

**IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH:
ESSAYS BY
YOUNGER MINISTERS OF
THE UNITARIAN CHURCH**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649496624

In Spirit and in Truth: Essays by Younger Ministers of the Unitarian Church by James De Normandie

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

JAMES DE NORMANDIE

**IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH:
ESSAYS BY
YOUNGER MINISTERS OF
THE UNITARIAN CHURCH**

IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH

ESSAYS

BY

YOUNGER MINISTERS OF THE UNITARIAN CHURCH

With an Introduction

BY THE REV. JAMES DE NORMANDIE

"But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."*—John iv. 23, 24.*

BOSTON

GEO. H. ELLIS, 141 FRANKLIN STREET

1893

PREFACE.

THE writers of this little book have aimed to speak out of their lives rather than out of their libraries. They therefore make no apology for the appearance of these essays. For every earnest word out of life is a needed and helpful word. Each writer is responsible for his own essay, and for his only. But the united prayer of all the writers is that this, their book, may lead those who read it to a better understanding of the *religious* life of our beloved Church, and so to that great union of the whole Christian Church for which all Christians do now most truly pray.

THE EDITORS.

BOSTON, January 1, 1893.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	3
By Rev. JAMES DE NORMANDIE, pastor of the First Church, Roxbury, Boston, Mass.	
THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION	11
By Rev. GEORGE CROSWELL CRESSEY, pastor of the First Congregational Society, Salem, Mass.	
THE REVELATION OF GOD IN NATURE	43
By Rev. L. D. COCHRANE, pastor of the First Unitarian Church, Littleton, N.H.	
THE BIBLE AS LITERATURE AND AS REVELATION	57
By Rev. W. W. FENN, pastor of the Church of the Mes- siah, Chicago, Ill.	
THE THOUGHT OF GOD IN THE BIBLE	87
By Rev. FRANCIS B. HORN BROOKE, pastor of the Chan- ning Church, Newton, Mass.	
THE REVELATION OF GOD IN MAN	107
By Rev. S. M. CROTHERS, pastor of Unity Church, St. Paul, Minn.	
THE CHRIST	119
By Rev. ALBERT WALKLEY, pastor of the First Parish of Brighton, Boston, Mass.	
THE USE OF A LITURGY IN WORSHIP	137
By Rev. JOHN TUNIS, pastor of the Church of Our Saviour, Boston, Mass.	

INTRODUCTION.

THIS little volume represents a constructive tendency among the younger ministers of the Unitarian Church. It also shows what has frequently been asserted in the present disturbed condition of the sects, with no reasonable denial: that, with all the liberty of thought and the individuality which have marked this body, there is a unity in variety which cannot be claimed in the other denominations.

All the differences which disturbed the counsels of the Free Church a quarter of a century ago are lost in an earnest and united effort to discover the best way by which the religious needs of the present generation can be met. The terms "radical" and "conservative" are unheard: the occupation of the heresy-hunter has gone into other folds.

It represents the tendency of association among us. More than sixty years ago Dr. Channing published an article on association which for a long time directed the sentiment of the Free Church, a suspicion of every kind of organization,—a fear lest it might hamper the freedom of the individual and keep him from forming an independent and reasonable judgment. The great purpose of

society, in his view, was to call forth private and moral freedom. That battle has been fought. The great purpose of society to-day is to call forth every effort for that union which is to encourage moral growth, to fix the mind and heart upon present evils rather than future salvation, and to interpret Christianity as a religion which is to concern itself chiefly about the regeneration of humanity by personal righteousness.

It represents a tendency away from negations and criticisms to a religion of positive assertions, to the life of the Spirit. We do not admit that the preaching of Channing and his early followers was not positive and constructive; but every departure from a popular faith seems, for a time, to be a matter of denials. No true reformer wishes to take away anything until he is perfectly assured of something better in its place; but the adherents of the old tremble at the thought of what is to be given up, and cannot look with an unprejudiced view at what is to be introduced. That often seems destruction which is development, as it requires a keen vision to see the germ of the bud which is to replace the fallen leaf. For a long time the controversy in the early days of the Liberal Church could not even state the new doctrines without appearing to be in antagonism to the old; and so it was a time of negations, of denials. In proclaiming the Unity, there was a rejection of the Trinity; in showing the human element in the Bible, there was a rejection of plenary infallibility; in asserting the value of reason, there was an attack upon the author-

ity of the Church ; in the study of comparative religion, there was a blow to the cherished idea that Christianity was the only religion ; in welcoming the results of science, there was an overthrow of the theologian's artificial distinction between natural and revealed religion. It was a hard battle at every step, but each of these positions has been won by the Liberal Church. The doctrines of the popular theology, in the terms by which they were expressed a century ago, are as antiquated among thoughtful persons as the Ptolemaic system. All religious bodies are following the paths we have gone over, for the movement is a part of the divine plan which knows no retrogression. The views for which the Free Church has contended seem here to have a more positive and devout tone, because the trend of thought is everywhere in this direction.

It is this changed atmosphere which can permit the liberal minds of all sects to accept as unreservedly as they surely will the conclusions of the first essay on "The Philosophy of Religion." There is here all the emphasis of Channing on the supreme place of reason, there is the sure but reverent overthrow of the false and pernicious barrier between natural and revealed, or natural and supernatural, religion ; but one finds all the time the spirit of construction instead of denial, emphasis upon the spiritual, and belief in it upon the same foundation as in the material. All lines of separation vanish, but the transcendent power of the spiritual remains.

The same reason can alone explain the cordial ap-