

Frederic Huidekoper (1817-1892): Philanthropist, Scholar, and Teacher

IT WAS not the destiny of American Unitarianism to blossom like a rose in the desert of the American frontier. Neither though did it remain exactly "corpse cold" and confined to "the Fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man and the neighborhood of Boston." As American Unitarianism moved toward the mid-nineteenth century it shared a concern with evangelical Protestantism for the fate of the West. Of particular concern was the role that liberal Christianity would play on the frontier in shaping religious life and thought. From its formation in 1825, the American Unitarian Association consistently acknowledged the need for Unitarians to rouse themselves from their slumbers and respond to "the solemn call of duty," for "not only the destiny of our country, but the destiny of Unitarianism is to be decided in the West."¹ If this did not induce Harvard graduates to abandon their Boston pulpits in favor of leather stockings, still the record shows a concern for Unitarianism's role in westward expansion.

Interestingly, the impetus and resources for establishing a seminary from which Unitarianism could expand in its bid for the West came not from among Boston's Brahmins but from a transplanted Hollander given to liberal views in religion and serving as a land agent in a village in northwestern Pennsylvania. By all standards, Harm Jan Huidekoper was a remarkable individual—a successful businessman, a congenial and forward-looking citizen, an occasional essayist, churchman and a family man.² His generous contributions made possible the construction in 1825 of a classical Greek Revival building to house the Independent Congregational Church in

¹ American Unitarian Association, "Twelfth Annual Report to the Executive Committee," *Tracts of the AUA*, X (June, 1837), 24. See also Charles H. Lytell, *Freedom Moves West* (Boston, 1907).

² Nina Moore Tiffany and Francis Tiffany, *Harm Jan Huidekoper* (Cambridge, 1904).

Meadville,³ and again in 1844 it was Harm Jan Huidekoper's generosity which enabled the Meadville Theological School to open its doors.⁴ That one of the sons of this urbane and cosmopolitan man should be groomed for the ministry comes as no surprise, and Huidekoper was delighted when Frederic chose to pursue theological studies at Harvard.

In later years, Frederic reflected fondly upon the memories of his childhood spent within the security and warmth of a large family living in a peaceful village—chasing sheep through its streets, watching the stage from Pittsburgh arrive in the mud, shaking hands with the heralded General LaFayette during his visit, attending traveling wild animal shows. He recalled the rather clamorous meetings of Methodists and Presbyterians whose singing and shouting broke the still of the otherwise quiet French Creek Valley. He recounted a rather vivid memory of a boyhood visit to the famed Economy Village founded by the Harmonist Society, where none other than Gertrude Rapp herself played the organ for him “and every attention was shown to us during our visit.”⁵ And to Pomona Hall, the Huidekoper estate, came a steady stream of Harvard graduates to serve as tutors to the Huidekoper children. Among the most memorable were A. P. Peabody, Ephraim Peabody, John Sullivan Dwight, William Henry Channing and James Freeman Clarke. From these tutors young Frederic imbibed the spirit of liberal Christianity and a commitment to the life of the mind that was to remain with him always.

These strong ties with Harvard made it almost inevitable that Frederic would migrate to Cambridge, which he did in 1834, matriculating as a sophomore. The young man's absence from home occasioned a considerable correspondence with his father, who

³ Wilbur Earl Morse, *A Historical Sketch of the Independent Congregational Church of Meadville, Pennsylvania, 1825-1900* (Meadville, 1902).

⁴ Francis A. Christie, *Makers of the Meadville Theological School, 1844-1894* (Boston, 1927), esp. chap. 3.

⁵ Frederic Huidekoper, *Autobiography*, Crawford County Historical Society, Meadville, Pa. In addition the Society has on deposit four Journals 1839-1848, twenty-five letter books, 1848-1890, two pamphlet boxes of letters to F.H. Manuscript sermons, lecture notes, and letters are on deposit at the Meadville/Lombard Theological School, Chicago, Ill. Unless otherwise indicated all manuscripts cited are at the Crawford County Historical Society. I wish to express my special thanks to Mrs. Joyce Ketcham of that Society for her assistance.

advised him on matters of proper conduct, and with his sister Anna, who kept him informed about affairs around Pomona Hall. It is clear that Harm Jan was well acquainted with the Harvard faculty and Boston's Unitarian clergymen, and young Frederic was readily admitted to the company of such luminaries as Andrews Norton, Charles Follen, and Channing. "You cannot but feel that it is a condescension in men such as Norton and Greenleaf and others to admit a young man like you to their family circle, and I hope you will duly appreciate their kindness."⁶ Meanwhile, his sister Anna gave him a full description of the visit of the celebrated Harriet Martineau whom they welcomed with great joy to Pomona Hall.⁷ Later, when Frederic returned to Harvard to begin his second year, the young scholar was forced to give up his studies, upon the advice of an eye doctor, and return home (he attributed his near-sightedness and eventual blindness to a childhood bout with typhoid fever). Farm work and a severely restricted study schedule of ten minutes a day then occupied his time. During the ensuing four years ("I never enjoyed life better"), he assisted his father in business and attended the affairs of the family estate.

In the Spring of 1839, at age twenty-two and in the tradition of gentlemen's sons and budding scholars, Frederic embarked on a two-year grand tour of Europe. He kept extensive journals on his travels, recording his impressions of Holland, Germany, France, England, Scotland and Ireland. In Germany he placed himself under the care of a doctor, and was able later to report that his eyes had improved "and if they continue strong, my probable course of life is the ministry, and in that case, I wish to be a thorough Greek scholar."⁸ He studied both German and French, attended lectures in theology in Geneva (where he found the theological

⁶ Harm Jan Huidekoper to Frederic Huidekoper, Nov. 20, 1834. In addition to Andrews Norton, the other Harvard professor who left a notable impact on Huidekoper was Charles Follen (1797-1840), a versatile scholar who taught German literature and wrote linguistic texts as well as philosophical and theological essays. He received an appointment to the Harvard Divinity as lecturer in ethics and history, but his strong antislavery statements led to a falling out that resulted in his dismissal from Harvard in 1835, a turn of events that distressed Harm Jan Huidekoper. Follen perished in a tragic ship's fire off Long Island in 1840.

⁷ Anna Huidekoper to Frederic Huidekoper, Nov. 4, 1834.

⁸ Frederic Huidekoper to Harm Jan Huidekoper, Jan. 22, 1840.

students "a complete set of children"), and had short visits with both Wilhelm Martin Leberecht De Wette (1780-1849), famous church historian, and Victor Cousin (1792-1867),⁹ the noted philosopher, of whom he wrote, "My impression of his civility is worse than of that of any person, whom I have yet met."¹⁰ He was unimpressed with German theology, finding it both parochial and out of touch with common sense and common people. He visited museums, institutions for the blind, prisons, libraries and universities, where he noted that "professors are to be had here as plenty as blackberries for a mere trifle, and the government supplies the university with an abundance of them."¹¹ He developed a distaste for European governments, finding them all equally despotic. A keen observer of people and places, Frederic was somewhat appalled at the poverty and high illegitimacy rate on the Continent, and accused Europeans generally of "worshipping art to the exclusion of moral'ty."

Upon his return to America, Frederic once again enrolled at Harvard, this time in the Divinity School where again he was forced to withdraw because his eyes could not withstand the strain of study, especially of Hebrew which was required for graduation. He managed though to pursue a course of private study, most notably with the venerable Andrews Norton, before returning to Meadville in 1843. In October he was ordained and served as a minister-at-large for a year.¹² He preached, studied, and prepared for the fall of 1844, when the Meadville Theological School was scheduled to admit its first class. As it turned out, Frederic Huidekoper would spend the next thirty years as Professor of New Testament and Church History at the school and "the whole of this

⁹ His visit with DeWette is reported in a letter to his father, Oct. 19, 1839; his visit with Cousin is noted in a letter to his brother Edgar, Mar. 13, 1840.

¹⁰ Frederic Huidekoper to Harm Jan Huidekoper, June 29, 1840.

¹¹ Frederic Huidekoper to Harm Jan Huidekoper, June 17, 1840.

¹² The ordaining Council consisted of George W. Hosmer of Buffalo, and James Freeman Clarke who had married Frederic's sister Anna. Lay representatives from the Independent Congregational Church in Meadville were Horace Cullum and Isaac Cooper. The practice of a minister-at-large was not uncommon among Unitarians, and Frederic had written his father on Jan. 12, 1841, that "the ministry at large would suit my inclinations better than the parochial, and walking a few miles daily, in visiting, would suit my health and eyes better than writing sermons."

time included somewhat arduous constant study with no little labor in the collection of a library for the school and also for myself."¹³ His devotion to the school and to ministerial education for liberal clergymen was untiring, for not only did he donate the land upon which the school was built, he served as its treasurer, fund raiser, book buyer, church historian and public relations man—all without remuneration.

The prospects of this new theological school not only provided an outlet for Frederic Huidekoper's energies, it would establish an opening for further Unitarian expansion in the West. Sensitive to the views of New England Unitarians regarding the conduct of the school, Huidekoper sought both to enlist their support yet remain firm in his conviction that the school should be adapted to the training of ministers according to "Western wants." During the summer of 1844 on a book buying trip to Boston, Huidekoper promoted the idea of the school, chatted with Unitarian clergymen in Boston's bookstores after the traditional Thursday lecture, and confided in his *Journal* that "if the expenses had to come from my own pocket and I had to take all the labor on my own shoulders and work day and night, I would on the first of October have a library and text books at Meadville and begin with such students as might come."¹⁴ The remainder of the summer was spent in discussions with Unitarian leaders such as Ezra Stiles Gannett, William Henry Channing, Andrews Norton and Samuel K. Lothrop. He traveled extensively to New York City, Philadelphia, Trenton, Buffalo, Rochester and finally back to Meadville where he set to work cataloguing the acquisitions for the school's library.

Fortunately, Huidekoper did not have to go it alone for delicate negotiations with the American Unitarian Association brought the Rev. Rufus Phineas Stebbins of Leominster, Massachusetts, to Meadville as both the school's president and minister of the local Independent Congregational Church. Though Huidekoper at first was ill at ease with Stebbins because of the latter's somewhat presumptuous attitude toward his age and lack of letters, the two men came to have an increased respect for each other and, except for a

¹³ Frederic Huidekoper, *Autobiography*.

¹⁴ Frederic Huidekoper, *Journal* 3, July 1844.

brief period when Huidekoper resigned over requirements for student admissions, the two men labored faithfully on behalf of ministerial education in the liberal vein. They greeted the incoming class of five students and commenced study in the newly renovated and dedicated Divinity Hall. Among these candidates for the ministry were members of the Christian Connection, a denomination that shared Unitarianism's antagonism toward Calvinism and sought to unite all Christians on the simple foundation of Scripture through a spirit of free inquiry. Huidekoper was convinced that "an immense amount of good may be effected if they can be persuaded to enter the school," and indeed the Christian churches did provide a ready supply of ministerial candidates.

Though somewhat critical of the abilities of the students (those lacking necessary prerequisites could make them up through co-operation with nearby Allegheny College), Huidekoper nonetheless plunged the candidates into a rigorous theological curriculum patterned after that of Harvard's Divinity School. He had confided to his Journal that, "If I am to devote years of labor without remuneration, and to share in the responsibility of, perhaps mortifications of the school, it must be on a plane satisfactory enough to myself to enable me to labor with pleasure."¹⁵ The curriculum embraced the history and interpretation of the Old and New Testaments, Biblical Antiquities, Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion, Mental and Moral Philosophy, Logic and Rhetoric, Composition and Delivery of Sermons, Ecclesiastical History, Systematic Theology, Pastoral Care, Greek and Hebrew, or Latin and German. In addition to preparing his lectures on the Bible and church history, Huidekoper continued to preach to small groups of Unitarians at nearby Dunham and Kiebert schoolhouses, to counsel his students, to attend church conferences, to collect and catalogue books, to begin a program of wide reading in Greek, Roman, and early Christian history, and, in short, attend to every minor detail of the seminary. He even managed to embroil himself in a controversy over fencing and planting trees and grass in the muddy, dusty town square, which served as the militia training grounds. When this proposal threatened the militia with finding new quarters out-

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, October 1844.

side the town limits, needless to say the local tavern owners were outraged. Diamond Park remained for the time unfenced and unseeded, much to Huidekoper's dismay.

In the early years of the seminary, Huidekoper traveled widely on behalf of the school, preaching as he went and ransacking bookstores and private libraries for acquisitions, always with an eye to the interests of the seminary. A catalogue of the books he collected and carted to Meadville is impressive indeed, and there is evidence that Huidekoper had more than a casual acquaintance with most of the works he assembled.¹⁶

Though severely limited in his studies by his failing eyesight, Huidekoper continued to read widely in church history, and in 1853 published *The Belief of the First Three Centuries Concerning Christ's Mission to the Underworld*. He was attracted to this rather obscure teaching precisely because it had been neglected by church historians such as Johann A. W. Neander, Johann L. Mosheim, and Joseph Milner. Huidekoper patiently plodded his way through primary Jewish, Christian, and Gnostic writings, and he concluded that the doctrine of Christ's descent into hell arose: (1) to solve the question of what Christ did in the interval between his death and resurrection; (2) to account for the life-giving power of Christianity and the victory of Christ over death; (3) to discover a dignified object for his sufferings; (4) to encourage proof-texting the Old Testament for implications of Christ's death; and (5) to demonstrate the benevolent purposes of saving the departed without endangering the doctrine that no one could be saved without becoming a Christian.¹⁷

True to the character of Huidekoper's work, the book demonstrates wide and careful reading in primary sources. Although documented with lengthy and copious footnotes, it lacked originality. A later edition received a brief review by Adolf Harnack,

¹⁶ *A Library Catalogue of Frederic Huidekoper* (Meadville, 1867; rev. 1892) shows a diverse collection of works in the classics, patristics, New Testament, the history of doctrine, and writings by such liberal authors as Orville Dewey, James Freeman Clarke, Andrews Norton, William Paley, John Gorham Palfrey, A. P. Peabody, Joseph Priestley, Jared Sparks and Henry Ware, Jr.

¹⁷ Frederic Huidekoper, *The Belief of the First Three Centuries Concerning Christ's Mission to the Underworld*, in *Works* (New York, 1883), II, 129.

who was impressed with Huidekoper's diligence in collecting and indexing extensive quotations, but found nothing else to say in praise of the book. He found Huidekoper's discussion neither historical nor theological in its orientation, and expressed amazement that the author had overlooked contemporary secondary works on the apostolic age which would have contributed to his argument. Nonetheless, Huidekoper's work had drawn the critical attention of Europe's most distinguished church historian.¹⁸

Huidekoper's strength lay in organization rather than originality, and the outline of his course in early church history is an impressive display of vast quantities of material brought to manageable presentation. Though his actual lecture notes are sparse, and we have no reports as to his abilities as a lecturer, the course outline is evidence that Huidekoper sought rigorously to introduce students to primary and secondary sources in early Christianity and to awaken their interest in the historical and cultural context out of which Christianity emerged.¹⁹ Students were introduced to the political, civil, moral, intellectual, cultural and theological milieu of early Christianity, and were invited to examine the conflicts within various Christian groups as well as the tension between Christianity and both classical culture and Judaism. Students were challenged to consider the attitudes of ante-Nicene Fathers toward such issues as Scripture and inspiration, the supernatural world, human nature, the object of Christ's mission, man's destiny, the church and religious observances. In each instance appropriate citations are given both for readings in the church fathers as well as contemporary literature. Thus the names of Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Origen, Athenagoras appear alongside those of Priestley, Neander, Milner, Norton, John Gorham Palfrey, Mosheim.

These classroom presentations served as background for Huidekoper's second major publication, *Judaism at Rome*, which ap-

¹⁸ Adolf Harnack, review of Frederic Huidekoper, *The Belief of the First Three Centuries Concerning Christ's Mission to the Underworld*, in *Theologische Literaturzeitung*, no. 3 (Feb. 3, 1877).

¹⁹ The course outline was printed in Boston (John Wilson and Son, n.d.). Huidekoper's Lectures on the New Testament and Ecclesiastical History are on deposit at the Meadville/Lombard Theological School Library in Chicago.

peared in 1876 after nearly twenty years of research and reflection. Again, the work is a painstaking documentary with copious Germanic footnotes presenting Huidekoper's detection of Jewish influences at nearly every juncture of Roman culture. His real underlying interest is in the moral influences of monotheism and the contributions of Judaism both to the moral education of mankind and as the preparation for Christianity. Judaism clears the path for Christianity, which is "a revelation addressed to moral sense" and inspires an inclination to human duty, justice, improvement and character.²⁰ Throughout, there are repeated references to Cicero, Horace, Seneca, Tacitus, Suetonius and Plutarch, as well as to Philo, Josephus, and even Augustine. Though widely read in the classics, Huidekoper found little in classical culture to commend it apart from the mitigating influences of monotheism.

His whole purpose was to demonstrate that the influence of Judaism on Roman culture was stronger and more extensive than generally recognized. The prime contributions of Judaism to the human saga are a belief in a Moral Ruler and the inculcation of moral duties—neither of which is present in paganism. Thus he can find the morality of Judaism subtly at work on classical culture in such practices as the division of weeks, belief in the impending destruction of Rome, the conduct of the public games, and so forth. He even finds extensive influence of Judaism upon Stoicism, and suggests that the Stoics had their roots in the Old Testament. The bulk of the work is then given over to a chronological treatment of the subject from 76 B.C. to 140 A.D., demonstrating both the history of Jewish influences during this period and the repeated resistance to it.

This work also received the notice of a distinguished German scholar, Emil Schürer, who accorded the book a patient hearing and says of Huidekoper that "as a man of wide reading in the church fathers and in Greek and Roman authors he is amazing . . . and he brought together a wealth of extensive notes." But the Leipzig professor's kindness runs out as he continues, "this is all that I can find to praise in this book. In my view it is very weak. Everywhere the author finds Jewish influences and everywhere anti-

²⁰ Frederic Huidekoper, *Judaism at Rome, 70 B.C. to 140 A.D.*, in *Works*, I, 17.

Semitic attempts, where an unprejudiced eye sees neither one nor the other.”²¹ On the American side, the book did not go without notice, receiving praise from A. P. Peabody, Ezra Abbott, Charles Eliot Norton and Orville Dewey.²²

Huidekoper was not one to pen a work of antiquarian interest only, and *Judaism at Rome* contains in its closing chapters some of his reflections upon Christianity in America. His intellectual development had been shaped by early nineteenth-century Harvard moral philosophy, with its emphasis upon the “moral sense” and man’s ability to perceive the eternal truths of morality. Figures such as James Walker, Henry Ware, Sr., Henry Ware, Jr., Francis Bowen, Edward Tyrell Channing and Levi Hedge emphasized the role of conscience and ethical obligation and they deprecated the place of dogma and theological subtleties. Denounced by some as provincial and pedantic plutocrats, the Harvard moral philosophers were nonetheless not complacent patricians but philanthropists and concerned social reformers.²³ In some respects Huidekoper’s work may be viewed as an attempt to ground the Unitarian conscience in Jewish monotheism and Christian patristics.

As one trained in the Harvard tradition of moral philosophy, it is not strange that Huidekoper’s reading of Roman history should make him sensitive to the corruptions of power and the attacks of the privileged class upon popular rights: his disdain for patrician rule is evident. The role of religion as a moralizing influence, whether in ancient Rome or nineteenth-century America, was a theme dear to the Unitarian conscience. Thus, in a chapter on “Moral Culture,” Huidekoper argued that free institutions depend upon moral culture, and that private conscience seeks its expression in public spirit. Monotheism nourishes morality, and Western culture is a history of the march of monotheism and morality, not by ecclesiastical power over civil authority, but in the individual conscience.

²¹ Emil Schürer, review of F. Huidekoper, *Judaism at Rome*, in *Theologische Literaturzeitung*, no. 7 (Mar. 31, 1877), 103.

²² Huidekoper carefully collected and copied reviews favorable to his publications in a notebook of Correspondence Relating to the Writings of Frederic Huidekoper, Crawford County Historical Society.

²³ See especially Daniel Walker Howe, *The Unitarian Conscience: Harvard Moral Philosophy, 1805-1861* (Cambridge, Mass., 1970).

Christianity especially provides a sense of moral purpose under a Moral Ruler, and brings monotheism and morality together in their finest expression in the life of Jesus. There is a quiet confidence that liberal Christianity will serve both as the vanguard in mankind's progressive march to perfectability and as the guardian of individual conscience.

Huidekoper's other major published work was his *Indirect Testimony of History to the Genuineness of the Gospels*, published in 1879. Here the influence of Andrews Norton (1786-1853), with whom Huidekoper studied during his stay in Cambridge between 1841 and 1843, is evident. Norton had written a monumental four-volume work on the *Genuineness of the Gospels* as a rebuttal to what he perceived to be the threat of German theology, most notably David Friedrich Strauss's *Life of Jesus* and Johann Gottfried Eichhorn's *Introduction to the New Testament*. Both of these authors had argued that the gospels in their present form were not in common use before the end of the second century and that the gospels were compilations of a late date. Norton flatly denied this and searched extensively through both Catholic and Gnostic Christianity to prove that the gospels remain in their present form essentially the same as when they were originally composed, and that they have been ascribed to their true authors. Though not nearly so outspoken, Huidekoper shared Norton's contempt for German scholarship, which the latter labeled "a bravado of infidelity," and heaped scorn upon it as a chaos of ideas, incomprehensible, folly, unintelligible jargon, the literature of despair.²⁴ Huidekoper also shared his teacher's concern that, as the basis of faith, the gospels simply could not be second-century fabrications comprised of myths and fables. After all, the Gospels produced belief, and that is a sufficient argument for their genuineness as works of the apostles whose names they bear. Huidekoper was convinced that only ignorance of second-century Christianity could have led Strauss and Eichhorn to their mistaken conclusions about the origin and authorship of the Gospels.²⁵ He is writing therefore

²⁴ Andrews Norton, *Internal Evidences of the Genuineness of the Gospels* (Boston, 1855), part I, chap. 6. A one-volume edition of Norton's major work was issued in 1873.

²⁵ Frederic Huidekoper, *Indirect Testimony of History to the Genuineness of the Gospels*, in *Works* (New York, 1883), II, xiv. For a summary of his argument, see p. 83.

to curb the excesses of a Biblical criticism which he perceives has exceeded the boundaries of historical reliability.

Huidekoper also gained from Norton a keen appreciation for the role of reason in religion. Christianity is a rational religion and reason must be granted a wide berth in the life of faith. In the quiet of his study during the long Meadville winters, Huidekoper continued to burn out his eyes on the New Testament and the church fathers in search of historical evidence that Christianity was grounded in texts that are genuinely the product of eyewitnesses. Huidekoper, no less than Norton, found unacceptable a higher criticism that substituted the common-sense facts of the Gospels for a pseudohistory of fables and myths. Reason, guided by Scottish common-sense realism, would deliver men in their interpretation of Scripture from preconceptions and caprices that questioned the historical veracity of Christianity. The Gospels address man's reason through common-sense historical facts and not by way of fantastic mythological fables; Christianity is both an historical and a reasonable faith.

Not all of Huidekoper's time was consumed by minute studies of the New Testament and the ante-Nicene Fathers. The Theological School continued throughout his career to need careful nurture and care, and he continued to render untiring gratuitous service until forced by blindness to retire in 1877. The local Independent Congregational Church also required constant attention, and Frederic remained ready to fill the pulpit when requested. Domestic responsibilities were added by his marriage to Harriet Nancy Thorp of New York City in November 1853, a union which bore three daughters and a son. The death of his father in 1854 left a sizeable estate to be administered by Frederic and his two brothers, Alfred and Edgar, and there is considerable evidence that he inherited some of his father's business acumen, for investments in real estate, railroads, and bonds assured his continued financial independence.

The distribution of Unitarian tracts and books absorbed his time and energy. He served as administrator for the Liberal Christianity Fund which each year required a voluminous correspondence concerning the gifts of small libraries to worthy young liberal

ministers in the western states.²⁶ He was always available to speak to the local Literary Union or to the Lyceum, and was instrumental in founding the Meadville Public Library, to which he willed \$3,500. He became an active supporter of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania in which he had a lifetime membership, and served as a consultant on historical matters for northwestern Pennsylvania. Of special interest to him was the network of French and British forts. He prepared detailed sketches and descriptions of Forts Venango and LeBoeuf, began research on the legal history of slavery, and followed with interest reports of prison reforms. He was particularly interested in vocational education, and at his death left a \$10,000 bequest for the furtherance of that cause.²⁷

Frederic Huidekoper sought with remarkable persistence against considerable odds to bring the spirit of free inquiry and rigorous scholarship to students preparing to minister to a milieu that was not always receptive to either. But he never lost confidence in a liberally trained ministry as a vital means to uplift the general cultural tone of American society, and by precept and example his own life was a monument to the conviction that an enlightened Christianity is an essential element of civilized society. The legacy of his faith in the perfectability of man, the harmony of class interests, and the progressive march of monotheism and morality has been shattered. Today we are left in a post-modern age in which the attempt to try to understand not only what people such as Frederic Huidekoper thought, but also how he felt, becomes more difficult than ever.

*The Pennsylvania State University,
Delaware County Campus*

BRUCE M. STEPHENS

²⁶ Much of the correspondence in the letter books of 1858-1890 relates to his involvement in the distribution of liberal Christian tracts and books, as well as his wide-ranging business transactions.

²⁷ Obituary notice, *The Meadville Morning Star*, May 17, 1892.