

## LECTURE.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,--

I thank you for the opportunity your presence gives me to speak to you of the Church I love, and the Faith which is my inspiration and strength. It has been a question with me how I could best meet the expectation with which you have come here to-night: whether to attempt to review in detail the criticisms made upon the Universalist belief in the lecture delivered here the other evening, or to make a positive and independent statement of the grounds upon which we base that belief—noticing those criticisms incidentally as they touch my argument—and leave you to compare the two views, and judge between them as you will. I have finally decided to adopt the latter course, both because thinking it will be most satisfactory to you, and because it is most congenial to me—not leading to the personal reflections, that, in the other case, would be almost unavoidable.

There is no need to say that the church called Universalist is small in comparison with the other leading churches of Christendom, though, if this had anything to do with the truth of its teachings, I think it could be satisfactorily explained. But it is proper to say in answer to the charge that this Church "does no positive Christian work"—"has no spiritual power"—"lives upon controversial excitement:"—in answer to this charge it is proper to tell you that this little company, numbering about 180,000 souls, hold consecrated to religious uses church property amounting to \$8,000,000; that they employ about seven hundred ministers; sustain five weekly religious journals, two semi-monthlies, one monthly, and one quarterly. They have endowed and maintain five Colleges, seven Academies, and two Theological Schools: employing ninety-eight instructors, owning property to the value of two and a half million dollars, and having twelve hundred students. And, asking you also to bear in mind that this is a body which has had separate and independent existence less than a hundred years, I submit that a Church of this size and age which gives the world these proofs of its vitality, and loyalty to Christian duty, is *wronged*, when it is described as "having no power" and as "living upon negations."

Seventy years ago this Church, then much smaller than now, published its "Confession of Faith," which remains unchanged—