

UNIVERSALISM IN AMERICA.¹

Thirty years have passed since Dr. Eddy began to collect material for his work. In those years he has seen great changes in the denomination in which he works so loyally and with such deserved honors. In his first volume the story is told of the planting of Universalism in America, and of its varied fortunes to the close of the last century. The present volume continues the history to the present year.

Appended to the history is a very valuable bibliography. It gives a list of no less than 2,278 books, pamphlets, sermons, in which Universalism is attacked or defended, and will be of very great service to all those who may wish to study minutely the progress of the Universalist system of faith.

Dr. Eddy gives interesting accounts of the early defenders of the faith. He shows their earnestness, obstacles, and heroic persistence. It is a story of small beginnings under reproach and ridicule, of preaching in court-houses, dwellings, and by the waysides. In Georgia the early preachers were called "hell redemptioners." In New Orleans at first the Mayor forbade all preaching unless it was given from the deck of some ship. Much space is given to the controversy concerning future punishment—the Restorationist controversy. Hosea Ballou, who, by his treatise on the Atonement and his preaching, had converted nearly all of the Universalist clergy from Trinitarianism to Unitarianism, was supposed to hold the doctrine that all sin and punishment are confined to this life. Against this belief an earnest protest was raised. Thomas Whittemore in advocacy, and Adin Ballou in opposition, were the "Hotspurs" of the great debate. Harsh words were uttered on both sides. Recrimination followed recrimination. A secession occurred in August, 1831, when the "Massachusetts Association of Universal Restorationists" was formed. Not all the "Restorationists" of the body joined. Hosea Ballou, second, nephew of "Father Ballou," and afterward the first President of Tufts College, stoutly opposed the secession. So did many other prominent clergy. In a comparatively few years the whole body was committed to the doctrine of future limited punishment. Nor did Hosea Ballou himself ever desire to give great prominence to what seemed to him to be the teaching of the Scriptures. Dr. Eddy's account is so full of the early years that, with regret, he was compelled to condense greatly the history from 1821 to 1881. He shows the gradual growth of the General Convention, which in 1865 became the governing body of the denomination. He tells the story of the Centenary in 1870. He relates the history of the Historical Society and the General Reform Association, and tells of the preaching of Universalism and the present condition of churches in the many States of the Union where Universalism has now

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established itself; the starting of Sunday-schools in Philadelphia, at first unsectarian; the origin of Children's Sunday; the history of Tufts College, and St. Lawrence University, and Brechtel College, and Lombard University, and the various academies—Westbrook in Maine, Dean in Massachusetts, Fort Plain in New York, and others. In a word, his patient, careful labors have given a work in which all students can find, or will be led to find, all available information concerning the origin, the growth, and the present condition and prosperity of the Universalist denomination. In such a work he could not, of course, stop to tell the story of the learned Hosea Ballou second, the brilliant Starr King, the apostle of education, A. D. Mayo, or the wonderful orator, E. H. Chapin.

In numerous works the story of the lives of these men and other workers, such as Bacon, Brooks, Stacy, and Fisher, have been ably told, but we regret that Dr. Eddy's pages could not tell more of the story of the later days of growth and power. The history ends with these words: "The seal of denominational disapprobation was put upon all attempts to eliminate the supernatural element from the Christian records, and an earnest and unambiguous deliverance was made that the Universalist Church bows to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, and accepts his religion as a revelation from God. One abiding growth dates from the time of our development of organized power—the adoption of a polity that holds preachers and laymen in loyalty to the Church, in unity of effort for planting and sustaining its institutions. Within less than twoscore years we have made our real, our lasting, gains. Our churches, our conventions, our schools and colleges—all our denominational interests—attest healthy growth; while the central truth proclaimed by the fathers grows more dear to us, and Protestant Christians generally haste to share the blessing."