

**NEW VIEWS OF
CHRISTIANITY, SOCIETY,
AND THE CHURCH**

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New Views of Christianity, Society, and the Church by O. A. Brownson

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By O. A. BROWNSON.

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TO THE
MEMBERS AND FRIENDS
OF
THE SOCIETY FOR CHRISTIAN UNION AND PROGRESS,
THIS LITTLE
Volume is inscribed,
AS A TOKEN OF AFFECTION AND ESTEEM,
BY THE AUTHOR.

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P R E F A C E .

It must not be inferred from my calling this little work *New Views*, that I profess to bring forward a new religion, or to have discovered a new Christianity. The religion of the Bible I believe to be given by the inspiration of God, and the Christianity of Christ satisfies my understanding and my heart. However widely I may dissent from the Christianity of the Church, with that of Christ I am content to stand or fall, and I ask no higher glory than to live and die in it and for it.

I believe my views are somewhat original, but I am far from considering them the only or even the most important views which may be taken of the subjects on which I treat. Those subjects have a variety of aspects, and all their aspects are true and valuable. He who presents any one of them does a service to

Humanity; and he who presents one of them has no occasion to fall out with him who presents another, nor to claim superiority over him.

Although I consider the views contained in the following pages original, I believe the conclusions, to which I come at last, will be found very much in accordance with those generally adopted by the denomination of Christians, with whom it has been for some years my happiness to be associated. That denomination, however, must not be held responsible for any of the opinions I have advanced. I am not the organ of a sect. I do not speak by authority, nor under tutelage. I speak for myself and from my own convictions. And in this way, better than I could in any other, do I prove my sympathy with the body of which I am a member, and establish my right to be called a Unitarian.

In what I have written here, as well as in all I have written elsewhere and on other occasions, I have aimed to set an example of

free thought and free speech. I ask no thanks for this, for it was my duty and I dared not do otherwise. Besides, Theology can never rise to the rank and certainty of a science, till it be submitted to the free and independent action of the human mind.

It will at once be seen that I have given only a few rough sketches of the subjects I have introduced. Many statements appear without the qualifications with which they exist in my own mind, many parts are doubtless obscure for the want of fuller developments, and the whole probably needs to be historically verified. But I have done all I could without making a larger book, and a larger book I could hope that nobody would buy or read. I may hereafter fill up my sketches and complete my pictures; but it would have been useless in the present state of the public mind to attempt more than I have done.

For my literary sins I have a right to some indulgence. My early life was spent in far other pursuits than those of literature. I make no pretensions to scholarship. For all