

FIFTY POINTS  
IN FAVOUR OF  
UNITARIANISM

ALFRED HALL, M.A.

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Unitarianism**

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*The Church of the Divine Unity*  
NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE

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## Preface

THE Committee of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association were appealed to by a representative of a District Union at one of the Whitsuntide Meetings to publish a small book giving concisely the main religious beliefs held by Unitarians. In the discussion which resulted the suggestion was made by the writer of the following pages that it should take the form which has been here adopted. He was approached later by the Committee and asked to formulate his plan more definitely. At first it was thought advisable that several ministers should co-operate in the work. But Unitarians allow perfect liberty of thought, and consequently on some points they have differences of opinion. The writer, therefore, though he realized his inability to deal with every subject in the best possible way, thought the 'Points' would be more helpful if he gave his own beliefs as a Unitarian. He supposes, however, that nearly all those associated with our churches would be in general sympathy with his principles.

## Preface

He has written the following pages in the hope that they will make clear to those outside our churches and to some inside, what a Unitarian believes. He trusts his statements will prove useful, and may remove some misapprehensions, as well as help young people growing up within our own denomination. The writer has for some years past lived the life of a working pastor and been frequently consulted by those in doubt. He has borne in mind the difficulties which have been advanced by those who have approached him from time to time.

In his conversations with men and women, he has been profoundly impressed and moved by the fact that there are minds so delicately organized that they are more distressed by their theological difficulties than less earnest people are by their moral delinquencies. It is his sincere hope that these 'Points' may be of service to these people, wherever they may be.

He speaks solely for himself, and would deeply regret if any sentence he has written should be taken as a dogmatic utterance. Unitarians believe that the basis of Church life should be undogmatic.

A. H.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE,

*October, 1910.*

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# 1

## Unitarianism an Affirmative Faith

UNITARIANISM, having often been in conflict with the prevalent orthodoxy, has been charged with being a *negative* faith. It has thus shared the fate of every progressive movement: it was said of Paul and his companions, 'These that have turned the world upside down have come hither also'; and the early Christians were generally known as atheists because, standing in a clearer light, they proclaimed that the ancient gods were powerless.

Unitarianism rightly understood is the *Religion of the Larger Affirmation*. For years the writer has felt that he has been kept outside other religious communions, not because he has believed too little, but because he has believed too much. Instead of believing that God spoke to only a few men in days long past, Unitarians hold that he speaks to all his children, even to the worst. Instead of asserting that only a few will be saved, they teach that no one will be finally lost to God. Instead of perceiving God incarnated in one man only, they reverence the divinity in all. Instead of looking up to Jesus as the only Saviour of the world, they regard him and all good men as saviours. Instead of accepting a few



## Negations of Orthodoxy

trifling miracles recorded in the Bible, they reverence the great miracle of Creation and of all life. Instead of finding God's presence in a mysterious sacrament, they find him revealed as a real presence throughout the universe. Instead of saying that the Bible alone contains the word of God, they hold that every true and uplifting word is inspired by him.

The objections of Unitarians to 'orthodoxy' are to the limitations placed upon religious truth, which in some cases amount to positive denials. When the old doctrines are enlarged and universalized, modern Unitarianism is the result.

The Rev. W. A. Vrooman, of Winnipeg, himself a convert from the traditional theology, summarizes the *Negations of Orthodoxy* and the *Affirmations of Unitarianism* in seven statements

### Negations of Orthodoxy

1. God has not made human reason competent to apprehend religious truth; hence the need of some external and infallible authority to tell man what to believe.

2. God did not create man in the beginning as he creates him now; hence the devil must have interfered to cause the fall.

3. God does not create man inherently good, but as totally depraved and alienated from the life of God; hence men come into the world as hereditary sinners under condemnation to death and hell.

## Affirmations of Unitarianism

4. God does not incarnate his life and love in humanity as he did in Jesus; hence Jesus must have been superhuman, God in human flesh, the unique God-man.

5. God as the eternal Father could not experience love without the coequal eternal son as the object of his affection; hence an eternal society of persons in the Godhead.

6. God cannot forgive the sins of men until satisfaction has been made to his justice by some one whose suffering is sufficient expiation for the sins of the world; hence the death of Jesus meets this demand.

7. God is not able to overcome the sinfulness of all men, nor will he ever find a means of inducing them to seek the beauty of holiness; hence for vast multitudes the future life is an endless misery in hell.

## Affirmations of Unitarianism

1. God has made reason to be man's guide to truth.

2. God from the beginning has created men according to a good plan which has never been frustrated by the devil nor broken by a fall.

3. God brings men into the world as his children, imperfect and ignorant, but partakers of the divine life.

4. God incarnates his life and love in humanity, and in testifying to this fact Jesus gave pre-eminent revelation of a universal truth.

## Origins of Unitarianism

5. God is the eternal Father, the manifestations of whose manifold energies take many forms, but he is the central unity of all.

6. God forgives sin without the need of blood sacrifice to propitiate him.

7. God possesses resources of wisdom and love by which men shall receive discipline, instruction, and opportunity to the end that all shall become partakers of the divine nature, and participate in the divine joy of eternal love and life.

**Truth and comfort.**—The Unitarian thinks that these beliefs are supported by sound philosophy, human experience, and history. The present indications are that the Christian world will weary of the negations of orthodoxy, and will ere long find truth and comfort in the affirmations of Unitarianism.

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## 2

### Origins of Unitarianism

It is sometimes asked what was the origin of Unitarianism? The question is difficult to answer, because it had several different, *independent* origins.

**Unity of God.**—Many of the great religious teachers of the past, including Isaiah and Jesus, believed in *One Supreme Power in the universe*. In modern times Liberal Christianity, closely associated with Unitarianism, had an independent origin in

## The Protestant Reformation

the minds of various individuals and communities, in England, America, Germany, Holland, Hungary, Poland, France, Switzerland, Russia, and other countries. In the case of many forms of faith, missionaries were sent out from one country to convert others. But men living in different lands, under different conditions, with different experiences, aided only by their own earnest seeking, reached the Unitarian position. This fact is a powerful argument in favour of the truth of Unitarianism.

**Result of Freedom.**—Among the Nonconformists of England in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries there were some congregations—a few Independent, but chiefly Presbyterian—who did not formulate in the Trust Deeds of their chapels any creed which was binding on their successors; and the result was a steady development among them towards Unitarianism. It has been urged in recent years that unless churches and ministers are *creed-bound*, they are almost certain to move towards Unitarian Christianity.

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### 3

## Unitarianism and the Reformation

THE Protestant Reformation was a re-birth. Though the leading reformers made the lamentable mistake of endeavouring to imprison truth in unprogressive creeds

## The New Reformation

and dogmas, the human mind made a great advance towards emancipation in the sixteenth century. The last four hundred years have been distinguished from all that went before by the rapid progress which has been made in all departments of life and thought. We see a reformation taking place to-day in industrial, national, scientific, intellectual, moral, and religious circles. Evidently one Reformation contains within itself the seeds of another, and a further Reformation is doubtless ahead of us.

**Paul more than Jesus.**—Judging from their writings the Protestant Reformers seem to have cared more about Paul than Jesus, and consequently they have more to say concerning Faith than Love. Read the creeds and articles, and you will find many of the clauses are based on interpretations of Pauline theology. Turn to the commentaries of the Reformation period, and you will discover the most important of them deal with the Epistles rather than the Gospels. Every great movement has its watchword, its battle-cry. The great word of the Reformation was *Faith*, which is Pauline in origin. But Paul is not the greatest name in Christianity. Jesus is greater. Faith is not the noblest word in religion. *Love* is nobler—a truth to which Paul himself bore witness.

**The new Reformation.**—A higher Reformation awaits us, based not on creed

## Right of Private Judgment

but on character, not on theology but on life. Already we are witnessing its dawn. The humaner qualities are held in greater esteem: love for man is becoming the great ideal. The Reformation of Faith aimed at individual redemption; the Reformation of Love aims at universal redemption; it endeavours to establish the kingdom of God throughout the world, and proclaims that while the first commandment is, 'Thou shalt love God,' the second is 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.'

---

## 4

### Right of Private Judgment

DR. DALE in 1874 asked 'What is the ultimate principle of Protestantism?' He gave three possible answers: (1) The right of Private Judgment; (2) the sole and supreme authority of Holy Scripture as a rule of faith and practice; (3) Justification by Faith. 'Ask the question,' he says, 'of the first half-dozen men you meet, and five out of six will probably reply, 'The right of private judgment.' The proportion who would give this reply to-day is certainly larger than it was in 1874. The objections of the Passive Resisters against a rate for supporting the teaching of Anglican theology in Day Schools, for instance, have been based not upon the

## Right of Private Judgment

testimony of the Bible, but wholly upon the witness of their individual consciences. This was not the attitude in the past. Biblical texts were quoted as the strongest reasons for following or avoiding any line of conduct. Faith in the literal word of the Bible was held to be a surer guide than the light of reason or conscience.

**Reason supreme.**—In 1836 James Martineau said in his 'Rationale of Religious Enquiry' that all questions of religion must finally be submitted to the judgment of the *reason*, 'to the test of which even scripture must be brought.' It was a bold assertion for those days, and was condemned by some of his own brother ministers. But for many years past Unitarians have accepted this position without question.

**Freedom, not caprice.**—Sometimes the charge is brought against Unitarians that they simply 'believe what they please.' Nothing could be more untrue. This is not what the right of private judgment means. It means the right to believe what the voices of reason and conscience proclaim to be true and good; the right to listen to and to trust what God speaks to the mind, heart, and soul of man; the right to follow Truth and to accept what is made known to us in our human experience. 'The right to be free,' as Professor Henry Jones says, 'is not the right to be capricious.'

## 5

### Belief in God

UNITARIANS believe first of all and most profoundly in God. They erect their churches for the worship of God. The only theological statement made in the majority of their Trust Deeds is that the building shall be used for the worship of God. This is the bond which unites them as a religious community. Beyond this, they formulate no creed, but while offering what guidance they can, assert that it is the duty of each man to be diligent in his search for truth and faithful to the light God reveals to *him*. They reverence God so deeply, that they feel they cannot fully describe him. Words which call forth the spirit of reverence are the truest and best. 'The High and Lofty One that inhabiteth Eternity, whose name is Holy' is vague as a definition of God, but by these words Isaiah carries us at once into the atmosphere of worship. Compare Wordsworth's

I have felt a presence  
That disturbs me with the joy of elevated  
thoughts,

**God as power.**—God manifests himself as Power without us. We are assured by scientists that the sun is a million times larger than the earth and that the brightest star in the heavens, Sirius, far transcends the sun in size and splendour. The earth,



## Belief in God

only a small planet when measured by the universe, is travelling at the almost unimaginable speed of eighteen miles a second. What would prevent chaos and confusion, if there were no powerful, controlling Intelligence over all? 'No sane man,' writes the late Rev. R. A. Armstrong in his treatise on *God and the Soul*, 'can steadily contemplate the whole course of evolution which has led up to the existence of civilized nations of men, without feeling that this is no chance or accidental result, but reveals steady *purpose* ruling and shaping from the beginning to the end.'

**Man, the reader.**—We know it requires more genius and intelligence to write a book than to read it. Many people can appreciate Shakespeare, but they would never dream of attempting to rival him in the production of a drama. All that our great scientists accomplish in their discoveries is to read the writing of God on the earth and in the sky. The knowledge we possess to-day, great as it is in comparison with that of our forefathers, is exceedingly small, and every advance we make is only a further understanding of the Deeper Intelligence and Power of the universe, which is God.

**The Personality of God.**—In saying that God is personal, it must not be understood that God is a Being distinct, as we are, from other beings, for 'in him we live and move and have our being.'

## The Personality of God

He is the Life of all. It is because of the danger of regarding God as an object among other objects, that many thoughtful men to-day say they cannot believe in the 'Personality' of God. God, they tell us, is 'higher than personal.' No doubt he is greater than what we understand by human personality. Professor C. B. Upton says: 'There appears to be solid ground for believing with Lotze, that we are nearer the truth, when we say, not that God is *supra*-personal, but rather that man is *infra*-personal, seeing that in the Infinite Being alone is self-subsistence, and therefore perfect personality.'

**The Divine Sympathy.**—It would be presumption on our part to suppose that the limits of the human are limits also for the Divine personality; nevertheless, God's personality includes attributes similar to our own, which are perfect in him. His personality must have some kinship with ours; otherwise we could never know him. In our worship we experience such love, trust, and devotion, that we naturally associate them with a Person. It was this experience which led Jesus to speak of God as 'Father.' We may, then, with reason think of him as a God who cares. Unless we could thus look up to him, we should be compelled to regard the Intelligence immanent in the universe as heartless, and while he might exact our obedience, he could never win our love.

## 6

### God in Man

UNITARIANS believe that God speaks to man through conscience. What is meant by conscience must be stated in another 'point.' It may be true that many men are swayed by pleasure, but conscience never ceases to speak to man, as an authority higher than himself. Even the worst men are sometimes aware of conflicts within themselves, as it were between two persons, one of whom commands and the other is commanded. These two beings are the self and the greater than self, or the soul and God.

**Spiritual resistance.**—In this connection, for the purpose of removing all doubt concerning the existence of an indwelling God, it would be well to ponder upon Professor C. B. Upton's illuminating phrase '*spiritual resistance*.' We become aware of the reality of the external world, because we have the feeling of something *resisting* us. In the same manner we become convinced of the reality of God in our souls, because we are conscious of an ideal which sometimes resists our inclinations from within and at other times urges us forward.

**The increasing vision.**—The best men are governed neither by pleasure nor by the standard of society, as some teachers would have us believe, but by a life within.

## God in Man

The higher they rise, the loftier are the ideals which they perceive opening out before them in an endless series. That shows that man is *spiritually* in the making. The more men learn about the universe, the more they see there is to learn. That shows man is *intellectually* in the making. And the more carefully and earnestly we search into the nature of man, the more we become convinced of *Some One* above and beyond, whom man is approaching in his best moments.

**The moral life and the knowledge of God.**—Unitarians insist that morality is closely associated with religion. 'The consciousness of duty,' Dr. Martineau said, 'is an originating condition of religion.' God is realized by the man with character, while he is unknown to one who merely repeats a creed. How shall we learn more concerning him? 'Blessed are the pure in heart,' said Jesus, 'for they shall see God.' Paul said, 'For who among men knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the things of God none knoweth, save the spirit of God.' We have, then, to seek a spirit like God's, if we would know him. Unitarians believe that man's knowledge of God grows out of rectitude of life, and is not dependent upon intellectual assent to the statement 'I believe in God.' Many men believe more in God than they suppose; many others believe less in him than they imagine. A professed atheist,

## The Unity of God

who is honourable and loving in his life, may be in reality a truer believer in God and know more of him than many a professed Christian whose religion never gets beyond his creed. In his 'Philosophy of Religion' Auguste Sabatier shows that two things are equally impossible: for a man who is false to conscience to have an adequate conception of God; and for a good man, whether he speaks of himself as religious or not, to be without a knowledge of God. Often we entertain God unawares: we are uplifted but do not think of the source of the inspiration. In proportion as each man is true and noble, the larger vision is vouchsafed to him.

---

## 7

### The Unity of God

UNITARIANS believe that God is One: and they maintain that this belief is both *rational* and *scriptural*.

**Worship of God.**—In experience God always reveals himself to us as one and the same Person. In our aspirations and worship we feel we are approaching the same Being. One difficulty about the doctrine of the Trinity to a Unitarian is that it confuses worship. To whom shall we pray? Shall we plead with the Father to have mercy on us? Or shall we beseech the Son to intercede for us? Or shall we

## The Trinity reinterpreted

pray the Holy Ghost to keep us within the Divine influence? We should be at a loss what to do.

**The Trinity reinterpreted.**—The more advanced thinkers in orthodox churches see that the old interpretations of the Trinity were mistaken, and yet they are held by many people to-day. A great scholar in the Church of England, Dr. Hastings Rashdall, writes: 'I am afraid that most people think of three Persons as three distinct beings, three consciousnesses, three minds, three wills.' And further on he explains as follows: 'God is Power, and Wisdom, and Love. God is revealed fully and perfectly in Christ. God is revealing himself ever more and more perfectly in the souls of men. That is the sum and substance of the Holy Trinity as defined by the most unimpeachable exponents of orthodox theology.' Again, Canon Wilberforce says, 'In their deepest meaning, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit signify Love in essential being; Love in manifestation; Love in eternal procession.'

These modifications are a sign that the old dogma of the Trinity is losing its hold, and that thoughtful men are feeling the need of a more rational conception of God. After an exhaustive and scholarly study of the development, of the Trinitarian idea, Albert Réville concludes that, 'unacceptable to reason and contradicted by history, it has had its day.'

## Unity of God in the Bible

BELIEF in the unity of God is supported by both the Old and New Testaments. The Jews at the time of Jesus, it is admitted by all, were *monotheists*, and so are their descendants to-day. The Old Testament, in the clearest way, teaches that God is One, not three. So far as the New Testament is concerned, the questions we have to answer are, *Was Jesus God?* and *Did he consider himself God?*

**Jesus man, not God.**—A young man came running to him one day and asked, 'Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? Jesus said, Why callest thou me good? none is good save one, even God.' This was an emphatic denial of his Godhead. But we are told he was speaking as man and not as God. There is no passage in which he says, 'This I speak as man,' or 'This I speak as God.' Was he speaking as God or man when he cried out on the cross, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me'? It is said that here he was speaking as man; this was his human voice. But the whole efficacy of the Atonement surely depends on the notion that it was not as man but as God that Jesus died on the cross.

**Gospel teachings.**—Jesus says: 'I can of *my own self* do nothing: as I hear I judge: and my judgment is true,

## Jesus Man, not God

because I seek *not my own will*, but the will of him that sent me. If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true.'

In the Garden of Gethsemane he prays: 'Not my will but thine be done.' 'Father, save me from this hour.' *Would God pray thus?*

He bids us pray: 'Our Father, who art in heaven.' No mention is made of the other persons of the Trinity. And what shall we say of his prayers? What took place when Jesus prayed? Was the man in him praying to the God in him? Was one person of the Trinity praying to the other two?

The words, 'I and the Father are one,' are sometimes quoted in support of the Trinitarian view. Study the context in which these words occur. Note that Jesus says in it concerning his disciples: 'that they may all be one, even as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they may also be in us.'

**Jesus divine.**—It should be remembered that while denying the Deity or Godhead of Jesus, Unitarians believe in the divineness or divinity of Jesus. All men have divine potentialities, and the difference between Jesus and other pure and holy men is one of *degree*, not of kind. He is the ideal man, whose life bears witness to the loftiness of human nature, and whose achievements assure us of the advance towards Godlikeness the race will gradually make.



## 9

### The Trinity and the New Testament

IN the Authorised Version of the Bible there is one Trinitarian text: 'There are three in heaven that bear record, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one' (I *John* v. 7).

This text was at one time regarded as a scriptural refutation of Unitarianism, but it has been proved that it was introduced by a later hand. It does not occur in the earliest manuscripts, and out of simple honesty it had to be omitted from the Revised Version of the New Testament.

**Baptismal formula.**—Refuge is now often taken in *Matthew* xxviii. 19: 'Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.'

(1) It should be remembered that this is a resurrection saying, and falls into some discredit on that account. (2) It does not assert that these three are one. (3) It is acknowledged by many scholars that this baptismal formula is late in origin. An injunction of this nature would have been known throughout the Church, whereas there is no other mention of it in Apostolic times.

**Apostles did not observe formula.**—But a still more serious objection is to be found in the New Testament itself, which

## Teaching of the Apostles

finally disposes of it. *Either the apostles knew nothing at all of this command, or they wilfully disobeyed it.* They did not baptise in this formula, but 'in the name of Jesus.' This was natural, seeing that he was the founder of the movement.

Here are the proofs:—

And Peter said, 'Repent ye, and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ' (*Acts* ii. 38). 'Only they had been baptised into the name of the Lord Jesus' (*Acts* viii. 16). 'And he (Peter) commanded them (the household of Cornelius) to be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ' (*Acts* x. 48). 'And when they heard this, they were baptised into the name of the Lord Jesus' (*Acts* xix. 5). 'Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death?' (*Romans* vi. 3). 'For as many of you as were baptised into Christ did put on Christ' (*Galatians* iii. 27).

There are few scholars of repute belonging to any branch of the Christian Church in the present day who would contend that the New Testament contains any clear or explicit statement of the doctrine of the Trinity. Over three hundred years ago Hooker wrote, 'Our belief in the Trinity is in scripture nowhere to be found by express literal mention, only deduced it is out of scripture by collection.'

## 10

### The Love of God

UNITARIANS believe in the Infinite Love of God. They believe that to God the soul of every human being is of immeasurable worth, and that though every one must suffer the just penalty for wrongdoing, no soul will be ultimately lost to God. Unitarians look up to God as Father, and delight to believe with Jesus that he cares for the wayside flower, feeds the raven, and gives heed to the sparrow's fall. The parables of the Father's welcome home to the prodigal son, of the shepherd seeking his lost sheep, *until he find it*, suggest the wonder and depth of the Divine Love.

**Hell.**—Holding these beliefs, Unitarians were among the first to renounce the doctrine of an eternal hell. This dreadful doctrine, which still troubles some earnest people, is unscriptural. Four words are translated 'hell' in the Bible: (1) *Sheol*, which means the underworld, to which both good and bad were supposed to go immediately after death, and from which the good hoped to be liberated; (2) *Hades*, which is the Greek equivalent of *Sheol*; (3) *Tartarus*, used only once (II *Peter* ii. 4), an intermediate state, and never means 'hell' as we understand that word; (4) *Gehenna*, a rubbish heap outside Jerusalem, on which it was customary to

## The Devil

cast the corpses of criminals, and which was occasionally set on fire for sanitary reasons.

**The Devil.**—The Hebrew word Satan meant adversary, and the adversary was sometimes the messenger of God to men, standing between them and the evil they would do. Thus the angel of the Lord who appeared unto Balaam is termed a Satan. Evidently this word had not the evil signification to the Hebrews of old that it has for us. The modern idea of the devil grew out of the superstitions of the Middle Ages, when he was a subject of absorbing interest. Even if it could be proved that Jesus himself believed in a personal devil, it would not be just to suppose that he had the awful conception of him with which we are familiar. That he had not is clear from the fact that no man with his intellectual power could entertain such a conception and at the same time have such penetrating insight into the Divine providence and love. The doctrine also denies the Divine Omnipotence, and hands more souls over to the sovereign power of evil than are reserved for God. 'It is very significant,' writes Dr. Drummond, 'that, though the devil is represented as the tempter in the account of Christ's temptation, he is nevertheless ignored when a doctrine of temptation and sin is formally expounded, as in the Epistle to the Romans or the first chapter of the Epistle of James.' It is of the

## Eternal Punishment

utmost importance for religious and moral welfare that we should rid ourselves not only of the belief in the devil, but also of the supposition that temptation is purely external. The human factor is greatest in temptation. Tow burns because it is inflammable: man sins because he is susceptible to some forms of evil. It is sometimes a sin to be tempted. If a man is even tempted to steal, he is on so low a moral level that some guilt must be imputed. 'Every one who is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment.'

**Eternal.**—The word translated 'eternal' is *aiōnios*, from which we obtain our word 'aeon.' It never did or could mean 'eternal'; it signifies 'of long duration.' While there is ample testimony in the New Testament that sin is punished, it is nowhere stated that the punishment will endure for ever.

The word translated 'damn' (*krincin*) occurs about two hundred times in the New Testament, and only in fifteen cases, where it suited the old theology, has it been rendered 'damn.' In all the other passages it is translated 'condemn.'

It was not the New Testament writers, but later theologians, who formulated the doctrine of everlasting torments, which has made many souls regard God as a tyrant to be dreaded instead of a Father to be loved.

# 11

## The Word of God

UNITARIANS believe in the 'Word' of God. They do not, however, limit that word to the Bible or to any collection of books, but maintain that God is speaking to-day in England, just as he spoke in Palestine long ago. Unitarians have been unjustly charged with having a different Bible from that used by other churches. Their ministers, however, generally use the Revised Version, though lessons are occasionally selected from other books.

**Many Words of God.**—We limit not God's truth: the thought and experience of man, the universe itself, are revelations of God. We see the handwriting of God everywhere in the heavens above and the earth beneath. If we read any inspiring utterance of poet or prophet, we regard it as a word of God. The proof that a word is God's word is not that it is found in the Bible; it might occur in another Sacred Book of the East or in some modern writer. When we read in Paul's Epistle to the Romans: 'Be not overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good,' and then find in the Buddha's Dhammapada: 'Let a man overcome anger by love; let him overcome evil by good,' it is impossible to say the former is God's word while the latter is not.

*Test of God's Word.*—The test we apply

## The Word of God

is this. Does this word appeal to the mind as true? Does it purify and uplift the affections? Does it ennoble our thought and life? If it does any of these things, then it is a word of God to us.

**Divine influence.**—The friendly handshake, the kind look, the generous thought are as much under the inspiration of God as anything that is written. When an old man lays his hand on some rash young fellow's shoulder and by his helpful advice persuades him to abandon his evil ways, he is speaking the divine word. The word of God is not confined to spoken language. Many of the holiest messages never shape themselves into speech, but well-up from within as life-giving impulses.

**All noble work divine.**—Unitarians regard the Bible with the highest reverence; but they do not confine inspiration to its pages, nor consider all its words divine. They hold that the work of all faithful workmen, artists, architects, sculptors, engineers, musicians, poets, and others, which makes for the progress of the race, is under divine inspiration. Charles Darwin's account of the origin of man is doubtless nearer the truth than that contained in the first chapter of Genesis. God is an ever-living presence in nature and in humanity. He has still more light and truth to make known to his children, and future generations will possess fuller knowledge of him and the world.

## Revelation and Inspiration

UNITARIANS believe that revelation comes in a progressive order. As man develops intellectually, morally, and spiritually, so are the truths of God's wonderful worlds made known.

**Progressive revelation.**—In days gone by men strove in various ways to discover the will of God—from the flight of birds, the sighing of the winds in sacred groves, the passage of clouds, the ravings of mad people, and the offering of sacrifices. We now perceive that nothing contradicts divine law and order. Jesus did not appear until 'the fulness of time.' The power and use of steam could not have been discovered, until some man had attained a certain stage of intellectual development. The Sermon on the Mount could not be preached, until a human being had reached the moral and spiritual stature of Jesus. Electricity was made known after a long series of experiments by scientists. Christianity came after a long succession of Hebrew prophets. The gospel was not dropped from the skies ready written. It was wrought out of the life and thought and aspirations of the man Jesus. God reveals his truth to man as he ascends Godward.

**Inspiration universal.**—Unitarians believe that not only religion, but all that



## Inspiration

is true and noble in life is inspired of God. The thoughts of the philosopher, the creations of the artist, the discoveries of scientists are all quickened by divine inspiration. The inspiration of a man like Sir Isaac Newton was different in kind from the inspiration that filled the mind of Jesus; yet both were in a true sense divine. George Dawson, speaking on 'The Inspiration of Shakespeare,' said: 'If the fire of genius points to God, if its apex be upward, then it has borrowed its flame from the Great Spirit of the universe.' Our own generation has its tribute of truth and beauty to bring to the treasury of revelation, which increases as the years pass.

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## 13

### The Bible

UNITARIANS acknowledge with gratitude the debt that Western civilisation owes to the Bible, and deplore that in these days it is so little read.

**The greatest Book.**—If men would only study it in the light of the knowledge, which has been shed upon its pages by reverent research, they would receive more good from it than their fathers and grandfathers did. Its message was never so distinct and articulate as it is to-day. If by its words foul outrages have been

## A Human Book

justified, and slavery and war and polygamy defended, it must never be forgotten that it has nourished the best devotional life of Europe. It has fostered the purest religion, the noblest piety, and the highest morality. There is nothing in literature to equal the Sermon on the Mount, and no life so beautiful as that of the Master. Its best spirit is indeed the spirit of God.

**A human Book.**—And not only does it contain most valuable truth, it is also an intensely human book. Man is pictured as he is, with his divine possibilities and his manifold shortcomings, with his aspirations towards God and his inclinations towards evil. As a study of human nature it is unexcelled.

**Not all of equal value.**—But it is not all of equal importance or value. Even our forefathers, who maintained that every chapter and verse was the very word of God, found more help in some passages than in others. Turn to their Bibles and you will find how they thumbed the pages on which the noblest Psalms and the Gospel story of Jesus were written. Modern students are now agreed that 'The Bible contains the word of God, but it is not all the word of God.' Jesus asserted the superiority of his own teaching to the Law, when he said 'Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thine enemy; but I say unto you, Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you.'

## Infallibility of the Bible

THE early English Unitarians regarded the Bible in much the same way as their orthodox brethren. They asked for passages which proved the doctrine of the Trinity. Had these been forthcoming, many of them presumably would have abandoned their Unitarianism. When James Martineau in 1836 asserted that all questions of religion must be submitted to the judgment of the *reason*, 'to the test of which even scripture itself must be brought,' some of the older Unitarian ministers were not a little shocked.

**Infallibility.**—Unitarians were among the first, however, to acknowledge that every word in the Bible could not be accepted as true. The controversy is almost dead, but it may be well to bear in mind a few facts which bear on the subject. The Bible is very unequal in value. What a difference there is between the representation of God as worshipped by the patriarchs, and the heavenly Father whom Jesus sought in prayer. What a distance between the moral standard of the story of Rahab's treachery and deceit, and that of the Good Samaritan.

**An inspired translation.**—Strange to say, it was neither the Hebrew nor the Greek, but the English translation which was supposed to be infallible. The death-

## Infallibility of the Bible

blow was given to this theory by the publication of the Revised Version. The Revisers made 36,191 alterations in the text, translation, and punctuation of the New Testament alone. In the text 5,788 changes were introduced, though only a quarter of these were regarded as affecting the subject-matter. It must be remembered the Revised Version was only a revision and not a new translation, and that no alteration was made in the Authorised Version, unless there was a majority of two Revisers to one in its favour.

**Early opinions.**—The earliest Greek manuscript is a fourth century document. The other important manuscripts were written between the fifth and the ninth centuries. As printing had not been invented, and each fresh copy had to be made by hand, the difficulty of preserving verbal accuracy will be apparent at once. Jesus had been dead little more than a hundred years, before Marcion rejected all books as spurious, save the Gospel of Luke and ten letters of Paul. Before his day, one of the earliest fathers, Papias, said that he preferred to trust the word of those who had listened to the Apostles, believing that 'the information he could draw from books was not so profitable as that preserved in the living tradition.' This statement is of great significance, because Papias knew of the existence of the Gospels according to Matthew and Mark.

## 15

### The Higher Criticism

UNITARIANS accept the assured results of what is called the Higher Criticism of the Bible. There are two kinds of criticism—the Lower and the Higher. The Lower criticism deals with the text and its grammar; it aims at securing the original form of the documents. To take an instance: on examining the earliest manuscripts, it was found that the verse in the Authorised Version, I *John* v. 7, did not appear at all. The Revisers therefore left it out. That was Lower Criticism.

**Meaning of the term.**—The Higher Criticism tries to discover the date and the authorship, the character and the tendency of a book or passage, and the circumstances which caused it to be written. Take an example. We speak to-day of First Isaiah and Second Isaiah, because we know the book was not written by one man. Isaiah says 'In the year that Uzziah died, I saw the Lord.' Uzziah died in 740 B.C. Chapters xl.—lxvi. deal with the exile, and as the date of the first captivity is 597 B.C., one hundred and forty-three years later, it is obvious that the same man could not have written the whole book. The circumstances in the reign of King Ahaz, 733-721 B.C., called forth one part, and the circumstances

## Prophets and Prophecy

of the captivity, 597-538 B.C., called forth another.

Take a modern example. Suppose a book professing to be by Shakespeare (born 1564) were discovered, and we found in it an account of the Act of Union of Scotland with England, which was passed 143 years later, should we not unhesitatingly say that Shakespeare could not have written the passage which contained it? That would be passing judgment in the spirit of the Higher Criticism.

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# 16

## Prophets and Prophecy

UNITARIANS believe that God has never left himself without a witness, but has sent to every age and every nation his spokesmen, to direct the people to nobler ways of life. Among the greatest of these witnesses were the prophets of Israel, who spoke with such moral persuasiveness and power that their words still appeal to the hearts of men.

**What is a Prophet?**—Until modern scholars devoted themselves to a careful study of the Bible, it was generally supposed that a prophet was one who predicted future events; and it was taught that the two Greek words (*pro* and *phēmi*) from which the word is derived, supported this view. Now we know the Greeks

## Prophets as Moral Teachers

termed the foreteller of events *mantis*, and by the word *prophetes* they meant one who spoke on behalf of another. Thus, if we adhere to the original meaning of the word, the prophet is the spokesman of God, the proclaimer of his message. The Hebrews spoke of him as *nabi* and although the dispute is not finally settled, yet among scholars there is an overwhelming weight of opinion in favour of the view that the original meaning of this word also was 'spokesman.'

**The Prophets were moral teachers.**—Unitarians believe, with most scholars to-day, that the prophets were men who felt God moving in their hearts, and delivered to the people messages which had an intimate relation to the passing events of their time. Though some of them looked forward, as earnest souls in other nations have done, to the coming of a leader, who should deliver the people from their iniquities and distresses, they were not concerned about events which were likely to happen hundreds of years after their time. They were far-sighted religious men who dealt with the problems pressing upon their nation, and whatever *foresight* they had was the result of their *insight* into the meaning of the immediate present. They were social reformers and statesmen rather than diviners and clairvoyants. In early Israel men sought to discover the will of God by the casting of lots, by consulting sacred stones, by communicating

## Misinterpretations of Prophecy

with seers, and by listening to the ravings of dervishes ; but the later prophets, such as Amos, Isaiah, and Jeremiah, did not profess to use these magical arts. They were men aflame with moral zeal and religious enthusiasm of the highest order ; and they were possessed of wonderful sanity of judgment and intellectual force. They justified the saying of Locke : ' When God makes a prophet, he does not unmake a man.' They became God's spokesmen, as the true prophets do to-day, because by uprightness of life and earnestness of spirit they made themselves worthy to receive and deliver his message. They taught the people that above all the God of Israel was a righteous God, and that all the disaster which befell the nation was due to their disobedience of his precepts.

**Misinterpretations of Prophecy.**—The words of the prophets were primarily intended for the people living in their time, but through a misguided desire to centralize the whole force of their message upon Jesus, passages in their writings have been said to refer to him. This method of procedure was unfortunately adopted by the writer of the Gospel according to Matthew, who was anxious to convince the Jewish people that Jesus was their long-expected Messiah. Let anyone read the passages quoted, in a scholarly spirit, and he must agree with Dr. J. Estlin Carpenter's statement in 'The Bible in the Nineteenth Century' that this mode



## Jesus and his Age

of interpretation—the isolation of a verse from its context—is justly discredited to-day. ‘The study of *Isaiah* vii. 15, 16, shows that the Evangelist’s connexion of the promised child in 14 with the birth of Jesus could not have been in the prophet’s mind. He is to be born during the invasion by the allied kings of Ephraim and Syria from which Judah was then suffering. . . . But before he reaches years of discretion, the territories of the invading kings will have been devastated in their turn.’ ‘Was the young child taken with his mother to Egypt (*Matt.* ii. 15), “that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt did I call my son”? Hosea was looking backwards, not forwards, “when Israel was a child then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt”; and the proof of the divine affection lay in the Exodus.’

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## 17

### Jesus and his Age

ONE of the chief questions in modern days is: *What was the relation of Jesus to his age?* How was he influenced by his surroundings and by the religious forces which his country and people had inherited from the past?

**Greatest of the Hebrews.**—Jesus was

## Jesus and his Nation

the greatest of the Hebrew prophets, their culmination and their glory. He stands in direct historical connection with Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, and Jeremiah. He was deeply influenced by the religion and life of his own people. Before his time, God's witnesses had already spoken of the Fatherhood of God, had conceived the idea of all men worshipping together, and had had foregleams of the kingdom of heaven. To these conceptions Jesus gave a new and deeper significance. Are not the words of Micah truly Christian in spirit? 'What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God?' Empty ceremonialism as a substitute for morality, against which Jesus raised his protest in righteous indignation, is unreservedly condemned by Micah.

**New interpretations.**—The two great commandments of Jesus, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God,' and 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,' were taken from the ancient Jewish law. Jesus infused them with new vitality, read a deeper meaning into them, and gave them a wider application. He rose above nationality, and took a broad, loving outlook upon humanity.

**Child of his nation.**—Jesus was the child of his own land and people. Not Greece, not Rome, nor any other country could have given birth to such a man. He could only have proceeded from the

## Humanity of Jesus

Hebrew nation with its unparalleled genius for religion, with its stirring appeal to conscience and the soul, and with its tradition of high-minded patriarchs and prophets. Jesus spoke to that moral and religious spirit in man which is the possession of no special age or clime or race ; but concerning this spirit the prophets of Israel had the clearest insight ; and knowledge and experience of Judaism formed a necessary preliminary to the word and work of Jesus.

Can we 'account for' Jesus?— It is sometimes asserted as an argument against Unitarianism that it cannot account for Jesus by reference to his age or his nation. No one pretends that Jesus can be accounted for by dwelling exclusively on his ancestry and environment. Carlyle was right when he maintained that we can account for no great man. There is something in him which is above his time, or he certainly could not become a leader of men. In every great man there is an indefinable and inscrutable force which we call his individuality or personality, and which cannot be accounted for by environment and heredity.

Not separated from humanity.— But of this we are certain, that towering above their fellows as our greatest men do, they are rooted in our common humanity, from which they can never be separated. As we look from certain points of view at

## Jesus and History

the peak of a giant mountain like the Matterhorn, it seems almost a thing apart, as though it were swinging in mid-air; but when we get a full view of it we see it is broad based in the earth. Shakespeare stands apart; but he was none the less a child of his time. In any age he would have been great, but living in the time when the genius of English dramatic art flowered, he wrote great plays. In the time of Jesus the common people were looking to the future with confidence, assured that God was about to send a deliverer, a Messiah, a Christ. The age was marked by religious enthusiasm. Speaking of John the Baptist, Jesus says: 'What went ye out to see? a prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet. . . . Among them that are born of women, there is none greater than John.' The age never creates the genius of any man, but it often gives direction to it.

**Jesus and History.**—Jesus stands in the line of history, just as other great thinkers and workers have done. He was indebted to the past; he rose out of the past; and whatever new truth he proclaimed came from a human mind, inspired by the God of truth, his Father and our Father. He had in an unusual degree the power of perceiving and assimilating the best that the great prophets and rabbis had taught, and expressing it with new and living force.

## Jesus the Son of Joseph

UNITARIANS believe that Jesus was the son of Joseph, a carpenter of Nazareth, and his wife, Mary. They hold that this view is supported in the New Testament. They believe that Jesus was human, born as other children, and that his coming into the world was not a 'supernatural' event.

**The Virgin birth.**—The miracle of the Virgin birth is rejected on the following grounds: (1) We have the testimony of his mother Mary; we are told in *Luke* ii. 48 that she said, 'Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? Behold thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.' If this saying is authentic, then there can be no doubt that Joseph was the father of Jesus. (2) John would most surely have heard of the 'miracle,' for after the death of Jesus he took Mary under his care, and he does not mention it, but refers definitely to Jesus as the son of Joseph. (3) Paul, who is the earliest writer in the New Testament, says Jesus was of the seed of David according to the flesh. (4) The birth-story occurs in *Matthew* and *Luke*, but both gospels, in their genealogies, trace the descent of Jesus from *David through Joseph*. It is hardly possible that the birth-story and the genealogies can have been written by the same hand. (5) *Mark* was the earliest gospel to be

## The Virgin Birth

written, and it makes no reference to the Virgin birth, despite the writer's evident love of the miraculous. He records that Mary and her other children sought to restrain Jesus, believing him to be mad. Would she have been surprised at anything he said or did, if the story of the 'Annunciation' were true?

Similar stories are told of the Virgin birth of other heroes and kings in ancient times. The Gospel story of the miraculous birth of Jesus is probably founded upon a misunderstanding of *Isaiah* vii. 14. 'Behold a virgin shall conceive and bring forth a son.' The word 'virgin' can be translated 'a young married woman.'

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## 19

### Jesus the Man

UNITARIANS believe that in regarding *Jesus as a man*, they pay him the loftiest tribute possible. If he had been God, there would have been nothing to wonder at either in his life or his words, for all things are possible with God. But when we say he met temptation to sin and conquered it with the strength of a *man*; when we say that, by the diligence of his search and the purity of his heart, he discovered truth which has helped millions of his fellows, we render him the highest praise.

**His life.**—Jesus began life, as we all begin it, as a helpless babe, and he grew in stature and in favour with God and man. He probably had to be a bread-winner in the family at an early age. His affection for his mother was most tender. We are told while he was expiring on the cross he committed her to the care of his beloved disciple. He belonged to a brave and spirited race, but in his time they were not a free but a subject people. Despite many difficulties, he grew to be the noblest, truest, and best of the sons of God—a man who saw God, with unclouded vision, revealed as the Universal Father. Because Jesus was a man, we love humanity the more and have faith in its possibilities. He was a brother man; he mingled with the degraded, and perceived divinity beneath their degradation. It is easy to recognize divinity in a saint or hero: it was the practice to deify the Roman Emperor; but only a man with a large soul can see God in a slave. ‘Friend of publican and sinners’—the ancient reproach has become the modern eulogy.

**Example of Jesus.**—Born of the human race, he is our great example. How could he ever be our example if he possessed a nature wholly different from that of a man? But when we say that he is our example, we do not mean that any one of us can become as good as he was. We mean that we have the same capacities for progress in all that is good, though we may

## Was Jesus Sinless ?

not attain his spiritual stature. Jesus has shown what spiritual heights are possible to man when he is faithful to the noblest ideals. Strive as he might, no ordinary man would gain Shakespeare's mastery over words ; and strive as he might, he would have equal difficulty in attaining the nobility of Jesus. But to what level the human race will finally rise, who shall predict ? A great hope seems to have possessed Paul when he wrote, ' Till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.'

Was Jesus sinless ?—Much depends upon what is meant by the word ' sin.' That Jesus never violated any great moral principle, we can believe ; but that any man should be unconscious of weakness, we cannot believe. Jesus was evidently aware that he needed sustaining in hours of moral conflict, and therefore sought God frequently in prayer. He refused also to be called ' good.' We have only brief records of a short period of his life. It has been calculated that not more than thirty-five days of his life are mentioned in the Synoptic Gospels ; yet the spirit he manifested on those days was such that we are justified in holding that he was the greatest and noblest of the sons of God. ' Endeavour so to live that Jesus would approve your life ' (J. S. Mill).



## The Limitations of Jesus

THIS title would not have been used, had not theologians in the past ascribed to Jesus powers which Unitarians believe belong to God alone. Jesus was lacking in at least three attributes of Deity: omnipresence, omniscience, omnipotence.

**Omnipresence.**—Of the first it is not necessary to speak, for omnipresence is not claimed for Jesus during his earthly life by any theologian. All agree that while he lived among men his presence was necessarily limited.

**Omniscience.**—The New Testament teaches that the knowledge of Jesus was imperfect. 'Of that day and hour knoweth no one, not even the angels of heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only' (*Matt.* xxiv. 36). We cannot suppose that Jesus knew of the wonderful facts of the universe, as modern science has revealed them; or that he was aware, for example, of the existence of America. Dr. Hastings Rashdall, in his sermon on 'The Limitations of Knowledge in Christ,' says: 'Upon reflection I suppose every one will admit that it would have been impossible that Jesus, as he wandered in solitary communion with his heavenly Father over the hill-sides of Galilee, as he stood teaching those poor simple fishermen on the border of the Lake, as he drank the

## Limitations of Jesus

cup of agony in the Garden of Gethsemane, should have all the time had his brain full of the scientific truths which ages of patient labour have revealed to a wondering world.'

**Omnipotence.**—Jesus was not omnipotent. 'The spirit driveth him into the wilderness' (*Mark* i. 12). 'He could do there no mighty work' (*Mark* vi. 5). 'I can of myself do nothing' (*John* v. 30).

**Manhood.**—These limitations emphasize the kinship of Jesus to ourselves. Our reverence for him increases, when we realize that he had to meet difficulties similar to our own with such strength as a man may possess, and that he triumphed through the exercise of powers of like nature to our own.

**Kenosis.**—In order to meet these obvious difficulties the doctrine known as *Kenosis* (emptying) has been widely proclaimed in recent times. It is based on *Philippians* ii. 7. From this text it has been argued that when Jesus, who is God, came to earth, he put aside all his divine attributes and became man. One serious objection is that the text itself is in dispute, and has probably been mistranslated in the Revised and Authorised Versions. But, apart from this, there are serious difficulties. Dr. Drummond, in his 'Studies in Christian Doctrine,' says: 'This doctrine, which has been invented to save a tottering orthodoxy, is rank heresy; for the Council of Chalcedon

## Miracles

pronounced Christ to be perfect, or complete, in his Deity, which he certainly was not if the second person of the Trinity made himself imperfect when he became incarnate. . . . We must add that a God who has laid aside his Divine attributes has ceased to be God, so that the doctrine amounts to no more than this, that there was in Christ a special, though imperfect, manifestation of the Divine.'

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## 21

### Miracles

UNITARIANS believe that *order prevails in the realm of nature*. They are ready to accept the truths which science has discovered, and, if necessary, to modify their theological conceptions. They are convinced that, however strange truth may look at first sight, eventually it is seen to promote the good of mankind. It is surely wiser to base one's thought and life on *truth* than to found it on what has been proved to be error. Unitarians find a religious meaning in modern science.

**What is a Miracle?**—In opposition to this view of *the reign of law* stands the belief in *miracle*. (It should be understood that scientifically speaking 'a law is nothing more than a docket into which we collect phenomena which have some-

## Disbelief in Miracles

thing in common.") By miracle is here meant 'an event lying outside the laws of nature.' This definition is given in an admirable essay by the Rev. Dr. Drummond on 'The Miraculous in Christianity,' to which the reader is referred for further information. It is sometimes said that if we do not admit miracles, we make God a prisoner in his own laws. Well, is that not better than to make him break his own laws? Those laws are beneficent and are making for ultimate good. The more we learn concerning the laws of nature the more we see this is true.

**God as miracle-worker.**—No one disputes that an omnipotent God *could* work by miracle. The question is, *Does he so work?* Scientific men believe that *he does not*. When a man of science comes across anything which defies explanation, he does not say, 'here is a miracle'; but he sets to work, and by observation and experiment endeavours to discover the cause.

**Why we disbelieve in Miracles.**—It is impossible either to prove or to disprove a miracle said to have been performed a thousand or even a hundred years ago. We cannot produce the witnesses and subject them to examination in the light of what we know to be evidence. Why then do we reject miracles? Because our conception of the order of nature is quite different from that of our forefathers. *The reputed 'miracles' will not fit into our*

## New Testament Miracles

*knowledge and experience of the universe.* We may not be able to *disprove witchcraft or sorcery*, in which our forefathers believed; we reject both because they are contrary to what we know to be invariably true of the world of nature and humanity in modern times. No educated person can now believe that an axe-head, made of solid steel, ever floated; that a dead man, whose body was in a state of decay, came to life; that an ass spoke like a human being; or that the sun occupied for one hour the same position with regard to the earth. There are many mysteries and unexplained things about us, concerning which we have at present to keep *an open mind*; but these are not 'miracles': a miracle is a violation of known law.

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## 22

### New Testament Miracles

A FEW years ago the miracles recorded in the Gospels were brought forward as the unmistakable *proofs* of the supernatural origin of the teaching of Jesus. Now men are asked to accept the miracles because they are interwoven with the record of his life. They are frankly regarded as among the 'difficulties' of faith.

**Ancient outlook on the world.**—Ancient records are full of miracles. There is only one Jewish historical book, I Mac-

## Miracles of Healing

cabees, which does not contain any. In the time of Jesus men had no knowledge of law and order in nature, such as we possess. They looked for miracle everywhere. The history of their own country as they had learnt it from childhood, was a story of miracle; and they were expecting a stupendous 'miracle' which should break the power of the Roman empire and set them free.

**Parabolic explanation.**—Some of the miracles said to have been performed by Jesus may be explained naturally; but that he raised Lazarus from the dead, changed water into wine, killed a fig-tree by a word, and walked upon the sea, are such obvious impossibilities that they cannot be accepted. These stories may have some religious interpretation and may prove helpful, if treated as parables, illustrating the power of a beautiful life over men.

**Miracles of healing.**—The miracles of healing stand apart from manifest violations of the laws of nature. It may be that men of unique spiritual power can arouse in others strength of will and mind to overcome certain diseases, especially nervous complaints. Whatever the power of 'casting out devils' was, Jesus apparently believed that it was possessed by some of his contemporaries. 'The fact is notorious that *the confident anticipation* of a cure is in many cases sufficient of itself to bring it about.' Jesus worked

largely by *suggestion*. He often asked those who came to him to be cured, 'Believest thou that I am able to do this?' And we are told that at Nazareth 'he could do no great work there,' and he 'marvelled at their unbelief.' Evidently the power, whatever it was, depended largely upon the sympathy of the patient.

**Authenticated miracles.**—There are better authenticated miracles on record than those in the New Testament, and for some of these the reader is referred to Dr. Drummond's pamphlet. Dr. Percy Gardner points out that 'two of the best attested miracles of the life of our Lord, using the word miracle strictly, are the drowning of the Gadarene swine and the destruction of the barren fig-tree. These are found in all the Synoptic Gospels. But these miracles are destructive, not beneficent.' Is not the rejection of such 'miracles' more in accord with the spirit of Christianity than the acceptance of them? Jesus renounces miracle-working in *Mark* viii. 12 :—'There shall be no sign given to this generation.'

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## 23

### The Resurrection of Jesus

UNITARIANS believe that *life is continuous*, that the soul never dies, and that consequently there can be no resurrection

## The Resurrection

in the ordinary sense. Death is an experience in the process of eternal life. *Unitarians do not believe in the resurrection of the body.*

(2) **The Gospel records.**—It is extremely difficult to discover not only what is the truth concerning the records of the Resurrection, but even to find out what were the beliefs of the early disciples of Jesus concerning it. In the *Encyclopædia Biblica*, Professor Schmiedel considers the contradictions in the Gospels and the Epistles of St. Paul under twenty-two separate heads, and these contradictions are of a most serious character. According to *John*, the physical body was raised from the dead, and the doubt of Thomas was removed with the words 'Reach hither thy finger, and see my hands.' In the same Gospel we are told that the body entered a room, when the doors were closed; while Paul says, 'Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.' According to *Luke*, Jesus ate fish after his death, and in the same narrative it is stated that his appearance was so changed that two disciples, on their way to Emmaus, did not recognize him. According to *Matthew* and *Mark* the revelations were made in Galilee, whereas *Luke* records that the disciples tarried in Jerusalem. Dr. Drummond calls attention to some important omissions from the narrative of Paul, who was the first writer on the subject:—'Paul says nothing of the



## Theories of the Resurrection

empty grave; nothing of an appearance to the women; nothing of the old wounded body; nothing of eating and drinking; nothing of intercourse and conversation with the apostles; nothing of a bodily ascension.' Evidently *the legendary element in the Gospels grew as time proceeded.*

(2) **Different theories.**—There is one point in which the narratives do agree, and that is that *Jesus was seen.* What took place? Various theories have been put forth, some of which we may now consider.

(a) *That the body revived.*—One explanation is that the body revived while in the tomb. This is unsatisfactory, because the disciples based much of their teaching on the belief that Jesus did actually die on the cross, and their enemies often taunted them with this fact.

(b) *That the body was stolen.*—The idea that the disciples stole the body, and then spread reports concerning the resurrection, must be rejected. They were not the class of men to stoop to a deception of this character. The statement in *Matthew* that the Pharisees bribed the guard to say that while they slumbered the disciples came and stole the body, cannot be accepted. It was the last confession a Roman soldier would make: death was the penalty for being asleep on duty.

(c) *Disciples victims of hallucination.*—Explanations, such as that the appearance was entirely subjective and that the

## What Happened?

disciples were the victims of hallucination, create more difficulties than they remove. One great difficulty, however, in the way of accepting a bodily resurrection is that the appearances were to the immediate friends of Jesus, and, except in the case of Paul, not to his enemies, who would surely have been convinced, had the crucified Jesus suddenly appeared in their midst and rebuked them again for their errors.

(d) *An open mind as to what happened.*—Many Unitarians keep an open mind on this subject. The narratives seem to suggest that something of surpassing importance did occur after the death of Jesus, and it may be that in these accounts we have a confused statement of a natural phenomenon, which the science of psychology will finally illuminate for us. Already we are beginning to think, as Professor Lake says, that 'it is by no means certain that even our present life is always and absolutely circumscribed by space and time. On one side of our nature it is; but is there not also a side which is already at times in conscious communion with something which transcends those limits?' We feel that the deepest communion between the living is not by the way of speech. May it not be that the souls of those who reach the heights of love are joined by invisible bonds, and that neither time nor space nor death can absolutely separate them?

## 24

### Incarnation

UNITARIANS believe that God is incarnate in humanity, that within every human being is a hidden Christ.

**The Messiah.**—It should always be remembered that the chief aim of the Apostles in their preaching, especially at first, was to convince their hearers that Jesus was *the Messiah*. Various views were held in the early Church concerning the date of his Messiahship and his *Sonship to God*, and traces of these are to be found in the New Testament itself.

(1) Paul held that his sonship dated from the resurrection: 'declared (the Greek word means 'appointed') to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead.'—*Romans* i. 4.

(2) The second view was that Jesus became 'Son of God' at his baptism by John, for it was then that the Spirit of God descended upon him. Professor Schmidt in the *Encyclopædia Biblica* tells us that 'it is possible that one of the earliest manuscripts and a large number of patristic quotations have preserved a more original reading of *Luke* iii. 22, "Thou art my beloved son, to-day I have begotten thee." The generation of the Son is in this case accomplished by the entrance of the Holy Spirit as a dove.'

## New Testament Views

(3) A third belief, found only in the Gospels according to *Matthew* and *Luke*, was that Jesus was born 'Son of God,' being conceived of the Virgin Mary by the Holy Ghost.

(4) A fourth view was that Jesus was *pre-existent* as Son of God. Dr. Harnack points out that the miraculous genesis of Christ in the Virgin by the Holy Spirit and the real pre-existence are of course mutually exclusive. At a later period, it is true, it became necessary to unite them in thought.

(5) An indication of a fifth view is to be found in the story of the Transfiguration. A voice from heaven declares 'This is my beloved son, hear ye him.' The purpose of the story is evidently to show that Jesus is greater than the leaders of the past and that he is to be heard above the law, represented by Moses, and prophecy, represented by Elijah.

These different ideas are the gropings of men after a truth which is found in the New Testament, and which Unitarianism declares when it states that there is divinity in all humanity.

**Universality of Incarnation.**—The doctrine of the Incarnation is of great importance in the history of religious thought. We find in the Old Testament that God was regarded as separated from man by his holiness, and issued his commands like a distant sovereign. It was a distinct step in the right direction when

## Incarnation Universal

the human and divine were made to blend in Jesus. It was inevitable, however, that men should pass from this to the larger idea that the spirit of God is in every human soul, 'the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world.' Dr. Martineau expressed it thus: '*The Incarnation is true, not of Christ exclusively, but of man universally and God everlastingly.* He bends into the human, to dwell there; and humanity is the susceptible organ of the divine. And the spiritual light in us which forms our higher life is "of one substance" (*homoousion*) with his own Righteousness—its manifestation, with unaltered essence and authority, on the theatre of our nature.' This view runs through the Fourth Gospel and breaks into such emphatic statements as 'that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be in us,' and 'is it not written in your law, ye are gods?' Paul says, 'know ye not that ye are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwelleth (literally, 'houses') in you?' and again, 'know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, which is in you?'

**Man's knowledge of God.**—We can only know God by means of our human faculties. Doubtless, he has attributes of which we have no conception; but as Humanity is found in him, so Divineness is to be found in all of us, varying in degree according to our individualities

## Transcendence of God

and seen pre-eminently in Jesus. The Unitarian view of Incarnation, then, differs from the popular one, seeing that it 'does not unite the qualities of God and man in *one* case only and centre the blended glory in a single incarnation,' but finds that the living God tabernacles with man and makes his abode in each soul

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## 25

### Belief in Man

UNITARIANS by their teaching have aided in no small degree the remarkable growth in the belief in the dignity and worth of man, which has been characteristic of recent theology. It is more and more being recognized that man 'lives and moves and has his being in God.'

**Transcendence.**—The old idea was that God was entirely transcendent, existing quite apart from man. Holding this belief, it was only natural for men to suppose that God was like a distant king, who sent his prophets and angels to the alien race of man, imposed his laws and delivered his word from a distant heaven. With this conception of God as transcendent and wholly apart was associated the belief that man was a contemptible creature and a miserable sinner. The idea that God is unapproachably holy, entirely separate from man, is linked with the idea that man

is lost in iniquity. A mean idea of God generally begets a mean idea of man.

**Immanence.**—We believe that man is divine, and that God is not distant from but near to man, 'nearer than hands or feet.' Our deepest life cannot be separated from God. On the loftiest and purest heights the human will blends with the divine in a perfect communion. All this is summed up in the word '*immanent*.' There is a divine element in every man, and could he only be brought to believe in its power, what aspirations he would have and what a noble life he would attain! 'Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be.' Our nature is richly endowed. God has put such inspiration into the soul that if we will only exercise it, sin will become powerless to overcome us. This belief in man should be brought to the test: in it there is power beyond our imagination. It is this faith which many a morally weak man needs to make him strong.

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## 26

### The Ascent of Man

IN contradistinction to the old theology which taught men to believe in the Fall and total depravity of man, Unitarians believe in his divinity and in his gradual ascent.

## Evolution of Man

**Original sin.**—The question of the essential baseness or the essential goodness of human nature, of man's fall or rise, resolves itself into a choice between *Calvin and Jesus*. Calvin said: 'Though newly-born infants have not yet produced the fruits of their iniquity, they have still the seed inclosed in them.' Jesus said: 'Except ye become as little children, ye cannot enter the kingdom of heaven.'

**Evolution of soul.**—The story of man's upward march is more wonderful than a fairy tale; in that story we can discover the reasons why evil exists in him. Man has grown, but he is still in the making. Within him can yet be found the remains of his former lowly estate. The marks of the animal stage survive. When passions vile and brutal take possession of him he reverts to the primitive type, and becomes a beast again. When greed and anger enslave him, it simply means he has not yet got rid of the savage. His baser inclinations are not promptings of the devil, as our forefathers supposed, but crude survivals from earlier ages. The divine spirit within him struggles against these lower animal passions, which his body has brought down from the far distant times.

**Body and Soul.**—Henry Drummond said man has an old and finished body but a young and expanding spirit. That is an explanation of the moral conflicts in us. They are wrestlings between the



## The Christ in Man

divine in man and his animal survivals. Our highest duty is to mount guard over the body, to subdue what is evil in it, in order still further to rise on these dead and dying selves.

**The Christ in man.**—Over the doors of some mediæval buildings, erected as hostels for the poor, were engraved the words *Christo in pauperibus* (to the Christ in the poor). The words are full of truth. Beneath the rags and wretchedness of the poor, within every man, is hidden a Christ denied, forsaken, and crucified often—nevertheless a Christ, a Son of God. This spirit in man has grown, until it has become conscious of God as a Father; and it will continue to grow as man responds to the call, eternally repeated, to ‘*come up higher.*’

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## 27

### Conscience

UNITARIANS believe that the impelling power of Conscience is divine in origin. There are objections raised to this view which require consideration.

**Happiness the incentive.**—It is said by some that the great incentive to do right is the desire for happiness—in its highest form, the greatest happiness of the greatest number.

*Objections to this view.* (a) No one misses

## The Law of Right

happiness so much as he who seeks after it. The pleasure-seeker in any realm of life is doomed to failure. Happiness is never the end of action: it is the feeling we experience while engaged in certain pursuits. (b) Some of the martyrs who have willingly died, have seen no good that could come by their death; but in obedience to what they considered right, they have laid down their lives. Conscience is a driving power, a dynamic, which in our moral conflicts does not allow us to consider merely what is pleasant.

**The voice of society.**—It is sometimes said that conscience is the voice of society speaking in us. Hence it varies from country to country, and from age to age. *Objection:* The men of conscience have suffered because they refused to accept the standards of the men around them. They faced death because the voice within spoke contrary to the voice of society.

**Universal law of right.**—The correct explanation seems to be this. At the heart of the universe there is a *law of right*. What is anywhere right is everywhere right, whatever men may say about conscience varying in different countries and ages. The truths of morals are not less fixed than those of mathematics. To both the savage and the scholar, two and two make four. The difference between them is, that the scholar knows more than the savage about the laws of number, but as the savage grows in intellect, he

## The Sense of Right

does not discover a law of numbers which contradicts that of the scholar.

**Native sense of right.**—Similarly, certain moral truths are at the heart of the world. To no species of creature could hate appear to be better than love, or falsehood better than truth. We know nothing about absolute good; we only know the *right* because we are conscious of *wrong*, and *evil* because conscious of *good*. We cannot become aware of sin until we are alive to virtue. Those who affirm that conscience is the voice of God mean that whenever, for example, love and hate are seen in conflict, it is within the knowledge of every one that love is the higher. When the lower races once see two added to two they perceive they make four. When they see evil at war with good, they know which is the higher of the two.

**Saint and Savage.**—What then is the difference between the saint and the savage? Just as the mathematician knows more of the laws of number, so the saint knows more than the savage of the virtues which are high in the scale that reaches to perfection. Cannibals have been known to treat with reverence a man whose life was characterized by mercy and love. To prove that conscience is historical and geographical, men must be produced who believe that cowardice is better than courage, meanness than generosity, hate than love.

## What is Sin ?

Conscience enlightens man respecting the motive on which he ought to act. The pursuits men follow, the lives they lead, may and do differ widely, but the controlling motives may in each case be in accord with the voice of conscience

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# 28

## Sin

UNITARIANS believe in the reality of sin. Most of them would accept Dr. Martineau's definition : ' Every action is *right*, which, in the presence of a lower principle, follows a higher ; every action is *wrong*, which in the presence of a higher principle follows a lower.' This is in remarkable harmony with Sir Oliver Lodge's definition : ' Sin is the deliberate and wilful act of a free agent, who sees the better and chooses the worse, and thereby acts injuriously to himself and others.'

**Mistaken view of sin.**—This view is different from that held by some recent teachers, with whom on some points Unitarians have great sympathy of theological belief. Most Unitarians cannot say that when a man does wrong, he is seeking after good but has only mistaken the way. There are many instances of men deliberately and knowingly taking the path which is wrong. These instances indeed occur every day.

## The Witness to the Ideal

**Conflict of motives.**—The view here presented is in accord with what has been said already about *conscience*. Before sin arises two motives must be present and in conflict. Conscience would never condemn a man if something nobler had not been possible to him. We are judged by an *internal standard*, and 'the day of judgment' is always present. The question is asked: '*Is your actual life the highest possible to you?*' You may do good, and yet be guilty of sin. It is right and good to walk through the green fields and study nature; but if you are meanwhile neglecting some duty which you owe to a fellow-man, you are guilty of wrongdoing. Within us there exists an ethical principle, born with us and divine in origin: it tells us which is the better of two ways, and we can never escape from responsibility in the choice we make.

**Witness to the inward ideal.**—Theologians have spoken much about *the sense of sin*, but it is really not a distinct sense. It is quite possible to develop an artificial sense of sin. *In reality we can only know of sin, because we have an ideal within us of the good, the beautiful, and the true.* The consciousness of sin should not therefore produce in us an unhealthy, morbid brooding over the wrong we may have done, but should help us to contemplate with more earnestness the divine possibilities which are still immanent within us and to which the consciousness of

sin itself is bearing witness. It was the experience of 'the Christ' in his soul which made Paul exclaim, 'The good that I would I do not.'

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# 29

## Conversion

UNITARIANS believe in conversion, but they regard it as *a life process* rather than the work of a moment. 'Have you ever been converted?' Dr. Channing was once asked, and he replied, 'I should say not, unless my whole life may be regarded as a process of conversion.'

**Sudden conversions explained.**—We hear of *sudden* conversions. The evidence seems so overwhelmingly in their favour, that most men are inclined to believe they take place. But when we come to examine the evidence closely, we find these conversions are most diverse in character. There are records of sudden conversions not only to evangelical belief, but to Roman Catholicism; to patriotism, especially under the influence of Garibaldi; and even, as in the case of the French philosopher Jouffroy, to scepticism. The late Professor William James, after careful inquiry and examination, assured us that these sudden conversions are due to influences which have been silently and secretly working in the man's deeper life, in what

## Growth of Soul

is now generally called his subconsciousness. For everything there is a preparation. And the outward event—the word of an emotional speaker, for instance—only helps to further and make manifest the process of inner development.

**Shifting centres of interest.**—In every man there are many possibilities. The centre of his interest may shift from time to time. Indeed, our interest may change many times in the course of a day. And when the main interest of a man's life is suddenly altered, the cause is not to be found in a miraculous intervention of grace, but in the conclusion of a process which may have been long in operation.

**Perseverance in goodness.**—There are souls, no less earnest and no less progressive than those who experience violent revolutions of character and belief, who gradually *upbuild* their higher life. They may have no depressing conviction of sin, yet they are unquestionably good. They *grow* in nobility and strength and purity of character, though a 'revivalist' would never move them. Francis Newman spoke of these as the *once-born*: they are the saints who persevere. 'They see God, not as a strict Judge: but as the animating Spirit of a beautiful harmonious world, Beneficent and Kind, Merciful as well as Pure.' The childlike quality of their nature makes the opening of religion very happy to them. This type has been common among Unitarians.

## Vicarious Sacrifice

THE injustice of the 'orthodox' *Doctrine of the Atonement* will be seen if it is considered in relation to the following occurrence, the account of which Dr. Martineau extracted from *The Times*, October 20th, 1864.

GENERAL MCNEIL.—'The case occurred some time ago at Palmyra, where General McNeil had his headquarters. A Unionist, for whom the General had some regard, was reported to have been shot by guerrillas. McNeil forthwith ordered ten suspected inhabitants of the town, reported rightfully or wrongfully to be in league with the guerrillas, to be publicly shot in retaliation. One of them was an elderly man, with a devotedly attached wife and a large family of young children, the youngest but three years old. A youthful unmarried man named Sydnor, a resident of Palmyra, was struck with sudden sympathy for the fate of the husband and father, and in a fit of generous impulse, which had it been recorded in the page of ancient history would have rendered his name immortal, offered his life to General McNeil as a substitute for that of his old fellow-countryman. McNeil, without a spark of manly or Christian feeling in his heart, had the ineffable brutality to accept the offer. The old man was



## Salvation

released, protesting against the bargain, and the young man was atrociously murdered in his stead.'

**The old orthodoxy.**—'Yet there are people, we suppose, who accept their "salvation" on similar terms, without "protesting against the bargain," and have no objection to live in a universe governed by an Almighty McNeil.'—(Dr. Martineau's *Essays*, Vol. II, pp. 493-4.)

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## 31

### Salvation

UNITARIANS believe that true salvation is to be found in *perfection of character*. Heaven for them is not a place so much as a state or condition of the soul. Their idea of salvation is thus spiritual: it consists not in what we have or where we are, but *in what we are*. And seeing that no man is perfect here, they do not speak of any man as 'saved.'

**New Testament and Salvation.**—Many views of the 'means' of salvation have been held. *Christ died for us*, it is said. The phrase comes from the New Testament. But it should be known that the Greek word used is *hyper*, which means 'on behalf of,' a very different thing from saying Christ died *instead* of us. In *Philippians* we read: 'To you it has been granted in the behalf of Christ, not only

## Working out our Salvation

to believe on him, but also to suffer in his behalf.' In *Colossians*: 'Now I rejoice in my sufferings and fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ.' The sacrifice on the cross was not complete; we are all called upon in our measure and according to our opportunity to take part in the redemption of the world.

**The Death of Jesus.**—It is said by 'orthodox' teachers that Jesus knew the reason for his death and willingly made the sacrifice for the sins of the world. But Jesus ascribed his death to his persecutors, when he said, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.' The Gospels teach that his death was due to the weakness, iniquity, and bigotry of man, and they do not suggest that it was necessary for the furtherance of a scheme of salvation devised by God. If it were all pre-ordained or pre-arranged then should we not say, Blessed are you, Judas and Pilate, Annas and Caiaphas, for you were divinely chosen instruments by which God wrought the redemption of the world?

**Working out our Salvation.**—Unitarians believe that salvation depends not on the acceptance of a dogma but on living a pure and noble life. Nowhere in the New Testament are we told that *God needs reconciling to man*; we are told that *man needs reconciling to God*. It was the purpose of Jesus to help men to bring their

## Message to a Sinner

minds and hearts into harmony with the Divine life. John Hamilton Thom said: 'The working *in us* is God's part; the working *out* in word, act, thought, and character is ours.' This salvation cannot be attained in a moment: it is a life-process. Jesus does not ask men what they believe; he says 'Follow me; live as I live; be at one with the Father as I am at one with him.'

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## 32

### Message to a dying sinner

It is sometimes asked '*What message has a Unitarian to carry to a dying sinner?*' Personal testimony is the best reply to a question of this character.

A Unitarian minister was once sitting in a room, talking with two other Non-conformist ministers, when he was summoned to the bedside of a man who had led a notoriously bad life. The question was at once asked, 'What can you have to say to him?' He replied, 'I will tell you what I have said, when I return.'

On his return he told how the dying man was full of alarm and dread, which the old orthodoxy had aroused in him. In order to calm the man's mind the Unitarian minister read the parable of the prodigal son. He pointed out how gladly and freely the father had welcomed his

## Punishment for Wrongdoing

sinful lad home, and he sought to make the man feel that *he* need not be afraid to meet his God, who was a heavenly Father. The minister also pointed out how the prodigal son received punishment ; he had wasted his life, and must make a fresh start. Whatsoever the sinner had sown he must reap ; whatsoever he had wasted he had lost ; nevertheless, no man need doubt that God would give him another chance, if he turned to him with a repentant, trustful spirit.

In that faith the dying man was urged to face death with courage, and to believe that the future life was not without opportunity for the redemption and ennobling of the human soul.

This is a manly and reasonable religious faith to present to anyone. In actual experience it has been found not only strengthening, but consoling to the sinner in his dying moments.

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## 33

### Punishment for wrongdoing

UNITARIANS believe that the love of God is in harmony with his justice ; that Paul spoke truly when he said : ' Be not deceived ; God is not mocked ; for whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap.' *What then becomes of the Divine Forgiveness ?* This is often misunderstood.

## Forgiveness

There are people who suppose that all they have to do is to repent, and God will remove all the consequences of their wrongdoing. That is not what Jesus meant by forgiveness. Read the parable of the prodigal son. The father receives the lad back, but he does not and cannot return to him the substance he has wasted in riotous living. He says to the elder brother, 'All that I have is thine'; the younger son had spent his share. Forgiveness means that God will have communion with us again, when we surrender our sinful inclinations. As soon as a man ceases from his wrongdoing, the process of healing begins in his moral and physical nature.

**Sin is punished.**—Every sin will receive its due punishment in this world or in some other. The punishment and the reward will be that we shall start the next life where we leave off in this. We are punished even now for our wrongdoing. Though we may be unaware of it, our lives and our characters are feebler and poorer for the evil we may have done. Other punishments are the painfulness of uprooting an evil inclination which we have allowed to grow into a habit, and the pangs which conscience inflicts as it increases in sensitiveness.

**The Divine Forgiveness.**—One of the greatest punishments for evil done is the thought that God *does* forgive us. It is not an easy thing to be forgiven. Suppose

## Problem of Prayer

you had a friend who had done you good, and in a moment of selfishness you did some act which brought him great loss. What would be your feelings when he came and said, 'I have striven to help you; you have returned my friendship with enmity; but be assured, my friend, I know you acted contrary to your better self, and I forgive you?' How grieved you would be that you had wronged such a friend. A like sorrow will surely visit us when God out of Infinite Love says: '*I know all: I forgive all.*' Happily, that sorrow will be lightened when we hear God whispering in the soul, 'I am glad you have come back, my child.'

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## 34

### The Problem of Prayer

THE problem of prayer has presented more difficulties to many earnest men than any other. As they survey the history of mankind, multitudes of saintly souls are seen to have been sustained by communion with God. And on the other hand, science declares that the universe is governed by laws, and so far as we know by 'unalterable' laws. *What then is the use of prayer?* Which shall we follow, the testimony of history or the teaching of science? There is really no alternative here. Our prayers are simply wiser than

## True Prayer

those of our fathers : they are less material and more spiritual.

**The Divine will perfect.**—*We* are aware of the folly of asking God to gratify our passing desires, or even our transient needs. In him is 'no variableness neither shadow that is cast by turning.' God being perfect, any change in him could only be from perfection to imperfection. *Who would pray for that?* The words of the ancient prophet are a grave reproof to all presumptuous prayers : 'Who hath directed the spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor, hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him the path of judgment, and shewed him the way of understanding?'

**Petition for apparent trifles.**—We recognize more and more the absurdity of asking God to set aside the laws by which the universe is governed. To ask that rain should fall when there are no clouds or moisture in the air is to ask that the whole law of gravitation should be suspended. 'To add or take away by one tiniest particle of moisture would be as much a miracle as though I expected by prayer to hurl the Catskills into the Atlantic Ocean.'

**True Prayer.**—All our misconceptions arise from our ignorance of what prayer is. True prayer is not petition, but communion with God and the desire to know his will. Its purpose is not to effect a

## Use of Prayer

change in God but in ourselves. That prayer has failed which has not modified our spirit or attitude towards God. That prayer has proved useless which has not cleansed our desires and ennobled our affections. A good man often discovers in prayer that the things for which he most fervently longs should never have been desired by him. The purpose of prayer is to work an inward change in our disposition and to purify and strengthen our wills.

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## 35

### Use of Prayer

WHAT is the use of prayer? We might as well ask the artist the use of the sense of beauty, or the poet the use of inspiration, or the philosopher the use of thought. For just as the artist's sense of beauty gives him the vision of the picture he would paint, so the good man by prayer perceives *the life he should lead*. He has the vision divine and gains strength to live divinely.

**Good men have prayed.**—Prayer has a refining and purifying effect upon the soul. It was said by a saint of old 'that there is no time when a man is more incapable of sin than when the palms of his hands are warm from recent devotion.' A group of men came into an Eastern village to seek shelter in the inn for the night. One of the group was held in great



## Revelation through Prayer

respect by the others; and when night descended, he left the company and betook himself to the mountain side, and from his lips the words 'My Father,' floated upon the evening air. Who was this who thus earnestly sought the divine aid? It was the Master. If Jesus felt the need of prayer, what about you and me? If his life was ennobled by prayer, will not ours be elevated?

**Revelation through Prayer.**—Prayer also enlightens us. Many men have not seen the wrongfulness and the selfishness of their desires and plans until they have meditated upon them in the spirit of prayer. How different our lives seem when we come into touch with the Eternal Truth and Love, as we do in prayer! We realize more fully that our Father has a purpose in each of our lives, that there is an Ideal for each to follow. Prayer is one of God's highways to Truth and Love.

*Does prayer for others avail?* If my friend be sick, will prayer have any power to restore him? Whatever my opinions might be, I am sure I should pray for him, for I could not help praying. Prayer for others has its place and power. Every action has its effect. The earnest strength of my soul passes silently into his soul and gives him courage and hope. In secret, unknown ways our prayers encourage those who are dear to us. 'More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of.'

## Answered Prayer

DOES God answer prayer? Yes; but how strange this seems! The answer seldom comes directly, and sometimes God seems unresponsive. Never prayer more fervent floated on the air than that which broke the silence of Gethsemane: 'Father, if it be possible, take this cup from me.' Surely that prayer should have received the Divine answer. But the Gospel records bear testimony that no direct answer was given, and Jesus was left to drink the bitter cup. The Gospel according to *Luke*, however, in beautiful imagery, says: 'There appeared unto him an angel from heaven, strengthening him'; and Jesus calmly and fearlessly faced death.

**God's way.**—There are two ways in which God can answer the prayer that our burdens should be removed. Either he can lift them from off our shoulders, or he can strengthen our shoulders to enable us to bear them. He generally helps us in the latter way. He gives us the power and will to do our duty, whenever we ask him; he does not do our duty for us. It would not be good for us if he were to make all aspiration and effort on our own part unnecessary.

**Right prayer answered.**—Ask and it shall be given you. Is this an exaggera-

## Purpose of Prayer

tion? No; God answers every true prayer, but the prayer must be the right one. If I desire knowledge, the prayer I must offer is devotion to study. If I long for health, the prayer I must offer is obedience to the physical laws of the universe. If I want a good crop of wheat, the prayer I must offer is the careful and industrious tilling of the ground. And if I want spiritual insight or nobility of character, or a deep and abiding peace, the prayer I must offer is to draw near to God in a spirit of trust and filial love.

**God's mercy in not answering.**—Prayer has a reflex action. In seeking God we win blessings for ourselves. In pouring out our hearts to him, we learn our own true wants, and we understand that for our good God pays no heed to many of our petitions. Monica, the mother of Augustine, prayed that her son might be prevented from going to Rome, because of the temptations to which he would be exposed; but he went, and while there found the nobler path of life. No one can advance far in life before he realizes his deep cause for gratitude that God did not grant some of the deepest desires of his heart.

**Purpose of prayer.**—Unitarians have ceased to believe that by prayer they can alter the Divine Will, but they pray no less earnestly than their fathers: they have had experience that prayer helps to bring them into right relations with

God, and enables them better to partake of those blessings which are bestowed in largest measure upon those who devoutly seek them.

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### 37

#### Immortality

UNITARIANS believe in the Immortality of the soul; and they seek to base their belief on rational grounds.

**Science and Immortality.**—The physiologist, who says that 'Thought is the function of the brain,' sometimes supposes that thought is produced by the brain just as steam is produced by a kettle; and when the brain ceases to act, there is an end of thought and of all consciousness whatever. But science speaks not only of 'production' but of 'transmission.' For instance, a piece of coloured glass has a transmissive function: it does not create the light, it simply affects it as it passes through. And from a scientific point of view we may thus believe that thought passes through the brain of man, and is affected by his individuality in its passage. The scientist only reads the truths which are already written in nature. The truth is already there; it is not created, it is only discovered.

**The broken instrument.**—How shall we explain the gradual decay of intellectual

## The broken instrument

power, as old age advances ; or what shall we think of the souls of lunatics ? These questions were answered by Plato over two thousand years ago. A musical instrument has a transmissive function. The organ only lets the air through the pipes ; the musician turns it into music as it passes. You may have as perfect a musician as Paderewski, but if the instrument on which he has to play be broken the quality of his music will be affected. Neither can the soul be effective or expressive when its instrument, the body, is broken or deranged. There have been men whose souls have been brightest when their bodies were feeblest ; ' though our outward man perishes, yet our inward man is renewed day by day.' The soul is distinct from the body ; it is its companion and not its product. It is *I* who cause my body to move ; my soul is the source of my activity. *I am a soul and have a body ; the latter I shall one day relinquish*

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## 38

### Reasons for Immortality

THE following reasons form together a body of truth, which put the writer's belief in the immortality of the soul beyond doubt.

**The infinite in man.**—We have in our human nature more powers than we

require for mere physical existence. We have aspirations and longings which can never be satisfied on earth, and which demand a higher life. 'Try a shoeblack,' said Carlyle, 'with half the universe, and he is still discontented.' 'It is because there is an Infinite within him, which with all his cunning he cannot quite bury under the Finite.' We are all conscious of unexpressed thoughts, affections, and ideals within ourselves. No one has ever fully revealed himself to another, and no one has ever been fully aware of his own possibilities. Great men die, feeling that they have not achieved the highest possible to them, and convinced they have not revealed their best. There is an eternal in them, which struggles to cast itself forth into time and never completely succeeds. If men were mortal, this sense of the Infinite would be a misfortune, and those qualities and powers which have no relation to their mortal life would be superfluous.

**Do animals survive?**—It may be asked whether animals have a future life. To this question no definite answer can be given. But there is one great difference between an animal and a man. Whatever reason an animal may have is subservient to its physical life. With man, however, the physical is subservient to his other powers, to his intellectual, moral, and spiritual nature. Dr. Martineau writes: 'While what we call the inward life of

## The Death of the Good

the animal is for the outward life, with man it is the reverse; the outward is for the inward.'

**Timelessness of man's spirit.**—Another reason for believing in man's immortality is the timelessness of his spirit. The only connection animals have with their ancestors and the past of their race is physical. With man the connection is spiritual. Men often feel that they are more in touch with the teachers and thinkers of the past than with their own ancestors. Our spirits have little knowledge of time: they live and move and have their being in eternal thought. The teaching of Jesus is as fresh and living to them as though it were spoken yesterday. So with regard to the friend we have lost. We feel he has not altogether gone from us, that his life has passed into our spirits, and its presence there will help us to recognize him again. Our relationship with some men in the past is as close and as real as our relationship to the physical world of the present. The soul overleaps time and claims the eternal present as its sphere.

**The death of the noblest.**—Another intimation is that we cannot imagine the death of the noblest. Who can believe as he looks on the silent form of his departed friend that all that he loved is there? Who can suppose that the spirits of Dante, and Milton, and Beethoven, are no more? Who can believe that the

spirit of Jesus passed into nothingness on the cross at Calvary? God is God not of the dead but of the living.

**Argument from justice.**—Another reason is the demand for justice and retribution, which is native to the human soul. We cannot believe that justice is more deeply rooted in us than it is in the universe. On earth justice is not done. A young man's career may be blighted by one sin, whereas the practised sinner may go on his way prospering. It cannot be maintained that conscience regulates the balance. Conscience troubles the saint far more than the criminal. According to our ideas of justice the first offence should be treated with leniency, and every repetition be punished with increasing severity. But conscience always visits the first offence with the severest penalty, and with every succeeding fall the soul responds less and less to the pangs conscience would inflict. 'We are more certain,' said Benjamin Jowett, 'of our ideas of truth and right than we are of the existence of God, and are led on in the order of thought from one to the other. We are more certain of the existence of God than we are of the immortality of the soul, and are led on in the order of thought from one to the other.'

**A rational universe.**—All men agree that there is an intelligent purpose in the world. Is not our own intelligence largely the result of our understanding of the



## Evolution and Immortality

processes at work in nature? There are those who say that we should work for future generations without any thought of another life. The idea seems very beautiful until we examine it. We are assured by scientists that this planet will one day become so cold that it will not be able to support human life. Think of what this involves. After centuries of struggle and labour, men will have gradually increased in knowledge of truth and in beauty of character, and then a glacier period will arrive and the race will cease to exist. All the efforts, endeavours, aspirations, agonies and tears will have been in vain. All the sacrifices made, all the work done by man, will reach their result in zero. We can view our own annihilation with calm resignation, but who can contemplate such a result with equanimity? As an old man who had been a scientist all his life once said to the writer: 'If that is going to be the end, then the universe is not intelligent, and the belief in which the scientist works is a baseless assumption.'

**Evolution and immortality.**—When biological evolution demonstrated that man was descended from lower forms of life, it seemed at first that his origin made the glorious end, which prophets and preachers had declared, a vain dream. Later John Fiske, a man respected among evolutionists, demonstrated that the logical outcome of the evolutionary theory was

## Heaven

the belief in immortality. 'Speaking for myself,' he wrote, 'I can see no insuperable difficulty in the notion that at some period in the evolution of Humanity the divine spark may have acquired sufficient concentration and steadiness to survive the wreck of nature and endure for ever. Such a crowning wonder seems to me no more than a fit climax to a creative work that has been ineffably beautiful and marvellous in all its myriad stages.'

**The deeper consciousness.**—Emerson wrote: 'I am a better believer and all serious souls are better believers in immortality than we can give grounds for.' To the meanest man that lives there comes in no uncertain way the call to order his life in the light of the highest that he knows, to work for more than the satisfaction of bodily wants, to live not merely for a day but for eternity.

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## 39

## Heaven

WE cannot describe with any certainty what the future world will be like, and certainly we cannot tell where our next world is. But we are certain from what we know of the love of God that *there is no hell*. If there were, then every Christian as some one has said, should be there,

## Memory in another world

doing what he could to alleviate the pains of the damned.

**Growth of heaven in the soul.**—An old Indian proverb says 'Man is born into the world he has made.' If that be so, there can be no sudden change. We shall find the treasures of character we have laid up here, awaiting us in the life to come. We shall start the next life just where we leave off in this. This is the general belief of Unitarians, and they consider it their duty to prepare for a *higher life of service*, which will open out before them, somewhere in this great universe.

**Growth a law of life.**—In this world growth is a law of life, and it may be inferred that the next life also must be one of growth and progress. Heaven is the continuance and development of all that is highest and best in this world. Heaven will deepen the consciousness of beauty in the artist, sweeten music in the musician, increase love in the trustful, and develop goodness in the noble. We shall carry with us the moral and spiritual characters we have developed here. The evil in us will have to be worked out by painful processes similar to those which we have experienced on earth. Whatsoever we have sown, good or bad, we shall reap. The scales of divine justice will finally weigh every soul. There is no escape either from our reward or our punishment.

**Memory in another world.**—We shall be able to recognize those souls with

## What Heaven is

whom we have been in real sympathy. Even here we forget many people we meet : but some friends we never can forget. Their spirits have been blended with ours ; their life has passed into ours, and our life into theirs. By the natural force of spiritual attraction the souls of those who have been in sympathy will be drawn towards each other again.

**Universal redemption.**—We need not be troubled about losing our souls hereafter. What we need to be concerned about is degrading our souls here, missing those opportunities which God abundantly provides for building up pure and noble lives. That God will absolutely cut off any human soul from his mercy and love, we cannot believe.

**What heaven is.**—Heaven to the Unitarian means opportunity for gaining greater beauty of character, a nearer approach to God, the pure heart, the consecrated will, the reverent soul. Into such a heaven we can all in some measure begin to enter here and now.

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## 40

### The Problem of Evil

WHAT is known as the problem of evil has been *a source of great unrest* to earnest souls, sometimes making them doubt the Infinite Goodness and Love of God. It is one that every teacher of religion must

## Development through Pain

face. There are difficulties in the world of sorrow and suffering for which we have no explanation to offer, but it does not follow that there is no explanation. It may be that the direst evil enfolds within itself an everlasting good. And here are some indications which suggest to a Unitarian that this is actually so.

(1) **Development through pain.**—Experience has taught us that many of the powers in the world, which our fathers thought were destructive and the work of an evil principle in nature, are truly beneficial. History also shows that the race has moved upward through the sufferings of noble men and women. The old saying, 'It must needs be that the Christ must suffer,' will bear universal application. Out of the heroisms of the great and good most of our human attainments have come. *All noblest things are born in pain.* In our own daily experience we find that only after the strain does strength come. God has been working the salvation of the world out of the sufferings of the righteous. In this belief, again, be it noted, Unitarianism is the religion of the Larger Affirmation. The truth which underlies the doctrine of the Atonement is of wider importance than our fathers supposed. For our sakes all good men have, in varying degrees, lived and suffered and died.

(2) **Our standard of good.**—All that we mean or can mean when we say a

## Our judgment of Evil

thing is evil, is that it falls below our own standard or idea of good. As Dr. Martineau pointed out, we *assume* a thing should be for a certain purpose, and then because it does not serve that purpose, or works against it, we speak of it as *unmeaning, useless, or harmful*, and complain of flaws and blemishes in the universe. For instance, we assume that the earth was made for our enjoyment; and then because we have unpleasant experiences we complain of evil. We assume the earth was intended for cultivation, and then grumble at the Sahara. What right have we to complain that the world does not tally with our own presuppositions of what it should be? In early days when the uses of fire were unknown, one can see that it might have been regarded as a terrible evil, instead of one of the greatest blessings of mankind. *If we could get rid of our presuppositions, the problem of evil would dwindle into smaller proportions.* If men were in a higher state of development and based their lives on love, there would be little real evil in the world. It is interesting to know that Schopenhauer, who regarded life as evil and existence as vanity, wrote: 'There is nothing more certain than the general truth that it is the grievous sin of the world which has produced the grievous suffering of the world.'

(3) **Exaggeration of suffering.**—We should not overlook the fact pointed out by Dr. Drummond in his 'Studies in

## Science and Evil

Christian Doctrine,' that we are inclined to exaggerate the amount and degree of suffering in the world, owing to our own shrinking from it, and that pain serves as a warning that there is something wrong in the system and rouses the animal to defensive and remedial measures. A medical man writing recently says, 'the fact is that pain is one of the most important elements in the beneficent scheme. It is Nature's indication that we have made a mistake, and that we had better take more heed in future.' These truths, however, as Dr. Drummond asserts, do not entirely solve the problem.

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## 41

### Science and the Problem of Evil

IN connection with the problem of evil the statements of modern men of science should be carefully studied.

(1) **Evil involves higher life.**—Sir Oliver Lodge says: 'Evil only begins when existence takes a higher turn. For instance, we feel pain because God has blessed us with a marvellous nervous system, which is the source of our enjoyment of this wonderful world.' Again he says, 'The term evil is relative; dirt, for instance, is well known to be only matter out of place; weeds are plants flourishing where they are not wanted;

## Evolution and Evil

there are no weeds in botany; there are weeds in gardening. Even disease is only one organism growing at the expense of another; ugliness is non-existent save to creatures with a sense of beauty, and is due to unsuitable grouping. Analysed into its elements, every particle of matter must be a marvel of law and order, and in that sense of beauty.'

(2) **Evil positive, not merely negative.**—Sir Oliver Lodge, the Rev. R. J. Campbell, and others believe that evil is only negative, the absence of good. The present writer, however, holds that evil is as positive as good; the forces of the world being such that man can use them either for evil or good. Pain is a reality, being something more than the absence of pleasure.

(3) **Evolution implies imperfection.**—It is strange that men in considering this problem overlook the fact that an evolving world, as this is, cannot possibly be a completed or perfect world. If evolution is true, then there must be imperfections out of which we must develop, and some greater good towards which we must grow. It is written not only in the nature of man but on every particle of matter that the lower has gradually been giving way to the higher. The last words that Darwin wrote in his 'Origin of Species' support this view: 'Thus from the war of nature, from famine and death, the most exalted object which we are capable of conceiving,



## Fellow-labourers with God

the production of the higher animals, directly follows. There is grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms or into one; and that whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been and are being evolved.' If we can only grasp this truth, if we can only understand that God did not create the world long ago, but is still creating it, continually drawing forth from it, through struggle and pain, still grander forms of life, the difficulty which surrounds this problem of evil would be still further removed. This will help us to believe that somehow 'good will be the final goal of ill.'

In this upward process we are called to be the fellow-labourers with God. The Creator has graciously bestowed on us the privilege of taking part in the creation of the world, and permitted us to share in his glorious work of shaping it towards beauty, order, and perfection.

(4) **Evil and morality.**—John Fiske, another evolutionist, truly says: 'In a happy world there must be sorrow and pain, and in a moral world the knowledge of evil is necessary. The stern necessity for this has been proved to inhere in the innermost constitution of the human soul. It is part and parcel of the universe.' We are aware of the light, because we know

## Creation of the World

of the dark ; we are conscious of good, because of the possibility of evil. But let no one say, 'Therefore let the evil continue.' We are better and happier for working out the evil. We have been blessed by the struggles of our forefathers against disease and evil and wrong. Those who come after us will be blessed by our earnest upward efforts. God might indeed have created a world mechanically perfect, but how poor it would seem compared with this world in which we grow, in which we may achieve, and may see the vision divine unfold before us in ever-increasing beauty.

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## 42

### Creation and Evolution

UNITARIANS acknowledge that the accounts of the Creation and of the origin of man, in the Book of Genesis, were reverent and sincere attempts to explain how the world came into existence ; but they accept, as being nearer the truth, the explanations of modern science. These explanations are not mere guesses, but conclusions based upon the careful study of the evidences of the world-process to be found to-day.

**Origin of the stellar systems.**—What is known as the *nebular theory*, namely, that the stars and planets and

## Age of the Earth

moons were evolved out of nebulous or cloud-like masses of gas, such as we can see in the heavens, is now generally accepted by scientists. Let a scientist tell how this came about. 'Suppose,' writes Sir Robert Ball, 'that countless ages ago a mighty nebula was slowly rotating and slowly contracting. In the process of contraction, portions of the condensed matter of the nebula would be left behind. These portions would still revolve around the central mass, and each portion would rotate on its axis in the same direction. As the process of contraction continued, it would follow from dynamical principles that the velocity of rotation would increase; and thus at length these portions would consolidate into planets, while the central mass would gradually contract to form the sun.'

**The age of the earth.**—According to the Biblical chronology the earth has been in existence about 6,000 years. Sir Charles Lyell said that according to geology the earth has been in existence 200 million years; and Lord Kelvin, judging the question by the emission of heat from the sun, wrote: 'The sun may have already illuminated the earth for as many as 100 million years, but it is almost certain that he has not illuminated the earth for 500 millions of years.' These are enormous stretches of time, which it is difficult to grasp, and perhaps it is more interesting to know that from the

## Evolution of Man

strata of the rocks it can be proved that the earth is at least millions of years old. For instance, if two inches of chalk, which is composed of microscopic shell-dust, be deposited in a century—and this is above the highest possible rate of accumulation—then it will require 600 years to form one foot and 600,000 years to form 1,000 feet. In the Rocky Mountains chalk reaches a thickness of 10,000 feet; on the lowest possible computation, therefore, this chalk must have taken six million years to accumulate. In addition to this, in calculating the age of the earth, the other strata below, above, and intersecting the chalk, which reach together a depth of 100,000 feet, have to be considered. It can thus easily be seen that the earth has been in existence as a solid body many millions of years.

**The evolution of man.**—It was natural for men in pre-scientific days to suppose that God had created man and all other living beings as distinct species in the beginning, but to-day we can find no evidence in the world to support this view. No man of science accepts it. It might, however, be said that 'it is common sense.' Such common sense would say, 'the earth is flat,' but we know that it is not.

Evolution does not teach, as is sometimes supposed, that man is descended from monkeys, but that he is descended from parents slightly unlike himself. We see this process going forward to-day.

There are little variations in living creatures, which are almost unnoticeable from generation to generation, but in the course of many centuries they constitute vast differences. Men who have noticed these variations have been able to bring about important differences among flowers and domestic animals and birds. Here we have the Darwinian theory in a nutshell: it is a theory of infinitesimal variations, which lead in time to new developments. This being the case, it is foolish to seek or to ask for a missing link. To make the series complete thousands of missing links would be required, so far has man advanced beyond the animal stage; but in broad outlines the evolutionist has been able to trace the upward march of man from the lowest forms. If witness is borne in the world to any theory of the origin of man, it is to this, and consequently Unitarians accept it, believing at the same time that the Divine Power gave the original impulse which resulted in this wonderful and beautiful process.

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## 43

### Authority in Religion

UNITARIANS believe that the ultimate seat of authority in religion is in the spirit of man. This authority is not external; nor is it human in origin. It is

## Papal Authority

divine ; for whenever any noble truth is spoken, we accept it, not because we merely wish to do so, but *because we must*. We inwardly recognize that it has a claim over us, which we cannot repudiate. Men may, however, refuse to trust the divine element in their souls, and prefer an artificial to this natural authority implanted by God.

**Faith.**—We are told that 'faith'—which sometimes means the surrender of reason and conscience—is necessary to salvation, and the true sign of the religious man. Let us examine the various claimants to this 'faith' of man, bearing in mind Matthew Arnold's statement, 'If authority be necessary to faith, then an impossible authority makes faith impossible.'

**Papal authority.**—The claim of the infallible authority of the Pope is the most tremendous ever made in history. This being the case, it should rest on a basis so secure that no reasonable man could dispute it. Instead of that, it is founded on the interpretation of a text (*Matt. xvi. 18*), the meaning of which is doubtful, and a tradition which is historically most questionable.

**The Creeds.**—In their titles the three great Creeds of the Church claim support which has no foundation in history. The Apostles had nothing whatever to do with the so-called *Apostles' Creed*. The *Nicene Creed* was not issued in its present form by the Council of Nicæa ; it includes im-

## Authority of the Bible

portant additions, made by the Council of Constantinople, especially concerning the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, and should be known as the Constantinopolitan Creed. The *Athanasian Creed* was not the work of Athanasius ; its actual origin being still a matter of dispute among historians.

**The Bible.**—The doctrine of Biblical Infallibility not only creates the difficulties incidental to all theories of infallibility ; it is also useless. What is the good of an infallible book, when the light in each man's soul is supposed to be his guide in interpreting its words ? The Roman Catholic doctrine is more logical, because the claim here is not only to reveal the infallible truth, but also to give an infallible interpretation. Reflection will show that the freedom of the individual to interpret is inconsistent with any theory of infallibility. As might be expected from a dogma of this character, it is the sad testimony of history that the sects have claimed not only infallibility for the Bible, but authority for the tenets they have deduced from it and read into it. Instead of making the Bible a source of inspiration, they have often turned it into an instrument to support the dogmas they themselves have developed.

**The inward Light.**—Unitarians believe that ' all men from the least of them unto the greatest of them ' have powers which will enable them, if they are faithful, to know God. Religion is so closely associ-

## The Seat of Authority

ated with life that it is available to all who earnestly seek for it. Yet we are so deeply in need of each other, that for the development of our highest life we must all be learners. In the lives and thoughts of the great and good we must seek inspiration, as well as in our own souls. But, if the teaching of any writer, Biblical or otherwise, or of any speaker, is to help us, it must be 'proved' by our own conscience and reason, and if it harmonizes with these then it must be 'held fast' as good. In saying this, neither the Infallibility of Reason nor of Conscience is affirmed; all that is asserted is that it must be right to believe what we know is right, and it must be wrong even to endeavour to believe what we know is wrong. We all accept much in daily life on authority, but we all, nevertheless, reserve the right to seek for ourselves. If a man announces that he has been to the North Pole, where we have not been, we have to rely upon him for our information. At the same time, we have a perfect right to examine his credentials, and if we find them at fault to refuse to listen to him. We hold that his information must conform to what we know to be true. It is thus also in religion. We have to keep an open mind on many things *beyond* our reason, but it is wrong to accept any dogma or doctrine which is *contrary* to reason. Often as it may be denied, we all rely ultimately upon our reason. *Even the believer in*



*Papal Infallibility accepts that doctrine by an act of his own reason, which is said to be fallible. If reason can be trusted in a decision of such importance, why should it not be trusted throughout?*

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# 44

## The Church

THE word translated 'Church' in the New Testament, *ecclesia*, simply means 'an assembly': even the crowd which gathered round Demetrius to oppose Paul is spoken of as an 'ecclesia.' No evidence exists that Jesus intended to found a Church as that term is commonly understood; but we may regard him as the founder of the Christian Church, because he stirred the deeps of men's souls in new ways and inspired them to meet together for worship.

**Religion and the Church.**—Unitarians believe that the Church is the chief, though not the only, agency among Christians for the promotion of Religion. *The Church exists for Religion, not Religion for the Church.* To express this more clearly, it must be emphasized that *the Church owes its existence to Religion.* In the order of time and of importance Religion stands first. We can imagine Religion without a Church, but we cannot imagine a Church without Religion. The Church is there-

## Religious Orders

fore dependent upon Religion in a way that Religion is not dependent on the Church. Religion would become enfeebled if it were not for the communion of men in worship and prayer ; yet if there were no Church, men would still feel God moving in their hearts and would reverence him.

**Orders.**—The distinction made above is of the utmost importance. The Roman Catholic and the Anglican Churches uphold what is called *apostolical succession*, and would have us believe that those in 'Orders' have received in a special way the truth from the apostles, and possess powers which are withheld from their brother men. It is even taught that but for the ordained priest, true religion could not be communicated to men. Unitarians believe that an earnest, God-loving layman may be as truly a prophet of religion as an ordained official. Ecclesiastical polity possesses no intrinsic value to Unitarians. In Hungary their churches are Episcopalian, in Ireland Presbyterian, and in England Congregational in government. They appoint ministers because they consider that men fitted by character and scholarship should be enabled to devote their lives entirely and with perfect freedom to religious work. The foundation of the Church is to be sought in our common need of fellowship and the universal need of communion with God.

**An Anglican View.**—During the past few decades there has been a movement in

the Anglican Church, fathered by Pusey, Newman, and Keble, which has claimed that the Church is a supernatural authority. It is asserted that God publishes his messages only through his ordained priests, whose word the people must accept. Alas ! how diverse and confusing are the voices of the men who have received the same necessary ordination. Compared with these the testimony of the Liberal Christian fraternity, with all its freedom of thought, is harmony indeed. But beneath every doctrine that God communicates his truth and blessing only through the acknowledged officials of the Church, is a serious indictment of the Divine Love. It not only separates the heavenly Father from his children, it proclaims in plain terms, which Newman did not hesitate to use, that the nature of man is essentially godless. It rejects the teaching of Jesus that the kingdom of God is within us, and denies that God has implanted the seeds of highest truth in the human soul. If man cannot come to the knowledge of God without the assistance of the ordained priest, then it follows that by nature he is an atheist. It is strange that anyone can overlook the plain teaching of Jesus that 'the heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him.' At least of divine truth, it can be said, 'Ask and it shall be given you ; seek and ye shall find : knock and it shall be opened unto you.'

## Public Worship

To foster a noble religion in solitude is almost an impossibility. Men attain a deeper consciousness of God through associating with each other in their best moments. It has sometimes been supposed that God can be worshipped in the fields as devoutly as in the church, and that the reading of a good book is as helpful as joining with others in hymn and prayer.

**Place for worship.**—When men are frank, they confess that in the fields their minds soon wander away from subjects of high importance to the trivialities and troubles of life; whereas in church, aided as they are by others, they are able to fix their attention on things divine for long periods. It is questionable whether even good men would know the blessedness of the Sunday peace during their quiet rambles, if they were not inwardly aware that faithful souls were worshipping in the churches of our land. The spirit of worship is more abroad on the Sunday than on any other day of the week.

**Sunday rest.**—In these days of nervous tension, the restfulness of the English Sunday is one of the greatest assets of our national life, and if people generally were to give themselves up to pleasure on this day, as some people now do, we should

## Influence of Worship

experience a great calamity. Men have a citizen duty here, which only few now acknowledge. If any man can worship God in the fields as sincerely as in the church, his nature is so spiritual that he above all men should be found in the place of worship, helping his less fortunate brethren upward and setting them an example. Good men now outside the churches would probably be better men if they were within; and the churches would be better for their presence.

**The living Church.**—Unitarians recognize those outside the churches to whom the Master would say: 'Come, ye blessed of my Father, . . . for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat.' They believe that the community of good men, who earnestly seek the Unseen and the Higher, whether assembled in church or chapel, or in neither of these, is the True, the Invisible Church, the Living Church of the Living God.

**A moral safeguard.**—Unitarians place the cultivation of the religious spirit above all dogmas, which divide or separate men. They believe that a spiritual bond unites the faithful souls of all Churches, however diverse their creeds. They rejoice to join others in helpful work. When away from home, they are often found worshipping with men of opposite beliefs to their own. If any of the young people of his church go to reside in a town where there is no kindred congregation, they are urged

## The Universe a Sacrament

by the writer to join those with whom they can best worship. It is their duty to keep within the circle of the noblest influences. Nothing so surely shields the moral life of a young man or woman as a church. Grown men have also many temptations to face, and they need, no less than the young, to be regularly reminded of the divine purpose of life and to have noble ideals placed before them. The church sheds a refining influence over womanhood and makes home-life sweeter and healthier ; and little children are there taught reverence and love for all that is good.

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# 46

## The Sacraments

If by the word 'sacrament' be meant an outward and visible sign of an inward and real presence, then Unitarians may be said to believe in sacraments.

**The universe a sacrament.**—The visible world is the garment of an Invisible Reality. The sacraments, as generally understood, are confined to a few ecclesiastical ceremonies, but Unitarians believe that we are always in the presence of the Divine, that in God we live and move and have our being. Because they thus believe in the sanctity of all things, they find no special or miraculous efficacy in sacraments as usually understood. The sacredness of

## Baptism

anything depends upon the spirit in which we approach it and upon the emotions which our thought over it awakens in us. We may have in our possession something, say a Bible given to us years ago, which moves the deeps of our religious life more powerfully than could any ecclesiastical ceremony.

**Sacramentum.**—The Latin word 'sacramentum' once signified the oath of allegiance which a soldier took when he entered the service of his country: and Unitarians who have their children baptised or who take part in the Lord's Supper, regard both Baptism and the Communion as sacraments in this sense.

**Baptism.**—The Baptism of adults is very rare in Unitarian congregations, but the baptism of infants is the rule. Some ministers do not use water, but hold a service of dedication. All agree that there is no special or magical efficacy in the water, and regard the service as a help to the parents rather than to the child.

(1) *It is a service of Thanksgiving.*—The most precious of all God's gifts to man is the little child, and it is fitting to offer thanks to him for a treasure so priceless. It may help the child later in life to remember that his parents welcomed him into the world as a sacred charge; it also becomes the first link of association with the church of his father and mother.

(2) *It is a service of Devotion.*—By taking part in the baptismal service the parents

## The Communion

signify that it is their solemn intention to bring up their child in the ways of religion and godly living ; and for the child's sake to walk in their homes in uprightness and with loving hearts. This is their oath of allegiance—or sacramentum.

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### 47

## The Lord's Supper

IN many Unitarian churches, though not in all, the Communion Service is held at stated intervals. Unitarians who do not take part in it abstain because they believe, like the Quakers, that rites and ceremonies are hindrances rather than helps to spiritual religion.

**History and the New Testament.**—In the early days of the Church it was a simple meal, of which the disciples partook together, rich and poor bringing what they could to the table. Paul had to rebuke some of those who shared this common meal for drunkenness and gluttony. Under a priesthood, seeking power, it gradually became a magical and miraculous ceremony, though the Roman Catholic doctrine is not so crude as is often supposed.

Jesus meant one of two things by the words he spoke to his disciples on the occasion of the last supper. Either he desired the apostles present (1) to think of



## Symbols

him whenever they took part in the yearly observance of the Passover, or (2) to call him to mind whenever they sat down together to eat food.

**Memorial Service.**—For Unitarians the service is simply and only one of memorial. They call to memory the life and words of Jesus, reflect on his suffering and sacrifice for the truth, and endeavour in the moments of quiet meditation to gain a spirit akin to his.

**The Bread and Wine.**—The service has been held in some Unitarian churches, without the use of bread and wine. But these external aids may assist in carrying us in spirit into the presence of the Master on the last and most significant night of his earthly life. After Dr. Channing's death there was discovered among his manuscripts a faded slip of paper, on which, as a young man, he had written the words: 'I have now solemnly given myself up to God.' That slip of paper was the outward sign of his inward grace, and no doubt every time he handled it, his soul would be stirred in holy remembrance of his vow. Most of us possess treasures, of no worldly value, but we should feel it was impiety to part with them, because whenever we see or touch them, they remind us of incidents in our own lives or in the lives of those dear to us. In like manner the bread and wine may be of assistance in stimulating our remembrance, as we ponder upon the spirit

in which Jesus calmly resolved, in the night in which he was betrayed, to face death. The service is a *sacramentum*, because in it we renew our resolves and pledge our allegiance to the ideal of the Master's life.

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## 48

### Christianity and other Religions

UNITARIANS believe that God has inspired the saints and prophets of religions other than Christianity, especially the great religious teachers of the East. The sacred writings of non-Christian religions in India and Egypt, Persia and Arabia, China and Japan, contain thoughts and sentiments which will enrich the universal religion of the future.

**Witnesses to the divine.**—God has never left himself without a witness. Nothing is truer in the Bible than the words contained in *Acts* x. 34, 35: 'Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to him.'

**Value of other religions.**—When Unitarians find in the books of other religions a truth contained in the Bible they rejoice, and are strengthened in their conviction that it is divine in origin. In sending missionaries to foreign lands, the old idea was that Christianity is a complete

## The Sympathy of Religions

and supernaturally inspired religion, which 'the heathen' refused at the peril of eternal damnation. The truer idea is that Christianity is like a seed, capable of growth, and is to be planted in the hearts of people of different races, in the faith and hope that whatever is true and good in it will become assimilated with the highest and noblest elements in the religion they now profess.

Max Müller, who did much to make the great religions of the world more widely known, once said: 'There is no religion—or if there is, I do not know of it—which does not say "Do good, avoid evil." There is none which does not contain what Rabbi Hillel called the quintessence of all religions, the simple warning, "Be good, my boy." "Be good, my boy," may seem a short catechism; but let us add to it, Be good, my boy, for God's sake, and we have very nearly the whole Law and the prophets.'

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## 49

### Practical Religion

UNITARIANS lay great emphasis on practical religion. Preaching, as they do, salvation by character, they have often been accused of exaggerating the importance of good works. Considering the number of professed adherents, it will be

## Social Service

found that they have occupied and still occupy a prominent place in public service and in schemes for social welfare.

SOCIAL SERVICE has been no small part of the religion of Unitarians, and in furthering the public welfare they have acted in the belief that, apart from works, faith is dead. Their religion is not a mere intellectual interest: if it were, it could never be the inspiration it is to them in daily life, nor the consolation it undoubtedly is in times of bereavement.

**Practical value of Unitarianism.**—Take its cardinal belief that God is the Father of all men and has endowed his children with divine possibilities. Many a youth has led an upright life, because he has considered it his duty to maintain the honourable traditions of his family. What a reformation, then, must take place when men truly believe that they themselves are divine by nature, that the kingdom of God is within them, and that they have been inwardly endowed with a strength beyond that of all the evil which can meet them in life. Men only do base deeds because they have mean ideas of themselves. Further, how noble they would be in action towards others if they accepted the early teaching that *all men* are the offspring of the Most High, and are to be regarded as divine beings! Let this teaching be given a trial, and men will soon witness at work the greatest moral dynamic the world has known.

**Peace.**—Unitarians have worked zealously in the cause of Peace. They stand for Arbitration in all International disputes. They have no sympathy with the view that 'the best way to preserve peace is to prepare for war.'

Dr. Channing said that it does not need the war-spirit to kindle heroic resolutions; a peaceful disposition has no affinity with a tame and feeble character. There is ample scope for the exercise of enterprise, courage, and magnanimity in blessing mankind. King Edward VII wisely observed: 'Rulers and Statesmen can set before themselves no higher aim than the promotion of mutual good understanding and cordial fellowship among the nations of the world. It is the surest and most direct means whereby humanity may be enabled to realize its noblest ideals.'

**Temperance.**—As in other denominations, there are earnest workers in the cause of Temperance among Unitarians. Numerous Bands of Hope and other societies are united under the National Unitarian Temperance Association.

'In a Christian community,' said Dr. Channing, 'not one human being should be left to fall, without counsel, remonstrance, sympathy, encouragement from others more enlightened and virtuous than himself.'

**Social responsibility.**—In promoting social welfare, Unitarians are now happily

## The Kingdom of God

permitted to work hand in hand with men of other faiths. While Unitarians maintain the moral responsibility of every individual, they acknowledge that society as a whole must bear the shame of many iniquities. They hold that individual life should be shaped out of consideration for the larger life of humanity, and that it is the duty of every man to ask himself whether he would consider the course of his action and the mode of his life, *if seen in another person*, beneficial to the community.

**The common good.**—Unitarians agree with Professor Henry Jones that 'There is no more certain symbol of a limited and crude personality than heedlessness of the common good—of which the political state, with its institutions, is the representative. The man who does not carry his city within his heart is a spiritual starveling. The measure of manhood is the fulness and generosity of its interests. The diviner the man the wider the world for which he lives and dies.' 'Wherever there is unmingled self-interest,' says Dr. Stopford Brooke, 'there is injustice; wherever there is self-giving there is justice.' Jesus undoubtedly meant by the kingdom of God better and juster relations among men. To him religion was brotherliness and love; and the plea of any body of religious men, who claim fellowship with him, must be for social well-being and progress.

## Eminent Unitarians

MANY eminent men and women have been Unitarians. The number is out of proportion to the worshippers who have assembled in the few Unitarian churches and chapels in England and America.

Unitarians may be divided into two classes. (1) Those who were born into the communion and who owed much of their development to the freedom in the search for truth, fostered by their religion, and to the emphasis it placed on character; and (2) those who were attracted to Unitarianism by their admiration for the frank and fearless spirit of its teaching.

In the following list, it must be borne in mind that men who lived two or three centuries ago had not reached the modern Unitarian position, but they held that the doctrine of the Trinity was scripturally unsound.

**Martyrs and Heroes.—**

George von Parris, burned at Smithfield  
1551.

Michael Servetus, who first discovered the circulation of the blood, burned at Geneva by order of Calvin, 1553.

Patrick Patingham, burned at Uxbridge  
1555.

Matthew Hamont, burned at Norwich 1579.

John Lewes, burned at Norwich 1583.

## Eminent Unitarians

- Peter Cole, burned at Norwich 1587.  
Francis Kett, burned at Norwich 1589.  
Bartholomew Legate, burned at Smithfield 1612. A man profoundly versed in Scripture. King James tried to convert him to 'orthodoxy.'  
John Bidle, founder of the first avowedly Unitarian congregation in England, condemned to death, and died in prison 1662.

### Scientists and Inventors.—

- Sir Isaac Newton, d. 1727, discoverer of the law of gravitation.  
John Dollond, d. 1761, inventor of the achromatic telescope.  
Josiah Wedgwood, d. 1795, the potter.  
Joseph Priestley, d. 1804, discoverer of oxygen.  
Thomas Wedgwood, d. 1805, pioneer of photography.  
Sir Charles Lyell, d. 1875, geologist.  
Charles Darwin, d. 1882, was educated in a Unitarian home.  
William B. Carpenter, d. 1885, mental physiologist.

### Writers, Philosophers, Poets.—

- John Milton, d. 1674, poet.  
John Locke, d. 1704, philosopher.  
William Roscoe, d. 1831, poet and historian.  
Charles Lamb, d. 1834, essayist.  
Samuel Rogers, d. 1855, poet.  
W. H. Prescott, d. 1859, author of Histories of Conquests of Peru and Mexico.  
Nathaniel Hawthorne, d. 1864, novelist.



## Eminent Unitarians

Mrs. Gaskell, d. 1865, novelist.

Charles Dickens, d. 1870, novelist, was for some years a member of the Little Portland Street Chapel, and described Unitarianism as 'the religion which has sympathy for men of every creed, and ventures to pass judgment upon none.'

J. L. Motley, d. 1877, author of 'The Rise of the Dutch Republic.'

William Cullen Bryant, d. 1878, poet.

Samuel Sharpe, d. 1881, Egyptologist and Translator of the Bible.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, d. 1882, philosopher and poet.

Henry W. Longfellow, d. 1882, poet.

Louisa May Alcott, d. 1888, author of 'Little Women.'

George Bancroft, d. 1891, historian.

James Russell Lowell, d. 1891, poet.

Oliver Wendell Holmes, d. 1894, poet.

Julia Ward Howe, d. 1910, writer.

### Philanthropists and Reformers.—

Thomas Firmin, d. 1697, founder of St. Thomas's Hospital, London.

Thomas Cogan, d. 1818, joint-founder of the Royal Humane Society.

William Smith, d. 1835, 'King of Dissenters,' grandfather of Florence Nightingale.

John Pounds, d. 1839, the Portsmouth cobbler, and founder of Ragged Schools.

Joseph Tuckerman, d. 1840, founder of Domestic Missions for the Poor in England and America.

## Eminent Unitarians

Robert Hibbert, d. 1849, founder of the Hibbert Trust.

Catherine Wilkinson, d. 1860, 'Catherine of Liverpool,' originator of public wash-houses and baths.

Southwood Smith, d. 1861, pioneer of sanitary and industrial reform. 'Bringer of Air, Light, Health into the Home.'—*Leigh Hunt*.

Dr. S. G. Howe, d. 1876, educator of the blind and deaf—Laura Bridgman case.

Mary Carpenter, d. 1877, founder of Industrial Reformatory Schools for girls.

Dorothea L. Dix, d. 1887, 'the Florence Nightingale of America,' who brought about better treatment of lunatics.

James Stansfeld, d. 1898, 'champion of womanhood.'

Sir Henry Tate, d. 1899, founder of the Tate Gallery, London.

William Rathbone, d. 1902. Florence Nightingale described him as 'one of God's best sons,' founder of District Nursing Associations.

Frances Power Cobbe, d. 1904, friend of dumb animals, and social reformer.

Sir Sydney Waterlow, d. 1906, donor of Waterlow Park, London.

### Unitarian Preachers.—

Theophilus Lindsey, d. 1808, Vicar of Catterick, founder of the first Unitarian Chapel, Essex Street, Strand, London.

## Eminent Unitarians

William Ellery Channing, d. 1842. Dean Stanley declared: 'Anyone who desires to exercise a permanent influence over the future must breathe more or less of the spirit which animated this truly Christian philosopher.'

Theodore Parker, d. 1860. 'One of the highest and brightest souls in American history.'—*Lord Chief Justice Coleridge*.

James Freeman Clarke, d. 1888. 'Ten Great Religions,' 'Every-day Religion.'

Charles Beard, d. 1888. 'The Reformation in the sixteenth century,' 'The Soul's way to God.'

John Hamilton Thom, d. 1894. 'Laws of Life after the Mind of Christ,' 'A Spiritual Faith.'

James Martineau, d. 1900. 'Types of Ethical Theory,' 'The Study of Religion,' 'Endeavours after the Christian Life,' 'Seat of Authority in Religion.' 'In the whole nineteenth century there lived no man of subtler thought, of more exquisite imagination, of finer character, of purer spirit, than James Martineau.'—*Dr. Fairbairn*.

Edward Everett Hale, d. 1909, Chaplain of the United States Senate, and founder of 'Lend a Hand' Clubs.

### Hymn Writers.—

Sarah Flower Adams, d. 1848,  
'Nearer, my God, to thee.'

Anna Lætitia Barbauld, d. 1825,  
'Come, said Jesus' sacred voice.'

## Eminent Unitarians

Sir John Bowring, d. 1872,

'God is love; his mercy brightens.'

'In the cross of Christ I glory.'

Rev. J. W. Chadwick, d. 1905,

'Our fathers' faith, we'll sing of thee.'

Rev. William Henry Furness, d. 1896,

'Slowly, by thy hand unfurled.'

Rev. William Gaskell, d. 1884 (husband of  
Mrs. Gaskell, the novelist),

'Forth went the heralds of the cross.'

'Though lowly here our lot may be.'

Rev. F. H. Hedge, d. 1891,

'It is finished!' 'Man of Sorrows.'

Rev. Thomas Hincks, d. 1899,

'Hark, the evening call to prayer.'

Rev. John Johns, d. 1847,

'Come, kingdom of our God.'

Rev. Samuel Longfellow, d. 1892,

'Holy Spirit, Truth divine.'

'Now on land and sea descending.'

'One holy church of God appears.'

Rev. John Pierpont, d. 1866,

'O thou to whom in ancient time.'

Rev. E. H. Sears, d. 1876,

'It came upon the midnight clear.'

Rev. Isaac Watts, d. 1748,

'O God, our help in ages past.'

Rev. John R. Wreford, d. 1881,

'Lord, while for all mankind we pray.'

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Hymns by every writer mentioned in this list, and by many living Unitarians, will be found in the Essex Hall Hymnal.

## BOOKS FOR FURTHER STUDY

The following list of books may prove helpful to those interested in the further study of Unitarianism. A few of the books are by writers unconnected with the Unitarian denomination. All these publications may be purchased at the Book Room, Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand, London, W.C.

- Armstrong, R. A.**—'God and the Soul' (6d.),  
'The Trinity and the Incarnation' (2/-).
- Blatchford, A. N.**—'Church Councils and their Decrees.' (2/-).
- Carpenter, J. Estlin**—'The First Three Gospels' (6d.), 'The Bible in the Nineteenth Century' (10/6).
- Channing, W. E.**—'Select Discourses and Essays' (2/6), 'The Perfect Life' (6d.).
- Clarke, J. Freeman**—'Materialism and Atheism examined' (6d.).
- Delitzsch, F.**—'Whose Son is Christ?'  
Two Lectures (1/6).
- Dobschutz, E. von**—'The Apostolic Age' (2/-).
- Drummond, James**—'Studies in Christian Doctrine' (10/6), 'The Miraculous in Christianity' (3d.).
- Essex Hall Hymnal**—534 Hymns for Church and Home (1/6).
- Fiske, John**—'The Idea of God' (3/6),  
'Man's Destiny' (3/6), 'Through Nature to God' (3/6).
- Gardner, Percy**—'A Historic View of the New Testament' (6d.).

## Books for Study

- Giran, Etienne—'Jesus of Nazareth: a Historical and Critical Survey' (2/-).
- Gordon, Alexander—'Heads of English Unitarian History' (1/-).
- Harnack, Adolf—'What is Christianity?' (5/-).
- Herford, Brooke—'Religious Thought as interpreted by Unitarians' (1/-).
- Herford, R. Travers—'Unitarian Affirmations' (1/6).
- Hibbert Lectures—Dr. Drummond and Prof. C. B. Upton (3/6 each).
- Hollmann, G.—'The Jewish Religion in the Time of Jesus' (2/-).
- James, William—'Human Immortality' (1/-).
- Lodge, Oliver—'The Substance of Faith' (2/-).
- Martineau, James—'The Seat of Authority in Religion' (7/6), 'Endeavours after the Christian Life,' 2 vols. (6d. each), 'Essays,' 4 vols (7/6 each).
- May, Joseph—'Miracles and Myths of the New Testament' (1/6).
- Mellone, Sydney H.—'Converging Lines of Religious Thought' (2/-).
- Memorable Unitarians—Brief Biographies (1/-)
- Parker, Theodore—Prayers (6d.).
- Peabody, Prof. F. G.—'Approach to the Social Question' (5/-).
- Prayers for Church and Home,—Prayers by R. A. Armstrong, James Martineau, and others (1/-).
- Pringle-Pattison, Prof.—'Man's Place in the Cosmos' (6/-).
- Réville, Albert—'History of the Dogma of the Deity of Christ' (2/6).
- Rix, Herbert—'Rabbi, Messiah, Martyr' (1/-).

## Books for Study

- Sabatier, Auguste—'Outlines of a Philosophy of Religion' (7/6).
- Savage, Minot J.—'The Passing and Permanent in Religion' (6d.).
- Street, C. J.—'Immortal Life' (1/-),  
'Jesus the Prophet of God' (2/-).
- Studies in Theology—By J. E. Carpenter and P. H. Wicksteed (5/-).
- Tarrant, W. G.—'The Story and Significance of the Unitarian Movement' (1/-).  
'Our Faith: Studies in Religion' (6d.).
- Thom, John Hamilton—'Laws of Life after the Mind of Christ,' 2 vols. (2/6 each).
- Thomas, A. H.—'The Early Church: its Orders and Institutions' (2/6).
- Weatherall, J. H.—'The Books of the Old Testament' (2/6).
- Webster, Alex.—'My Pilgrimage from Calvinism to Unitarianism' (1/-).
- Wernle, Paul—'The Sources of our Knowledge of the Life of Jesus' (2/-).
- Wood, Joseph—'The Bible: what it is and is not' (6d.).
- Wrede, W.—'Paul: a study of his life and thought' (2/-).
- Wright, John—'Denials and Beliefs of Unitarians' (1/6).
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Anyone desiring further information or guidance in regard to the 'Points' may write to the author, c/o Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand, London, W.C.

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