.	JAMES HENDERSON,	18	9	9	7			190
	THOMAS SKELDING,							
	JOHN FINLAY,							
	S. Dutcher,							
King-Street, S. C.	FRIEND HUMPHREY,							
	JAMES RATTRAY,							
	J. A. BURKE,							
	JOSHUA TINKER,							
*Catskill.	H. WOODRUFF,							
	Wm. ADAMS,							
	Wm. H. SEYMOUR,							
	J. G. WASSON,							
	No Messengers,							80
	REED BURRIT,							60
	Deac. Hiland Hill,							
	Geo. M. Kendal,							
	<i>*Added this session.</i>	88	50	70	44	4	16	1770

5. The church in Catskill presented its request to become a member of this association; whereupon

Resolved, Then brethren Finlay and Malcom be a committee to confer with the messengers from said church, and make such enquiries as they shall deem proper, and report to this body.

Adjourned until 3 o'clock P. M. Prayer by Dr. Stoughton.

Met pursuant to adjournment—Prayer by brother Olmstead.

1. The committee appointed to examine the application of the church in Catskill, reported as follows: "Your committee have examined the articles of faith, upon which the church was constituted, and finds them to be such as we esteem orthodox, and calculated to promote sound knowledge and holy practice, and therefore recommend their admission into our fellowship."

Resolved, unanimously, to accept the report of the committee. The right hand of fellowship was then presented by the Moderator to brother Burrit, pastor of said church.

2. The Circular Letter written by brother Williams, and the Corresponding Letter prepared by brother Finlay, were read, and referred to a committee consisting of brethren Leonard, Malcom and Burrit, together with the authors.

3. Received communications from the following corresponding Associations:

Associations.	Minutes.	Messengers.
Charleston, S. C.	Min.	
Philadelphia,	Min.	
Warren,		
Boston,	Min.	Deac. Lincoln,
Hartford,	Min.	
Warwick,	Min.	Brother Leonard.
Madison,	Min.	
Shaftsbury,	Min.	Harris and Olmstead.
Cayuga,	Min.	
Franklin,	Min.	
Rensselaer-ville,	Min.	Herrick and Norris.
*Union,	Min.	Osburn.

** This Association solicited correspondence the present session.*

4. Brethren Hill, Gifford and Brouner, were appointed to examine the minutes of Corresponding Associations.

5. *Resolved*, That we with pleasure accede to the wishes of the Union Association, and cheerfully open with them a christian correspondence.

6. Appointed the following brethren, Messengers to Corresponding Associations: brethren Sommers, Malcom and Seymour, to the Philadelphia; brother Leonard to the Warren and Hartford; brethren Sommers, Malcom and Wayland, to the Shaftsbury; brethren Leonard, Sommers and Hoyle, to the Boston; brethren Brouner and Leonard, to the Warwick; brethren Finlay, Seymour, Humphrey and Wasson, to the Rensselaer-Ville; and brethren Martin and Leonard, to the Union.

7. *Resolved*, That brother Malcom be appointed to preach to-morrow at 10 o'clock A. M. brother Rice at 3 P. M. and Dr. Stoughton in the evening.

8. Appointed a prayer meeting to-morrow morning at 6 o'clock.

Adjourned to meet to-morrow morning at 9 o'clock. Prayer by brother Brouner.

Brother Leonard preached a sermon in the evening for the benefit of the Education Society in New-York, from Math. xix. 28: "And Jesus said unto them, verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." After which a collection was taken amounting to \$17 37.

Thursday morning met pursuant to adjournment—Prayer by brother Burrit.

1. The committee to whom the Circular and Corresponding Letters were committed, reported that they had made no material alterations in them, and recommends their adoption without another reading. *Resolved, therefore*, That they be adopted and printed with our minutes.

2. The committee appointed to examine the minutes of Corresponding Associations reported, that the minutes of the Cayuga Association contain a caution against an impostor, calling his name Thomas Paul, whereupon *Resolved*, That said caution be inserted in our minutes, and also an extract from the minutes of the Boston Association of 1818, designed to prevent further imposition.

"The churches and public are warned against: n African who calls himself Thomas Paul, and pretends to be the much esteemed Thomas

Paul of Boston; he is about 40 years of age, 5 feet 3 or 10 inches high, very black skin, and base character."

An extract from the minutes of the Boston Association:—"With a view to prevent such impositions as far as possible, we would recommend, that no person who is a stranger be received as a minister of the gospel, who has not credentials of the most unequivocal nature. Indeed, travelling preachers ought to take letters from one minister or public character to another, as far as they travel. A man of fair character will find no difficulty in obtaining such letters, and those who cannot obtain them, or who carelessly neglect them, ought not to be received. We would hence advise, that no church destitute of a pastor, invite a stranger to preach among them, unless he bring a letter of introduction from some respectable character, with whom they are acquainted."

Adjourned until half past 11 A. M.—Prayer by brother Leonard.

At 10 o'clock, brother Malcom preached from Zech. ix. 12: "Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope: even to day do I declare that I will render double unto thee."

Met pursuant to adjournment—Prayer by brother Sommers.

1. The secretary presented a communication received from the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions, which was read. Whereupon

Resolved, That the association have read with pleasure the communication from the Board of Foreign Missions, and that we sincerely wish them success in their pious labour, and desire to co-operate with them in whatever tends to promote the interest of the Redeemer's kingdom.

2. *Resolved*, That this association deem it unadvisable to attempt a solution of the "Quere," proposed by the church in Mount-Pleasant; but affectionately recommends them to a prayerful examination of the Holy Scriptures.

3. *Resolved*, That at our next, and at each succeeding session of this Association, a collection be taken up, immediately after the introductory sermon, to be placed in fund for the benefit of widows and orphans of deceased ministers belonging to this body.

4. *Resolved*, That we cordially approve of the measures pursued by the Hamilton Baptist Missionary society for the promotion of Religious and Literary improvement, among the benighted tribes of Indians, on the western frontier; and affectionately wish them success in their pious labours.

5. *Resolved*, That brother Malcom be appointed to write the Circular, and brother Burrit the Corresponding Letter, for the ensuing year.

6. *Resolved*, That our next session be held in the Baptist Meeting-House in Hudson, on the first Wednesday in August, 1821, at 10 o'clock A. M.; and that brother Finlay preach the introductory sermon, brother Sommers in case of failure.

7. *Resolved*, That brother Brouner be appointed to preach a sermon for the benefit of the Education Society, on the evening of the first day of our next session.

8. Received \$1 81 from the church in Mount-Pleasant, to aid the funds of the above named Society.

Adjourned until half past 4 o'clock P. M.—Prayer by brother Rice.

At 3 o'clock P. M. brother Rice delivered a sermon from Matth. xxviii. 19: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations," &c. After which the Association met pursuant to adjournment—Prayer by brother Powell.

Resolved, That brother Leonard be requested to superintend the printing and distribution of the minutes.

The business of the Association being closed, adjourned. Prayer by brother Sears.* Signed, JOHN WILLIAMS, Moderator.

CHARLES G. SOMMERS, Clerk.

* In the evening, pursuant to appointment, Dr. Stoughton delivered an eloquent sermon from 2d Tim. i. 10: "Who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel."

CIRCULAR LETTER ON CHRISTIAN UNION.

BELOVED BRETHREN—

Through the kindness and tender care of the Chief Shepherd of Israel, we have enjoyed another Annual Meeting. With pleasure we embrace the opportunity of addressing you on a subject of the highest importance to all—*Christian Union*;—a subject intimately connected with the present happiness of the churches, the glory of our Redeemer, and the future prosperity of his kingdom on earth. The union of all believers to Christ as their head, is the foundation of the union between the saints, as the members of his body. He is the chief corner-stone that unites and gives stability to the spiritual building as an holy temple in the Lord. Without the saving knowledge of Christ, it cannot exist; for he alone forms the bond of union. The subjects of grace are made partakers of the spirit of Christ, quickened, enlightened and sanctified by his heavenly influences; he becomes their teacher, their leader, and their comforter, and dwelleth in them. By the influence of this spirit, their hearts are knit together in love, for the truth's sake which dwelleth in them, and shall be with them forever. Having received the truth in love, it becomes the foundation of their hopes, the source of their joys, the rule of their conduct, and leads them to love the saints with a pure heart, fervently. Heavenly in its origin, holy in its nature, and powerful in its effects, it constraineth them that believe, to obey the commands of Christ, and suffer the will of God in all things.

The saints are commanded to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace; for christians are all members of one body, which is the church of Christ, and ought to feel for each other's afflictions, and seek the welfare of the whole. The one holy spirit of God dwelleth in them, and as the spirit of man animates the natural body, so doth that of Christ his spiritual body. They are called to possess one glorious hope, of an inheritance in the presence of God. There is one Lord, whose power and authority extends over the whole family, and whose glory is the great end to be promoted, both in time and eternity. All the children of God have one faith in Christ, which worketh by love, purifieth the heart, overcometh the world, and shall hereafter obtain the end of the faith, which is eternal salvation. By one baptism, they are buried with Christ in the sacred name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; their covenant God, whom they trust, obey, and worship. He is the one Father of all the family, who stand in the most honorable and sacred relation to him, as his dearly beloved children. He is over all in his love, authority and care, and dwells in them by the influence of his holy spirit, to guide and protect them. [Ephes. IV. 3. 6.] What strong motives present themselves to all the disciples of the Prince of Peace, while they

five in a world of enemies, to seek the same spirit which was in Christ, and to keep the same bond of union! Remember, brethren, that the great enemy of God and man, is continually seeking to destroy the peace and harmony of the church on earth; that he is sowing the seeds of discord among brethren; and too frequently succeeds, to a lamentable degree, in disturbing the communion of the saints, while in this imperfect state. All pride, and seeking of our own greatness, proceed from this source; and "who shall be greatest?" produced a contest among the disciples of old. Our blessed Redeemer hath taught us, by his word and example, to be the servants of all as the only road to true greatness. All envying, malice, jealousy, bitterness and evil speaking, proceed from the same source; and, as christians, we are called upon to lay them aside, as unbecoming our holy profession of the gospel of the son of God, who was meek and lowly in heart. We are commanded to mark those "who cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which we have learned, and to avoid them, for they do often, by good words and fair speeches, deceive the hearts of the simple." [Romans, XVI. 17. 18.] But let us seek "that wisdom which is from above, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits."— [James, III. 17.]

The advantages connected with the union of the saints are great, and worthy to be sought after by all that love our Lord Jesus Christ. "Behold, how good, and how pleasant it is, for brethren to dwell together in unity." The happiness of every individual in the family is greatly advanced and increased by its heavenly influence. "Anger," saith the wise man, "resteth only in the bosom of fools." The wise seek peace and promote it in the church, and in society; for his own happiness is connected with the advancement of peace and good will towards men.— The comfort of the church of God, throughout all her branches, depends upon its union rather than upon the wealth, numbers, or talents of its members. The laws of Christ, in his house, are obeyed only where union dwells. The spirit of love leads us to feel for the distressed, to relieve the needy, to sympathize with the tempted, to weep with them that weep, and rejoice with them that rejoice. The love of Christ constraineth us to seek to reclaim the wanderer from the paths of error, to restore such in the spirit of meekness to the ways of righteousness and truth, and, when the glory of Christ renders it necessary, to put away the transgressor from among us. And this must be done with earnest prayer for the salvation of his soul, in the day of the Lord. The want of union impedes the discipline of the churches more than any other cause. But where it exists, it gives strength to the church of Christ, in all her efforts to promote the glory of God, and the good of mankind, in the world.— It strengthens the hands of the ministers of the gospel, in all their labours, and under all their trials, for the truth's sake. Their arms are held up, like those of Moses, by the united prayers and efforts of their brethren, who are their joy before their God, and their crowns in the coming day of the Lord. The unity of the churches has also the most powerful effect upon the world around. To see contentions among them that profess the name of the Prince of Peace, hardens many in the paths of sin, and such as are under concern of mind are wounded and ready to balt, and are thus frequently kept back from the path of duty, and from the enjoyment of precious privileges. But when the members of the

churches walk together in love, in all the commandments of the Lord with one accord, it has caused many without to say: "See, how these christians love one another:" and by this means many are brought to glorify God in the day of visitation, seeing the disciples proving their relation to Jesus, by their christian affection one to another. They seek a place in the church where peace and harmony dwell, saying: "Let us go with you, for the Lord is with you, of a truth." The spread of the gospel, in the world, is also greatly advanced by christian union. When the churches shall feel the importance of this great subject, the enlightening of the nations by the gospel of Christ, and when they shall unite their efforts in this great and good cause, the thick darkness which now covers the greatest part of the earth, will flee before the united labours and prayers of the friends of Christ. For his presence shall attend the labours of his servants, and the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord. The Lord has already done much by the efforts of his people. The churches now planted in the wilderness of our own country, remain the monuments of his faithfulness. In the east, and in the west, we see the displays of divine grace. The labours and success of our brethren in India, are the fruits of the efforts of those who have united to promote the cause of our Redeemer among the Heathen. The preaching of the gospel in Burmah, is an evidence that some of the spirit exists in our own land. The Bible Societies, which have been established in Europe and in America, are remarkable proofs of the good effect of christian union, in promoting the best of causes. The Sunday Schools, in which thousands of children are taught to read the word of God, afford happy signs of the age in which we live. Brethren, union forms the strength and the sinews of the church of Christ; it directs the talents, the wealth, and the labours of its members to the promotion of the cause of religion, and thus produces the most glorious effects, for the good of man and the glory of Divine Grace.

Let none be discouraged in looking for this desirable object, by the many difficulties which appear in the way. Before our Immanuel, mountains shall be made plains. The promises of God stand in his word, the foundation of our hope, and he hath said: "I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me forever, for the good of them, and of their children after them." [Jer. 32. 39.] "For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent." [Zeph. III. 9.] Our great Redeemer prayed for his disciples: "That they all may be one." The promises of God, which cannot fail of being accomplished, and the prayers of Christ, our great High Priest, which must be answered, afford the greatest encouragement, to pray and labour for the prosperity of Zion. Let us therefore with patience wait the time, when "her watchmen shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion;" [Isa. LII. 8] and when the church shall be the terror of her enemies, the joy of angels, and the glory of Christ; and with admiration it shall be said of her "Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners!"

JOHN WILLIAMS, *Moderator.*

CHARLES G. SOMMERS, *Cleric.*