

Report to the Second Congregational Society  
Unitarian Church

Concord, NH

Earl Clement Davis

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To the Second Congregational Society:

The report of the minister can hardly convey to the Parish just what he feels the situation to be. What happens in the life of a Parish can hardly be cast into offsetting debits and credits with a defined balance. As I watch the people of the Parish moving on from day to day with such knowledge as I have of their vital problems, I am impressed by the sterling quality that from time to time emerges. It is a privilege to witness it and to feel one's self associated with it.

I can tell you briefly of the chores that record the day to day things. During the past year I have conducted the funeral services of 18 persons who have died. Seven of these have been long and intimately associated with this Parish. There have been six weddings; three births. Only two persons have signed the church role. I have made something more than 200 calls; have devoted about 40 days to conferences, committee and council meetings not directly connected this Church. Mrs. Griffin records 564 letters sent out, and, in addition 3,177 circular letters, statements and calendars. This latter item Mrs. Griffin has handled.

But there is one thing more that I wish to say. About ten years ago one of the most influential and successful ministers in the Unitarian Denomination said that as church life and matters pertaining thereto were then running, he took great comfort from the remark that Saint Paul made at the time that he was ship-wrecked off the coast of Miletus. "They let go four anchors from the stern and wished for the day." For upwards of fifty years the Christian Churches have been sailing through difficult waters, The wave of

Materialistic Philosophy which has run for about one hundred years has presented difficult problems. Twenty-five years ago Prof. Munsterburg asserted that the wave of Materialism was beginning to ebb, and that a new interpretation of life was beginning to emerge. Within the five years that I have been in Concord a great change has taken place in the religious life. The old doctrines of so-called orthodox religion, based on the materialistic philosophy, have passed away. Nothing is left of them but the shell. Within the past year I have witnessed in this city a most remarkable change. The future of the religious life of this city is in your hands. I throw that out as a direct challenge to you who are the custodians of the tradition of the forward looking liberal wing of the Puritan tradition. Back of all the statistics, back of all the day by day events in your life and mine, is the astounding fact that the sun is rising on a new day.

Earl C. Davis.