

## [LeRoy, New York]

### Le Roy

An interesting letter in regard to our cause in this place comes to us from our brother, A.T. Drake. He says:

I write to inform you that, like Rip Van Winkle, we have awakened from our long slumbers, and secured the services of Rev. C.H. Dutton for the ensuing year. He has labored with us for the last four Sabbaths to good acceptance. There is but one feeling manifested in our little flock, and that is a determination to have union and harmony, let what will come, and with the help of God push forward the work so auspiciously renewed, to the building up of the faith, and the breaking down of error. We have the material for a strong Society. With a pastor suited to our wants, and a good church edifice paid for, we cannot help but succeed, if we deserve success.

*Christian Ambassador*, New York, NY, 18 Jul 1868

### Le Roy

To the Editor of the *Ambassador*:

In your paper of the 18th inst., there is a short communication in reference to the Universalist Society in Le Roy, N.Y. The readers of said item might infer that the Society has been asleep for many years. But such is not the fact. Certain persons, for reasons of their own, left the Society during the political campaign of 1864. This is a free country—they had a right to leave. But it should be known that the “little flock” that was left pushed bravely on, until about a year ago, when it was obliged to close the church. It is true that a part of the Society has just awakened out of a Rip Van Winkle sleep of four years; but not so those who remained steadfast when others fell away.

The writer of the item referred to says that the Society is now “determined to have union and harmony, come what will.” It is to be hoped that all concerned will keep this in mind. I would respectfully suggest, however, that it would be well to let the past bury the past. Especially would it be wise for those who have had the longest part of this Rip Van Winkle sleep to say the least about how the nap was brought on. Above all, it is eminently prudent to keep the history of said nap out of the papers.

C. Cravens

Le Roy, N.Y., July 10, 1868

*Christian Ambassador*, New York NY, 1 Aug 1868

[LeRoy, New York]

**A Parting Word**

To the Editor of the *Ambassador*:-

I have read, in a recent number of your paper, that at the last session of the New York State Convention of Universalists, held in Utica, a "Resolution was passed to the effect that Charles Cravens, having publicly and privately to members of the Committee and others, avowed himself no longer a believer in Christianity, in the commonly accepted meaning of the word, and has thereby, *by his own act*, severed his connection with the denomination; and that his name be erased from the roll of membership."

It is not for the purpose of finding fault with the action of the Committee on Fellowship, at this time, or with the action of the Convention, that I ask the privilege of a few words. Many of my friends, especially those who have not heard me explain my views, may be misled by the wording of the resolution. I have never said that I reject the essential truths of Christianity. What I have said is that I deny the supernatural or the superhuman *origin* of these truths. I deny that any system of religion is more authoritative than another, only insofar as it is truer and better.

.... I should have been pleased to say a few words, in all kindness, to the Convention, but not to stop its action. I was not aware that any action in my case was to be taken before the Council. It has occurred to me—perhaps I am wrong—that, after having labored for twenty-three years in the denomination, my brethren should have accorded to me the privilege of saying a few words—not designed to change any vote, but simply as a justification of my position.

Still I am willing to confess that it is questionable whether such a course would have been the better one. The one pursued is very direct and very simple. All forms are laid aside; all possible controversies avoided. Swiftly and surely the work is done. The one most interested is not even troubled to appear and answer. It is well. I would not change the result.

My brethren, who have voted to erase my name from among yours, go forth to your work, and I will to mine. And may God bless us all!

CHARLES CRAVENS

Le Roy, N.Y.

*Christian Ambassador*, New York NY, 19 Sep 1868

Transcribed on 30 Mar 2004 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY