

THE PROBLEM OF REFORM

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The Problem of Reform by S. C. Eby

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S. C. EBY

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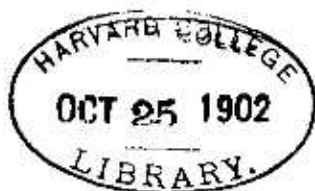
BY S. C. EBY.

"THE LORD GOD OMNIPOTENT REIGNETH."—Apocalypse.

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Prof. Wm. James.

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PREFACE.

THE essays on "The Spiritual Philosophy of Natural Reform" were published in series in the *New-Church Messenger*, at the particular request of its editor, in January and February of last year.

The chapters on "The Church and the World" were written afterward at the suggestion of an esteemed friend in London, in order to elucidate the complementary truths involved in the doctrine that if it were not for the Church the human race would become insane and perish.

The first three of the "Miscellaneous Essays" did service some years ago as editorials in the *Messenger*, and the one on "Civilization and Christianity" first saw the light as an editorial in *New-Church Reading Circle*. The interest they awakened when they first appeared seems to make their republication excusable.

St. Louis, March 25th, 1897.

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INTRODUCTION.

FOR some years reforms and their claims upon the attention of the New Church have worn a very problematic aspect. Those who have been impressed chiefly by the value of a correct environment, and by the doctrine that the world is necessarily the arena of spiritual life, have thought that the Church should professedly co-operate with reform agencies; while those who have been convinced especially of the spiritual character of the Church's message, and of the regenerate life as a matter of individual choice and experience, have thought that the Church had no legitimate interest in or direct relation to processes of external reformation. My little book does not endorse either one or other of these positions. Each represents but a half-truth in its premises, and both are fallacious in their conclusions. In the following chapters a point of view will be found from which the reader can appreciate natural reforms not only at their face or external value, but at their full or cumulative value as serviceable to heavenly life; and at the same time can see how the