

## An Appeal; Especially to the Universalists of Western New York

In the spring of '59 the undersigned, having preached several years in Pavilion, moved to Le Roy, still holding the relation of pastor, and preaching to the society in Pavilion, eight miles distant, every Sunday, and also in Le Roy. At the latter place services were held in a large hall. In the beginning, congregations were very small, but they soon began to grow, and continued to do so rapidly. During the summer a society was formed, with all the proper officers. Very soon our congregation grew so large that the idea took possession of all interested that the time had come to build a house of worship. Brother Tuttle, then of Rochester, exchanging with the writer at that time, was astonished to find so large an auditory, and remarked that five dollars from each hearer would go far toward building a church. A subscription paper was prepared and circulated by the undersigned with very good success. A sufficient sum was pledged to encourage the trustees to purchase a lot and commence building. On the 25th day of April, '60, the building was dedicated to the worship of God. It is a very substantial and elegant brick edifice, having a large, well-lighted Sunday School room under the auditorium. The house and lot are worth about \$5,000, though costing only about \$4,000.

When the house was completed, there was a debt upon it, which has accumulated. It is now about \$2,500. Recently the members of the society have pledged the sum of \$1,500, providing the whole amount can be secured within ninety days. The remaining part of the debt (\$1,000) the society cannot pay.

Already a part of the debt against the church has been put into the hands of a lawyer for collection. Unless the Universalists of Western New York come to the rescue, our beautiful church in Le Roy must be sold under the hammer of the sheriff.

Having a few weeks of leisure, the writer has undertaken, at the urgent request of the trustees, to raise this sum of \$1,000. For no other society could he have engaged in this labor: but he organized it, he watched the progress of the building from foundation to roof, he dedicated it to the worship of the Father; he cannot, therefore, endure the thought that it shall be sold and the society annihilated.

Le Roy is a beautiful village of about twenty-five hundred inhabitants, in the midst of one of the most fertile regions of the State. It is the seat of Ingham University, and has been supposed to be given over to self-styled orthodoxy. I think it not too much to say that the denomination in this part of the state will suffer disgrace if, for the lack of the comparatively paltry sum of \$1,000, the church in Le Roy is lost to it. It is the first and chief principle of Christianity to help the needy, and especially those who are willing to do nobly in helping themselves. Christianity is a missionary religion. We can never grow as a denomination until we adopt the system of planting and fostering churches in waste places. We are greatly suffering as a people for the want of the spirit necessary to do such self-renunciatory work. Let us not, however, work for the growth of the denomination as an *end*, but for Christ and the upbuilding of his kingdom on the earth, and then the denominational growth will take care of itself.

Now, the undersigned proposes to call on those personally who can give a helping hand in this matter, and especially on those who live within the bounds of the Genesee Association. Where is the use of associations, if the churches thereof are not ready to help one another in the hour of need?

Let every one, then, be ready with open heart and hand, so that this good work may be speedily done. If anyone wishes to send money by letter, he can direct it to C. Cravens, Pavilion, Genesee Co., N. Y., and the name will be credited in the *Ambassador*.

C. Cravens

*Christian Ambassador*, New York, NY, Sat. 28 Feb 1863