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Unitarianism
done for the
people**

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OR,

UNITARIANISM

IN ITS

**LITERARY, SPECULATIVE, AND PRACTICAL
ASPECTS.**

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Literary, Speculative, and Practical Aspects.

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Glasgow.*

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To
All Lovers of Justice
Who Fear not to Follow the Truth
Whithersoever it may Lead
This Volume is Respectfully Dedicated.



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“Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit; neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire.

“Wherefore, by their fruits ye shall know them.”

JESUS CHRIST.

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P R E F A C E.

THE object of the reproduction of these sermons in the present form is to give the many strangers we meet with in our work as a religious organisation an opportunity of seeing what we are doing to justify our existence, and to enable them to form definite and accurate ideas as to our philosophical longitude and latitude in relation to other systems and denominations.

They were not originally intended for publication and are now set forth with but slight and unimportant modification.

While the views expressed are not a fac-simile of those held by all in Unitarianism, they are, in the humble opinion of the author, in substantial harmony with the teaching of the great majority of that historic, liberal, enlightened and influential body.

JOSEPH TAYLOR.

117 ONSLOW DRIVE, DENNISTOUN,
GLASGOW, 10th June, 1885.

What Has Unitarianism done for the People?

OR,

Unitarianism in its Literary Aspect.

“By their fruits ye shall know them.”—JESUS CHRIST.

IT is sometimes affirmed that Unitarianism, as a distinctive religious body, has not proved its right to live; that history has demonstrated it to be organically and hopelessly weak and that, sooner or later, it must succumb in order to make room for that which is stronger and more fit to survive.

However, it is only fair to say that such opinions, if opinions indeed they be, are generally expressed by those who know very little

about Unitarianism, either as to its essence or history—by those who have not yet risen superior to the irrational popular prejudices and in whom the rising conviction is frequently dominated by an ungenerous wish.

A few weeks ago, in the course of a discussion which took place in this church one week evening, the question was raised, “What has Unitarianism done for the people?”—a question which necessarily carries with it an implication that the organisation to which we are proud to belong has done little or nothing for the people.

The subject, of course, was too extensive and important to admit of adequate treatment during the few minutes allotted to the answering of questions and so, at the request of kind friends, zealous to preserve untarnished the pure white flower of honour which rightfully belongs to their elected denomination, I promised, as soon as convenient, to deal with the question in the form of a discourse.

That promise, I am sorry to say, it will be impossible fully to redeem this afternoon ; hence it will be necessary to return to this subject in future.

Before proceeding to the theme before us at present, it may perhaps be advisable to make one or two preliminary remarks.

In the first place, I wish to point out that the question, "What has Unitarianism done for the people?" is a very proper one to ask and that its prudence and propriety are equalled only by its far-reaching significance.

I agree that it is a fair way of ascertaining the quality of a tree by examining its fruit. All the world over, the true test of soundness and worth is utility—susceptibility of serving in the best way the highest interests of the greatest number.

That which does nothing for the people is not worth the cost of its cultivation. "By their fruits

ye shall know them" is a touchstone which I am as ready to apply to our own as to any other religious body : yea, indeed, and more so ; for none other, I am persuaded, will be able to pass through the righteous ordeal so victoriously.

If Unitarianism brings forth the fruit of human service—"pity and fairness" as George Eliot would say—encouragement, enlightenment, harmony and happiness—then we must conclude the tree is a good one. If it yields evil fruit—obscuring the True Light of the world and thus causing men, as they walk in the darkness of dangerous night, to come into collision with the inexorable forces of the universe of the terribly righteous God existing under the relations of time and space—then we will agree that it is corrupt. And, if it bear no fruit at all, we will frankly admit it is barren and, cumbering the earth with unnecessary aggrandisement, ought to be cut down.

The great significance of this question is seen

when we consider that it affects the right to, and fitness for, existence. The answer, negative or affirmative, must be either a condemnation or justification of one of the most—if not the most—truly devout, sincere, enlightened, liberal, earnest, unobtrusive and influential sections of the church universal.

In the second place, I wish you to remember a fact which to Unitarians is somewhat peculiar ; viz., that the results of their work are not of such a nature as to admit of being tabulated by those who slavishly worship the god of statistics, or of being weighed and measured by zealous dealers in sectarian commodities.

The other day I saw that General Booth had been trying to convince the world of the increasing influence and usefulness of the Salvation Army. His method was to compare the statistics of past years with those of the present.

Said he, so many paid officers; so many soldiers in prison; so many persons on the platform from China and elsewhere; so many corps (cavalry and otherwise); so many "soul-saving ships"; so many newspapers and magazines sold; so many ministers, publicans, politicians and representatives of the sporting press talking about General Booth's disposition to lunacy.

And, on finding that this sort of thing is going on now to a larger extent than it was seven years ago, he exclaims, "How the work of the Lord is prospering! how greatly we have caused the devil to hate us! how thankful we ought to be for such a marvellous outpouring of the Holy Ghost! and what a mighty moral influence has the Salvation Army!"

With wonderful tact does he loosen the purse-strings of pious and truly-disciplined individuals by well-timed prophecies, based on these happy statistics, of the state of their cause in the year

1900: when they will have erected an "International World-Wide Central Temple" and rejoice in a glorious millennium!

Oh how these appeals quicken the conscience of the saints! Oh how such eloquence—as it rings through the renowned Exeter Hall—evokes the benevolence of people seeking advertisement and who are disposed to contribute banners, steamboats, musical instruments and large sums of money!

How truly unique must be the instrument through which Jehovah carries on such a magnificent enterprise and whom He raises up to accomplish a work in the short period of eight or ten years which "all the religious denominations combined had failed to do in a hundred years!"

And yet—how fallacious the conclusion that is drawn from such premises!

To the great General, it would seem, outward and physical show are infallible signs of inward

and spiritual reality—a species of illusion common only among religious fanatics, charlatans and imbeciles.

Too much importance should not be attached to deductions from the data of inflexible statistics. Nothing is more misleading.

The lists of names and numbers of churches paraded so proudly at the annual meetings of such organisations as have the popular suffrages and are backed by foolish fashion and iniquitous legal enactments are amongst most Unitarians accounted as of little moment and often positively despised.

With them the boast of quantity is generally rebuked by a vehement enthusiasm for quality.

Numbers and material resources are frequently regarded as symptoms of spiritual disease, as useless and dangerous exotics, as evidences not of soundness, strength, and development, but of weakness, disintegration and decomposition.

The degree of the importance attached to these methods of counting progress we may be sure is always in exact correspondence with the measure of retrogression, artificiality, delusion and iniquity.

If the popular tactics for determining the success of religious movements be applied impartially more will be proved than, to the so-called orthodoxists, will be desirable and even Christianity itself will have to yield to many systems and sections of what is commonly regarded as heathen darkness—darkness that can be felt—and by which are enshrouded the children of the evil one who are made to stumble into deep pits of vice.

When we ask, “What has Unitarianism done for the people?” we don’t mean in the way of blowing trumpets, building material churches and upsetting the natural, familiar, reverent orderly and profitable worship and religious symbolisms of civilised heathens by the customs

to the memory of heroes and days of artless worship—before which we instinctively fall on our knees. There may be inequitable legal endowments and aristocratic patronage. There may be stereotyped creeds and fiery defenders of the faith.

And yet—all these may be only covers for corruption. And yet—the glorious end may be ignored and forgotten in excessive and sinful devotion to means.

The work Unitarianism has done and is doing for the people may be said to be of a three-fold character—literary, speculative and practical—and, though these are not all the aspects under which it may be viewed, they certainly include some of the most important features and will serve as convenient headings under which to group most of what I intend to say in response to the legitimate and significant query, “What has Unitarianism done for the people?”

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To-day, I shall glance briefly at this question only in the first of these aspects.

In reference to the literary work of Unitarianism, I am bold to affirm that it has yielded more fruit of an important and lasting nature than all other religious denominations.

In the critical, philosophical, scientific, artistic or historical department it has no rival—whether of men of eminence or works of merit—and none to approach.

Mark, I do not contend that it outrivals all other bodies in respect to the number of its publications. The question is again not one of quantity but of quality.

The literature of pure orthodoxy—as it is termed—or that which faithfully represents the popular theological beliefs—is fast becoming extinct and will soon be known only by its fossil remains.

The only relic that is in a good state of pre-

ervation is that issued by the Salvation Army and General Booth was perfectly right the other day when he affirmed—to the shame of the churches which contend so earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, excommunicating all who have the audacity to think and speak beyond the limits of their sharply-defined creeds—that the Salvation Army was “the most orthodox Christian organisation on the face of the earth.”

Publishers regard the publication of orthodox literature as a mark of discredit and are afraid of working in a department that is rapidly becoming defunct.

To say that a new book is about to appear in the interests of the “Old Theology” is now equal to strangling it in the press. Nobody will buy it except those whose minds are petrified into the habit of trying to prove that a thing can be and not be, in the same sense and at the

same time, or whose powers of judgment are warped by bigotry and deliberate disloyalty to truth.

Were it not for the rationalistic elements, stolen slyly from the pages of Unitarian liberalism, orthodox literature would fall flat on the thinking public and be so insipid and useless that no one would read it.

The germs of the best sermons preached by the leaders in orthodox circles to-day are taken from the works of such men as Dr. Channing, Theodore Parker, Dr. Martineau, James Freeman Clarke, M. J. Savage, and others on our side of the house, who are adored as the world's great heretics and denied the honour even of acknowledgment.

These are kings uncrowned—reigning over many subjects: priests—ministering at other altars than such as bear the name Unitarian: giants—“whose exterior semblance doth belie”

their "soul's immensity": philosophers—who
"yet" do "keep" their "heritage": prophets—
who are

"Haunted for ever by the eternal mind":

mighty prophets! seers blest—

"On whom those truths do rest

Which we are toiling all our lives to find,"

and over whom their

"Immortality

Broods like a day, a master o'er a slave,

A presence which is not to be put by,"

even in the assemblies from which their physical
form is unanimously exterminated. These are
chained prisoners—

"Yet glories in the might

Of heaven-born freedom":

men sublime and beautiful—who are revered
by the deeper hearts of those whose lips despise
them, "saying all manner of evil against" them
and vociferously crying, "Crucify them! crucify
them!" for they are "not fit to live."

How seldom is there now-a-days a reprint of

the standard works of the "divines" who, one or two hundred years ago—long posterior to the time when were formulated the standard creeds of Orthodoxy—were looked up to with awe and regarded as the great prophets of God!

How few will now take the same pains as used to be taken to read such works, *e.g.*, as those of Baxter, Manton, Owen, Doddridge, Watts, Fletcher, Law, Tillotson, Stillingfleet, Sterne, Pearson, Paley and Matthew Henry!

How fewer still are the pains-taking and approving readers of the productions of Jonathan Edwards, Knox and Calvin, who are held in such esteem in Scotland even now!

Even such charming things as Chalmers' *Astronomical Discourses*, the sermons of Vinet, the orations of Whitfield and Paley's *Evidences of Christianity* are becoming tame, unattractive and of defunct repute.

No more uncongenial task—as I know from personal experience—is imposed on the students

in Methodistic colleges than that of having to wade through Cooke's Christian Theology and Pope's Compendium of Christian Theology and of having to prepare for examinations in the Sermons of John Wesley, Field's Handbook of Christian Theology and Watson's Theological Institutes—books all of which in some respects are most admirable, I gladly and frankly admit.

Thoughtful people turn away from the dry and dusty fodder alike of the divines and fathers of the past ages and of the creed-bound—and therefore, in regard to spiritual illumination, unprogressive—churches of to-day and they seek to feed on the springing grass which grows in the fertile meadows of liberal thought where the new and sweeter life is not smothered by the effete productions of the past and where they have not to wander and climb so hopelessly over the high and barren rocks of ugly superstition.

The intellectual food they obtain is not, of

course, similar to that of Unitarians. To talk about going over the fences into out-and-out Unitarian pastures would shock their tender sensibilities.

Their fields are all denominated "evangelical," "orthodox" and "Christian."

The most popular, important and prosperous journals and magazines of Orthodoxy at the present time are issued and valued not for the sake of the orthodox theology they nominally represent, and with which they are chiefly concerned, but because of that infinitesimal fraction of rationalistic theology, borrowed principally from Unitarian sources, which they profess to ignore and openly denounce as heretical.

The moment they cease to disguise their plagiarism and honestly acknowledge their indebtedness they also are both denounced and discarded.

But, so long as they are sufficiently obtuse to the dictates of journalistic reason and conscience,

they are allowed to proceed in their dishonest course not only without murmur or objection, but with the positive and constant applause of the marching section of Orthodoxy—who welcome and honour them as ideal lights of liberal religious philosophy—making a splendid success out of what were the commonplaces of Unitarianism fifty years ago.

If a minister in Orthodoxy happens to publish a lecture or a book containing half-a-dozen sentences with a decidedly liberal ring, he is very soon excommunicated and immediately the public begin to worship him as a hero, as a martyr to personal conviction and as a great modern prophet.

If a minister in Orthodoxy wishes to attain the summit of the giddy pinnacle of popularity, all he needs to do is to pose before the indulgent world as a free or advanced thinker—like some of whom we have recently heard in Scotland.

As soon as he does this he receives a pressing

invitation to a respectable church, round which gather the intellectual luminaries of the first magnitude and the pious aristocratic M.P.'s—upon whose solemn decisions and unstinted generosity all the world depends—is offered a magnificent salary and multitudes crowd, from Sunday to Sunday, to hear the same profound philosophy expounded as was preached in the despised old Unitarian church across the street a hundred years ago and is now considered the most commonplace trash.

Do not conclude, however, that I wish to imply that all Unitarian literature is, on the other hand, of an ideal kind. In reality I do not. Some of it can only be described as the reverse of ideal literature.

But it is not always so. Indeed, it is only so in cases which are rare exceptions to the general rule.

By far the greater bulk of Unitarian literature—especially of to-day—is valuable. Much of it

is exceedingly valuable and constitutes the choicest and most meritorious literature to be found either inside or outside of the religious denominations.

To mention all the eminent literary characters who have drawn their inspiration from this source I should be compelled to devote a separate discourse to the subject, and perhaps more than one; hence I only now stay to make the statement in a general fashion and pass on to observe that :

Unitarians have done more than any other religious workers for the purpose of giving the people a faithful transcript of the original documents of the ancient Hebrew and Christian Scriptures.

No scholars have been more stedfastly bent on ascertaining not only what mean but also what say the scriptures contained in our grand old Bible.

They have worked towards this end not only within the present generation, when the glaring deficiencies of the Authorised Version of the time of James I. of England have been universally admitted, but also during the days of dense ignorance, when for anyone to suggest that that much idolised Version was, in one way or another, defective was to lay himself open to imputations of irreverence and even to insinuations of wickedness in the way of positive and deliberate opposition to the truth of God.

Not always was it so light a matter to talk about revising the Authorised Version of the Bible.

Formerly every sentence, phrase, word, syllable and letter were regarded as the result of special and peculiar Divine inspiration; as the infallible, final and absolute Word of God. And he who ventured to introduce, or advocate the introduction of, a new reading, or an improved

rendering, of any passage had to brave a storm of ecclesiastical censure and anathema.

In the face of the heretical individual who had the audacity to oppose his wisdom to that of God and make the supernaturally revealed Word square with his proud imaginations were instantly hurled the dreadful threatenings of the jealous and avenging Judge—"If any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life and out of the holy city."

Notwithstanding such terrible warnings, however, our forefathers nobly fought the battle of biblical reform—a battle of long duration and of bloody progress and which to them was, as it is to many to-day, a struggle for truth and justice.

To specify all the efforts in this direction would be superfluous, but for the sake of strangers I will mention a few.

Whiston's Primitive New Testament appeared so far back as 1745. Harwood's Liberal Trans-

ment Translated from the Greek text of Tischendorf by Robert Ainslie—a work which an intelligent gentleman in Glasgow the other day told me was the means of his conversion from orthodox Calvinism and one which has admittedly been of great service to people of all denominations.

Four years ago the religious world was wild with delight at the long-wished-for appearance of the Revised Version of the New Testament—intended to supersede the popular version—and now—in the spring of 1885—it is rejoicing over the publication of the Revised Version of the Old Testament.

What a glorious event! exclaim the excited scholars. What a boon to the community! re-join the at-last-waking theologians.

And yet the same work as causes them now to kill their fatted calf and dance for joy and talk loudly about epochs in the science of biblical criticism had been accomplished by Unitarians

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many years before without eliciting so much from them as a simple recognition—to say nothing of careful and impartial examination and honest and grateful acknowledgment.

The work of Unitarians is still despised. Whilst passing along Sauchiehall Street the other day I noticed in a window a card containing the photographs of forty-five “most potent, grave and reverend” gentlemen entitled “The Revisers of the Old Testament.” But it contained the photograph of no Unitarian.

The Revised New Testament of 1881 about which the astonished denominations went mad was scarcely any improvement upon a Revised Translation published by the late scholarly Mr. Samuel Sharpe in 1840 (*i.e.*, forty-one years previously) and in some respects even inferior. While the same person, a generation ago, gave to the world a Translation of the whole of the Old Testament Scriptures able to hold its own with the popularly applauded version issued

during the last few weeks from the Jerusalem Chamber of Westminster Abbey.

According to report, this important—and, to those capable of reaping

“The harvest of a quiet eye,”

highly significant—result is also largely due to a Unitarian; for the movement which ultimately led the Convocation to take up the question of the revision of the Old Testament had its origin in the efforts of the same insufficiently appreciated, high-souled and indefatigable gentleman.

Do not infer, however, that I mean the progress of the people is essentially related to a correct translation of the Bible, or that the perfection of the one is necessarily proportionate to that of the other. I neither mean nor say any such thing.

For my part, I believe people could both live and be happy if there were no translation at all.

Not even our sacred and unique Bible is absolutely essential to human development. For

thousands and thousands of years the world evolved without it. Men listened to the Eternal voice as it rolled—not so much through the avenues of literature and the circumscribed senses of the physical organism as—through the instincts, intuitions and impressions of sensitive, thinking, willing and loving souls—capable of recognising and enjoying the beauty, power and goodness in this great and glorious universe of God.

And, should the Bible be some day lost or forgotten, mankind will march onward without it again.

Thus, I don't attach any vital importance to the commonly-urged question, "What say the Scriptures?" The Bible is undoubtedly a good book—the true worth of which is not comprehended by the majority of even the advanced thinkers of to-day and will not be seen until they are willing to take up a more thoroughly scientific position—but it is not the only good

book. It is one out of many God has given and to study it exclusively is a greater sin than not to study it at all.

To the student of comparative religion its importance is superlative, as it indicates in a remarkable manner the evolution of humanity during a considerable period of history—from rude myth and savagery to tolerable civilisation. As a text-book on morals and philosophy, I frankly admit it has been a prolific source of evil as well as of good. As a work of art—chiefly the much forgotten art of naturalness—and a literary relic, it is pre-eminently worthy of preservation and will amply repay the most careful and sympathetic study.

But, in answering the question before us, I am dealing with an insinuation, tantamount to an objection, urged against Unitarians by those who regard the Bible as the infallible Word of God, given by special and peculiar

inspiration, for the express purpose of lifting mankind from the miry clay of moral evil and guiding men in the way of salvation.

And, in conclusion, I would affirm with redoubled emphasis that, even if the Bible be all they take it to be—the only candle to light us on our long and circuitous path from night to day, from sin to obedience and from suffering to joy—Unitarianism has done more for the world than all other denominations combined to snuff away the mistranslations and disabuse the misconceptions which have hitherto obscured it and cause it to shine forth once more in the native beauty of the brilliant original flame.

Unitarianism in its Speculative Aspect.

“Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.”—PAUL.

“We have but faith : we cannot know ;
For knowledge is of things we see ;
And yet we trust it comes from Thee,
A beam in darkness : let it grow.

“*Let knowledge grow from more to more,*
But more of reverence in us dwell.”

TENNYSON.

ON viewing Unitarianism in its speculative aspect, the first thing that strikes us is its unique position. Its characteristic features are many, but the most prominent and important is the one I wish to emphasise this afternoon. It is the only body that professes and attempts to combine religious reverence with the boldest rationalism.

The position of all other denominations is

either superstitious and unduly conservative, or superstitious and unduly destructive.

Secularism, of the type peculiar to the *Secular Review*; Freethought, such as is advocated by the *Freethinker*; and Positivism, as represented by Mr. Frederick Harrison and Leslie Stephen — alike Pooh! Pooh! the religious systems and movements of the past—sometimes condemning them *in toto* and always regarding them as unworthy of critical and thorough study.

The votaries of orthodox Revealed Religion study exclusively a few of such systems and movements and those selected for examination are—not understood but—emphasised excessively, even to the extent of ignoring those of the present.

According to their teaching, the work of revelation was finished eighteen hundred years ago and the highest duty of men who live to-day is to close up their own channels of

information, with the single exception of that through which they receive the testimony of people of the past and distant days.

Then steps forward catholic-spirited Unitarianism, declaring all of these sections are both right and wrong—right so far as they go, but wrong in not going far enough: being unwarrantably and lamentably partial and unsympathetic.

To such as ignore the productions of former ages, Unitarianism says, “Despise not the day of small things”—but think of it with gratitude—and learn to express yourself concerning it in less sweeping and scienceless terms.

That the philosophies of the past are defective we frankly concede. That fact we assert as constantly and positively as you.

But they are not entirely useless. They are not a heap of unmitigated superstition and rubbish. Amidst the mountains of what to some is only chaff there is to us a great

deal of solid grain; much that may be utilised as valuable food for the impoverished philosophers of the nineteenth century.

While the ancients were surrounded by myths and dense superstitions and a large proportion of their teaching is for ever out-grown, they clearly and firmly grasped many of those ideas which are fundamental in all ages and in every system of human thought and in some respects—may I not say in many respects?—rebuke our incredulous credulity and are fitted to be our teachers and guides.

Yes, indeed, in regard to some of the most sublime problems of human thought, better able to instruct us than men of our own times to whom we are willing to yield hearty and unreserved allegiance.

Unitarianism contends, in the words of Longfellow,

“That in all ages
Every human heart is human;
That even in savage bosoms

There are longings, yearnings, strivings
For the good they comprehend not ;
That the feeble hands and helpless,
Groping blindly in the darkness,
Trust God's right hand in that darkness,
And are lifted up and strengthened."

The Infinite Being whence come all perceptions and illuminations—or all interpretations of symbolical phenomena—is around His children ever and, as Clodd has finely said, "All age and place and human life is sacred with His presence."

What He is we can neither know nor imagine, but that He is we are certain ; for in Him we live and move and have our being. How He besets and inspires we cannot say—and probably no one ever discovered—but how else is anything possible, whether physical or spiritual, whether of the nature of thought, word or deed ?

Modern science brings with it both advantages and disadvantages. It not only reveals but obscures.

That class of phenomena which is of fundamental importance it habitually ignores—insisting excessively on the superficial and non-essential—and often men rest in its temporary and misleading terms and theories.

How few have a clear conception of the meaning even of such familiar words as law, force, cause, effect, nature and universe! How many are content with listening to the high-sounding name without enquiring what it denominates!

In ancient times it was impossible to make one's abode in highly-wrought theories and elaborate scientific nomenclature for the simple reason that such wonderful and convenient—or rather inconvenient—places of refuge did not exist.

The people of old were free to look—face to face—at the pure and undraped facts—often being much the better for the lack of the coloured spectacles of modern speculation

—and saying as wise things about the beautiful and wonderful universe as can be said to-day.

Instead of ignoring or ridiculing the records of their experiences, we need and ought to ponder them deeply—with sympathy and grateful reverence.

To attempt to cut ourselves off from the experiences of the past is as vain and foolish as for a person to profess that he is independent of the lowest rungs of the ladder when nearing the top.

The thoughts of past ages are the steps which have lead up to the present: the potent germ out of which has been developed the fruitful tree of modern knowledge.

Unitarianism looks upon the past with reverence and studies it with a sympathetic insight into its intrinsic and abiding worth. And, although—in the light of modern discovery—compelled to relegate much of its teaching to the region of childlike myth and

crude superstition, it has no sympathy with wild and wholesale denunciation and scorns the language of learned contempt.

To those who swing to the opposite extreme—ignoring the present and dwelling exclusively on the past—it says, “The position you occupy is less excusable still. It is better to rob the ages we have left behind of their halo than to refuse to see the glory of our own day.”

However good men have been, they never were better on the whole than now. The Golden Age, about which they have talked and by which their poetic imagination has so often been kindled into purest flame never yet was realised, but was a beautiful dream of the future: a dream still to be fulfilled we hope—and trust. Yes!

“Oh yet we trust that somehow good
Will be the final goal of ill
To pangs of nature, sins of will,
Defects of doubt and taints of blood ;

“ That nothing walks with aimless feet ;
That not one life shall be destroyed,
Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made the pile complete ;

“ That not a worm is cloven in vain ;
That not a moth with vain desire
Is shrivelled in a fruitless fire,
Or but subserves another’s gain.

“ Behold we know not anything ;
I can but trust that good shall fall
At last—far off—at last, to all,
And every winter change to spring

“ So runs my dream : but what am I ?
An infant crying in the night :
An infant crying for the light
And with no language but a cry.

.
“ I falter where I firmly trod,
And falling with my weight of cares
Upon the great world’s altar-stairs
That slope through darkness up to God,

“ I stretch lame hands of faith, and grope,
And gather dust and chaff, and call
To what I feel is Lord of all
And faintly trust the larger hope.”

The voice of the Supreme was heard of old it is true. "At sundry times and in divers manners in times past" did He speak "unto the fathers in the prophets." But so far is His voice from having ceased that it sounds forth to-day clearer and louder than ever.

"Hark ! on the evening breeze,
As once of old the Lord God's voice,
Is heard among the trees."

The ancient Hebrews had their prophets—many of them noble and sublime—"worthy to be had in everlasting remembrance." So had the ancient Christians and before some of them we are compelled to stand in awe—hardly daring to pronounce their charming names.

But the nineteenth century has its prophets also—some of them grander and mightier still—whose words not only thrill our souls but will mould the thoughts, feelings, conduct and destinies of the future

“Prophetic voices now resound :

Far, far and wide, they strike the ear,
While glowing tongues, no longer bound,
Proclaim the age of Reason near.”

Whether it be through the media of ancient or modern prophet—known by whatever name and hailing from whatever department of the world or universe—or through the beauty, power, majesty and beneficence of the spheres, or through the plastic and unfathomable intuitions—connecting us before and behind with God—He who is and changes not, urging us along in our eternal and marvellous course, speaks on and on and with the unfolding capacity of man to hear—and obey—His measured and delicate tones are sweeter and sweeter and His meaning increasingly clear.

To say he ceased communicating with His erring creatures eighteen hundred years ago is not to encourage men and conducive to their happiness any more than to affirm, like those at the opposite speculative pole, that He

never spoke at all; for, thereupon, they instantly begin to quarrel about what He said and how He said it: splitting up society into persecuting factions and—to borrow a bold metaphor from one of the letters of Byron which has always been suppressed by his orthodox publishers—“tearing each other to pieces for the love of the Lord and hatred of each other.”

Scarcely anything has been a more prolific source of evil, or a more effective barrier to evolution, in Christendom than the assumption that the Bible contains all that God will ever say to man on the earth and that the magnificent panorama of revelation was completed by the apocalyptic vision of St. John.

Since that notion first spread the Christian centuries have been marked by bloody and revolting carnage. The towering Christ has been crucified a million times by those who have claimed to be his very special—if not

exclusive—friends and the pure and helpful humaneness of his gospel been in danger of being burned out by the eternal fires of fierce persecution.

As soon as the Bible came to be regarded as the final standard of appeal, some contended that it taught one thing and some another—each interpreting it differently and all maintaining that it favoured their own pet theories and dogmas.

Nearly all the religious sects and denominations that have sprung up during the last seventeen centuries—not excepting Unitarianism itself—have had their origin in some peculiar interpretation of a few passages of the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures: the most opposite and mutually contradictory doctrines being based with equal confidence on the same portions of what has been regarded by all alike as the infallible Word of God.

As Unitarians—who find the ultimate

standard of appeal, neither in the commands of a Pope, Acts of Parliament nor in the decisions of ecclesiastical committees—large or small—but in the reason and conscience of the individual: saying with Paul, “Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind” and endeavouring to crystallize the precept into practice—asking only for freedom of thought and liberty to walk according to our best ideal of right (for Unitarianism does not stand merely for the dogma of Divine Unity), we maintain that the same Being as spoke in the prophets of old not only did not utter His last word on the sacred isle of Patmos but will speak to the people of to-day in sublimer strains—if only they will hear—and that there is a glory yet to be revealed in us infinitely transcending what at present is man’s loftiest conception of possibility.

“ We limit not the truth of God
To our poor reach of mind,

By notions of our day or sect,
Crude, partial and unkind :
No ! let the new and better hope
Within our hearts be stirred—
That God hath yet more light and truth
To break forth from His word.

“ Who dares to bind to his dull sense
The oracles of heaven,
For all the nations, tongues and climes,
And all the ages given ?
That universe has much unknown,
That ocean unexplored ;
And God hath yet more light and truth
To break forth from His word.

“ Our great forefathers darkly went
The first steps of the way ;
'Twas but the dawning, yet to grow
Into the perfect day.
And grow it shall—our glorious sun
More fervid rays afford—
For God hath yet more light and truth
To break forth from His word.”

Nor is this position in the slightest degree fatal to religious reverence. On the contrary, it is conducive thereto and to an extent which they who confine themselves within the

cramped and gloomy chambers of mediæval speculation are not able to imagine.

The way to intensify reverence is not to clip the wings of the intellect but to give the soul free play—to allow it to soar unhindered into the wide heavens of human thought and view for itself the wonders of this great and glorious universe of God.

Ignorance and not knowledge is the parent of irreverence. It is when men see little to comprehend and fancy they have comprehended the little they see that they are glib, bombastic and peremptory.

When they exercise properly their reasoning faculties and study the phenomena of Nature in a thoroughly scientific fashion, their boasting and flippancy are instantly rebuked and irreverence becomes almost impossible. Knowledge makes them fall on their knees and exclaim, "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works,

and that my soul knoweth right well. Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of the ages."

Newton—one of the most pronounced rationalists Unitarianism has been able to boast of and one of the greatest scientists the world ever knew—after making discoveries which have no parallel except perhaps in those of a Unitarian scientist and philosopher of the nineteenth century—Charles Robert Darwin—said, "I am but a little child playing with pebbles on the shore while the great ocean of truth rolls before me."

They who fulminate their folly in the words "too much learning makes thee mad" and discourage investigation

"For fear divine Philosophy
Should push beyond her mark, and be
Procuress to the Lords of Hell"

are irreverent in the extreme and make more

atheists—if there be any—than all the scientists and philosophers combined. Such dogmatism is essentially irreverent—shutting out truth and reflecting upon the Infinite Father of the inquiring mind—and the deepest religious reverence is conditioned by the boldest rationalism.

The peculiar position of Unitarianism is admirably indicated in the words of Tennyson—

“ Our little systems have their day ;
They have their day and cease to be :
They are but broken lights of thee,
And thou, O Lord, art more than they.

“ We have but faith : we cannot know ;
For knowledge is of things we see ;
And yet we trust it comes from thee,
A beam in darkness : let it grow.

“ Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of reverence in us dwell.”

Unitarianism in its Practical Aspect.

“ O pure Reformers, not in vain
Your trust in humankind ;
The good which bloodshed could not gain,
Your peaceful zeal shall find.

“ The truths ye urge are borne abroad
By every wind and tide :
The voice of Nature and of God
Speaks out upon your side.

“ The weapons which your hands have found
Are those which Heaven hath wrought—
Light, Truth and Love ; your battle-ground,
The free, broad field of Thought.

“ Oh, may no selfish purpose break
The beauty of your plan,
Nor lie from throne or altar shake
Your steady faith in man.

WHITTIER.

UNITARIANISM is a very ancient ism ; yet it is not known as such by more than half the

people of Scotland and I am not quite certain that so many as half are aware of its great antiquity.

That which is of vast importance is never extremely popular. The people's best friends are invariably treated as their bitterest foes.

Never is the true worth of a system or movement of extraordinary value to humanity appreciated by the masses when first promulgated and seldom is it generally acknowledged until many centuries after.

The prophets are no more welcome than the devil of the orthodox hell and on their first appearance are ridiculed, hooted and scoffed. The world cries, "Ye are preachers of strange doctrines, worshippers of false gods, presumptuous heretics, men possessed of devils and dangerous to society. They are haunted by zealous truth-haters and antiquated creed-mongers—anxious to preserve intact the old and determined to stem the tide of the new.

Be not a prophet if you expect to have a smooth course in life. Be no more a lover of justice if you anticipate a kind and cordial reception. Be no more a truth-seeker if you are afraid of running counter to popular prejudices, or of being despised as a vacillating heretic who has no definite beliefs.

If you are a prophet you will have to send the fire and the sword among men, to turn friends into enemies and make foes in your own household. You will be suspected, dishonoured, slandered, reproached, condemned, "despised and rejected." Your work will be contemptuously ignored or virulently opposed.

Such has been the lot of all great men. Such has been the reception accorded to every cause of unusual worth to the world.

Which of the fertilising streams that have flown on to our times have not been contorted alike by the learned and ignorant, by truth-seekers and despisers of truth? When in all the

history of evolution was there a movement originated and established without opposition? When was there a system of teaching maintained by its founder until it could hold its own against the world? Never. No, never.

Many have been introduced and enabled to survive their authors, but they have not gone on to maturity without the most trying strains and often has there been an entire collapse.

Whether we take this country or any other we shall find every new organism struggling hard for existence and scarcely able to survive. Not one tree is allowed to flourish to the full extent of its capacity ; but is blighted in the bud, impaired in the flower and hindered in the growth of its appropriate fruit.

Improvements in the highest spheres have always been objected to by theologians and ecclesiastical zealots as poisonous exotics, as mischievous innovations, as the progeny of evil

spirits—children from a hell of darkness and spite.

As it was in the past, so it is now and so it will be for a long time to come.

Give the world another Christ and it will crucify him, as it crucified the prophet of Nazareth. Give the world another Paul and it will persecute him, as it persecuted Paul the Apostle. Give the world another Darwin and it will stigmatise him, as it stigmatised the patient and unostentatious scientist who has trailed across our sky an endless and widening glory. Give the world another Spencer and it will ignore him, as—even in our own age of boasted enlightenment—it has ignored one of the greatest philosophers the centuries have produced. Give the world another Socrates, or Arius, or Socinus, or Wyclif, or Luther, or Bunyan, or Robinson, or Columbus, or Bruno, or Galileo, or Priestley, or Channing, or Parker and it will accord to him a recognition worthy of

that which it gave the men whose names I have mentioned.

Give unto every man his due ; consideration to whom consideration is due : deference to whom deference is due : reverence to whom reverence is due : "honour to whom honour is due"—no matter who they are, whence they come, or where they live and work for humanity. The prophets are worthy of acknowledgment and all the more so because they are seldom recognised and praised during their lifetime.

Do not think you are great when people tell you so. If they say you are a prophet you may safely conclude they are mistaken or insincere.

The true prophet always has to reveal himself and explain the meaning of his own terms. He is often obliged to bear witness of himself in language which to others appears intolerably egotistical and is not regarded as faithfully representing facts until a long time afterwards.

How absurd must those statements I read to you on Sunday afternoon last have seemed to the people to whom they were first addressed! What presumption, they would exclaim, for this man to say he is "the true vine"; that without him we "can do nothing" and that, if we "abide in" him and his "words abide in" us, we shall ask what we will and "it shall be done" unto us! Who ever heard such blasphemy before? A man from Nazareth saying he is a prophet—"greater than Jonas"—"lord of the Sabbath" and of our "Temple!"

Where is there anything to match for audacity such expressions as—"I am the light of the world; the way, the truth and the life. I am the door through which all must pass into the sheepfold and if any man entereth not by this door but climbeth up some other way the same is a thief and a robber. Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest"?

Never did man utter words so outrageously egotistical, yet never were sublime facts so lamentably understated.

Would that Christ had told us more about himself! Alas that we know so little! We are the losers, not he.

He had "many things" to tell the people of his day, but they could not hear them. Therefore, "the light shined in darkness and the darkness comprehended it not." Hence still, in a very real sense, the darkness is well nigh dense as ever :

"Heavy as frost and deep almost as life."

"I, if I be lifted up," said he, "will draw all men unto me." But, instead of exalting the real Christ, his disciples have "lifted up" a caricature; a theological effigy—which has caused many to revolt.

The sin of the age in which Christ lived—as it is in this—was conventional modesty, which—being interpreted—is mock-modesty.

“Burning” lights were plentiful, but “burning and shining lights” were rare. The custom was to put the candles not on tables, so that they might be useful to all, but under bushels so that they were of service to none.

The custom then was—as it is still—to sew “a piece of new cloth on an old garment,” and put “new wine into old bottles.”

But when the Scribes and Pharisees saw him eat “with publicans and sinners” and “heal on the Sabbath day,” and charged him with transgressing their conventional restraints, Christ exclaimed,—“You shall not confine me within your artificial limits. You mock-modest people are the subtlest foes of society—wolves in sheep’s clothing. Much as your vain customs will cause me to throw myself open to, they shall never make me lay myself open to the imputation of inhumaneness—of negligence of the poor and needy. Men are men, even though they be lying wounded in the gutter, and none

the less so because you stigmatise them as 'publicans and sinners' and hold yourselves aloof from them. 'It is lawful to heal on the Sabbath day.' It is quite proper; yea, it is a noble thing to 'eat with publicans and sinners.' And, when the children of the bride-chamber have the bridegroom with them, it is perfectly natural that they should rejoice. Sew me on to the garment of Judaism! If you do I shall tear it. Put me into the old bottle of pernicious custom! If you do, I shall burst it. No, no! New cloth must not be sewn on old garments and 'new wine must be put into new bottles.'"

Whenever Jesus addressed an audience, the people knew that he spake, not as the professional Scribes, but "as one having authority," and as one burdened with a needed and original message.

He durst say to people, "Forsake all and come, follow me." And, usually, they immediately rose and followed him.

Talk of capturing me! If it were necessary I could have legions of helpers and break through every barrier that man can set. Think of starving me out! "I have meat to eat ye know not of." Talk of antiquity and dignity! "Before Abraham was, I Am." I Am as the Absolute; yea, I and my Father are one."

Casting aside entirely both what is known as the orthodox and what is known as the heterodox interpretation of these expressions, there is yet to be seen beneath them the most exact and scientific science and the most advanced philosophy known to man. And, one day, they will be found to contain not a particle of error or presumption, even when interpreted as literally as possible.

In spite of imputations of egotism, Christ declared plainly it was necessary that he should bear witness of himself, and that, even if he did bear witness of himself, his statements were none the less true.

If I don't say things which never were said before and do works which no other man has done, said he, the people will not have sufficient light to see they are in error ; much less be willing to acknowledge it and reform.

I know that the message that is given me to deliver will revolutionise the world and bring peace, hope and joy to the hearts of men. Hence, he said to his disciples, go ye "out into all the world and declare the good tidings to every creature.

If thou knewest the gift of God and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, he said to a woman of Samaria, thou wouldest have asked of him and he would have given thee living water. Whoso drinketh of this water shall thirst again ; but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst ; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up eternally. You people talk of worshipping God in particular localities and

according to certain conventional rules. But, woman, believe me, the hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we worship intelligently. Yea, the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father, not formally and by contortions of the body, but in spirit and in reality. Those are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks. The Great Spirit can only be truly worshipped in spirit and in truth. Thou speakest of the Messiah and sayest when he is come he will tell us all things. I that speak unto thee am he.

Christ was indeed all he professed to be—and more. And without these self-revelations—beneath which may be seen a more advanced philosophy than that which passes for advanced philosophy to-day—the world would not have understood the true value of the Christ life so well as it does—and someday will.

Not that he was God. Not that he was constituted on a peculiar plan. Only that he was loyal to the best within him and not afraid to be a man. Jesus was true to himself—true to his highest ideal of the laws of his nature—and therefore a giant amongst human pigmies. He was the “king of kings and lord of lords” and drew men unto him in humble allegiance because the only man who had conquered in the kingdom of self and was not dominated by any of the baser parts of his being.

To all his disciples he could say, “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit and that your fruit, as well as mine, should remain.”

Let us see whether Christ can choose us, to follow him as humble disciples, or whether the words he spoke have been indeed fulfilled—“the servant shall be as his lord.”

At anyrate, let us be careful that no malice, envy, conceit, prejudice, bigotry or dogmatism

warps our judgment of, or freezes up our generosity towards, either the men above us—on whom we so largely depend—or those systems and machineries revolving in society that are not in the same direction as our own views and sympathies or in absolute harmony with our tastes and desires.

No phase of the absolute truth of God has been so much ignored and despised as that for which we Unitarians stand to-day and for which the body we belong to has stood for very many years.

For this our forefathers contended. For this they suffered—at the instance of those who were regarded as loyal followers of the Prince of peace, freedom and love. For this they went to the martyr pyres and sealed their testimony with cruel and ignominious deaths. For this their followers strove and consequently were excommunicated from the presence of arrogant and bigoted Protestant popes. And, loving the

truth rather than livings, they “went out not knowing whither.”

The persecuted, however, were not to be destroyed. In spite of disadvantage, opprobrium and fire, they lived on and on. At last, they are recognised—by some—as the kings and heroes of conscience and reason. Their march down to the grave proved to be their ascension to thrones—on which they still sit and whence they speak in language of greater authority than otherwise would have been possible. To-day they live in and reign over loving human hearts and find a glorious immortality in

“The sweet presence of a good diffused,
And in diffusion ever more intense—
In minds made better by their presence.”

But their children are received to-day with almost as scant hospitality as was shown to them and, wherever they go—especially if they happen to venture so far as Scotland—have to

face a somewhat similar hostility. They are looked upon with suspicion. They are feared as foes of truth. They are denied the ordinary courtesies of society—even by enlightened Britons—even by the inhabitants of this city.

And yet there is not a body of religious workers to whom the people owe more ; whether in the way of important and stimulating literature, reverent and enlightened philosophy, or beneficent and practicable standards of morality.

The practical work of Unitarianism is not to be measured by the methods generally adopted for determining the quality of religious movements ; but according to its deeds of benevolence, its piety at home, its latitude of sympathy and manhood of rarest proportion.

The questions to be asked are : “ What is the degree of its service to men in general ? What does it do for the deprived, depraved and despised ? What is the extent of its restraining influence upon the vain and pernicious customs of

society? How does it affect those politicians who generously devote their lives to the work of teaching the populace how to conduct unseemly debates and oppose the removal of glaring injustices? In short, with what determination does it apply itself to the difficult task of emancipating men from the thralldom of poverty, oppression, discontent, greed, selfishness, lust, vanity, artificiality, vulgarity, bigotry, delusion, disease and despair?"

The true test of the greatness and utility of any system or movement must be in these directions and, if it does not bring forth such fruit, it is a superfluous ornament, a pretentious sham, a glorified idol, an effete and shameful anomaly and ought to be destroyed.

"Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?" Why should it engage the attention of those who ought to be doing a work for the ages—bringing forth year after year

"Nothing but leaves, nothing but leaves"?

Why doth the world so fondly foster that which is worthless—not fit to live because of encroaching decay, superabundant foliage and meagre and unhealthful fruit?

These are the questions we always ask. These are the tests Unitarians value. And these tests ought to be applied universally.

Let this be done and what will be the result? Where will be all those elaborate creeds according to which men are annually judged and disposed of in orthodox denominations? Where will be the stalking monsters of church establishment and legal endowments at the expense of those who have no option in reference to their continuance and prefer to reserve their taxes for pressing domestic objects and for the support of such forms of religious worship as are elected by their own reason and sympathies? Where will be those pernicious relics of mediæval superstition which undermine the common standard of morality under the sanction of law

and of equivocating theologians and unsympathetic Christians — destroying the hopes, health and happiness of the despised and suffering children of unfortunate circumstances? What will become of the many distracting anxieties, doubts and fears caused by the terrible dogmas of a wandering and powerful devil, a capricious and angry God and a hell of eternal torment? What will be the measure of mercy shown to those doctrines according to which friends are severed from friends, the dear and beautiful child

“ Is shrivelled in a fruitless fire ”

and the bonds of parental affection for ever wrenched? Where will be the theology which makes one person a sinner in consequence of the conduct of others and places the finite transgressor beyond the reach of the mercy of the infinite God? Will not the result be that such gross anomalies will be speedily sent to oblivion?

These are practical matters, although generally relegated to the regions of harmless superstition and unimportant detail. These are matters of immense significance to struggling and suffering humanity. These are matters of vital importance to those who have not time, or means, or ability to work them out to their logical issues for themselves and see how irrational, unchristian and inhumane they are.

Why should the people who make the physical wealth and strength of the nations be hampered and injured in reference to matters of the highest importance and left in the dark concerning truths so intimately related to their peace, contentment and happiness? Why should they not be delivered from unnecessary burdens of care ; deluding myths ; depressing, demoralising and destructive superstitions and be enabled to look up into the face of the loving Father who pities them even in their folly, pursues them with beneficent pains and tender entreaties and

carries them ever in an infinite and benevolent heart?

There is enough to make men sad under the present conditions of existence without inventing additional and unnecessary evils. There is enough to give us pain without conveying us to an imaginary place of torment.

What we need is relief from the pressure of anxiety, deliverance from the incubus of fear, emancipation from the terrors of the near and distant future, and light, love and liberty in all our hearts, homes and labours—turning this world into a beautiful and virtuous paradise and enabling the souls of men to rise to the God they seek and find in Him a refuge from the blast, a shelter from the storm, a resting-place for their weary pinions, a solace for all their distress and a balm for all their woes.

For the accomplishment of these objects Unitarians have ever striven with undaunted

courage and increasing zeal and resolution. Towards these ends they have not been reluctant to work when to do so was—as in many places it still is—to lay themselves open to the most trying imputations and when loyalty to their ideal meant social disadvantage and even excommunication from the circles and sympathy of their nearest and dearest friends.

They have submitted to banishment from their native land. They have suffered at the martyr's stake and in many more instances than the generality of people are aware.

For such noble purposes they have not refused to sacrifice their property, time and reputation ; but have taken joyfully the spoiling of their goods. They have been content to endure the criticisms, cynicisms, detractions and stinging insinuations of both friends and foes, learned and illiterate, high and low. They have denied themselves of civil interests, the privilege of lucrative positions, commercial advantages, edu-

cational facilities and the tempting honours of literary distinction.

Unitarians have to an unusual extent devoted their time and energies to the establishment of charitable institutions. Of this we have many remarkable illustrations even in our own City of Glasgow—the chief of which may, perhaps, be said to be the splendid Mitchell Library and the Allan Glen's Institution.

They have headed all sorts of movements for the redress of popular grievances. For works of genuine philanthropy they are absolutely unequalled by any religious body in existence.

Their's is the only religious faith that will admit of a full-orbed philanthropy.

Neither have they, any parallel in the political sphere—whether in respect to men of ability and eminence or of far-reaching influence.

Unitarian principles have inspired men to devote their resources to the abolition of the slave trade, to the repeal of intolerable corn

laws and of statutes prohibiting the opening of museums, libraries and art galleries on Sunday and to proclaim with unanimous voice the rights of all—not excepting women—to equal representation in Parliament.

Unitarianism has ever led its sons to protest with one consent against the establishment and endowment of a church by law and against compelling those to support it who would not do so if free to follow the dictates of conscience without pecuniary and civil disadvantage.

It has always contended against the foolish attempt to confine the expanding truth of God within the limits of creeds and confessions of faith—of any age or people—regarding such attempts as positive barriers to the improvement of the race.

It has invariably demanded the removal of social anomalies and been in favour of peace, reform and progress.

The good of the past it has carefully con-

served—gratefully partaking of and assimilating its fruit. The bad it has cast ruthlessly to the winds.

“What has Unitarianism done for the people?” Permit me to ask, What has it not done for the people? You cannot point to a single agitation in favour of popular liberty and justice into which it has not sent “men of light and leading” who have materially facilitated the issues.

The faith of the Unitarians in the inherent efficiency of truth, the unlimited possibilities of men and the ultimate supremacy of righteousness and happiness has “subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, waxed valiant in fight and turned to flight the armies of the aliens.”

And this is the explanation of the fact that it exerts a regenerating influence upon the com-

munity so entirely out of proportion to its numbers; that an expression of opinion by its assemblies is valued so much by leading statesmen and that it has been able to hold on its way so long in spite of the most virulent and determined opposition.

This is why it has attracted the attention and evoked the sympathy and support of such a number of the greatest thinkers and noblest souls the ages have yielded and can boast of so many loyal, earnest and unusually enlightened sons and daughters in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

And this is the reason why its fertilising influences are pouring forth over every people, country and continent to-day—with such rapidity and volume as to excite the unconquerable hope that, before long, all who love the truth in sincerity and are not afraid to follow it whithersoever it may lead will come to acknowledge the marvellous dignity and universal brotherhood of

man; the exceptional beauty and authority of "the man Christ Jesus;" the eternity of revelation and the unity, wisdom and goodness of

"God who is our home"—

the "Infinite and Eternal Energy from which all things proceed"—the nameless and proofless Absolute.