

October 14, 1913

My dear Davis:

I have read and reread your really great paper in The Register on "The Influence of Democracy on Religious Thought and Practice." You, instead of myself, should have been on the program at Buffalo. You, in this article, get right at the very heart of things, and present in a remarkably clear and illuminating fashion what you call the "king thought" of the present time. We all enjoy the great words with which we agree, and I presume a large part of my enthusiasm lies in this fact. I have never worded my discussions of the same theme so well as you have, but in many of your sentences I almost felt as though I was reading my own, and it is this thing that gives me great courage, and fills me with deep enthusiasm.

What I have been longing for for years seems to be coming to pass. There are a group of us here in America who are beginning to see eye to eye. The time for the synthetic word is at hand. The opportunity that I have longed for I know is here. I feel more strongly than ever the necessity of some concerted effort to bring our individual messages out of our local communities and amalgamate them into one great fundamental expression of the underlying spiritual import of democracy. There must be fifty of us in our Fellowship alone who have more or less of the same feeling, and there are countless numbers outside. But fifty men can do anything in this world. Now is the day of our opportunity. When I think of how all of the young men look with confidence to Dole, I am filled with regret that Jenkin Lloyd Jones



has not maintained closer relations with our Fellowship. He has had this vision for years. What he has sought to do with Unity we ought to do in a larger and more inclusive fashion. He has sought to amalgamate, however, the dying elements of Protestantism; a useless and impossible task. The synthetic word that is to be spoken has to do with the living, vital but as yet unrelated movements of the present day. I feel more strongly than ever that our first effort should be in securing a literature which shall have something in it of the vital power of that which came out of the Christian Socialist movement headed by Morris and Kingsley. To do this we must, ungracious as the task may seem, find or bring into closer relations a smaller fellowship within our larger Unitarian Fellowship. But from my point of view it must extend beyond the bounds of any Unitarian movement, and must have emblazoned on its banners the great words Universal Religion. After we get our occasional literature in the form of pamphlets, then we can probably look forward to the establishment of some sort of magazine. I talked this to Weirs, and he suggested that we could swing the Unitarian Advance. I said it never could be done with that name, and he said he thought we could change the name. If that is done, it would cease to be a denominational mouthpiece, but the organ of a great movement. Of course any of our conferences now could use it as their official organ.

I am going this morning to get up a letter to send out to those who might be interested in the matter of sending out pamphlets, as you and I talked over. I am so deeply in sympathy with your article in the Register, and think it is such a splendid strong statement, that you will pardon me if I make one or two



suggestions - please remember that they are only suggestions, and not criticisms.

In your second paragraph, you say "pitiable beyond hope." I am sure you don't mean that; it strikes a false note, to my mind. The expression at the close of the third paragraph "for near two thousand years," may be all right from a grammatical standpoint, but it seems to me that "nearly" would be better. Then at the beginning of your sixth paragraph, it seems to me you had better fix up your metaphor, which appears somewhat mixed. I don't quite see how the anti-toxin could carry within it the embryo of a new social order.

I would vote, myself, to have this as one of the first of the tracts that ought to be published. I am, with all good wishes,

Very sincerely,

Arthur I. Weatherly.

Mr. Earl C. Davis  
Pittsfield, Massachusetts

P.S. I am getting ready a circular letter to send out. I have no doubt - but what we can get - 50 men.