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MINUTES

OF THE

New-York Baptist Association,

HOLDEN IN THE CITY OF NEW-YORK,

MAY 19th AND 20th, 1802.



WEDNESDAY, May 19.

ASSEMBLED at 3 o'clock, P. M. for Public Worship, at the Baptist Meeting-House in Gold-street. Brother WILLIAM COLLIER preached the Introductory Sermon, founded on Matt. iii. 1, 2.—“ In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, repent ye: for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.”

2. Prayer introductory to business, by Brother RUNYAN. Brother WILLIAM VAN HORNE was chosen Moderator, and Brother COLLIER, Clerk.

3. Received and read Letters from the Churches belonging to this Association.

Note.—Ministers' names are in SMALL CAPITALS.—Licenced Preachers in *ITALICS*.—No Intelligence from the Church at Patihos.—Dashes [—] denote no settled Minister.

<i>Churches.</i>	<i>Ministers and Messengers.</i>	<i>Baptized.</i>	<i>Received by letter.</i>	<i>Dismissed by letter.</i>	<i>Excommuni- cated.</i>	<i>Deceased.</i>	<i>Number.</i>	<i>Time of Con- stitution.</i>
Piscataway,	{ REUNE RUNYAN, Edward Griffith.		2	1		2	123	1689
Scotch-Plains,	{ WILLIAM VAN HORNE, Ezra Darby, William Little.	1		5	1	3	81	
King-Street,	{ NATHANIEL FINCH, Daniel Wilson.			2		1	50	1747
Carried over,		1	2	8	1	6	254	

<i>Churches.</i>	<i>Ministers and Messengers.</i>	<i>Baptized.</i>	<i>Received by letter.</i>	<i>Dismissed by letter.</i>	<i>Excommunicated.</i>	<i>Deceased.</i>	<i>Number.</i>	<i>Time of Constitution.</i>
	Brought forward,	1	2	8	1	6	254	
Oyster-Bay,	{ BENJAMIN COLES, Richard Latting, Albart Albertson, James Coles.						40	1748
Morris-Town,	-----	1		4		1	41	1752
1st. New-York,	{ WILLIAM COLLIER, Samuel Dodge, John Bedient, Abraham Cannon, Eliakim Ford, Lewis Rogers.	7	2		1	2	212	1762
Mount-Bethel,	{ LEBBEUS LATHROP, Reuben Ferris, Oliver Still.	2	3	13	1	1	109	1767
Lyon's Farms,	{ PETER BRYANT, John Sites.			9		2	24	1669
Bethel* Baptist Ch.	{ CHARLES LAHATT, Peter Thurston, Augustine Elliott, Francis Vandyk, Richard Wilkinson, James Gritman.		1		2	3	63	1770
Staten-Island,	{ ELKANAH HOLMES, Nicholas Cox.					1	27	1786
Northfield,†	{ MOSES EDWARDS, Jonathan Meeks.	8		5			58	1786
Mount-Pleasant,	{ _____, STEPHEN S. NELSON, Thomas Stevens, P. G. Smith.	4	5	5		3	50	1792
Patihos,	-----							
Samp-Town,	{ JACOB FITZ RANDOLPH, Samuel Randolph.		1	3		2	33	1792
Middle-Town,‡	{ DANIEL STEARS, James Burges, John Wandell.	25					39	1796
Total,		48	11	47	5	21	955	

* This Church was formerly called the *Second* in New-York; but some inconveniences arising, there being two Churches in the city known by that distinction, they have mutually agreed to change their names.

† Formerly Canoe-Brook.—Altered by the request of the Church.

‡ Formerly Rockland.—Altered by the request of the Church.

4. Brethren John Pitman and John Williams being present were invited to take seats with us.

5. Received and read an affectionate letter from the Muhheconnuk nation of Indians at New-Stockbridge, in which they manifest great satisfaction in our epistolary correspondence with them, and gratefully acknowledge the reception of the books we sent them last summer, by the hand of Brother Holmes.

6. The Circular Letter prepared by Brother Darby, was read and referred to a committee of Brethren Runyan, Holmes, Pittman, Collier, and the Author.

7. Adjourned until half past eight o'clock to-morrow morning.

8. Prayer by the Moderator.

[Sermon in the evening by Brother John Pitman: Founded on 2 Peter I. 1.]

THURSDAY MORNING, MAY 20.

9. Met according to adjournment. Prayer by Brother Bryant.

10. Received the minutes of the Shaftsbury, the Philadelphia, the Virginia Portsmouth, the Middle District, the Roxsok District, the Dover and the Kehukee Associations.

11. The Church on Staten-Island, labouring under some difficulties, at their request, the following Brethren were appointed to visit them as an advisory council:—Runyan, Bryant, Labatt, J. Randolph, S. Randolph, Griffin and Ferris. The council to meet at Brother Fountain's on the second Wednesday in June.

12. Brother Williams presented a copy of the minutes of the Warwick Association, held at Bedford on the 26th and 27th of May, 1801; with special reference to our taking into consideration the 15th article of said minutes. Took the same into consideration; and appointed Brethren Van Horne, Dodge and Nelson, a committee to prepare a letter upon the subject.

13. The following Brethren were appointed to write to the Associations, annexed to their names:—Bryant to Shaftsbury, Smith to Philadelphia, Randolph to Warren, Dodge to Danbury and Van Horne to Stonington.

14. Adjourned until 4 o'clock, P. M. Prayer by Brother Randolph.

AFTERNOON

15. Met according to adjournment. Prayer by brother Coles.

16. The Letter to the Warwick Association read and approved. Brethren Williams and Nelson appointed to present it at their next session.

17. The Circular Letter read the second time and adopted.

18. Letters to Corresponding Associations read and approved.

19. The following Brethren were appointed Messengers to the Associations annexed to their names. Brethren Runyan, Labatt and Lathrop to the Philadelphia, and Brother Pitman to the Warren.

20. Being desirous to manifest our Love and Friendship to the Brother-Town and Muhheconnuk Indians, we request our Committee of Indian affairs to write to each of them, and take such measures as they think proper, to furnish them with more books, and to give some assistance to the latter, to enable them to prosecute their proposed Mission to their Western Brethren in the Wilderness.

21. Whereas great inconveniencies often arise for want of a proper system of correspondence: Therefore agreed to appoint a *Standing Secretary*, whose duty it shall be to keep a record of the proceedings, and have charge of the papers belonging to the Association; to receive minutes, letters and other communications from a distance and transact such other business as appertains to the appointment.

22. Brother Collier was appointed to the office created by the preceding article.

23. Took into consideration the request from Mount-Pleasant, to raise an *Education Fund* : referred until our next Association.

24. Supplies for Bethel Church.

Brother Holmes, 2d. Lord's day in June.

Lahatt, 2d. do. in July, December and January.

Collier, 2d. do. in August and March.

Coles, 2d. do. in September.

Bryant, 2d. do. in October.

Van Horne, 2d. do. in November.

25. Brother Lathrop is appointed to preach the Introductory Sermon next year : and in case of failure, Brother Nelson.

26. Brother Collier to write the Circular Letter for next year. Also to superintend the printing and distribution of the minutes.

27. The next Association to commence on the last Wednesday but one in May, 1803, at 3 o'clock, P. M. in the Meeting-House of the 1st Baptist Church in the City of New-York.

28. The Moderator concluded by Prayer.

[Sermon in the evening by Brother Nelson : Founded on Psalm xxxiv. 15.]

Circular Letter.

The Elders and Messengers of the several Baptist Churches, met in Association, in the City of New-York, the 19th and 20th days of May, 1802: holding the doctrine of three equal Persons in the Godhead, eternal and personal election to Holiness here, and eternal Life hereafter; original guilt and total depravity of all Adam's race; redemption of the elect by the life, sufferings, and death of JESUS CHRIST; sovereign grace, in regeneration, the final perseverance of the Saints, water Baptism by immersion only, on a profession of repentance towards GOD, and faith in our LORD JESUS CHRIST; the eternal punishment of the finally impenitent, in an unlimited a sense as the happiness of the righteous, &c. &c.

TO THE CHURCHES THEY REPRESENT,

SEND CHRISTIAN SALUTATION.

Dear Brethren,

WE have received new manifestations of the tender mercies of our heavenly Father. He has once more brought us together in an associated capacity, he has refreshed us with agreeable intelligence from various quarters, and we trust he has in some degree manifested his presence to our souls.

It has been usual on these occasions to address the Churches on some important subject. The annual return of Associations and Circular Letters, have been so frequent and become so far things of course, that, if they suffer not from you, that neglect, to which periodical publications are generally exposed, yet it causes us some degree of anxiety to select such subjects from the many which present, as are peculiarly interesting, and calculated most for your edification. At various times, you have been addressed on the doctrines of our Holy Religion. The operations of grace and the outlines of Christian experience have been exhibited. Attempts have been made to unveil the prophetic volume and point you to the future prospects of the righteous. We shall content ourselves, at present, with turning your thoughts to *Brotherly Love*, a subject which so incessantly requires our attention, and with which our hopes of eternal happiness are so intimately connected, that, though our usual limits require our treating it rather in a

disultory manner, yet we confidently hope you will give it that candid consideration which its infinite importance demands.

For the fountain of this principle we must carry our ideas far back, to the council of peace in the eternal Mind. Long before creation was spoken into being; long before the generations of mortals existed, it smiled in the bosom of Deity, and contemplated its future conquests among the human race. It projected a plan which finite intelligences could never have conceived; a plan of salvation worthy of Omniscience; a plan which is represented as exciting the curiosity of Angels, and which will be the wonder of Heaven forever.

After nature was put in motion, and sin was permitted to tarnish the system, our father, and representative, broke through the restriction which his Maker had assigned, and involved himself and posterity in disgrace and ruin. The thunders of a violated law, the voice of the offended Majesty of Heaven, roused him from his torpor to meet an expected doom. The criminal stood without a plea; Justice lifted an almighty arm to strike; then Love arrested the blow and cried, "Deliver him from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom." What must have been the sensations of the heavenly host, on this display of a glorious attribute of Divinity. How must the contemplation of a God of

mercy have gratified their benevolent natures and called forth a new Hallelujah to his praise!

Many eminent instances of Brother-love occurred in the early ages of the world, which have been handed down to us for our instruction. This moved the pity of Noah and made him a "preacher of righteousness" to the antediluvian generation. By this Moses declined the honor of becoming a nation greater and mightier than Israel, and, influenced by this, he strove so earnestly and successfully to stay the hand of the Lord from destroying his people. This knit the souls of Jonathan and David in as tender and inviolable a friendship as ever existed. Indeed, the ancient prophets and long list of champions in the truth, "of whom the world was not worthy," moved by this to "cry aloud and spare not;" to show the people their transgressions and the house of Jacob their sins. With what tenderness they wept for the sins of their brethren, and how pathetically they entreated them to turn and live!

But why should we wander so far for examples of this principle, when Benevolence itself has descended from heaven in a human form and shone forth in absolute perfection! O JESUS! "thou friend of sinners!" thou patern of eternal unconquerable love! how shall we mention thy holy life without "darkening council, by words without knowledge?" That "he who was infinitely rich should become poor; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;" that he should submit to the distresses of temptations and poverty, pain and reproach; that he should constantly and patiently go about doing good, amidst the malice and "contradiction of sinners;" that he should be "numbered with transgressors, and more, that he should bear our sins in his own body on the tree," are arguments, beyond the possibility of doubt, that his Love is incomprehensible. He endured these intolerable sufferings "for the joy that was set before him; the joy of saving "his people from their sins;" the joy of presenting them "holy, and unblameable and unproveable in his sight;" the joy of providing for them such an "exceeding and eternal weight of glory," that "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered

into the heart of man, the things which he hath prepared for them that love him."

On the birth of such a Personage, well might the celestial musicians shout, "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace; good will to the wards men;" and well might it be expected that the religion he would propagate, would be the expression of his benevolent nature. Thus we find that, besides giving a "holy, harmless, and undefiled example;" his language was such as never man spake, and the great sum of all the doctrines he inculcated was "Love God and our Brother. Forgive thy brother if he turn and say he repents not only seven times in a day, but seventy times seven." Not only "love one another, love thy neighbour as thyself," but "love your enemies; do good to them that hate you, bless them that curse you and pray for them that despitefully use you." In short, this principle is the "one thing needful," the "pearl of great price," the very essence of the Gospel, and all other graces, rich and beautiful as they are, are only the rays of this principal Jewel. This extends the hand of beneficence, this furnishes the wing to faith; this supports humility; this leads hope to cast her anchor, both sure and steadfast, "into that within the veil."

Notwithstanding all those who, "through faith and patience," shall inherit the promises and be brought to the enjoyment of everlasting felicity, will disclaim every work of merit and ascribe their salvation wholly to sovereign, unchangeable grace; yet their labours of love will not be forgotten. It is worthy of observation, that in the description of that great and solemn day, when we shall appear before the Judge of all worlds, seated on the throne of his glory, when the separation is made between the righteous and the wicked and the heirs of life are welcomed with, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," not a single virtue is mentioned but such as are the natural and necessary effusions of Brotherly Love. The King proceeds not to reconcile their minds to such a load of felicity, nor to satisfy the assembled universe of his justice, by saying,—Ye believed my doctrines—ye contended earnestly for the faith—ye

preached my Gospel far and wide—ye laid down your lives in my cause—but, “ I was an-hungred, and ye gave me meat, I was thirsty and ye gave me drink : I was a stranger, and ye took me in : naked, and ye clothed me : I was sick, and ye visited me : I was in prison, and ye came unto me.” Not that I have personally received any benefit from you, but “ in as much as ye have done it unto the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me.” In that day, every act of benevolence, every secret whisper of the heart which has flowed from this heavenly principle, will be remembered and meet a rich reward.

As manifested in the plan of salvation, “ God is love ;” the Gospel is a message of love ; the proper life of the Christian is a life of love. This is the corner stone, the foundation of all true religion. Without this, the eloquence of men and angels is nothing. The gift of prophecy and intuitive penetration into all mysteries and knowledge, without this, are nothing. Without this the faith of working miracles, unbounded liberality, and the sacrifice of life itself amount to nothing. This is that which shall continue when eloquence shall be no more, when all predictions shall have been fulfilled, and long after faith and hope shall be swallowed up in complete enjoyment. This is what will lift its possessor above the ruins of universal nature ; insure to him his seat in the mansions of glory, and tune his voice to that triumphant song which shall never cease.

This principle not only forms an indissoluble union among those who bear the image of Christ, but, from this centre, it grows and extends in compassion to the whole human race. By the first effects of it, we love our brother, of whatever description, who exhibits the spirit of our Lord and Master. We are disposed to cover his inadvertent errors with the mantle of charity ; to forgive him the trespasses which in an unguarded moment he may have committed against us, knowing that we also need continual forgiveness. We dare not offer our gift on the altar, remembering that he hath sought against us ; we cannot rest while the contention remains ; we must first be reconciled to him, before we can expect our heavenly Father to lift

upon our souls the light of his reconciled countenance. By the more extended operation of this grace, we carry our warm affections beyond “ the household of faith.” Hence flows the tenderness, with which it is so becoming to entreat sinners to have compassion on themselves, to behold the misery they are at so much pains to purchase, and to flee from the intolerable ruin which awaits them ; hence arise those earnest intercessions for their salvation, those prayers which often ascend to God at the moment of their reviling and in the midst of their hasty career of impiety ; and hence our sighs and tears pursue them through every stage of iniquity, till they drop into everlasting woe.

This is not only an extensive, but an active principle. If we feel this, we shall not see our brother in distress and not attempt his relief ; borne down with a heavy heart, and not strive to administer comfort ; in poverty and want, and shut the “ bowels of our compassion from him.” We shall give him every proper assistance according to our abilities. The means necessary for shining acts of charity are not in every hand, nor are they more grateful in the sight of Heaven than the still, small operation of benevolence, which retires from the world to perform its office and laments that it can perform no more. The scanty pittance of penury, the widow’s “ two mites, a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple,” a word of kindness and consolation, are within reach of every one, and the most trifling benefit, bestowed with cheerfulness and sweetened with Christian love, will in this life feast us with all the luxury of doing good and meet an everlasting remuneration hereafter.

Is it true then, that our sacred religion is of such a nature that the enjoyment of it is calculated to soften all the asperities of life, to meliorate the condition of the human race, and turn this dreary world into a terrestrial Paradise ! Most surely it is, and doubtless the Angels who sang “ Peace on earth and good will towards men,” on the nativity of our Redeemer, expected the descent of that Love which is the joy and connecting link of heaven would perform its proper work below, and nourish here a race of

young immortals, scarcely inferior to themselves in the enjoyment of its happy influence. But it is a humiliating and melancholy consideration, that it operates at all in so few minds, and that in those few the operation is so contracted. It certainly becomes the "friends" of the benevolent Saviour, the professed followers of his example to be actuated, in some degree, by the spirit which he manifested.—We wish Brethren to lead your contemplations seriously to this subject. We pretend not to do it justice, all we expect from this imperfect sketch is, to awaken and draw your attention to it, which we know will result to your advantage. Let us trace back the path of our experience, and remember the heart-felt satisfaction we have enjoyed in performing the offices of kindness. Let us recollect the instances in which we have failed, and the cold and gloomy enjoyments they afforded. Let us follow the united dictates of duty and interest; live the religion we profess, and cause our light so to shine before men, that they may see our good works, and take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus.

We cannot dismiss this subject without raising our view to a happier day, which the "sure word of prophecy" teaches us to expect. From the present mournful state of degeneracy and wickedness, in which the creation groans, we look forward with confidence, to the time when the "earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea;" when all shall know him, from the least to the greatest, and when Brotherly Love shall establish a permanent and universal empire over the children of men. Such a season has long been expected; it has been prayed for in all ages of the Church, and it must roll on in its proper order, for he who holds the helm of nature and manages the kingdoms of providence and grace has given the assurance, and we know that "heaven and earth shall pass away, but his word shall not pass away."

To know precisely when these predictions shall be accomplished is far beyond our very narrow attainments. But certain preceding events must attend, many of which, on examination, will be observed strikingly to correspond with

the great transactions which have passed on the theatre of the world within a few years. It may be remarked, that the revolutions and convulsions which have lately taken place, appear to have been absolutely necessary, to remove the rubbish of tyrannical systems out of the way; to clear the thick darkness from the hemisphere, and to open the portals of day for the rising of the "Sun of Righteousness." As the child of grace, before he can taste the consolations of religion, must feel something of the bitterness of sin and the pangs of regeneration, so the political world "must be born again," before it can become the kingdom of our Lord. The struggles and "distress of nations;" the "wars and perplexities," with which this will be attended, are yet in the bosom of futurity. From what is foretold and what we have seen we may conclude, they will be great; but our consolation rests on the certainty that they will be no greater than needful, and that they will finally subside in the calm of universal felicity.

When tyranny, civil and ecclesiastic, that hated monster of iniquity, that principal agent in the havoc which satan has made among mankind, shall be expelled from the earth, and Brotherly Love will become universal, then, will the *royal story* of war be laid aside; then will the shocking idea of *national enemies* be forgotten. Nations will consider each other as brethren, entitled to all the expressions of friendship, "swords will be beat into plow-shares, and spears into pruning hooks," and Love to God and man will become the great connecting ligament of the universe.

Brethren, are not the morning rays of this glorious era already beginning to appear? In this country, despotism, with his iron grasp, has lost his hold. Not all the fascinating shapes he could assume, were sufficient to save him from disgrace. Here no tyrant can lead half the people to slaughter, nor carry violence and misery into the abodes of industrious poverty. Hence the outrages peculiar to arbitrary governments are unknown; our laws are those of justice and humanity; our honorable national characteristic is moderation. No paramount church can here

present to dissenters the arguments of *inquisition* and *faggot*. Consequently the different denominations, which are permitted to exist; perhaps for the trial of our forbearance and charity, consider each other as brethren; they treat each other with tenderness, for their Master's sake, and they "love one another," as far as they observe the love of our "Lord Jesus in sincerity and truth."—The late astonishing displays of divine Grace in different parts of the United States; the unusual manner of its influence, the long continuance of its operations, and the multitude of its conquests are certainly calculated to raise extraordinary and joyful expectations.

From a concurrence of events, perhaps peculiar to the present day, the sanguinary sons of the western wilderness have universally buried the hatchet, and began to turn their thoughts to civilization and the arts of peace. They have not

only afforded security to missionaries publishing the Gospel among them, but they are frequently making the most pressing invitations for more to come in that capacity. This joyful news has lately sounded, for the first time, on the Islands of the vast Pacific, where it has been favorably received. Even the distant Indies have heard the name of Jesus, and soon we hope the religion of love will succeed the cruel and unnatural sacrifices of Brama. These circumstances appear as if the day were approaching when "the wilderness and solitary place shall be glad, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose;" when "the isles shall await upon the Lord and trust on his arm;" when the King of Zion shall "speak peace unto the heathen; and his dominion shall be from sea to sea and from the river even to the ends of the earth."

WILLIAM VANHORNE, *Moderator.*
WILLIAM COLLIER, *Clerk.*

EXTRACT from the MINUTES of the PHILADELPHIA ASSOCIATION, 1801.

“Ninety-four years have rolled on since the first Meeting of this Association, the first in America, and then composed of only five Churches; but viewing the present state of our connexions in this Country, we perceive it to be as the *thousands of Israel*, embracing numerous Associations, composed of *at least twelve hundred Churches*, including more than a *hundred thousand members*.”

