

THE UNIVERSITY MILITANT

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The university militant by Charles Ferguson

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CHARLES FERGUSON

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MILITANT**

The
University Militant

by

CHARLES FERGUSON



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PREFACE

THIS book is addressed to those who understand that great changes are taking place in the order of the world ; that religion, politics, education, business cannot possibly be the same, day after to-morrow that they are to-day ; that decrepit institutions are swiftly passing away, and new ones, with fresh vigor and portent, are lifting their promises into the light.

In particular it offers itself to those who are escaping from the ruins of the old religious and political superstitions, without leaving either their faith or their prudence behind them ; those who are disposed to build for themselves, while there is yet time, a new intellectual and spiritual establishment that shall be strong enough to withstand both the seductions of the money-power and the assaults of the mob.

This manifesto of the University Militant undertakes to give the spirit of the University a political rating in as many towns as can seize the point of it.

Its persuasion that this spirit has, by rights, a primary jurisdiction in practical affairs, is not tentative, but confident and well tried.

The writer has spent all his working years in finding out what is the matter with Society. To escape from the waste of guessing he has subjected himself to the contrasting disciplines of the three Sociological professions — the Law, the Church, and the News.

He is a member of the New York bar, was one time rector of St. James' Church in Syracuse — now called a "cathedral" — and for some years has been writing editorials for the Hearst newspapers. He has thus triangulated his problem, as an astronomer does.

What is written herein is submitted as good law, good theology, and good journalism. The fact that it could not be pleaded in any existing court, preached from any known pulpit or printed in any extant newspaper, judges not it, but them.

It will have its day in court, in church and in the despatches. Or else there will be the Fates to pay.

NATIONAL ARTS CLUB
Gramercy Park, New York
April 15th, 1911

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I INTRODUCTORY

WHEN the Master of History sends into the world a great idea, He does not work it out in a day. He takes time. Nobody ever understood a great idea until after it had been knocked around the world for a thousand years or so. When the idea first makes its appearance, it is scarcely an idea at all; it is a passion. Nobody has it — it has somebody by the vitals. It masters him, as Heine says, and forces him into the arena, where, like a gladiator, he is compelled, whether he will or no, to fight for it.

Next the idea gets itself uttered in the form of an institution — an institution all poetry and pure flame — totally misunderstood and unintelligible, until it has burned itself up and passed out of existence, covering the whole earth with good wood-ashes. Then a few careless ages slip away, and behold! the white ashes are wheat. Your big idea is ready for business.

It is after this fashion that the world is dealing