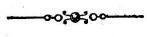


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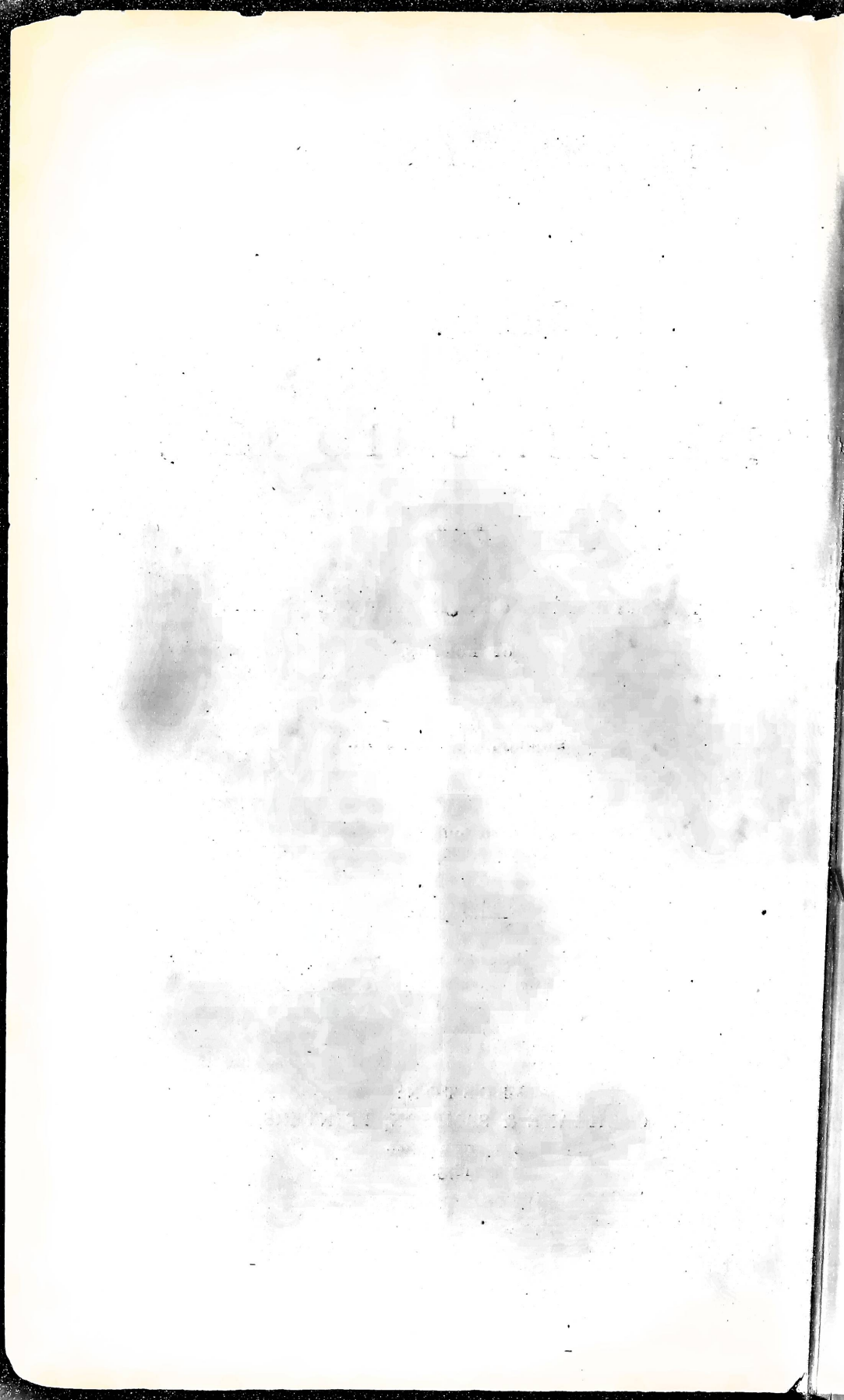
DEDICATORY SERVICES  
OF THE  
PARKER MEMORIAL  
MEETING HOUSE,

BY THE  
TWENTY-EIGHTH CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY,  
OF BOSTON,

Sunday, Sept. 21, 1873.



BOSTON:  
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1873.



# SERVICES.

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## I. DEDICATION HYMN.

BY SAMUEL JOHNSON.

*(Sung by Choir.)*

To Light, that shines in stars and souls ;  
To Law, that rounds the world with calm ;  
To Love, whose equal triumph rolls  
Through martyr's prayer and angel's psalm, —  
We wed these walls with unseen bands,  
In holier shrines not built with hands.

May purer sacrament be here  
Than ever dwelt in rite or creed, —  
Hallowed the hour with vow sincere  
To serve the time's all-pressing need,  
And rear, its heaving seas above,  
Strongholds of Freedom, folds of Love.

Here be the wanderer homeward led ;  
Here living streams in fullness flow ;  
And every hungering soul be fed,  
That yearns the Eternal Will to know ;  
Here conscience hurl her stern reply  
To mammon's lust and slavery's lie.

Speak, Living God, thy full command  
Through prayer of faith and word of power,  
That we with girded loins may stand  
To do thy work and wait thine hour,  
And sow, 'mid patient toils and tears,  
For harvests in serener years.

## II. REMARKS OF JOHN C. HAYNES,

CHAIRMAN OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY, OF BOSTON.

As your representative here to-day in the dedicatory services of this Memorial to Theodore Parker, the first minister and founder of our Society, what I have to say will consist mainly of a brief review of the history of the Society.

On January 22d, 1845, a meeting was held at Marlboro' Chapel by several friends of free thought, at which the following resolution was passed:—

*Resolved*, That the Rev. Theodore Parker shall have a chance to be heard in Boston."

At that time he was preaching at West Roxbury. The Melodeon was hired for Sunday mornings, and Mr. Parker preached his first sermon there February 16th, 1845, on "The Importance of Religion." In November of that year the Society was regularly organized as a "body for religious worship" under the laws of Massachusetts, the name "Twenty-eighth Congregational Society of Boston" was adopted, and Mr. Parker, on January 4th, 1846, was regularly installed as its minister. The Society remained at the Melodeon until the fall of 1852, when, for the sake of a larger audience-room for the great number who flocked to hear Mr. Parker, it removed to the Music Hall, then recently erected. There Mr. Parker preached from Sunday to Sunday until his illness on January 9th, 1859. His last discourse was on the Sunday previous. He continued, however, to be the minister of the Society until his death, which occurred May 10th, 1860. From the time of the illness of Mr. Parker to his death, the Society continued its meetings, in the hope at least of his partial recovery. After his death, the Society, seeing the continued need of an unfettered platform for free thought, and for the maintenance and diffusion of just ideas in regard to theology, morality and religion, and whatever else concerns the public welfare, of course maintained its organization and continued its meetings, engaging as preachers the best expounders of religious thought and feeling within its reach, laymen as well as clergymen, women as well as men.

The meetings have been held, without any interruptions except those of the usual summer vacations, up to the present time, a period of more than thirteen years since Mr. Parker's death. We have had financial and other discouragements, but the enthusiasm of the Society for the cause of "absolute religion," — the feeling that a pulpit like ours was needed, in which earnest men and women could freely express their views upon religious, social and political questions, — have kept us united and in action.

Our first serious misfortune, after the death of Mr. Parker, occurred in April, 1863, when, in consequence of the several months needful for the putting up of the Great Organ, we were obliged to vacate the Music Hall and go back to the Melodeon.

Our second principal misfortune took place in September, 1866, when, in consequence of the Melodeon being required for business purposes, we were compelled to remove to the Parker Fraternity Rooms, No 554 Washington Street.

In each case, the removal from a larger to a smaller hall reduced our numbers.

In May, 1865, Rev. David A. Wasson was settled as the minister of the Society, which position he held until his resignation in July, 1866. Previous to Mr. Wasson's settlement, Rev. Samuel R. Calthrop, now of Syracuse, N.Y., occupied the pulpit continuously for several months.

During 1867 and 1868, for more than a year, Rev. Samuel Longfellow preached for the Society on successive Sundays. Mr. Longfellow has continued to preach for us occasionally ever since.

On December 13th, 1868, Rev. James Vila Blake was installed by the Society as its minister, and remained our pastor nearly three years, until his resignation in November, 1871.

Aside from these, we have had the occasional pulpit service of many men and women, noble in character, and eminent in ability. Among them are Ralph Waldo Emerson, William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, William R. Alger, John Weiss, Samuel Johnson, O. B. Frothingham, John W. Chadwick, Francis E. Abbot, Ednah D. Cheney, William J. Potter, Celia Burleigh, William H. Spencer, and W. C. Gannett.

The Parker Fraternity, which is an offshoot of the Twenty-eight Congregational Society, representing particularly its social element, was organized in 1858, and has been a valuable adjunct to the Society. Through its public lectures it has largely influenced public opinion, particularly in the days of the anti-slavery reform and the momentous years of the rebellion. It naturally recognized the rights of woman, and year after year placed women among its lecturers.

The Twenty-eighth Congregational Society has always, from the start, had its seats free. All who chose to come to its meetings have been welcome. The contributions for payment of expenses have always been voluntary. The Society has never had a creed, and has never used those observances with water, bread and wine which the sects call "sacraments." Through the twenty-eight years of its existence, the feeling against these has been constant and universal, so that no question in regard to them has ever arisen.

Now, for the first time, we have a building we can call our own. We have erected it as a memorial to our first great teacher and standard-bearer, Theodore Parker. We dedicate it to the ideas he represented: namely, to truth, to humanity, to the free expression of free thought; to duty, to mental, moral and social progress, and to the diffusion of religion without superstition.

### III. SCRIPTURE READING.

[A part of the following selection from the Scriptures of different nations was read.]

LET us meditate on the adorable light of the Divine Creator: may He quicken our minds.

What I may now utter, longing for Thee, do Thou accept it: make me possessed of God!

Preserver, Refuge! leave us not in the power of the evil: be with us when afar, be with us when near; so sustained, we shall not fear. We have no other Friend but Thee, no other blessedness, no other Father. There is none like Thee in heaven or earth, O Mighty One: give us understanding as a father his sons. Thine we are; we go on our way upheld by Thee.

Day after day we approach Thee with reverence: take us into Thy protection as a father his sons. Thou art as water in the desert to him who longs for Thee.

Preserve us by knowledge from sin, and lift us up, for our work and for our life. Deliver us from evil!

Spirit alone is this All. Him know ye as the One Soul alone; dismiss all other words.

The Eternal One is without form, without beginning, self-existent Spirit.

The Supreme Spirit, whose creation is the universe, always dwelling in the heart of all beings, is revealed by the heart. They who know Him become immortal. With the eye can no man see Him. They who know him as dwelling within become immortal.

He is the Soul in all beings, the best in each, the inmost nature of all; their beginning, middle, end: the all-watching Preserver, Father and Mother of the universe; Supporter, Witness, Habitation, Refuge, Friend: the knowledge of the wise, the silence of mystery, the splendor of light.

He, the One, moveth not, yet is swifter than thought. He is far, he is near. He is within all, he is beyond all. He it is who giveth to his creatures according to their needs. He is the Eternal among things transitory, the Life of all that lives, and being One fulfilleth the desires of many. The wise who see Him within themselves, theirs is everlasting peace.

Dearer than son, dearer than wealth, dearer than all other beings, is He who dwelleth deepest within.

They who worship me, He saith, dwell in me and I in them. They who worship me shall never die. By him who seeks me, I am easily found. To such as seek me with constant love, I give the power to come to me. I will deliver thee from all thy transgressions.

He who seeth all in God, and God in all, despiseth not any.

Hear the secret of the wise. Be not anxious for subsistence: it is provided by the Maker. He who hath clothed the birds with their bright plumage will also feed thee. How should riches bring thee joy. He has all good things whose soul is constant.

If one considers the whole universe as existing in the Supreme Spirit, how can he give his soul to sin?

He leadeth men to righteousness that they may find unsullied peace.

Who can be glorious without virtue?

He who lives pure in thought, free from malice, holy in life, feeling tenderness toward all creatures, humble and sincere, has God ever in his heart. The Eternal makes not his abode within the heart of that man who covets another's wealth, who injures any living thing, who speaks harshness or untruth.

The good have mercy on all as on themselves. He who is kind to those who are kind to him does nothing great. To be good to the evil-doer is what the wise call good. It is the duty of the good man, even in the moment of his destruction, not only to forgive, but to seek to bless his destroyer.

By truth is the universe upheld.

Speak the truth: he drieth to the very roots who speaketh falsehood.

Do righteousness : than righteousness there is nothing greater.

Honor thy father and thy mother. Live in peace with others. Speak ill of none. Deceive not even thy enemy. Forgiveness is sweeter than revenge. Speak kindly to the poor.

Whatever thou dost, do as offering to the Supreme.

Lead me forth, O God, from unrighteousness into righteousness ; from darkness into light ; from death into immortality !

There is an invisible, eternal existence beyond this visible, which does not perish when all things perish, even when all that exists in form returns unto God from whom it came.

— *Hindu (Brahminic) Scriptures.*

O Thou in whom all creatures trust, perfect amidst the revolutions of worlds, compassionate toward all, and their eternal salvation, bend down into this our sphere, with all thy society of perfected ones. Thou Law of all creatures, brighter than the sun, in faith we humble ourselves before Thee. Thou, who dwellest in the world of rest, before whom all is but transient, descend by thine almighty power and bless us !

Forsake all evil, bring forth good, rule thy own thought : such is the path to end all pain.

My law is a law of mercy for all.

As a mother, so long as she lives, watches over her child, so among all beings let boundless good-will prevail.

Overcome the evil with good, the avaricious with generosity, the false with truth.

Earnestness is the way of immortality.

Be true and thou shalt be free. To be true belongs to thee, thy success to the Creator.

Not by meditation can the truth be reached, though I keep up continual devotion. The wall of error is broken by walking in the commandments of God.

— *Buddhist Scriptures.*

In the name of God, the Giver, the Forgiver, the Rich in Love ! Praise be to the God, whose name is He who always was, always is, always shall be. He is the Ruler, the Mighty, the Wise : Creator, Sustainer, Refuge, Defender.

May Thy kingdom come, O Lord, wherein Thou makest good to the righteous poor.

He through whose deed the world increaseth in purity shall come into Thy kingdom.

This I ask of Thee, tell me the right, O Lord, teach me : Thou Ruler over all, the Heavenly, the Friend for both worlds !

I pray Thee, the Best, for the best.

Teach Thou me out of Thyself.

The Lord has the decision : may it happen to us as He wills.



“Which is the one prayer,” asked Zarathrusta, “that in greatness, goodness and beauty is worth all that is between heaven and earth?” And the Lord answered him, That one wherein one renounces all evil thoughts, evil words, and evil works.

Praise to the Lord, who rewards those who perform good deeds according to His will, who purifies the obedient at last, and redeems even the wicked out of hell.

— *Parsee Scriptures.*

Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one.

What doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to reverence the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways: to love him and to serve him with all thy heart and with all thy soul!

For the Lord your God is a great God, a mighty and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, neither taketh gifts. He executeth justice for the fatherless and the widow and loveth the stranger. Love ye therefore the stranger. Ye are the children of the Lord your God.

Ye shall not steal, neither deal falsely, neither lie one to another. Neither shall thou profane the name of thy God. Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbor, but in righteousness shalt thou judge him.

Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart.

But thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

If thine enemy hunger feed him, if he thirst give him drink. So shalt thou heap coals of fire upon his head.

Bring no more vain oblations. Wash you, make you clean; cease to do evil, learn to do good; seek justice, relieve the oppressed.

Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

Justice will I lay to the line and righteousness to the plummet.

When Thy justice is in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.

The Lord will teach us his ways and we will walk in his paths. And he shall judge the nations. And they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

For behold, I create a new heavens and a new earth. The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad, and the desert shall blossom as the rose.

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my life, He leadeth me in the right paths. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the deadly shadow, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me: Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life.

— *Jewish (Canonical) Scriptures.*

Wisdom is glorious, and never fadeth away. And love is the keeping of her laws : and the giving heed unto her laws is the assurance of incorruption. And incorruption maketh us near unto God.

For wisdom, which is the worker of all things, taught me. In her is an understanding spirit : holy, one only, yet manifold ; subtle, living, undefiled, loving the thing that is good, ready to do good ; kind to man, steadfast, sure, having all power ; overseeing all things, and going through all mind ; pure and most subtle spirit. For wisdom is more moving than any motion. She passeth and goeth through all things by reason of her pureness. For she is the breath of the power of God, and a pure influence flowing from the glory of the Almighty. She is the brightness of the everlasting light, the unspotted mirror of the power of God and the image of his goodness. And being one, she can do all things : and remaining in herself, she maketh all things new ; and in all ages entering into holy souls, she maketh them friends of God and prophets.

Thou lovest all things that are ; thou savest all : for they are Thine, O Lord, thou lover of souls. For Thine incorruptible spirit is in all things.

To know Thee is perfect righteousness ; yea, to know Thy power is the root of immortality.

For righteousness is immortal.

— *Jewish (Apocryphal) Scriptures.*

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Love your enemies ; bless them who curse you ; pray for them who despitefully use you and persecute you, that ye may be the children of your Father who is in heaven. Be ye therefore perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect.

God is Spirit, and they who worship him must worship him in spirit.

The Father who dwelleth in me doeth the works. My Father worketh hitherto and I work.

God is Love ; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

If we love one another, God dwelleth in us. And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in Him, and He in him.

Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God.

And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself as He is pure. As many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

Unto us there is but one God, the Father.

One God, and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

He hath made us ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter, but of the spirit : for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.

Now the Lord is that spirit : and where the spirit of the Lord is there is liberty.

For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty. Only use not your liberty as an occasion for the flesh, but that by love ye may serve one another.

And now abide faith, hope, love : but the greatest of these is love.

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely : if there be any virtue and any praise, think on these things. The things which ye have learned and received and heard, DO : and the God of peace shall be with you.

— *Christian Scriptures.*

#### IV. PRAYER.

BY SAMUEL LONGFELLOW.

#### V. DEDICATION HYMN.

WRITTEN FOR THE OCCASION BY W. C. GANNETT.

*(Sung by Choir and Congregation.)*

O HEART-of all the shining day,  
 The green earth's still Delight,  
 Thou Freshness in the morning wind,  
 Thou Silence of the night ;  
 Thou Beauty of our temple-walls,  
 Thou Strength within the stone, —  
 What is it we can offer thee  
 Save what is first thine own ?

Old memories throng : we think of one —  
 Awhile with us he trod —  
 Whose gospel words yet bloom and burn ;  
 We called him, — Gift of God.  
 Thy gift again ; we bring thine own,  
 This memory, this hope ;  
 This faith that still one Temple holds  
 Him, us, within its cope.

Not that we see, but sureness comes  
 When such as he have passed ;  
 The freshness thrills, the silence fills,  
 Life lives then in the vast ;  
 They pour their goodness into it,  
 It reaches to the star ;  
 The Gift of God becomes himself,  
 More real, more near, so far !

## VI. DISCOURSE.

BY SAMUEL LONGFELLOW.

I GREET you upon your gathering in this new and fair home. It is but a change of place, — not of mind or purpose. You lay no new foundations of the spirit. What foundation can any man lay deeper, broader, more eternal than those you have always had, — faith in man and faith in God, whom man reveals? You build no new walls of spiritual shelter: what other can you ever need than you have always had, — the sense of the encompassing, protecting, and perfect laws, the encircling God? What better roof could overarch your souls than the reverential, trustful sense of the Heavenly Power and Love; the Truth, Justice, and Beauty that are above us all; the Perfect which lifts us to heaven, and opens heaven to us and in us, even as in Rome's Pantheon — temple of all the Gods, or of the All-God — the arching dome leaves in its centre an open circle, through which the infinite depths of sky are seen that tempt the spirit to soar and soar, without a bound, farther than any bird hath ever lifted wing or floating air-ship of man's building can ever rise! What spires and pinnacles could you raise that would point upward better than that ideal within us, that haunting sense of Perfection which forever calls us to a better manhood, and toward which in all our best moments we long and aspire? What breadth of enlarged space could you open, with hospitable welcome of free place for all who would come, beyond that entire freedom of thinking, of speaking, of hearing, which have been yours, and your offering to others, for so many years? Ever since, indeed, you gathered together, resolved that "Theo-

dore Parker should have a chance to be heard in Boston," and formed the Twenty-eighth Congregational Society. Founded in the ecclesiastical independence of that name, you, in coming here, have not to break away from any ecclesiastical organization. Nor do you need now or ever to ask leave of bishop, or approbation of consistory or council, — or fear the censure of either, — for anything that you may do here, for any one whom you may invite here, for anything that may be said here, for any rite or form or ceremonial that you here may establish or may omit. Springing from such root of sympathy with fair play and freedom of speech, — and especially of thought and speech that were under some ban of heresy, — you have not in coming here had to break away from any traditions of orthodoxy or spiritual constraint. The traditions you bring here are all the other way. It is to no experiment of liberty that you open this place of meeting; to no untried ideas and principles, but to well-tested ones, which you see no ground to give up or to abate. For ideas and principles you have, — though you are bound by no creed. Bound by no creed, I say, — refusing to proclaim any. Not, however, without individual beliefs, and doubtless with substantial agreement amid your varieties of opinion; but not imposing your beliefs upon each other, as conditions of fellowship, still less upon any as conditions of salvation. You do not impose them upon yourselves as final; but hope that they will grow out into something larger, fuller, deeper. You may be afloat; but you are not adrift. You may not know what new worlds of Truth lie before you; but you know where you are, and in what direction you are going. Beneath you is the deep of God; over you, his eternal stars; within you, the magnet which, with all its variations, is yet a trustworthy guide. Your hand is on the helm. The sacred forces and laws of nature encompass you. While you obey them you will not be lost. "If your bark sink, 'tis to another sea." You cannot go beyond God.

This great principle of Freedom of Inquiry, Liberty of Thought, you bring with you. And may I not say for you that you re-affirm it here? In using it, it has not failed you or betrayed you or harmed you. You have not found it fatal or

dangerous. It has not led you into indifference, or into license or moral delinquency. It may have led you to deny some old beliefs, but it has not left you in denial or unbelief. Its free atmosphere has been a tonic to your faith. It has brought you to convictions,—the more trustworthy and precious because freely reached by your own thought, and tested by your own experience, and fitted to your own state of mind. No longer a report, but something you have seen for yourselves. The story is told of a well-known hater of shams, that, a new minister coming into his neighborhood, he sought an opportunity of talk with him: he wanted to learn, he said, whether this man knew, himself, anything of God, or only believed that eighteen hundred years ago there lived one who knew something of him. Is not our faith that in which we have settled confidence,—what we trust our wills to in action? It is that to which we gravitate, and in which we rest when all disturbing influences are withdrawn. It is that to which we find ourselves recurring from all aberrations of questioning and doubt, as to a practical certainty. We may not be able to answer all arguments against it, but nevertheless it commends itself to us as true. There is to us more reason for holding to it than there are reasons for rejecting it. So, while belief may be called an act of the understanding, faith is rather a consent of the whole nature. It is, therefore, more instinctive than argumentative, though reasoning forms an element in it. And it is the mighty power which it is, removing mountains, and the secret of victory, because it is this *consensus* of thought, feeling, and will,—a deposit of their long experiences, an act of the whole man. It is structural and organic. But it need not be blind or irrational. If we must differentiate it from knowledge, I would say that, while we may define knowledge to be assurance upon outward grounds, faith is assurance upon real but interior grounds. I repeat this because many people seem to think that faith is assurance without any ground. Now that our faith may be really such as I have described, it must be a personal conviction, from our own thought and experience. And that it may be this, we must have liberty of thinking without external constraint.

You do not find that this liberty of yours isolates you. Others who count it dangerous, or who dislike the use you make of it, may cut you off from their fellowship. But the liberty which frees you from artificial restraints leaves you open to the natural attractions, and over and through all walls and lines you find a large fellowship of sympathy in thought and feeling. The electric instincts of spiritual brotherhood overleap all barriers of creed and organization, even of excommunication. Above all are you bound by such invisible, deep ties with all the noble company of the heretics and pioneers of thought: and a noble company it is. For the line of so-called heresy is nearly as ancient, and quite as honorable, as that of orthodoxy. Think of the names that belong to it!

Let me say further that this liberty of yours — your birth-right and sacred charge — is not lawlessness. You have never felt it to be so. In a universe of law no true liberty can be that. It is not that which has made the soul of man thrill as when a trumpet sounds; not that to which the noblest men and women have sacrificed popularity, fortune, and life. How foolishly Mr. Ruskin talks about liberty, misusing his eloquent pen; saying that we need none of it; and taking for its symbol the capricious vagaries of a house-fly! Is it a house-fly caprice that has made the hearts of true men leap high and willingly bleed into stillness; which has been dearer than friend or lover, than ease or life? Your liberty, I say, is not lawlessness, — it is not whim and caprice. It is simply the throwing off all bondage of tradition and conformity and prescription and ecclesiasticism, — every external compulsion and imposition in behalf of the free, natural action of the mind and heart. It rejects outward rule in behalf of inward law. It refuses obedience to outward dictation in behalf of its allegiance to the Truth which is within. Thus it rejects bonds, but accepts bounds; for all law is force acting within bounds, — that is, under fixed and orderly conditions. Your liberty is order, not disorder.

Your liberty, again, is not rude or defiant. You do not flout authority: you give due weight to the natural authority of superior knowledge, wisdom, conscientiousness, holiness. But you acknowledge no human authority which claims to be infallible, or

to impose itself upon you as absolute ; none which would deny to you the right — or seek to release you from the duty — of thinking for yourself what is true to you, of judging for yourself what is right for you. The opinion of the wisest you will not accept, in any matter that interests you, unless it commends itself to your thought, to your conscience, is justified by your experience. You will not take your religious opinions ready made from pope or synod or apostle. God has given you power — and therefore laid upon you the duty — of forming your own. In that work you will gladly accept all help, willingly listen to the words of the wise and good ; but their real authority is in their power to convince your mind ; and the final appeal is to your own soul. Is inspiration claimed for any, its proof must be in its power to inspire you. Till it does it is no word of God to you.

Yet once more, this liberty — won by pain of those gone before, and by your own fidelity — is yours not for its own sake chiefly, not as an end. It is yours as *opportunity*. It will be a barren liberty if it be not used. What good will the right of free inquiry do to a man who never inquires ? Of what advantage freedom of thought to one who never thinks ? Of what value the right of private judgment to one who never exercises it ? Freedom, I say, is but opportunity. It is an atmosphere in which the mind should expand unhindered in its inbreathing of Truth ; in which all virtues should grow in strength, all sweet and loving and devout feelings flower into beauty and fragrance ; in which the character, unconstrained by artificial bondages, should grow into the full statue of manhood, the full possession and free play of faculty. It is in vain that you have put away infallible church and infallible Bible and official mediator, and priesthood and ritual, from between you and God, if you never avail yourself of that immediate access ; if your soul never springs into the arms of the Eternal Love, nor rests itself trustfully on the Eternal Strength, nor listens reverently to the whispers of the Eternal Word, nor enters into the peace of communion with the Immutable.

Our freedom is founded in faith, not in denial. It springs from faith in man. The popular theology is founded upon the idea



of human incapacity : ours upon faith in human capacity. We believe, not in the Fall of Man, but in the Rise of Man. We believe, not in a chasm between man and God to be bridged over only by the atoning death of a God, but in a chasm between man's attainment and his possibility, between his lower and his higher nature, to be bridged over by growth, government, and culture. We believe that there is more good in man generally than evil. And the evil we believe to be, not a native disability, but an imperfection or a misuse, an excess or perversion, of faculties and instincts whose natural or right use is good. We believe sin is not an infinite evil, but a finite one, — incidental, not structural. Man is not helpless in its toils ; but every man has the elements of good in him which may overcome it, and all needed helps. It is a disease, — sometimes a dreadful one, — but not absolutely fatal, since there is a healing power in his nature, and in the universe around and above him ; and the excess or misdirection may be overcome by the inward effort and outward influences which shall strengthen into supremacy the higher faculties which rightfully control and direct the lower. We believe in the existence of these higher faculties as original in man's constitution, — reason, conscience, ideality, unselfish love. These are as much a part of his nature as the senses and the animal mind. When rightly used they are as valid, — not infallible, but trustworthy. They will not necessarily lead astray, as the popular theology teaches, but probably lead aright. That theology, not having faith in human nature, cannot believe that freedom of thinking is safe for men. Protestantism proclaims indeed the "right of private judgment," but it is merely the right to read the Jewish and Christian Bible, and to accept unquestioning its declarations, bowing natural reason, heart, and conscience to its texts, believed to be the miraculously inspired and infallible Word of God, the "perfect rule of faith and practice." The Roman Catholic Church, far more logical, seeing that private judgment gets such a variety of meaning out of this "perfect rule," declares that an infallible Bible, to be such a rule, needs an infallible interpreter, — namely, the church, or, latterly, the Pope speaking for the church. It, therefore, logically denies freedom of individual thinking as

dangerous. Father Newman, indeed, with amusing simplicity, declares that nowhere is liberty of thought more encouraged than in the Roman Church, since, he says, she allows a long discussion of every tenet and dogma before it is definitely defined and proclaimed. Yes: but after? We can only smile at such a pretension. In London, a friend said to me, "I do not see but these Broad Churchmen have freedom to say everything that they want to say in their pulpits." I answered, "Perhaps so, but then they do not want to say all that you and I should want to say." But of what they wish to say or think much must require an immense stretching of the articles to which they have subscribed: I do not speak of conscience, for I will not judge another's. But what a trap to conscience, what a temptation to at least mental dishonesty, must such subscription be! And the Liturgy, from which no word may be omitted, though many a priest must say officially what he does not individually believe,—can that be good for a man? I know what may be said on the other side, but to us it will seem that all advantages are dearly purchased at such cost. The Unitarians, the Protestants of Protestants, in their revolt from Calvinism, proclaimed the right of free inquiry. And, let it be remembered to their credit, they have refused to announce an authoritative creed. But they have not had full faith in their own principles and ideas. They have hesitated and been timid in their application. They have been suspicious and unfriendly toward those who went farther than they in the use of their freedom of thinking. They have written up, "No Thoroughfare" and "Dangerous Passing" on their own road. They have now organized round the dogma of the Lordship and Leadership of Jesus; and invite to their fellowship, not all who would be "followers of God, as dear children," but only those who "wish to be followers of Christ."

I do not forget that in all churches, Romanist and Protestant, there is a spirit of liberty, a leaven of free thought, which is creating a movement in them all,—an inner fire which is breaking the crust of tradition and creed and ecclesiasticism. It shows itself in the Old Catholic movement in Romanism; the Broad Church in Anglicanism; the Liberal wing in Orthodoxy; the Radicalism in "Liberal Christianity."

But the freedom which in these is inconsistent, imperfect, or unwelcome, with you is organic and thorough. Our faith in it, I said, springs out of our faith in man and God, to which indeed our freedom has led us. We think that man can be trusted to search for the truth without constraint or hindrance, because we think that his mind was made for truth, as his eye for light; and that to his mind, fairly used, the truth will reveal itself as the light does to his eye. And we believe that in his sincere search he is never unassisted by the Spirit of Truth. We do not say that he will make no mistakes, or that he will know all truth all at once. But if a man be earnest and sincere, his mistakes will be his teachers: his errors will be but his imperfect apprehension of some truth. We believe that all truth that has ever come to man, including religious truth, has come through the use of his native faculties; that this is the condition of all revelation, and ample to account for all revelations. We, therefore, utterly discard all distinction between natural and revealed religion. We should as soon speak of natural and revealed astronomy, or establish separate professorships for teaching them. Newton revealed to men the facts of the universe which his natural faculties discovered, and which the universe revealed to him using his faculties. Some of these facts were unknown before to the wisest men; some were only dimly guessed. Did that prove his knowledge superhuman? Would it be a sensible question to ask, Why, if human reason were capable of discovering them, were they not known before? Yet such questions are asked in religion, as if unanswerable! We believe that the human faculties are adequate for their end. Among them we recognize spiritual faculties, framed for the perception of spiritual truths,—a religious capacity adequate to its end. We find religion—a sense of deity—as universal and as natural to man as society, government, language, science. You know how the latest and completest investigations into the ancient religions of the world confirm this belief. They show that the great religious ideas and sentiments—of God, of Virtue, of Love, of Immortality—have been taught with remarkable unanimity in all these religions. These are mingled in all with much that is mythological, unscientific, local, personal,

temporary. But they have all contained that which elevated, consoled, and redeemed the souls of men. Under all of them, men have lived the truth they professed, and have suffered and died in its behalf. Most of them have had their prophet, believed to have been the chosen friend of God, sent to communicate His word to the world. He has been worshiped by his followers, glorified with miracle, deified. In view of these facts, it is impossible to regard any one of them as the only, the universal, or the perfect religion. Christianity, therefore, cannot any longer be regarded as other than one of the religions of the world, sharing the qualities of them all. It has its bright central truths, eternal as the soul of man, elevating, comforting, redeeming. It has its elements of mythology, its personal and local traits, peculiar to itself. What is peculiar in it can never become universal: what is universal in it cannot be claimed as its peculiar property. The Christianity of the New Testament centres in the idea that Jesus was the miraculously attested Messiah, the King, long expected, of the Jews. "If ye believe not that I am he ye shall perish in your sins." "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus, the Messiah, is come in the flesh, is of God; every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus is the Messiah come in the flesh, is not of God." "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God [that is, the Messiah], God dwelleth in him." "Whosoever believes that Jesus is the Messiah, is born of God." This was the primitive Christian confession,—the test of belief or unbelief, the test of discipleship, the condition of salvation. Paul enlarged the domain of the Messiah's kingdom to include all of the Gentiles who would acknowledge him; declared that in his own life-time he should see Jesus returning to take the Messianic throne, and looked to see the time when "every knee should bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus was the Christ;" "whom God had raised from the dead, and set at his own right hand, far above all principality and might and dominion and every name that is named." This was the primitive Christian confession. Seeing that it has never come to pass, that it was a mistaken idea, some modern Christians idealize the thought, and say that Jesus is morally and spiritually King among men. But that is not the New

Testament idea, which is literal, not figurative. This Messianic idea, in its most literal sense, colors the Christian scriptures through and through. And with it, its correlative idea of an immediately impending destruction and renovation of the world, which was to accompany the Messianic appearance. A great many of the precepts of the New Testament have their ground in this erroneous notion of the writers, and have no significance or application apart from it. It is such things as these that make it impossible for Christianity, as it stands in the records, to be the universal or absolute religion. Just as like things in Brahminism, Buddhism, Judaism, prevent any one of these, as it stands in its scriptures, from becoming the Religion of the World. What is local, personal, peculiar, special in each, is of its nature transient, — the temporary environment and wrappage of the truth. What is universal in each, — the central spiritual and moral ideas which re-appear in them all, — these cannot be called by the name of any one of them. These, it seems me, are neither Judaism, Buddhism, nor Christianity, — they are Religion.

Religion, — a name how often taken in vain, how often perverted! but in its true essence what a joy, what an emancipation, what a consolation, what an inspiration! What a life it has been in the world! Corrupted and betrayed, made the cloak of iniquity, ambition, selfishness, uncharitableness, and tyranny, it has never perished out of the human soul. A product of that soul, an original and ineradicable impulse, perception, and sentiment, it has shared the fate of that soul in its upward progress out of ignorance into knowledge, out of superstition into rational faith, out of selfishness into humanity, out of all imperfection on toward perfection. In every age, and in every soul, it has been the saving salt. For by Religion, I need not say, I do not mean any form or ceremonial whatever, any organization or ecclesiasticism. I mean the Ideal in man, and devotion to that Ideal. The sense of a Perfect above him, yet akin to him, forever drawing him upward to union with itself. The Moral Ideal, — or sense of a perfect Righteousness, — how it has summoned men away from injustice and wrong-doing, awakened them to a contest with evil within them, and led

them on to victory of the conscience over passion and greed! How it has nerved them to do battle with injustice in the world, and kept them true to some cause of righting wrong, patient and brave through indifference, opposition, suffering! And it has always been a sense of a power and a law of righteousness above themselves, which they did not create and dared not disobey, and which, while it seemed to compel them, yet exalted and freed them. The Intellectual Ideal, — the sense of a Supreme Truth, a Reality in things, with the thirst to know it, — how it has led men to “scorn delights and live laborious days,” to outwatch the night, to traverse land and sea, in its study and pursuit, to sacrifice for it fortune and society; this also felt to be something above them, yet belonging to them; something worth living and dying for, and giving to its sharers a sense of endless life! And the Ideal of Beauty, haunting, quickening, exalting the imagination to feel, to see, to create, in marble, on canvass, in tones, in words: itself its own great reward. The Ideal of Use, leading to the creation and perfecting of the arts and instruments of human need and comfort and luxury: every one of them at first only a dream in the brain of the inventor, a vision of a something better than existed haunting his toilsome days and years of self-denial and poverty. The Ideal of Patriotism or of Loyalty, the sense of social order, of a rightful sovereignty, or of popular freedom, — how has it made men into heroes and martyrs, giving up ease and facing death with exulting hearts. The Ideal of Love or Benevolence, that makes men devote themselves and consecrate their possessions to the relieving of human suffering, and discovering and removing its sources. The Ideal of Sanctity, of Holiness, the vision and the consecration of the saint, the aspiration after goodness, that by its inspiration gives power to overcome passion and control desire and purify every thought of the mind and every feeling of the heart, and mold the spirit into the likeness of the All-Holy.

All these ideals, differing so much in their manifestation and direction, are alike in this, — that they all look to an unseen Better, a Best, a Perfect; that this seems always above the man who seeks it, yet at the same time within him, not of

his own creation, but governing him by a law superior to his own will, while attracting and invigorating it; that they all demand a self-surrender and self-devotion, and sacrifice of lower to higher, and give the power to make that sacrifice; and that they are their own reward.

All these ideals—and if there be any others—I include in the idea of Religion. Is my definition too broad? I cannot make it narrower. It will not seem too broad to you who are accustomed to regard religion as covering all human life. Whatever in that life is an expression of ideal aspiration, is done in unselfish devotion, and in obedience to the highest law we know, is a religious act, is a worship and a prayer. It is a service of God; for it is a use of our faculties to their highest end, which must be His will for us. It is a contact with things invisible and eternal. For these ideals are of the mind, not of the body: they are of the soul, and must go with it into all worlds. They are thus an element, and a proof, of immortality.

O friends, is there anything the world needs, is there anything every one of us needs, more than some high ideal, to be kept bright and clear within us by sincere devotion? Is there anything we need more than a high standard in character, in aim, in spirit, in work? We have it in our best moments. But how easily we let it get clouded in the press of cares. How easily we yield to the temptation to lower it for immediate results! Is there anything we need more than the elevation of spirit such an ideal gives, the power to rise above annoyance and fret, above low and selfish thought, above unworthy deeds? How ashamed we stand before that ideal when, because we have not been obedient to its celestial vision, but have too easily let it go, we are betrayed into the temper, the word, the act we had resolved should never betray us again! What is needed in our politics, in our business—do not daily events teach it to us most impressively?—but a higher ideal; a higher standard of integrity; a high-minded sense of right, which would take no questionable dollar from the public purse; a sensitive conscience, scrupulous of the rights of others given to its trust? Then the haste to be rich would cease to be the root of evil that it is, and embezzlements, defalcations, political jobs, and

mercantile frauds no longer shock and grieve us with every paper we take up. Oh, the anguish and self-reproach of the man who has involved himself, little by little, in the toils and excitements of temptation, and, accepting a lowering standard of honesty, sinks, till he is startled to find himself fallen into the pit!

What is more needed in all our work than a higher ideal of excellence, a higher standard of truth and conscientiousness? How hard to get anything done thoroughly well, — precisely as agreed upon, and at the time promised! Most earnestly would I insist that every right which the "working-man" can justly claim should be secured to him; his full share of the product he helps create, and every opportunity for health, recreation, and culture which he will use. But he should remember that faithful performance of *duties* on his part will be the best ground for any claim of *rights*: he must be careful of the right of others to honest work and honest time in return for fair pay.

How great is our indebtedness to those great and true souls who have kindled or kept alive within us a loftier ideal! What an influence in that way has the image of Jesus been in the Christian world! Many have not seen that what they worshiped or looked up to in him was often simply their own ideal of human excellence, — really not so much derived from him as projected upon him, with little regard to historic fact. But this shows us, still, the power of a lofty ideal within us to lift up, sustain, and redeem. Many, if they were willing to speak frankly, would say that the human excellence of some noble, pure-hearted, spiritually-minded friend, with whom they had walked in the flesh, has been more to them than the image of Jesus. And when we remember that these high ideals have inspired millions who never heard his name, it is plain that he cannot be regarded as their origin. There is one Supreme Ideal of Goodness. "Likeness to God" was the aim of the Pythagorean teaching. "Be ye perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect."

All these ideals of Truth, Righteousness, Beauty, Use, Love, Holiness, of which I have spoken as constituting, in our devotion to them, true Religion, unite in the Idea of God. For He



is the Perfect of them all, the Spirit or Essence of them all, — the Perfect Truth, the Perfect Righteousness, the Perfect Beauty, the Perfect Love, the Perfect Power, the Perfect Holiness. That is what we mean by saying "God," — surely nothing less than that. This sublime idea has always, in some shape, haunted and possessed the mind of man. The moment the spiritual faculties begin to germinate in a man or a race, at that moment the thought of God springs up. From our far-off Aryan ancestor, who, on those high plains of Central Asia, looked up to the clear, transparent sky, and said thankfully and reverently, "Dyaus-pitar," Heaven-father, — for he knew that the blessing of sunshine and rain came thence to him, and must have felt a mysterious sense of some being invisible in that visible, — down to the child who to-day makes his prayer, "Our Father, who art in heaven," all over the world the reverence of men's hearts, and their sense of blessing and dependence, have uttered the name of God, and joined with it the thought of Father. The conceptions in which men's thought and language have clothed that idea have varied with knowledge and culture. But the central idea of a Power and Beneficence superior to man, in Nature and above Nature, has been ever present. Delusions may have gathered about it: but is it a delusion? Superstitions may have distorted it: but can you count it a superstition? I count it the greatest of realities. I accept the well-nigh universal verdict of the soul of man. I accept the experiences of my own soul. I accept the faith which, whether it be original or an inheritance of accumulated thought, is now an instinct and intuition within me. I accept the confirmation of science to the divination of the soul, in its more and more clear affirmation of a unity and perpetuity of Force in Nature, and an omnipresence of Law. I accept the testimony of saints who, through purity of heart, have seen God and felt him near, — and more than near. Their highest statement is, "God is Spirit." A distinguished preacher has said, — justifying his declaration that Jesus Christ is his God, — that he believes it impossible to form the conception of pure spirit. Of course we cannot form any image or picture of it. But we can think it, surely. For we know thought and feeling and will in our-

selves, and these have no shape, nor do we confound them with the bodies in which they are manifested. Thought, feeling, will, — these are our spirit, our essential life. God is the infinite Thought, Feeling, Will, — the infinite Spirit or essential Life of the universe of matter and of soul. Our conception of him must depend, I said, upon our spiritual condition. But I think with every advance in spiritual life and perception, we put off more and more of physical and human limitation. Said one to me, the other day, "I think it will be no service to men to undermine their belief in a personal God." Now, thought, feeling, and will are qualities of person, and not of thing, and therefore we may speak of God as the infinite Person. But he meant, as is usually meant, by personality, *individuality*. For myself, I think it a great gain to give up the conception of God as an individual being, however majestic, sitting apart from the universe, overseeing and governing it, and from time to time intervening by special act. I count it a great gain to have reached a conception of him as pure Spirit, the all-pervading Life of the Universe, the present Power and present Love and present Justice at every point of that universe, — perpetually creating it by his present Energy of good. Present perpetually in the affairs of men, invisibly, restraining evil, righting wrong, leading on to the perfect society. Present really in the hearts and minds and consciences and wills of men, not displacing them, but re-enforcing them. "If we love one another, God dwelleth in us," said the inspired writer of old, — surely inspired when he said that. "If a man is at heart just," said the inspired modern, "by so much he is God. The power of God and the eternity of God do enter into that man with Justice." How could this be if God be a separate, individual being? But conceive of him as Being, and the difficulty vanishes. It is no figure of speech, but literally true, that He dwells in holy souls, inspiring and working through him. "The Father who dwelleth in me," said Jesus. Yes, but in no special or miraculous way: in the way of the universal law of spiritual action; as he dwells in all souls that aspire and obey. "Above all and through all and in us all."

Does this conception of God as Essential Life seem to any

vague and unreal? Oh, think again, how substantial are thought, feeling, and will! The moving powers of the human world setting all the material into action! How many perplexities of thought, which beset the common view of God as an individual being, disappear under this conception of him as spirit! How does it make possible the thought of his omniscience and omnipresence and providence! No longer the all-seeing eye, watching us from afar, but the present spirit, knowing us from within, involved in our thought and our thinking,—the law or order by which we think and feel, the present power by which we act. Spirit can thus encompass us, and flow through us, without oppressing us, or hindering our freedom. Do the forces of nature—of attraction, of gravitation, of chemical affinity—oppress us? We cannot get away from them, but do we not move freely among them? The air is around us and within us, a mighty pressure,—do we feel the weight of it? In such sweet, familiar, unconscious ways does God, the Spirit, encompass and dwell within our spirits. How can we flee from that Spirit, or go where it will not uphold and keep us? Our God besets us behind and before. Our Father never leaves us alone. Modern science, we are told, is rejecting all notion of volition from the material world. The conception of God as Spirit has already done that. For God's will, in that conception, is no separate jets of choice, but an all-filling, steadfast Energy,—a Power living at every point. His will is no series of finite volitions, but an infinite purpose in the constitution of things,—the unchanging element in them which we call their law. God's will, therefore, is not in any sense arbitrary. A permanent force, with its permanent laws, from constant conditions it produces constant results. Wrought into the constitution of things and beings, it is there to be studied, known, and obeyed.

Friends of the Twenty-eighth Congregational Society: Coming at your call to speak to you on this occasion of the dedication of your new house, I have not thought it unfitting to the occasion, instead of trying to open to you some new topic, rather to offer you this outline and review of principles and ideas already somewhat familiar to you. We glance over what

has been gained before beginning anew our quest. You build here no House of God, but a house for men. A "meeting-house" you call it, — the good old New England name, — not a church: for is not the church the men and women, not the walls? You have most fittingly made it a memorial of your first minister. And this in no slavish adulation, and in no slavish following of him. You are not bound to his thoughts. But you can never forget or cease to be grateful to him, many of you, for the emancipation of thought you owe to him; for the moral invigoration, for the quickening of devout feeling, always to him so precious.

He was a thorough believer in the Liberty of which I have spoken. He believed that it should have no bounds save such as love of truth and good sense and feeling might set to it. And he *used* the freedom he believed in. And when, in the use of it, he was led to judge and reject some things around which the reverence of the denomination to which he belonged clung, they who had taught him the liberty which he used, with some noble exceptions, — I am sorry to recall it, — to save their credit, proved false to their principle. They lost a noble opportunity. They had always insisted that the essential in Christianity was not belief, but character and life: now they turned round, and asserted that it was not a spirit and a life, but a belief in supernatural history. He did not spare them, and hurled at them the arrows of his wit and the smooth stones of his keen logic. He did battle for the freedom which was denied. Men mistook his wit for malignity, and his moral indignation for bitterness. But, though he was capable of sarcasm, his heart was sweet and kind, and full of genial sympathies, as those who knew him best best knew.

His services to Theology in this country were very great. His work was partly destructive, clearing away errors and superstitions, but mainly constructive. He built up a complete system of theology, founded upon the native spiritual instincts in man and the infinite perfection of God. Though a vigorous practical understanding was the characteristic of his mind, he accepted this ideal or transcendental theory of religion, and, with his clear common sense and terse sentences, interpreted it to the general mind. Though no mystic, he had much devout

feeling, and loved to speak of Piety, and the soul's normal delight in God. You will never forget the deeply reverential tone of his public prayers to the "Father and Mother of us all." But even more than in Piety he believed in and loved and enforced Righteousness in every form ; and his great power was ethical. How clear and sure was his sense of right ; a conscience for the nation : its guidance sought by how many, in public and private duty ! Before its keen glance how many an idol fell ! He liked to be called a Teacher of Religion : and he made it cover all of life. He applied its ideal to the nation, and, finding human slavery there, he threw all his energies into rousing the conscience of the country to feel its falseness and its iniquity, and to work for its removal. In this cause he rendered you know what noble and devoted service, gaining the sympathies of many who least liked his theology. He gave the weight of his advocacy to every cause of humane reform, pleading for the poor and the perishing classes, for the rights of woman, for temperance and purity and peace.

He has left you a powerful influence, and a heritage of principles and ideas, to whose charge you show yourselves faithful in building this house, that the work he begun may be carried on and fulfilled. The men and the women whom you call to speak to you know that they will have full freedom of speech and hospitable hearing to their most advanced thought. You will expect them to speak to you, not upon theological questions alone, or on the experiences of devout feeling, or personal duties, but on all that deeply concerns the welfare of the community ; upon the vital questions of the day, and its present needs ; upon political and social topics ; upon questions of moral reform and humane effort, and rights of man and woman ; upon all the practical applications of ideal thought. All these you will wish discussed, in the utmost freedom, and from the highest point of view.

But not for speech alone is this house to be used. I cannot but hope that your enlarged space will be used as opportunity for work in various directions of help and good will. Why should not this be a headquarters of action as well as thought ?

And now, may I say for you, that you devote and dedicate this house to Freedom and to Religion ; to Truth and to Virtue ; to Piety, to Righteousness, and to Humanity ; to Knowledge and to Culture ; to Duty, to Beauty, and to Joy ; to Faith and Hope and Charity ; to the memory of Saints, Reformers, Heretics, and Martyrs ; to the Love and Service of God, in the Love and Service of Man.

## VII. GOD IN HUMANITY.

BY JOHN G. WHITTIER.

*(Sung by Choir and Congregation.)*

O BEAUTY, old yet ever new,  
Eternal Voice and Inward Word,  
The Wisdom of the Greek and Jew,  
Sphere-music which the Samian heard!

Truth which the sage and prophet saw,  
Long sought without, but found within:  
The Law of Love, beyond all law,  
The Life o'erflooding death and sin!

O Love Divine, whose constant beam  
Shines on the eyes that will not see,  
And waits to bless us, while we dream  
Thou leav'st us when we turn from thee!

All souls that struggle and aspire,  
All hearts of prayer, by Thee are lit;  
And, dim or clear, Thy tongues of fire  
On dusky tribes and centuries sit.

Nor bounds, nor clime, nor creed Thou know'st,  
Wide as our need Thy favors fall;  
The white wings of the Holy Ghost  
Stoop, unseen, o'er the heads of all.

## VIII. ADDRESS BY EDNAH D. CHENEY.

IN looking over the congregation here assembled, and seeing some of the old faces which greeted Mr. Parker on those first stormy Sundays at the Melodeon, I have asked myself what it is which has kept this society together through so many changes when friends advised its dissolution, and enemies hoped for its failure. It seems to me it was no doctrine of Mr. Parker's, not even a sentiment; but, if I may so call it, his method of trust in the truth. He never feared to utter the whole truth, and never doubted that what was good food to his soul was fit nourishment for others who hungered for it. This has made the pulpit truly free, so that those who spoke here, and those who listened, felt that they could speak and hear honest convictions. While this society is true to this tradition, it will have a place to fill, and, I trust, this new building is to give it a fresh lease of life, and greater opportunity of usefulness.

This still seems to me the great need of the time, — loyalty to truth, not attachment to a dogma. If we feel that any truth is dangerous to our well-being as a society, it is time that we disbanded, but as long as we dare to trust the truth, we need not fear that any blast of a trumpet can blow down our walls.

In a country town, where an independent society met in a hall, when it was asked of what religion is such a man, it was answered, His is the Hall Religion. I think there is some value in the phrase, and I rejoice that this society has not builded a church to be open only on Sunday, but a hall which on every day of the week may be consecrated by the psalm of life, and dedicated to use or beauty. The echo of the dancing feet of the children who gather at the festivals will not disturb our devotion, nor the remembrance of the good words of the lecturer mar our enjoyment of prayer or sermon. It is an emblem of the Religion of Life, no longer divorced from every-day work and pleasure, but elevating and sanctifying it. It is said that the great Church of St. Peter's at Rome has never been ventilated since Michael Angelo reared its lofty dome, and that the worshipers now breathe the foul and lifeless air which has not been renewed for nearly four centuries. But as I hope the physical ventilation of this hall will never be neglected, but the pure air of heaven will be freely brought in, so we can never live a true and vigorous spiritual life unless we keep our souls ever open to the broad, free air and light of heaven, not confined by any creed or dogma, but perpetually renewing itself by fresh inspiration.

Such seems to me the great principle of this society, which it is bound to cherish and carry out, and to which in the worship of God and the service of humanity we would dedicate this hall to-day.

## IX. ADDRESS BY JOHN WEISS.

WHENEVER a liberal thinker expresses his belief that the popular theologies are honeycombed by the climate of science and information, and are falling apart beneath the surface, he is asked to observe that there never was such a time for the laying of corner-stones for church extension; never such an enthusiasm of temple-building; never before so many seats filled by worshipers. It is undoubtedly a fact. The competition between the sects is so great, and the national temper of extravagance so confirmed, that church extension has become another vice of the times; and people will run hopelessly in debt rather than be without their sumptuous building, thus setting an example, to a country which does not need it, of speculative immorality. For I can see no difference between extending a railroad over illusory capital and watering its stock, and watering a congregation with a meeting-house too large and fine, watering it with a large per cent of empty pews, which require in the pulpit a man with some of the virtues of an auctioneer.

But there is a real decay of the popular theology in spite of these costly elegancies which seem to announce a revival of religion. Before every dissolution a period of renaissance, or superficial revival, has always set in, substituting sentiment for the old impetuous earnestness, imitating faith by pretty form. We may safely predict extensive decay when it has become such an important object to secure paying sitters for the various sects. The old sincerity will be soon crushed beneath their ornamental expenses.

Then let us have a new sincerity, to be nursed in humbler places, and supported by honest means. Here let it be, for one place. Welcome the plainness and freedom of these walls, so solidly built, so simply colored in their warm, brown tints. Here a real memorial to Parker is yet to be erected by successive Sundays of free speech, and week-days of fraternity. To-day you are only laying the corner-stone of a structure of thought and feeling which will throw its door wide open to the common people, to every wayfaring fact and cause against which so many churches shut their gates.



It pleases my fancy to notice that you have put up this building next to a grain elevator, for it constantly reminds me of Parker, of his frame, even, of his manner and his mental style. Solidly laid, robustly built, not excessively addicted to beauty; but framed for the sole purpose of receiving and distributing, with convenience and the least of waste, the cereals of a thousand fields for which millions of hungers are waiting. Such was the abundance and nutrition of his genius. He explored many fields to collect his staples and the simple corn-flowers of his fancy: his keel furrowed many seas, but not to gather and bring home luxuries, nor to hunt up a place where he might enjoy intellectual seclusion. The delights of scholarship were subordinate to his humanity. He was constantly tearing himself away from those books, the darlings of his spirit, as if they imposed upon him, and were defrauding people of his service. He let the exigency of the hour break without ceremony into the sacred study, and he rose to meet the pauper and the slave, to perform the great symbolic action of marrying two fugitives with a Bible and a sword. The perishing classes, the neglected, the unfortunate, always held a mortgage on his precious time. But life never seemed so precious to him as when he was killing himself to help emancipate America. What a homely sublimity there was in this giving of bread to mouths that had munched the old political and sectarian chaff and had swallowed indigestion!

Now it is for you to honor him by imitating this action: not so much to prolong a memory as to resuscitate a life that was laid down in the service of mankind; yes, to revivify that bust, poor, passionless and rigid remembrancer of the nature you knew, that was so manifold, so profuse, so virile with anger, love and friendship: to bid that whiteness mantle again with his florid cheek; to make those eyeballs beam with a blessing or a threat, so that Theodore Parker shall be heard again in Boston.

This shall be your service in this place, to reproduce his manliness; if not with the same fertile and sturdy vitality, or with the same warmth which lifted up so many beacons of indignation and warning, which compelled the East to look at him, and the West to listen, and the South to dread, still, at least, with the old sincerity, the old persistent purpose to be dedicated to the rights and wants of man.

## X. ADDRESS BY FRANCIS E. ABBOT.

WHEN, nearly thirty years ago, the founders of the Twenty-eighth Congregational Society rallied around the unpopular and ostracised minister of West Roxbury, and, with a laconic brevity worthy of Sparta in her best days, voted that "Theodore Parker should have a chance to be heard in Boston," what was the real meaning of their act? Did they intend to rally about Parker as the disciples of old rallied about Jesus, in order to proclaim a new personal gospel, to glorify a new personal leader, and to sink their own individualities in that of a new "Lord and Master"? James Freeman Clark has said that, when the radicals give up Jesus of Nazareth, it is only to attach themselves to some other leader; that they only abandon Jesus in order to take up with Socrates, or Emerson, or Parker. Was this the real purport of that now famous and historic vote?

If this had been your aim and spirit, we should not be here to-day. When the eloquent voice was stilled, the stalwart form laid in its far Florentine resting-place, and the man whose words had electrified two hemispheres had passed away forever from human sight and hearing, in vain would you have voted that "Theodore Parker should have a chance to be heard in Boston." Small respect would Death have paid to your resolutions. No! If your vote had meant only that the powerful personality which had so impressed itself upon the times as to be henceforth a part of American history should still utter itself from your platform to a listening world, you would have disbanded; you would have broken ranks, and scattered sadly and silently to your homes; you would have discontinued your meetings, and surrendered your organization. Parker had been heard; his message had been delivered. Henceforth the book of revelation that all men read in his speech and life was sealed forever, and no man could either add to or take away from its fullness.

But you did not disband. Your meetings were continued. Your platform was maintained. Other prophets were summoned to speak in Music Hall, now chiefly known abroad for the work done there by you and your great minister. They were summoned, not to echo Parker, but to speak themselves. They were no servile followers of a dead leader, no blinded apostles of a vanished Christ. Far from it. They were called by you to proclaim independently and fearlessly the secret thought of their own hearts; for this alone did they come before you. And still your platform means this, and this only. True, in one sense

Parker is still heard from it; for his ideas are not dead, but living. But you have perpetuated your organization and your platform for a higher object than to secure endless reverberations of any one voice, however piercing, eloquent, or potent. You meant, and mean, that Truth shall here speak for herself, not that Parker alone shall be heard, magnificent spokesman of Truth though he was. And Truth has infinitely more to say than has yet been said.

No, it was not so much Parker's individual voice that you voted should "have a chance to be heard in Boston," as it was the great, heroic, burning PURPOSE to which he had dedicated his all — the purpose to *make human life genuinely religious in spite of the churches*. I repeat it — to make human life genuinely religious in spite of the churches. Not ecclesiastical, not theological, not formal or ritualistic; but religious in the high sense in which he used the word, as signifying devotion to righteousness, to noble service, to devout aspiration. This purpose of Parker's soul was even grander than his thought. Thought must change; it must move; it must advance. Even since Parker's death we all know that there has been a great onward movement of thought; and to the best thought of the times, be it what it may, you mean always to keep open ear and heart. But the purpose to make human life genuinely religious must abide as the best and purest that can inspire a human soul. This was Parker's inspiration and power, obeyed under the frown of all the churches of the land. To this sublime purpose of his you first voted a hearing, and now dedicate these walls. That marble bust before you, perpetuating Parker's visible features to your sight, is changeless, immobile, ungrowing; it will be the same a hundred years hence as it is to-day. But Parker's mind, could it still have manifested itself to us, would have been in the very foremost ranks of thought. This you will remember, and know that, in the best sense, you hear Parker still in the noblest utterances of ever-developing knowledge and ever-deepening aspiration. His mighty purpose shall still be ours; and all the churches of the land shall lack the power to quench or cool it. This stately hall, built as a grateful memorial to the singleness and power with which he put it into deed and word, shall be a home for all who cherish it,—a place of comfort, enlightenment, and inspiration to all who love it, a place of mutual sympathy and encouragement for all who would pursue it. You could have raised no fitter monument to Parker, and rendered no better service to those who would further Parker's cause.

## XI. ADDRESS BY CHARLES W. SLACK.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The spirit that has erected this handsome building was latent in the community, and needed only to be called into activity to have ensured the same result before as now. I congratulate you, and all this large and interested audience, at the splendid conclusion of our labors in this direction.

You will remember, sir, that it was at the annual meeting of the Twenty-eighth Congregational Society, on the first Sunday in April, 1871, — only two years and a half ago, — that I had the honor to suggest that it seemed to me that we, as a Society, were not doing our full duty, either to the memory of our great teacher, or to the community in which we dwelt; that we held great truths in matters of religion which should have a more conspicuous enunciation; that if we were willing to adopt the forms of worship in which we were educated, erect a church edifice, and, in good time, as judgment should approve, select a permanent minister, who should not only be a guide in thought, but a visitor and counsellor in our families in the alternating incidents of life and death; I should be only too happy to lend what energy and influence I possessed to the consummation of that purpose. You will remember, too, sir, that the suggestion was kindly received, and it was felt that the plan of a meeting-house of our own was practicable, if one-half of the amount of money deemed necessary for its erection could be secured before operations should commence. It was our great pleasure, you will also remember, Mr. Chairman, to announce at the next annual meeting, in April, 1872, that fully fifty thousand dollars, in money and work, had been pledged by our small band for the new enterprise. Thence everything moved with alacrity; friends were found on every hand; plans were considered and adopted; and now, in a little more than fifteen months from the commencement of operations, we find ourselves in this completed and central edifice, with every convenience and many elegances, ready to proceed to our necessary work and demonstrate our need in the community in which we dwell.

And there is reason that we should make this demonstration. We had a leader who, while he lived, was acknowledged to be a power in thought and personal influence. He uplifted every pulpit in the land, giving freedom to the voice and thought of their occupants; he bade the young men of his day accept independence of character and action; he taught the liberalizing of opinion, and urged resistance to those often

brutal episodes of public clamor when the dominant majority sought to crush out the honest, thinking minority; in a word, he made every man with a soul within feel the better and the nobler for his ministration in religion, politics, and morals. If his high aim and earnest endeavor be not so potent and perceptible to-day as fifteen years ago, possibly it is because we have not improved our opportunities in presenting his example and teaching to the world. There is indeed need that we dedicate ourselves anew to his service when we read, as we may in the latest "Biographical Dictionary" published, bearing the imprint of the great house of Macmillan & Co., London and New York, and compiled by Thompson Cooper, F.S.A., this estimate of his public position:—

"He became a popular lecturer, and discussed the questions of slavery, war, and social and moral reforms, with much acute analysis and occasional effective satire; but as a practical teacher he was in the unfortunate position of a priest without a church and a politician without a state."

And this is the best judgment of an intelligent Englishman, so many years remote from Theodore Parker's activity among us! Surely the editor is too far away to discern the influence of this great man on the thought of the times. Possibly he may have been "a priest" without "a church," but he was a minister who made every denomination in the land envious of his scholarship and eloquence, and more than half the churches jealous of the throngs of his weekly disciples. But why be surprised at the judgment of the Englishman, three thousand miles away, when we have on our own soil, near-by, a more depreciatory estimate by one belonging to the generally large-hearted and catholic Methodist denomination? The Reverend Professor George Prentice, of the Wesleyan University, Middletown, Conn., can afford to say in "The Methodist Quarterly Review," for July, 1873, of Theodore Parker, this:—

"I am amazed at the daring of a man who never had fine culture and high philosophic talent; whose chief gift was the gift of exaggeration; whose life was largely that of a peripatetic stump-orator, hot with perpetual lecturing, agitating, denouncing and misrepresenting, when he tries to mould the thought of the world on a matter profound and difficult."

And this is the verdict of the Methodist collegiate instructor, and of his denomination, fifteen years after the death of Theodore Parker, of that man's transcendent abilities—is it? Let me, as the humblest of the humble followers of Theodore Parker, fling back to its obscure

utterer his flippant, his *impudent*, detraction of a man whose courage of opinion has made it possible for his defamer to utter even his slander without public rebuke—whose claims to culture and scholarship will live long after the occupant of the professor's chair who now belittles him will be utterly forgotten, if not despised! The scholarship of Theodore Parker questioned!—as soon ask if mind and character are formative elements in New England character! Go to the scholars of twenty-five years ago who measured weapons with Theodore Parker, and this forward stripling will learn that he *had* a reputation for culture and humanity that no later-day controversialist can question, anxious however he may be that the students under his charge shall never hear to the contrary, and thus be led to examine for themselves into his opinions and services.

Without "fine culture"!—a "peripatetic stump-orator"!—a "priest without a church and a politician without a state"!—this the conjoint testimony to-day of England and America! Surely there is something for us to do, friends, to show that there is at least one congregation, still abiding at the home of this great man, which does not accept this estimate. Nor are we alone in this. It was but yesterday I was conversing with Vice-President Wilson in relation to the exercises of this day, when he surprised as well as gratified me by incidentally mentioning that when he first entered the Senate Mr. Seward, the great Senator of New York, a statesman as well as legislator, came to him one day and said, "You have a wonderful man in Boston—Theodore Parker. I know of no man in the country who so thoroughly appreciates the political situation, has such a comprehensive grasp of the issues involved, and applies so faithfully the moral teachings that will safely land us on solid ground." Surely, friends, we can safely leave the influence of Mr. Parker in morals and politics, letting alone scholarship and religion, to those who knew him best and were brought within the range of his acquaintance and co-operation!

Standing here to-day, then, in the capacity of representative of the proprietors of this beautiful edifice, it remains only for me to bid all welcome who find themselves drawn by sympathy or love to worship with this congregation. May it be the home of helpful teaching and quickening influence! May good-will and all sweet charities abound! Spacious in area and soft in coloring, may it typify breadth of affection and the repose of settled conviction! Thus used, and thus influencing us, we shall come to believe that we have made a wise investment, and

take satisfaction in the thought that the good work of the generation now on the stage of affairs shall descend, developed and multiplied, to their children for long years to follow.

## XII. GOD IN THE HUMAN SOUL.

BY SARAH F. ADAMS.

*(Sung by Choir and Congregation.)*

NEARER, my God, to Thee,  
Nearer to Thee !  
E'en though it be a cross  
That raiseth me ;  
Still all my song shall be, —  
Nearer, my God, to Thee,  
Nearer to Thee !

Though like the wanderer,  
The sun gone down,  
Darkness be over me,  
My rest a stone ;  
Yet in my dreams I'd be  
Nearer, my God, to Thee,  
Nearer to Thee !

There let the way appear,  
Steps unto heaven ;  
All that Thou sendest me,  
In mercy given ;  
Angels to beckon me  
Nearer, my God, to Thee,  
Nearer to Thee !

Then, with my walking thoughts  
Bright with Thy praise,  
Out of my stony griefs  
Bethel I'll raise ;  
So by my woes to be  
Nearer, my God, to Thee,  
Nearer to Thee !

Or if, on joyful wing  
Cleaving the sky,  
Sun, moon, and stars forgot,  
Upward I fly :  
Still all my song shall be, —  
Nearer, my God, to Thee,  
Nearer to Thee !

### XIII. BENEDICTION.

BY SAMUEL LONGFELLOW.



## LETTERS.

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THE following letters were received, addressed to John C. Haynes, Chairman of the Standing Committee of the Twenty-eighth Congregational Society, in answer to invitations to be present at the dedication of the Parker Memorial Meeting-House: —

SALEM, Sept. 14, 1873.

I have been quite ill for a month, and, though now gradually gaining strength, am too weak as yet for any effort; so that I shall hardly be able to attend, even as a hearer only, the Memorial Hall services, next Sunday.

I need not say that my best sympathies will be with the occasion, and that I am sorry to lose the opportunity to hear what will be so quickening to the higher life as the word it promises to bring with it.

What omens can you ask, better than the house itself, and the secret forces that impel its whole movement, and its grand ideal duties, as inevitable as the rights we claim?

Sincerely yours,

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

NEW YORK, Sept. 17, 1873.

The completion of your new hall is an event to be congratulated on, an achievement worthy of the Old Guard that bears the glorious banner and preserves the glorious tradition of Theodore Parker. The thing that should be done in New York, that must be done here before long, and in other cities, too, you have done in Boston. There Radicalism has a rallying place and a home. Here it is dependent on the good, must I say, rather, the ill will, of proprietors who are so jealous for the reputation of their halls that good, honest infidels cannot use them. With you now, the Young Men's Christian Association have not all the fine audience rooms. The devil has not all the good tunes.

I wish I could be present at your dedication to *the Spirit of Truth*, the comforter. Your speaker will say the right word. But many right words need be said on such an occasion, and no speaker can say them all. May the spirit of the great and good Theodore be with him and you!

You say your hall is commodious. I hope it is handsome, fair in proportion, beautiful in decoration, cheerful, airy, good for voice and ear; attrac-

tive and inviting to strangers ; like the new faith itself, which would glorify every spot it touches. Spare no pains to make it and keep it a centre of happy influences ; crowd into it as much intellect, sentiment, earnestness, and aspiration as it will hold ; and as these angels take up no room, a million of them standing on the point of a needle, you will have space enough for a good many. Use the room for good purposes. If you have a preacher, let him have a multitudinous voice, in the persons of truest spirit wherever found, that a *line* of prophets may pass before you and deliver their word. In this way you will best make a worthy succession for the man who has, and is likely to have, no successor.

To write these hurried lines, I turn my pen off the task of writing his biography, which has been the refreshment of my summer. As it draws near completion, I am conscious of a new indebtedness to the great soul I admired and loved so deeply. If the readers of the book find what I have tried to put there, they will confess that not one Memorial Hall, but many, should be erected to the honor of that great leader.

Thanking you for your kind invitation to be present on Sunday next, regretting my inability to be present, because my own services are resumed on that day, and wishing you the brightest of days and the sweetest of omens, believe me,

Heartily yours,

O. B. FROTHINGHAM.

WEST MANCHESTER, Sept. 20, 1873.

I have just got your note. It is impossible for me to be, as I gladly would, at your Dedication, having to go to Salem to-morrow. Were it my privilege to speak, I should certainly say in what honor I hold Theodore Parker for his honesty, courage, piety, and philanthropy ; and for the application he made, beyond any other theologian or scholar of his day, of moral truth and the results of study to the social condition and want. No such hero wore the clerical gown. While poets and essayists were willing to leave their views and visions in their treatises or musical lines, he insisted in putting every principle as a power in gear ; and, if any error or iniquity were hid beneath, he would rend the veil of the temple in twain. But if he destroyed, it was to rebuild, whatever hands beside his own might be required.

I may be allowed to express the early affection I had for him, and to remember the friendly regard he cherished for me beyond my deserts, so that I have a debt of gratitude to pay, should we meet again where the warrior's armor is laid aside. It was his wish that I should give him the Right Hand of Fellowship in West Roxbury, but I was away in another State at the time of his settlement in that town.

As so long indeed he has had it, may he, with you, accept it, in the spirit, now !

Cordially yours,

C. A. BARTOL.

NEW YORK CITY, Sept. 17, 1873.

I have received your invitation to be with you at the dedication of your new hall, next Sunday. I sympathize very deeply with the Society in this new opening, but my obligations here make it impossible for me to be present.

After many years of doubt and trouble and hard efforts, you enter at last upon cheering prospects. The climb has been difficult, but the hill-top is glorious. You will enter now and possess the land, spread out before all with invitation, but to be possessed only by those who will work in it for the good of man. No heart among you beats for you more exultingly or more hopefully than mine.

I wish I could figure to my mind the interior of this goodly home which you have erected. Sometime I shall see it. Meantime I shall think of it as a worthy body for the soul of the Twenty-eighth Society; neat, clean, lovely, and simple. It will be a place where the best may be uplifted, and the worst be not repulsed.

I think I can imagine the joy and enthusiasm with which you take possession of your abode. An exquisite composition by William Blake depicts the union, or reunion, of the soul and the body at "the last great day," as it is called by those who forget that every day is great and is a judgment-day. The body arises from the tomb, and the soul bursts rapturously from a cloud, and with inconceivable force descends headlong upon the body, whose neck it clasps, whose lips it seizes, in the ecstasy of reinvesting the animal frame with life and joy from heaven. This has been in my mind as an image of your advent to new life, when you, the soul, enter into your newly arisen house, the body. I think it is your just reward for a past which has certainly been very steadfast under many discouragements; and I believe it involves for you the prophecy for the future which is so radiantly given in the above-mentioned poet's picture.

I am sincerely yours,

J. V. BLAKE.

MONDAY, Sept. 15, 1873.

We are still in the country, and this, with Mrs. Phillips's health considered, renders it impossible for me to be with you Sunday. I am very sorry. Accept my heartiest wishes for your full success.

WENDELL PHILLIPS.

NEW BEDFORD, Sept. 15, 1873.

I am happy to learn that the "Parker Memorial Meeting-House" is so soon to be dedicated. It would give me great pleasure to accept your invitation to be present on the occasion; but as I have just resumed my pulpit duties at home, after several months' absence, I do not think that I ought to be away so early as Sunday, the 21st, and must therefore deny myself the gratification of joining with you in the interesting services. The name, "Par-

ker Memorial Meeting-House," has a pleasant sound, — not only as holding the memory of Theodore Parker, but as recalling the primitive days of the Puritans, of whom Mr. Parker was a genuine descendant, both by the progressiveness of his thought and the robust heroism of his character.

Long may the new meeting-house stand to help keep alive in Boston the elements of such character, and so to promote the interests of pure and rational religion.

Very truly yours,

WM. J. POTTER.

BROOKLYN, Sept. 15, 1873.

It would give me sincere pleasure to be present at the dedication of your new "Meeting-House." I am glad you have named it as you have. I like the sound of "Meeting-House" much better than the sound of "Church." It is homely and solid, and so joins on well with Parker's name — he was so homely and solid. If it has a savor of Quakerism, that will not hurt. I cannot be with you, because I am just back from my long vacation. I am sure Longfellow will speak the right word to you, and then you will have it printed so that the poor fellows who cannot come to the feast will have a sort of "second table" spread for them.

It seems to me much better that Parker should have a memorial hall built for him thirteen years after his death than at any time before. A great many men, who get imposing monuments soon after their death, would go *unmonumented* if the world paused a little and considered. But every year since Parker's death has made him seem more worthy of remembrance. In calling your building by his name, I know you do not mean to make it any citadel of his opinions, but a home for his spirit, which was the spirit of truth and love and righteousness. And I trust the new "Meeting-House" will justify its name by being not merely a meeting-place for different people, but also a meeting-place for different opinions and ideas. Radicalism is good, but still better is Liberality, and the faith that wrong opinions may somehow represent a truth to those who cherish them. And so, "with malice towards none, and charity for all," may you go forward, and may the dear God prosper you, and comfort you, and build you up forever.

Yours faithfully,

J. W CHADWICK.

DANSVILLE, N.Y., Sept. 18th, 1873.

I thank you for the invitation to be present at the dedication of your new "Meeting-House," and heartily wish it was in my power to accept it. But I have been debarred from work by illness for some months past, and am still an invalid, though I trust on the road to health.

I congratulate you on the completion of the Society's new home, and shall have pleasure in thinking of you in your commodious quarters. While I

wish you all material prosperity, my desire is a thousand-fold greater that you may be imbued with the spirit of him whose name you commemorate ; that you may emulate his courage, his fidelity to the truth however unpopular, his grand catholicity, that could be satisfied with nothing less than the salvation, temporal and eternal, of a whole humanity. As he recognized the motherly element in God, and made his religion vital with love as well as luminous with thought, so may you. May you accord to women in the pulpit, in the society, in all the walks of life, full equality with man ; equal liberty to use the powers with which God has endowed her. May you constitute such a fraternity of true-hearted men and women as the world has never seen ; untrammelled by any creed, limited by no boundaries of sect, the world your field, the sorrowing and sinful your especial care ; may you go on from strength to strength ; and with no doubtful sound proclaim the dawning of "the near new day."

Hoping sometime to be able to accept the invitation to preach for you again, I am, with all best wishes,

Cordially yours,

CELIA BURLEIGH.

SYRACUSE, N.Y., Sept. 19th, 1873.

I am glad to be able to congratulate you all on the completion of your enterprise, which once more gives you a local habitation. The name you have always had. It is a noble one, and binds you all by many grand memories to the steady and persistent pursuit of Truth in Thought and Righteousness in Life.

The bitter days when the prophets prophesied clothed in sackcloth are over, thanks to God and their God-directed labors. It is the task of our generation to help to bring in that Coming Time, which they foresaw and for which they gave themselves, body and soul. May you all be inspired to do your full share of the great work.

With kindest remembrances to all your Society, I remain,

Yours fraternally,

S. R. CALTHROP.

MARSHFIELD, Sept. 19, 1873.

I received to-day your kind invitation to attend the dedicatory services of your Parker Memorial Hall, on Sunday. I should be glad to comply with it and participate briefly in the exercises as you request. It is not easy for me to leave home for two nights, as would be necessary in order to be in Boston on that day of the week, and I see no way to do it.

The construction of your hall I look upon as a most auspicious event, as well as an evidence of the faith and courage of those who, through doubt and discouragement of no common magnitude, have held aloft the standard of free thought and speech since your great hero was summoned from earth, and his body laid to sleep in the soil of the beautiful Italian city made fa-

mous in history by the genius of Dante and the sublime piety and martyrdom of Savonarola.

In this marvelous dream which we call life, there is nothing more wonderful and inspiring than the great moral and political revolution which has been accomplished in this country since Mr. Parker came upon the stage of manhood. I remember seeing him at the series of reform meetings, held mostly in Chardon St. Chapel, in 1839-40, to discuss the character and use of "the Sabbath, the Church, and the Ministry." He was a young, modest, and unassuming man; but even then giving signs of the mighty force which afterwards in the Melodeon and Music Hall exposed the rottenness of Church and State, and gave such an impetus to the cause of freedom, both of body and mind.

From him largely proceeded the impulse that has given new life to a nation, and emancipated the mind of the age from the thralldom of priestly rule. His mantle rests upon you. His spirit and purpose are nourished by the Society which bears his name. You do well to inscribe that name on the building you have erected. Long may it continue, and be an instrument in the hands of the Parker Fraternity for the more perfect education, emancipation, and elevation of the human race.

Yours, in the everlasting life,

N. H. WHITING.

