

**LECTURES ON
ULTRA-
UNIVERSALISM**

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Lectures on Ultra-Universalism by A. Wilson McClure

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A. WILSON MCCLURE

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By A. WILSON McCLURE.

Fourth Edition, with Improvements.

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PREFACE.

These Lectures were prepared and preached in consequence of an exigency in the course of the Author's ministry. They went to the press, in the hope that they might contribute somewhat toward the suppression of a baneful and spreading error. They are published now, as at first, at no man's instigation, and under no man's censorship. They were originally written with incessant prayer for the restraints and the guidance of overruling grace; and in like manner were afterwards given to the world.

The Author renders his thanks to friends and strangers who have honored his efforts with approbation more generous than merited. He has also been honored by the censure of certain Universalist editors, and others, whose

reproach is praise. These dull-witted critics could stumble upon no better device than to take his irony in sober earnest. Says one of them:—

“Through the whole pamphlet he is advising Universalists to commit suicide, and this advice is sometimes given in language so warm and ardent, that we cannot but believe it was sincere. The heavenly feeling that possessed his bosom can well be imagined.”

Notwithstanding such gross perversions, the Author has too much confidence in the common sense of his readers to notify them when he is using the language of irony, and when he discontinues it. This they will easily distinguish by their own penetration.

Some may think that these Lectures pass too indiscriminate censure upon a denomination which boasts of some respectable and amiable members. While it is frankly admitted that there are such Universalists, it is answered that the proportion of these to the whole number is so small, as to make it unnecessary to bring them into constant view. Besides, if good people *will* get into bad company, they subject themselves to the general rules for the treatment of bad company. So

far from being allowed to claim an exemption from reproof, they ought to be made to blush for their situation, and find it too uncomfortable to be retained.

The Author disclaims to have ridiculed Universalism. It is essentially ridiculous, and he has attempted nothing farther than to expose it as it is. The result of his labor surprised himself; for when he commenced his investigation, he was not aware of the astonishing absurdity of a system so extensively received. When compared with the teachings of enlightened reason, and especially when viewed in contrast with the statements of the Bible, it is a mass of intolerable nonsense.

Some who love the truth may deem that the Author of these Lectures has been too bold, or too severe; and may blame him for not resorting to a milder and more persuasive strain. Perhaps they have not been placed, like hapless him, where the evils of Universalism pressed them on every side. Perhaps experience has not satisfied them of the insensibility of many minds, hardened by that doctrine, to any more serious and gentle address.

And perhaps too they have; and the Author may deserve their censure on this and other accounts. He would therefore address to every such reader the lines of Coleridge—

*"If aught of error, or intemperate truth
Should meet thine ear, think thou that riper age
Will calm it down, and let thy love forgive it."*

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TO THE

FOURTH EDITION.

Since the publication of these Lectures, the Author has perceived that they have made the impression that his labors are constantly directed against Universalism. It is not so. This little volume, now somewhat enlarged, embraces almost all that he has ever preached or printed upon that subject. He deems it generally inexpedient to assail any denomination by its name, from the pulpit. In regard to Universalism, it is unwise to controvert it before congregations where it is little known. In places where it attempts to raise its standard for the first time, it is best to let it alone; for in such cases, there is at least an equal chance that it will come to nought of itself. But where it appears to muster strength, and by its