

## Universalism in Malone, N.Y.

The following article we copy from a late number of the *Christian Repository*, published at Montpelier [Vermont]. It is from the pen of Rev. J. O. Skinner, the present editor of that paper, and recently the Pastor of the Universalist Church in this place:

Malone, the shire-town of Franklin Co., on the Ogdensburgh and Lake Champlain Railroad, and about equally distant from either terminus, is a large, enterprising and growing town. Here are the machine-shops of the aforesaid Railroad. The Salmon River, on which the village is located, furnishes water-power for numerous manufactories, mills, and a foundry, which gives employment to a great many persons. It is the center of a large domestic traffic in produce and general merchandize [sic]. It has six religious Societies, all of which have good church edifices, viz., Presbyterian, Universalist, Methodist, English, Romish [e.g. Catholic] and Baptist. The Methodists have just erected, close by the side of the Universalist Church, a new brick church, the most costly, commodious and elegant Church edifice in town, having a basement, on the level with the street, a bell weighing about 2000 lbs., a lofty spire, and is to have a town clock in its tower to cost \$1000; and the church is expected to cost when finished not far from \$15,000.

The Universalist Church is not a large edifice, but large enough for the present; commodious, in good repair, centrally located, and provided with all the furniture for every necessary purpose in a house of worship. — We preached in Malone for eighteen months, according to the ability that God gave us, and we hope not wholly without good results, though we confess, not entirely to our own satisfaction any more than to the satisfaction of *all* our hearers, nor with those immediate and manifest fruits that we had hoped would follow our labors. There is in every parish much necessary work to be done which does not show itself in statistical tables, which cannot be stated with propriety in public, which does not get into annual reports, and which perhaps cannot be well stated in words, — work, however, which is radical and of vital importance. The Society in Malone is made up of heterogeneous elements, of people not yet thoroughly bro't into accord with each other; some of whom are imbued with a due sense of what their faith is, and what it is worth, and what it requires ; and others not at all sensible of either the one or the other of these, primary convictions of Christian consciousness and primary requisites of the Christian character. Cowper, we think it was, who wrote that Christian is the highest style of man; we believe that Universalist is the highest style of Christian; but only when Universalism is rightly apprehended and practically exemplified in the life and character. To say that there is a lack of spiritual life and culture in the Malone parish is but to repeat what we have said before, what the members of that parish know to be true, and what is doubtless true of very many

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other parishes. It has suffered heretofore from bad management, it needs to have more radical work done in the way of stirring up believers in the common salvation to a deeper sense of their responsibilities, and of their duties to the cause of Christ, and a more thorough consecration to the holy work to which they are called and nominally pledged. Nevertheless, whosoever shall succeed us in that parish will find there some of the noblest specimens of christian men and women which it has ever been our good fortune to know. During a distressing sickness that kept us out of the pulpit for six weeks, not only was the stipulated salary paid us in full, but gifts, the aggregate first and last, of at least \$100, were bestowed upon us which were unsolicited and undeserved indeed, but most welcome, and for all the many kindnesses, and proofs of esteem and of appreciation of our humble labors, which we received, we wish to express our very sincere and grateful acknowledgments.

Indeed the activity of the Society during our residence among them was to them most creditable. About \$388.00 were raised by voluntary contributions for improving the interior and exterior of the place of worship during the eighteen months of our pastorate, besides the \$1500 paid us as our salary. Of the sum first named, about \$150 remain on interest for a future fence in front of the church. We have never known better or truer friends, than those we found in Malone nor can we wish our successor to find more unselfish, disinterested, devout, christian friends than he will find in that parish. The names of those who are faithful are written in undying characters on our memory and heart. May they soon find another and better minister than the last, and enjoy a day of prosperity far exceeding anything they have yet known. So we hope, and as in duty bound will ever pray.

But Universalism is not strictly popular yet in Malone. It is in the minority. It has been wounded in the house of its professed friends. Its future prosperity and good repute there, as everywhere, depend on the men who are its standard-bearers, its professed advocates and friends. Let them bring their faith into the ascendancy by their fidelity. It is the only way to do it.

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Transcribed on 13 Apr 2009 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY