

**OCTAVIUS BROOKS
FROTHINGHAM
AND THE NEW FAITH**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649304592

Octavius Brooks Frothingham and the New Faith by Edmund C. Stedman

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Cover @ 2017

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EDMUND C. STEDMAN

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Engr. by R. R. Hall

O. B. Frothingham

C. P. Putnam's Sons, New York.

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AND

THE NEW FAITH

BY
EDMUND C. STEDMAN

NEW YORK
G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
182 FIFTH AVENUE
1876.

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06-2-35 MB

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

IN response to numerous requests, and to the generally expressed opinion that the material belonged to permanent rather than ephemeral literature, the able essay of Mr. Stedman, which first appeared in "The Galaxy," is here reproduced in book-form.

The growing interest in the purport and influence of what are known as Radical ideas, and the very general recognition of the fact that those ideas have passed through their first and inevitable stage of simple negation and iconoclasm, and are shaping themselves into a positive and constructive faith, and a practical rule of life, form a sufficient ground for the work that the essayist has attempted.

His terse yet comprehensive summary of the life and teachings of the man who, more probably than any other American, is the representative and apostle of the liberal faith, will be of interest to all who sympathize with this

faith, and of special value to the many whose objections to or dread of Radicalism are founded upon distorted reports and prejudiced impressions.

To Mr. Stedman's effective presentation (which has received the author's revision) has been added an extract from a recent and typical sermon, which gives the teacher's own statement of his faith and life-long purpose.

G. H. P.

OCTAVIUS BROOKS FROTHINGHAM.

IF this philosophical teacher and divine had chosen to live in some rural spot, or from an academic grove had sent his thoughts out to the world—in such case possibly the world's attention would have been more speedily fixed upon him. He would be even more conspicuous by position, though not by magnitude, than he has become through his peculiar eminence among the notable preachers of New York. Settled in a provincial town, he doubtless would make the place of his teachings, as Emerson has made Concord, a modern oracle and shrine.

I.

Frothingham has been called the successor of Theodore Parker, whose life he has written with equal simplicity, reverence, and judicial poise. Certainly we have no other man

Parker and
Frothingham.

who, since the death of Parker, has so persistently grounded all religious faith and hope upon the basis of reason, nature, discovered law. No other preacher, taking up the ideas to which Parker finally advanced, has so expanded and developed them in keeping with the steadfast growth of knowledge. The mantle which fell to him rests upon a religious orator who displays less of that magnetic power which, in its lower manifestation, sustains the demagogue, and, in its higher, the noble leader of men; yet upon one who can see to it, by every gift of culture, purpose, and unflagging zeal, that no step is taken backward, and who with his rational intellect has crystallized in a religious system what was at first an inspiration—the revelation of a lofty and impetuous yet somewhat overburdened soul.

Parker stormed traditionalism in its stronghold. Boston, the nucleus of intellectual pride, was so content with the advance of Unitarianism that it was less easy to draw her liberals any further than to disorganize the ranks of the extreme devotees of authority. While Parker