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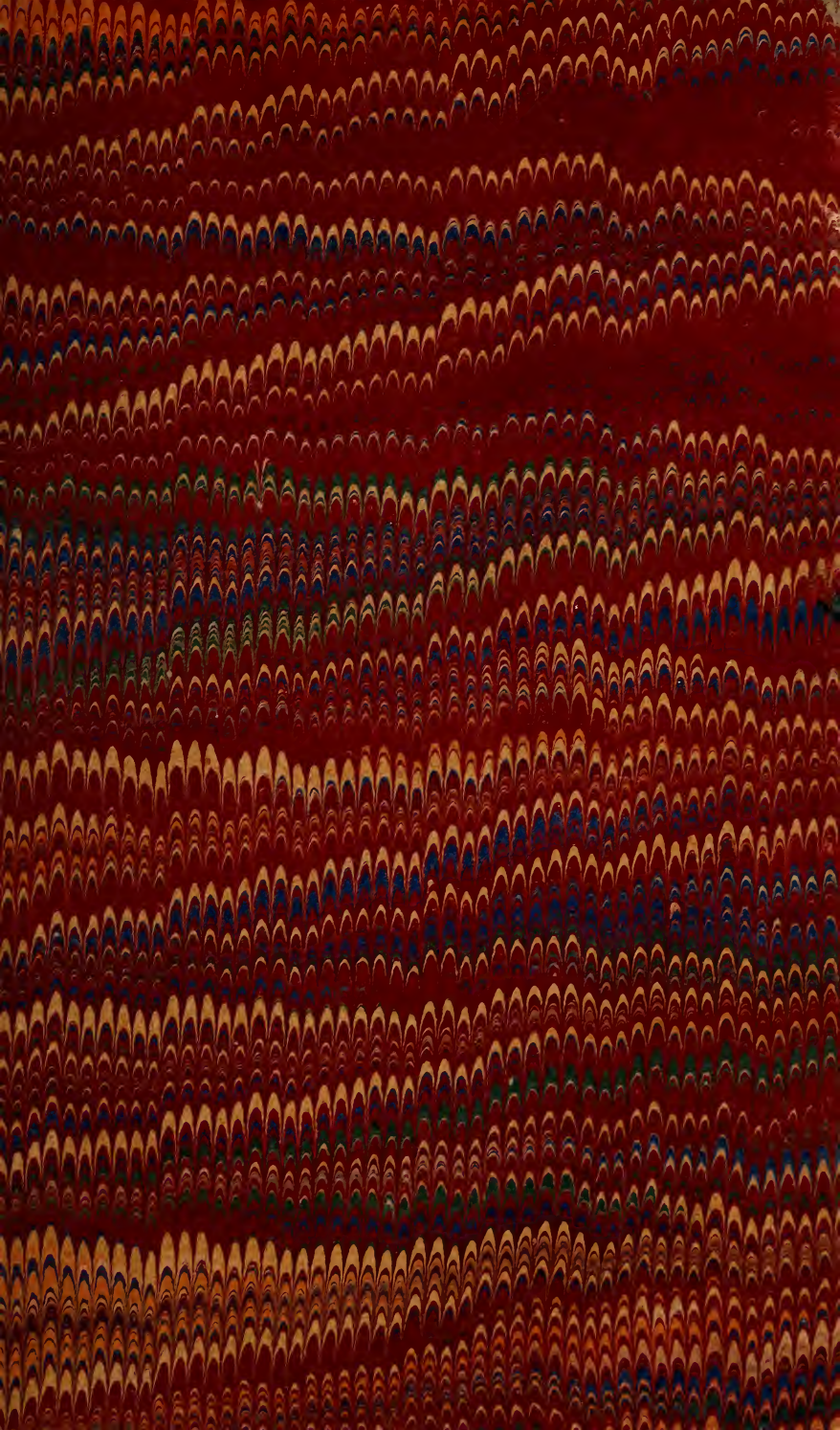
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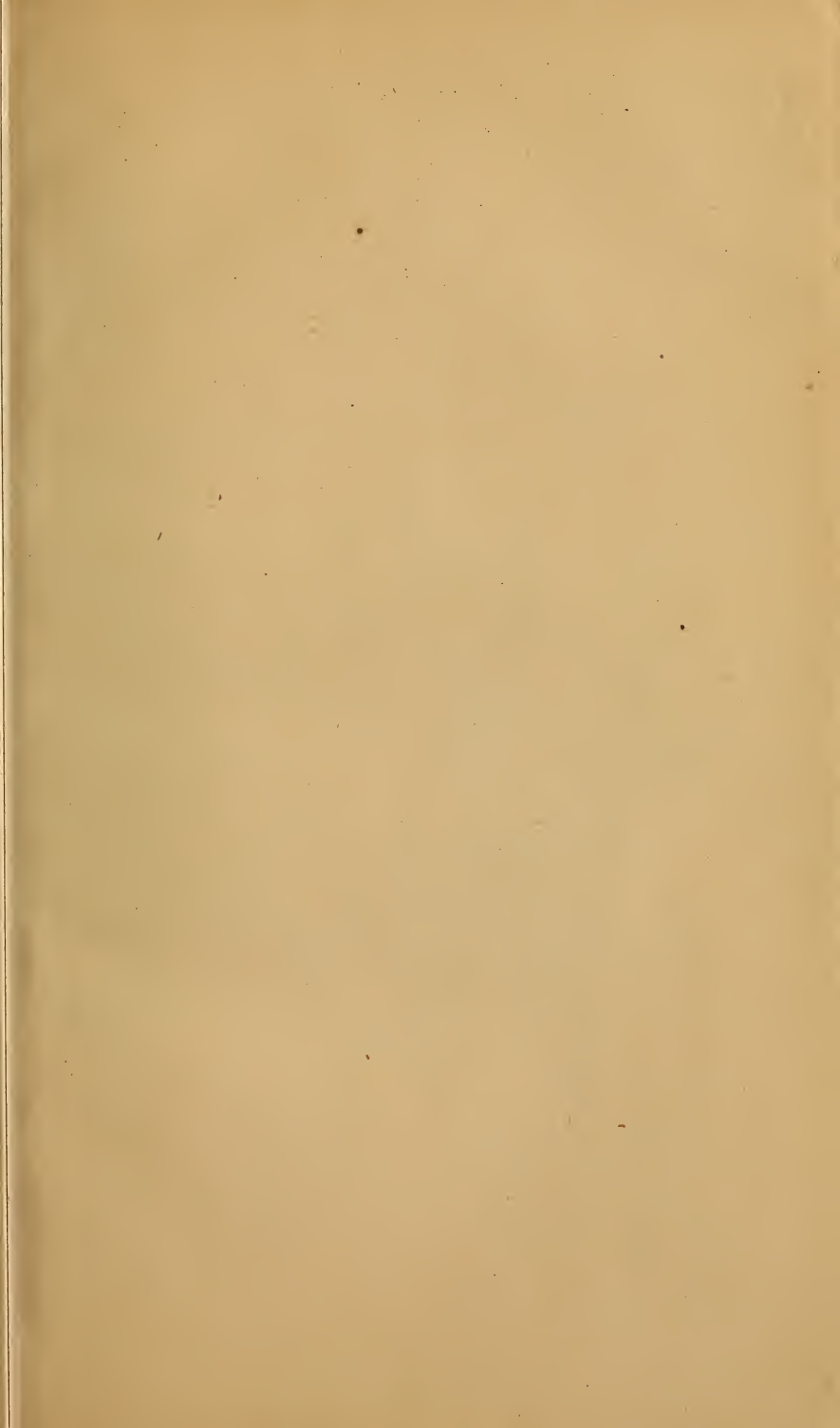
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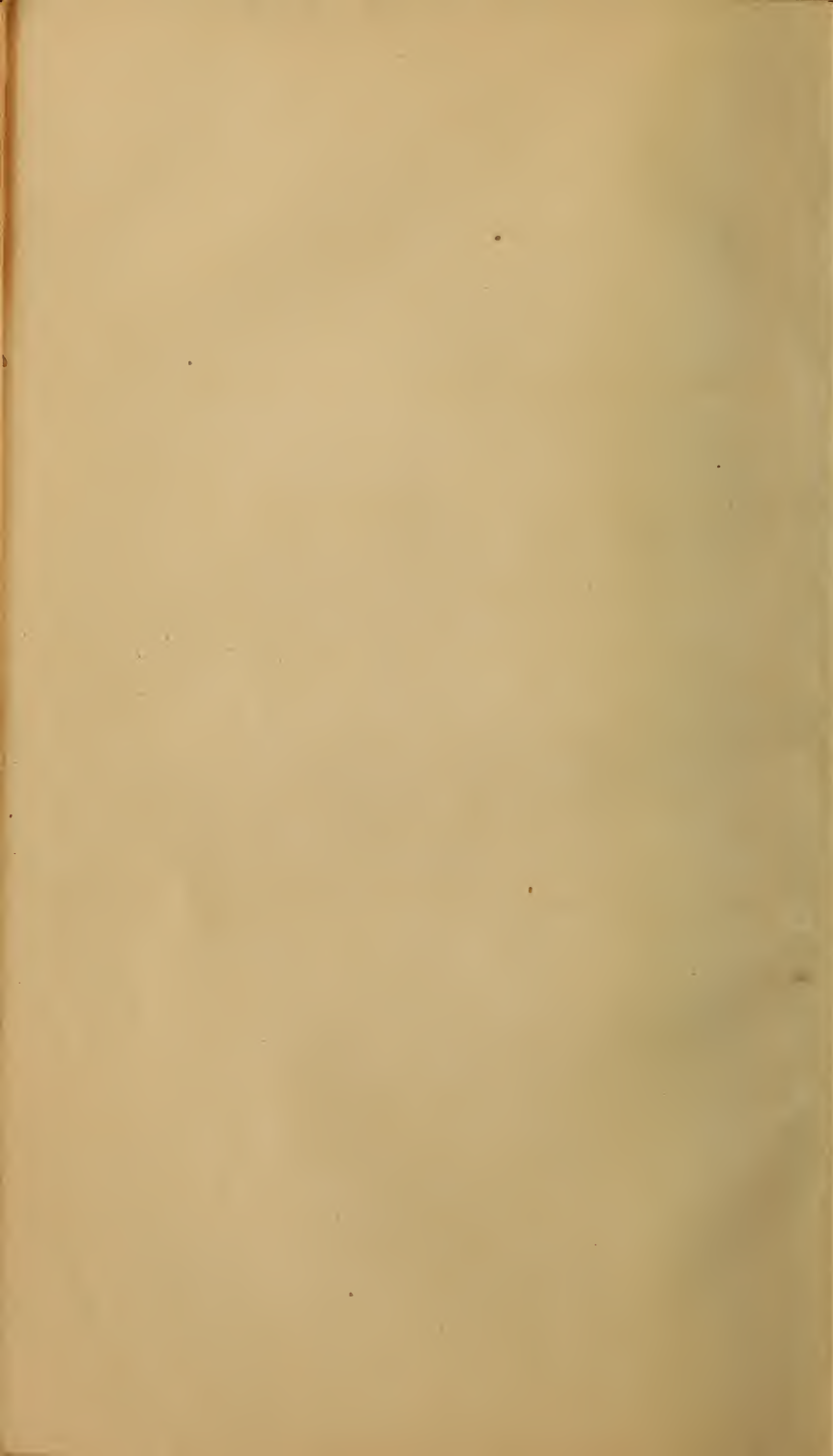
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.











THE
ANCIENT TESTIMONY

OF THE
RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS,

COMMONLY CALLED QUAKERS,

RESPECTING SOME OF THEIR CHRISTIAN DOCTRINES AND
PRACTICES.



Friends, Society of. Philadelphia yearly meeting.

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PRACTICES.

REVIVED AND GIVEN FORTH BY THE YEARLY MEETING,

Held in Philadelphia in the Fourth Month, 1843.



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1752

PHILADELPHIA:

PRINTED BY JOSEPH RAKESTRAW.

1843.

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*At a Yearly Meeting held in Philadelphia, by adjournments,
from the 17th of the Fourth month, to the 22nd of the same,
inclusive, 1843,—*

THE MEETING FOR SUFFERINGS having been brought under much exercise, on account of the attempts of the enemy of all righteousness to lay waste some of the principles and testimonies of our Religious Society, as set forth in the Writings of our early Friends, particularly in the Apology for the true Christian Divinity, written by Robert Barclay,—a work with which we have divers times declared our unity; they have prepared and produced to this Meeting, an address to our members, reviving those Christian doctrines, and some of the practices of our ancient Friends, which having been read, and time spent in solidly deliberating upon its important contents, it was united with by this Meeting, and the Clerk is directed to sign it on our behalf. The Meeting for Sufferings is authorized to print such number as they may deem proper, for general circulation amongst our members and others.

THE
ANCIENT TESTIMONY

OF THE
RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS.



IN taking a view of the state of our religious Society, and of the great unsettlement which prevails in the world, in regard to various subjects of a religious and moral character, we have been brought under feelings of earnest and affectionate solicitude, on behalf of our beloved brethren and sisters; and agreeably to our ancient practice, are religiously engaged to address them.

We feel a fervent desire, that by humbly seeking for and following the leadings of Christ Jesus, the Shepherd and Bishop of souls, we may all experience preservation from the many dangers and temptations which abound in this day of shaking and commotion, and witness an establishment upon that Rock which cannot be moved, and which has been the unfailing refuge and support of the righteous in every generation.

We are persuaded that this is the only ground of preservation and of safety. It is not in the power of any man, whatever may be his intellectual endowments, or his acquired knowledge, to withstand, by his own efforts, the force of temptation, or to direct

his steps safely through the difficulties and dangers which attend his earthly pilgrimage. It is only as we "trust in the Lord with all our hearts, and lean not to our own understanding," that we shall be enabled, through the inshining of the light of Christ Jesus, to detect the various snares which the enemy of man's happiness is insidiously laying for our entanglement, and be endued with strength and wisdom to escape them.

Under the guidance of this divine Light, the holy ancients in all ages were enabled to overcome the wicked one, and to obtain a good report as those that pleased God. It was this that separated our worthy predecessors from the corrupt manners, friendships and religions of the world; led them in the way of the daily cross and self-denial, and made them living witnesses of the power and coming of the Lord Jesus. Through its immediate discoveries, they were given to see the emptiness of an outside religion—resting in a profession of truths which, though good in themselves, were not livingly and practically experienced; by it, they were released from those forms and ceremonies imposed by the will and wisdom of man in this glorious gospel day, which is a dispensation of life and substance, not of types and shadows; and were constrained to bear a constant testimony to the necessity of resisting and overcoming sin in all its motions; and of witnessing the inward life of righteousness begun, carried on and perfected in the soul, by the immediate manifestation of the power and spirit of Christ Jesus, as the only solid foundation for the hope of everlasting life and happiness.

We believe that a loud and solemn call is renew

edly extended to the members of our religious Society, to come up fully and unreservedly in the belief and observance of those spiritual doctrines and holy practices, which conspicuously distinguished our honourable predecessors; that being brought more entirely under the government of the Spirit of the Lord, the source of all saving knowledge, we may really be taught of God the things which belong to the soul's salvation, and humbly and steadfastly walking in the light, may have true fellowship one with another, and know the blood of Jesus Christ to cleanse us from all sin.

The present is a period wherein we apprehend the enemy of souls is busily at work, endeavouring, with all the deceivableness of unrighteousness, to beguile the unwary, and to draw us away from a steadfast adherence to those doctrines and practices into which our primitive Friends were thus divinely led; in order, if possible, to frustrate the work of regeneration in individuals, and to hinder the spread of those principles and testimonies which, we believe, we were raised up as a people, to uphold and promulgate in the earth.

The doctrine of the immediate manifestation of the Holy Spirit in the soul of man, and the necessity of submission to his renewing and transforming power there, by which sin is effectually withstood and overcome, and Christ faithfully followed in all his requirements, aims a more direct and deadly blow at anti-christ's kingdom, than any other; hence his enmity against it is the greater, and he is busy in endeavouring to pervert and obscure it; while as it stands directly in opposition to the unregenerate nature of man, so he is most willing to have it concealed from his view.

We have seen, during a season of trial which but a little while ago passed over us, the attempts of the grand deceiver to invalidate and bring into disrepute the doctrine of immediate divine revelation, by leading many who made profession of it, but were not faithful to its teachings, under the pretext of greater spirituality than their brethren, into a denial of some of the fundamental truths of the Christian religion; especially in reference to the authenticity and divine authority of the Holy Scriptures, and the divinity and offices of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

This mournful declension brought deep sorrow and painful exercise upon many faithful Friends; who, through divine mercy, were preserved from the delusion, and engaged to lift up the standard of truth against its progress. Not having been permitted to lay waste the Society by means of this dark and bewildering stratagem, the enemy is now assailing us on the other hand; endeavouring to draw away from the spirituality of the gospel—to induce an undue dependence upon outward means, and to settle down at ease in a literal knowledge and belief of the truths of the Holy Scriptures.

Another device is, to set individuals at work, in the will and wisdom of the natural man, to comprehend and explain the sacred truths of religion; to bring them down to the level of his unassisted reason, and make them easy to the flesh; so as to avoid the mortifying experience of becoming fools for Christ's sake, and taking up the daily cross to the wisdom, the friendships, the honour and the fashions of the world. Others he is leading into great zeal and activity in undertakings of a religious or benevolent character,

which, however laudable their objects may be, are not their proper work and business; but engross the time, talents and attention, which ought to be devoted to the all-important concerns of the soul's salvation; and being in some measure substituted for that, produce great and serious loss to such individuals.

At different periods since we were first gathered to be a people, individuals have arisen among us, who have not submitted to the baptism of the Holy Spirit, so as to experience the death of self and a resurrection into newness of life—or having known it, have fallen away from that happy estate, and endeavoured to lay waste the doctrines they once professed. Through the friendships of the world, and the desire after an easier way, they have become ashamed of the simplicity of the truth, and offended at the reproach which the worldly professor attaches to the self-denying religion of the cross of Christ; and their spiritual vision becoming thereby clouded, they have promulgated sentiments repugnant to our Christian faith, and to the spiritual nature and universality of the gospel, as set forth by our early Friends; particularly by Robert Barclay, in his able and excellent "Apology for the true Christian Divinity;" a work which has been frequently published and spread by our Society, as a correct exposition of its doctrines, and which we would recommend to the careful and serious perusal of all our members.

These defections are no new thing, nor are they peculiar to our Society; many, in different ages of the church, having made shipwreck of faith and a good conscience, and for a time brought much suffering upon the faithful followers of Christ. But it is

worthy of observation, that those among us, who have thus turned against the truth and Friends, even though they were once eminent and useful instruments, have generally fallen away, so as to lose what they had known of the life and power of godliness; the men of this world have gathered them into their fellowship, and like withered branches, all greenness has been dried up.

During the season of trial already alluded to, when some of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity were denied by those who have since separated from us, many, from a sincere desire to maintain those precious doctrines inviolate, came forward in their defence. For want of coming under, and keeping to the unfoldings of divine light, by which alone the spiritual eye is enabled to see clearly, and a qualification is experienced to bear a true testimony to the gospel in its fulness, some of these, in their efforts to advocate those doctrines, have not sufficiently kept in view the internal operation of the gospel, as the power of God unto salvation; nor borne a clear and unequivocal testimony, as our ancient Friends did, to the universal appearance of Christ in the souls of all men, as "the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

Seeing the errors which arose from undervaluing the Holy Scriptures, there has been a tendency to run into the opposite extreme, and to exalt them into a place and office which they do not claim for themselves, and which derogate from the work and office of the Holy Spirit.

In attempting to counteract the sorrowful effects resulting from a denial of the benefits which accrue

to mankind from the sufferings and death of Christ, as the propitiation for the sins of the whole world, the subject has been pressed so far as to give countenance to the idea that Christ has paid the debt, and done the work for us, without us; and that by a profession of faith in and reliance upon him, as their atonement and righteousness, the ungodly may be justified without experiencing sanctification through the power of the Holy Spirit.

For want of duly considering that the unfaithfulness or inconsistency of false professors, is no argument against a truth, sound and profitable in itself, we apprehend that the high pretensions to the light of Christ, made by those who separated from us, have induced some to undervalue this fundamental doctrine of Holy Scripture, and to treat it in a manner calculated to derogate from its sufficiency as the primary rule of faith and life; or to take such an imperfect and mixed view of it, as to lessen the value and importance which it justly holds in sound Scripture doctrine.

We think the influence and effects of these things are to be discovered in our favoured Society; and under a renewed fervent desire to discharge our religious duty in the sight of the great Head of the church, and an affectionate concern for our beloved fellow-members, that we may all come into the unity of the faith; striving together, through the Lord's gracious assistance, for the spreading of his kingdom, and the growth of each other in the pure unchangeable truth; we feel engaged to caution our dear Friends against the dangers to which we have thus briefly alluded; and to revive some of the doctrines and tes-

timonies which our religious Society has always held, and still most surely believes; as well as to impart some tender counsel respecting other matters, which may endanger their stability, and the peace and prosperity of the Society at large.

OF THE ONE TRUE GOD, AND THE THREE THAT BEAR
RECORD IN HEAVEN.

WE believe in one only wise, omnipotent and everlasting God, the creator and upholder of all things, visible and invisible,—and in one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, the mediator between God and man,—and in the Holy Spirit, which proceedeth from the Father and the Son; one God, blessed forever, to whom belong all glory and honour, adoration and praise, forever—Amen.

In speaking of the infinite, eternal Being, we have always considered it most proper and consistent with his all-glorious and incomprehensible existence and attributes, and safest for us, finite creatures, to confine ourselves to the language of Holy Scripture. For this reason, and because it tends to perplexity and doubt, the Society has always objected to the use of the terms person and personality, in speaking of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Man may think, by his wisdom and learning, to define the Divine existence, and render it more intelligible than the holy men who wrote under the immediate guidance of the Holy Ghost; but we believe that all such attempts will ever be vain and futile, and that it is our duty humbly to receive, and rest satisfied with, the descrip-

tion of the Three that bear record in heaven, given to us in the language of Holy Scripture, without attempting to pry further into this sacred mystery. To speak of the Supreme Being as constituted of three persons, and to attempt to define in familiar terms the relative place and office of each, we believe does not tend to edification, but is calculated to lessen that reverence and fear which ought always to clothe the mind in speaking of Almighty God; tends to bewilder and confuse the sincere inquirer after truth, and not only leads into unprofitable speculation, but may give ground to the sceptic to cavil at the Christian religion.

Our ancient Friends, though often assailed in reference to this article of their faith, by persons who laboured to draw them into the use of terms which they considered improper and unscriptural, steadily refused to depart from the language of the prophets, and of our blessed Lord and his apostles, in relation to it; even though they were charged with unsoundness of principle, because they rejected those scholastic terms of their opponents.

George Fox, in a work entitled, "An Answer to all such as falsely say the Quakers are no Christians," writes thus on this subject, viz:

"We own the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, as the apostles have declared. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth; for there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one; and there are three which bear record in earth, which we own. And now let none be offended, because we do not call them by those unscriptural names of Trinity and Three persons, which are not

Scripture words; and so do falsely say, that we deny the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, which three are one, that bear record in heaven, &c.; which three we own with all our hearts, as the apostle John did, and as all true Christians ever did, and now do. And if you say we are not Christians, because we do not call the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the Trinity, distinct and separate persons, then you may as well conclude that John was no Christian, who did not give the Father, Word, and Holy Ghost, those names.

“We believe, concerning God the Father, Son, and Spirit, according to the testimony of the Holy Scripture, which we receive and embrace as the most authentic and perfect declaration of Christian faith, being indited by the Holy Spirit of God, that never errs: 1st. That there is one God and Father, of whom are all things; 2ndly. That there is one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom all things were made, who was glorified with the Father before the world began, who is God over all, blessed forever; that there is one Holy Spirit, the promise of the Father and the Son, and leader and sanctifier, and comforter of his people. And we further believe, as the Holy Scriptures soundly and sufficiently express, that these three are one, even the Father, the Word, and the Spirit.”

Robert Barclay, in his Confession of Faith, says: “There is one God, who is a Spirit; and this is the message which the apostles heard of him and declared unto the saints, that he is light, and in him is no darkness at all. There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one. The Father is in the Son, and the

Son is in the Father. No man knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. The Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God. For the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now the saints have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that they might know the things which are freely given them of God. For the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father sends in Christ's name, he teacheth them all things, and bringeth all things to their remembrance."

Concerning the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, William Penn says: "Because we have been very cautious in expressing our faith concerning that great mystery, especially in such school terms and philosophical distinctions as are unscriptural, if not unsound, the tendency whereof has been to raise frivolous controversies and animosities amongst men, we have by those who desire to lessen our Christian reputation, been represented as deniers of the Trinity at large; whereas, we ever believed, and as constantly maintained, the truth of that blessed Holy Scripture three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, and that these three are one; the which, we both sincerely and reverently believe, according to 1 John v. 7. And this is sufficient for us to believe and know, and hath a tendency to edification and holiness; when the contrary centres only in imaginations and strife, and persecution, where it runs high, and to parties, as may be read in bloody characters in the ecclesiastical histories."

The following is extracted from a work written by

George Whitehead, entitled, "The Divinity of Christ, and unity of the Three that bear record in heaven, and the blessed end and effects of Christ's appearance, coming in the flesh, suffering and sacrifice for sinners, confessed and vindicated by his followers, the Quakers."

"The divinity of Christ confessed by us called Quakers, and what we own touching the Deity or Godhead, according to the Scriptures; That there is but one God the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him,—and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him. That there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, and that these three are one, both in divinity, divine substance and essence; not three Gods, nor separate beings,—that they are called by several names in Scripture, as manifest to and in the saints; (for whatsoever may be known of God, is manifest in man; Rom. 1.) and their record received as the full testimony of three, by such as truly know and own the record of the three in earth; and yet they are eternally one in nature and being; one infinite wisdom, one power, one love, one light and life, &c.

"We never denied the divinity of Christ, as most injuriously we have been accused by some prejudiced spirits, who prejudicially, in their perverse contests, have sought occasion against us; as chiefly because when some of us were in dispute with [others,] we could not own their unscriptural distinctions and terms, touching the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; to wit: of their being incommunicable, distinct, separate persons, or substances; whereas, the Father, the Word, and Spirit, are one—not to be

compared to corruptible men, nor to finite creatures or persons, which are limitable and separable. For the only wise God, the Creator of all, who is one, and his name one, is infinite and inseparable. And the Father's begetting the Son, and the Spirit's being sent, we witness to and own, as he said, 'Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.' And he hath sent his Spirit into our hearts—and that the Father is in the Son, and the Son in the Father, yea in the bosom of the Father; so that they are neither divided nor separate, being one, and of one infinite nature and substance—Christ being the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature, by whom all things were created, both in heaven and in earth. Yea, the Son of God is the brightness of his glory and the express image of his substance. And that it was in due time that God was manifest in flesh, as in the fulness of time God sent his Son—and the Son of God was made manifest to destroy sin—and a manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. So the manifestation of the Father, of the Son, and Holy Spirit, we confess to and own to be in unity, and so the only true God, according to the Scriptures.

“And that Jesus Christ being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God, and yet as a Son, in the fulness of time was sent of the Father, and took on him the form of a servant, in which state he said, 'My Father is greater than I.' And he learned obedience through suffering, and was made perfect, and is become an everlasting High Priest, after the order of Melchizedeck, and is the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; and

God hath given us eternal life in his Son. And unto us a child is born and a Son is given, whose name is Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace, and he is over all, God blessed forever, even the true God and eternal life. So that the deity or divinity of Christ, in his eternal, infinite, glorious state, we really confess and own, having known his virtue and power to redeem us from our vain conversations, and to save us from wrath to come.

“And we judge that such expressions and words, as the Holy Ghost taught the true apostles and holy men, mentioned in the Scriptures, are most meet to speak of God and Christ, and not the words of man’s wisdom, or human inventions and devised distinctions, since the apostles’ days.”

OF DIVINE REVELATION.

THE doctrine of immediate divine revelation, which was soon lost sight of in the apostacy, and even treated with derision and scorn, although clearly set forth in the Holy Scriptures, and its necessity and use amply testified to; was revived and abundantly preached by the early members of our Society, as the glory and life of the gospel dispensation. Through the powerful operation of the Holy Spirit on their hearts, they came to see their own fallen condition, and their need of a deliverer nigh at hand, and not afar off; and obeying its divine openings, they were brought to the true knowledge of God, and of his beloved Son, Jesus Christ, as their Redeemer and Saviour. They could testify to others what their eyes had seen, and their

hands had handled of the good word of life, and of the powers of the world to come: the Holy Scriptures were livingly and savingly opened to them by this divine anointing; and their faith did not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God revealed in their hearts.

It is no marvel that to those who had been thus divinely gathered from the teachings and commentaries of men, to Christ Jesus, the minister of the sanctuary and true tabernacle, which God hath pitched, and not man, the doctrine of immediate divine revelation should be very precious, and should form a principal theme in their writings and discourses. They not only knew in whom they believed, but also that it was not of man, nor by man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ in the soul, that they came to this saving knowledge. While other professors, too generally, were resting in a bare belief of what Christ had done for them, without them, and in a literal knowledge of the Holy Scriptures; these converted and regenerated witnesses of the truth as it is in Jesus, were made partakers of that faith which is produced by the testimony of the Spirit of Christ in the heart, by which they not only received him as their Redeemer and Saviour, in what he graciously did and suffered in the flesh, as the propitiation for sin, and as their mediator and intercessor; but likewise in his inward and spiritual appearance, to baptize and sanctify them; so as to prepare their souls to partake of the fulness of the blessings which the gospel confers.

In setting forth the belief of the Society respecting this important doctrine, Robert Barclay states that,

“Seeing, ‘no man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son revealeth him;’ and seeing ‘the revelation of the Son is in and by the Spirit;’ therefore the testimony of the Spirit is that alone by which the true knowledge of God hath been, is, and can be only revealed. As, by the moving of his own Spirit, he disposed the chaos of this world into that wonderful order in which it was in the beginning, and created man a living soul, to rule and govern it, so, by the revelation of the same Spirit, he hath manifested himself all along unto the sons of men, both patriarchs, prophets and apostles; which revelations of God by the Spirit, whether by outward voices and appearances, dreams, or inward objective manifestations in the heart, were of old the formal object of their faith, and remain yet so to be; since ‘the object of the saints’ faith is the same in all ages, though held forth under divers administrations.’ Moreover, these divine inward revelations, which we make absolutely necessary for the building up of true faith, neither do nor can ever contradict the outward testimony of the Scriptures, or right and sound reason. Yet from hence it will not follow, that these divine revelations are to be subjected to the test, either of the outward testimony of the Scriptures, or of the natural reason of man, as to a more noble or certain rule and touchstone. For this divine revelation, and inward illumination, is that which is evident and clear of itself, forcing, by its own evidence and clearness, the well-disposed understanding to assent, irresistibly moving the same thereunto, even as the common principles of natural truths do move and incline the mind to a natural assent.”

With reference to the various outward sources of knowledge, he says, "I would not, however, be understood, as if I hereby excluded those other means of knowledge from any use or service to man; it is far from me so to judge, as concerning the Scriptures in the next proposition will more plainly appear."

Having laid down the position, that the knowledge of the Father is by and through the Son, he proceeds to show that the revelation of the Son is by the Spirit. "Where it is to be noted," he says, "that I always speak of the saving, certain, and necessary knowledge of God, which, that it cannot be acquired otherways than by the Spirit, doth also appear from many clear Scriptures. For Jesus Christ, in and by whom the Father is revealed, doth also reveal himself to his disciples and friends, in and by his Spirit. As his manifestation was outward when he testified for the truth in this world, and approved himself faithful throughout—so being now withdrawn as to the outward man, he teaches and instructs mankind inwardly by his own Spirit. He standeth at the door, and whoso heareth his voice and openeth, he comes in to such. Of this revelation of Christ in him, Paul speaks, in which he places the excellency of his ministry, and the certainty of his calling. And the promise of Christ to his disciples, confirms the same thing, 'Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world;' for this is an inward and spiritual presence, as all acknowledge."

Again, the apostle says, "What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might

know the things that are freely given to us of God." From which Robert Barclay argues, "If that which appertains properly to man, cannot be discerned by any lower principle than the spirit of man, then cannot those things which properly relate unto God and Christ, be known or discerned by any lower thing than the Spirit of God and Christ." Again, "that which is spiritual, can only be known and discerned by the Spirit of God; but the revelation of Jesus Christ, and the true and saving knowledge of him is spiritual, and therefore can only be known and discerned by the Spirit of God." The same apostle also asserts, that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost; from which Robert Barclay argues, "If no man can say Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost, then no man can know Jesus to be the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost; and if no man can know him to be the Lord but through this medium, then there can be no certain knowledge or revelation of him but by the Spirit."

"That these revelations were the object of the saints' faith of old, will easily appear by the definition of faith, and considering what its object is. Paul describes it two ways: Faith, says he, is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen; which, as he illustrates it by many examples, is no other but a firm and certain belief of the mind, whereby it rests and in a sense possesses the substance of some things hoped for, through its confidence in the promise of God; and thus the soul has a most firm evidence by its faith, of things not yet seen nor come to pass. The object of this faith is the promise, word, or testimony of God speaking in the mind.

Hence it has been generally affirmed, that the object of faith is God speaking; which is also manifest from all those examples deduced by the apostle throughout that chapter, whose faith was founded, neither upon any outward testimony, nor upon the voice or writing of man, but upon the revelation of God's will manifest unto, and in them; as in the example of Noah. Thus, 'by faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.' What was here the object of Noah's faith, but God speaking unto him? He had not the writings nor prophesyings of any going before, nor yet the concurrence of any church or people to strengthen him; and yet his faith in the word, by which he contradicted the whole world, saved him and his house. Of which also, Abraham is set forth as a singular example, being therefore called the father of the faithful, who is said, against hope to have believed in hope; in that he not only willingly forsook his father's country, not knowing whither he went, in that he believed concerning the coming of Isaac; but above all, in that he refused not to offer him up, not doubting that God was able to raise him from the dead; of whom it is said, that in Isaac shall thy seed be called. The object of Abraham's faith in all this, was no other but inward, immediate revelation, or God signifying his will unto him inwardly and immediately by his Spirit."

In outward and natural things, we often rely upon probabilities and the testimony of others; but in matters which pertain to the salvation of the soul, there

can be no effectual faith but that which is produced by the immediate operation of the Holy Spirit in the heart, inclining and enabling us to believe what it reveals to us there, as well as those things which are recorded in the Scriptures of Truth. This faith is not an inherent principle or natural faculty of the human mind, which can be exercised when, and as a man pleases, though it will always be given to those who seek it in a humble and childlike spirit, of Him who is the author and giver of it. "Whatsoever is born of God," saith the apostle, "overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." No faculty or principle natural to the mind of man, can give this victory. "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." This grace of God teaches us to deny all ungodliness, and the world's lusts; and where it is received and obeyed, it gives faith to believe that we shall be strengthened and enabled by it to overcome the world, the flesh and the devil. Thus we are saved by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ through faith in him; and as we continue to believe in and follow him to the end, we shall know him to be the finisher, as well as the author, of this living victorious faith.

"He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself:" this witness is the Holy Spirit, by which the Son of God reveals himself to the soul, gives it faith to believe in his all-powerful name, and as he is obeyed and followed, he displays his almighty power and goodness, in pardoning its past sins—delivering it out of the bondage of corruption, and translating it into the liberty of the sons of God. Thus,

Christ is experimentally known as the Redeemer, Saviour and Sanctifier of his people; and those only have a right to call him so, whom he thus saves from their sins, by his own blessed Spirit. "Wherefore I give you to understand, saith the apostle, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God, calleth Jesus accursed; and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." Through living experience of his power in breaking up the strong holds of sin and satan; delivering them from worse than Egyptian bondage and darkness, and bringing them into the marvellous light of the Lord, these can truly say that Jesus is their Lord and Saviour; and while they keep under the government of his Spirit, they can never do or say any thing that derogates from his divine character or offices, nor from the testimony of the Holy Scriptures.

After stating that some persons confess that the Holy Spirit now leads and influences the saints, but that he does it only by enlightening their understandings to understand and believe the truths delivered in the Scriptures; Robert Barclay further says, "This opinion is not altogether according to the truth, neither does it reach the fulness of it. Because there are many truths, which, as they are applicable to individuals, and most needful to be known by them, are in no wise to be found in the Scriptures. Besides, the Spirit not only subjectively helps us to discern truths elsewhere delivered, but also objectively presents those truths to the mind. For that which teaches me all things, and is given me for that end, without doubt presents those things to my mind which it teaches me. It is not said, it shall teach you how to understand those things that

are written [merely]; but it shall teach you all things. Again, that which brings all things to my remembrance must needs present them by way of object." This is also evident from the nature of the New Covenant, which is expressed in divers places: "As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord; my Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and forever."—"The perpetuity of this promise is fully expressed; and it was immediate, for there is no mention made of any medium. He says not, I shall by means of such writings or books convey such words into your mouths; but my words, I, even I, saith the Lord, have put into your mouths. This must be objectively, for the words put into the mouth are the object presented by him. He says not, the words which ye shall see written, my Spirit shall only enlighten your understandings to assent unto; but positively, my words which I have put into thy mouth: therefore upon whomsoever the Spirit remaineth always, and putteth words into his mouth, him doth the Spirit teach immediately, objectively and continually."

"The nature of the New Covenant is yet more amply expressed in Jeremiah, and repeated by the apostle in these words; 'For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord; for they shall all know

me, from the least to the greatest.' The object here is God's law placed in the heart and written in the mind; from whence they become God's people, and are brought truly to know him. In this then the law is distinguished from the gospel: the law before was outward, written in tables of stone, but it is now inward, written in the heart. Of old, the people depended upon their priests for the knowledge of God; but now they all have a certain and sensible knowledge of him. How much then are they deceived, who, instead of making the gospel preferable to the law, have made the condition of such as are under the gospel far worse. For no doubt it is a far better and more desirable thing to converse with God immediately, than only mediately, as being a higher and more glorious dispensation; and yet these men acknowledge, that many under the law had immediate converse with God, whereas they now cry that it is ceased."

"Under the law there was the holy of holies, into which the high priest entered, and received the word of the Lord immediately from betwixt the cherubims; so that the people could then certainly know the mind of the Lord: but now, according to these men's judgment, we are in a far worse condition; having nothing but the outward letter of the Scriptures to guess and divine from. But Jesus Christ hath promised us better things, though many are so unwise as not to believe him, even to guide us by his own unerring Spirit; and he hath rent and removed the veil, whereby not only one, and that once a year, may enter; but all of us, at all times, have access unto him as often as we draw near unto him with pure hearts.

He reveals his will unto us by his Spirit, and writes his law in our hearts. And where the knowledge of God is put into the mind and written in the heart, there the object of faith and revelation of the knowledge of God is inward, immediate and objective; and this is the situation of every true Christian under the New Covenant."

In replying to the objection, that if men be now immediately led and ruled by the Spirit of God, they may add new Scriptures of equal authority with the Bible, and that every one may bring in a new gospel according to his fancy,—Robert Barclay observes, "We have shut the door upon all such doctrine, affirming that the Scriptures give a full and ample testimony to all the principal doctrines of the Christian faith. For we do firmly believe that there is no other gospel or doctrine to be preached, but that which was delivered by the apostles; and do freely subscribe to that saying, Let him that preacheth any other gospel than that which has been already preached by the apostles, and according to the Scriptures, be accursed. So we distinguish between a revelation of a new gospel and new doctrines, and a new revelation of the good old gospel and doctrines; the last we plead for, but the first we utterly deny. For we firmly believe, that no other foundation can any man lay than that which is laid already."

William Penn, in writing on the same subject, says: "By revelation we understand the discovery and illumination of the Light and Spirit of God, relating to those things that properly and immediately concern the daily information and satisfaction of our souls, in the way of our duty to him and our neighbour. We

renounce all fantastical and whimsical intoxications, or any pretence to the revelation of new matter, in opposition to the ancient gospel declared by Christ Jesus and his apostles; and therefore not the revelation of new things, but the renewed revelation of the eternal way of truth."

That true Christians in the present day are to be immediately led and governed by the Holy Spirit dwelling in the heart, is evident from many Scripture promises and declarations. Our Lord himself, a short time before his ascension, gave this promise to his disciples: "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." Again he says, "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." "Howbeit, when He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come."

We are here told, first, who this is, designated by the several names of the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, the Holy Ghost, the sent of the Father in the name of Christ; secondly, where he is to be found; He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you; and thirdly, what his work is; He shall teach you all things, bring all things to your remembrance, and guide you into all truth.

That the Holy Spirit is to dwell in the saints now, and that these promises were not made to the immediate disciples of our Lord only, but to all who receive him when he knocks at the door, and obey his voice, is proved by many passages in the Scriptures. Paul says to the Romans, "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be the Spirit of God dwell in you;" and to the Corinthians, "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God." What is this but affirming that they in whom the Holy Spirit dwells, are no longer in the flesh, or of those who please not God, but are become Christians indeed; and in the same verse above quoted, he tells the Romans that "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his;" that is, he is no Christian. He then who acknowledges himself a stranger to the work and government of the Spirit of Christ in his own heart, has not attained to the least measure of Christian experience; nay, has not so much as embraced the Christian religion, notwithstanding all he may otherwise know and believe about Christ, or how much soever he may be acquainted with the letter of the Holy Scriptures. If the Spirit is taken away, Christianity is no more Christianity, than the dead body of a man is a man, when the soul is departed. Whatsoever is excellent, whatsoever is noble, whatsoever is worthy, whatsoever is desirable in the Christian faith is ascribed to the Spirit.

To this, true Christians in all ages attribute their strength and life: by it they declare themselves to be illuminated, converted, regenerated and redeemed from the world. By it they are strengthened in weak-

ness, comforted in affliction, armed against temptation, fortified against sufferings, enabled to triumph over their persecutors, and to hold communion with God. It is the Spirit that quickeneth; it was the Spirit that gave them utterance; it was the Spirit by which Stephen spake, so that the Jews were not able to resist. It is such as walk after the Spirit that receive no condemnation, for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus makes them free from the law of sin and death; and it is by the Spirit of God dwelling in us that we are redeemed from the carnal mind. It is the Spirit of Christ dwelling in us that quickeneth our mortal bodies; it is through the Spirit that the deeds of the body are mortified and life obtained. It is by the Spirit that we are adopted and cry Abba, Father; for it is the Spirit that beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God. It is the Spirit that helpeth our infirmities and maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered; and it is by the Spirit that the glorious things which God hath laid up for the righteous, which neither outward ear hath heard, nor outward eye seen, nor the heart of man conceived by all his reasonings, are revealed unto us. It is by this Spirit that wisdom, knowledge, faith, tongues, prophecies are imparted to man, and it is by it that we are all baptized into one body and made to drink into one cup. In a word, there is nothing relating to the salvation of the soul, that can be rightly performed or effectually obtained, without it.

This gift of the Holy Spirit, which comes through our Lord Jesus Christ, is indeed the glory of the gospel dispensation; and we believe that if the professors of the Christian name, would lay aside the prejudices of

education and their preconceived opinions, and consult the testimony of the Spirit in their own hearts, they would find that whatever of spiritual comfort, strength, or other benefit they partake of, is not to be ascribed to their forms or ceremonies, nor does it come through them, but from the inward operations of the Holy Spirit; and that if they were weaned from those outward observances, and their attention and dependence placed upon this blessed source of divine consolation and strength, they would be made the joyful partakers of much fuller manifestations of his glorious presence and power. The more we are brought into humble child-like reliance upon Christ, and obedience to the dictates of his Spirit, the greater degrees of faith will be granted us in his power to deliver us out of all evil, in his wisdom and goodness to guide us in the way everlasting, and in his unfailing strength to enable us to perform the will of God; by which his faithful followers will grow in divine knowledge and experience, and be built upon Him, the Rock of ages and the foundation of many generations.

We have dwelt the more largely upon this doctrine, because we believe it to be of great practical importance, and are apprehensive that it is not sufficiently regarded or lived up to, by many under our name. It is our earnest desire, that none among us may be drawn into the adoption of sentiments, or the use of expressions which tend to weaken a belief in the immediate guidance of the Spirit of Truth, or put the Holy Scriptures into its place and office, thinking that by the study of them they can come to the saving knowledge of spiritual things, and esteeming them, instead of the Spirit, the principal means for the enlightening,

conversion and edification of mankind, or of unfolding to the mind the divine will concerning us.

It pleased the Lord, by his blessed Spirit, to give our primitive Friends to see the deadness and formality of the religious professions of their day; to bring them out of the observance of those forms and ceremonies which yielded no life or peace to their panting souls, and to gather them into reverent, silent waiting upon himself, for a qualification to perform that worship which is in spirit and in truth. In faithfully following his heavenly guidance, they were united in the faith and fellowship of the gospel, and all spake the same language, come out of what society or from what country they might; and thus harmoniously travailing together for the honour of God and the spread of the kingdom of Christ, they were like a city set upon a hill that could not be hid; many souls were awakened and converted, through their instrumentality, and joined the Society, and they were successfully engaged in diffusing a knowledge of the doctrines and testimonies of the gospel in many parts of the world. May we all be sincerely engaged to follow them as they followed Christ, that others seeing our good works, may glorify our Father who is in Heaven.

THE FALLEN STATE OF MAN.

MAN was created in the image of God, capable of understanding the divine law, and holding communion with his Creator. Through transgression he fell from this blessed state, and consequently lost the heavenly image. His posterity come into the world in the image of the earthly, and until renewed by the quick-

ening power of the grace of God, they are fallen, degenerated, and dead to the divine life in which Adam originally stood, and are subject to the power, nature and seed of the serpent; and not only their words and deeds, but their imaginations are evil perpetually in the sight of God, as proceeding from this depraved and wicked seed. Man therefore in this state can know nothing aright concerning God; his thoughts and conceptions of spiritual things, until he is disjoined from this evil seed, and united to the divine light, are unprofitable to himself and to others.

Although we are not punishable for Adam's sin, and do not partake of his guilt until we make it our own by transgression, yet we cannot suppose that, descended from Adam, man has any natural light, or moral faculty pertaining to his constitution, that can give him a sense of his fallen state, or bring him out of it into that spiritual fellowship and communion with God, which Adam fell from. Whatever real good any man doth, it proceeds from the seed of God in him as a new visitation of life, in order to bring him out of his fallen state; which though it be placed in him, is not of him.

Where the apostle asserts that the Gentiles do by nature the things contained in the law, he is not to be understood as speaking of man's own nature, which he hath as man, for this would make him contradict himself; since he declares that the natural man receiveth not the things of God, for they are foolishness to him, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned. The nature by which the Gentiles did the things of the law, cannot therefore be the fallen corrupt nature, but the renewed spiritual nature, pro-

ceeding from the regenerating power of divine grace, which is evident from what follows—"these having not the law, that is outwardly, are a law unto themselves, which show the work of the law written in their hearts." Now the law of God is among the things of God,—and the apostle says, the law is spiritual, holy, just and good; and the Scriptures declare, that the writing of the divine law in the heart, is an essential part of the New Covenant dispensation, and therefore it can be no part of man's nature.

However early children give evidence of the effects of the fall, and of a sinful nature, they cannot be sinners from their birth, because there can be no sin where there is no transgression; and where there is not a capacity to receive a law, it cannot be transgressed. The testimony of the apostle is very positive to this point; "Where no law is there is no transgression;" "but sin is not imputed when there is no law." To account a child guilty or obnoxious to punishment, merely for an offence committed by its parents, before it could have any consciousness of being, is inconsistent both with justice and mercy; therefore no infant can be born with guilt upon its head. Those are by nature children of wrath, who walk according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that worketh in the hearts of the children of disobedience. Here the apostle gives their evil walking, and not anything which is not reduced to act, as a reason of their being children of wrath. Besides the natural alienation from the internal life of God, as they become capable of distinguishing the monitions of truth in their consciences, the bonds of corruption are often strengthened by habitual indulgence of the car-

nal propensities against the sense of duty, and thus all who have arrived at such a degree of maturity as to be convinced of right and wrong, have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

But whatever Adam's posterity lost through him, is fully made up to them in Christ, and undoubtedly his mercy and goodness, and the extent of his propitiation, are applicable to infants, who have not personally offended, as to adults who have; and little children who are taken away before they have sinned, may with perfect confidence be resigned as entirely safe in the arms of their Saviour, who declared "of such is the kingdom of Heaven."*

ON THE UNIVERSALITY OF THE LIGHT OF CHRIST.

IN reference to the universality of this divine light and grace, we believe in accordance with the testimony of Robert Barclay; "That God, who, out of his infinite love sent his Son the Lord Jesus Christ into the world, who tasted death for every man, hath given to every man, whether Jew or Gentile, Turk or Scythian, Indian or barbarian, of whatsoever nation, country or place, a certain day or time of visitation, during which it is possible for him to be saved and to partake of the benefits of Christ's death. That for this end he hath communicated to every man, a measure of the light of his own Son, a measure of grace or of the Spirit, which the Scripture expresses by several names, as sometimes of 'the seed of the kingdom,' 'the light that makes all things manifest,' 'the word of God,' or 'the manifestation of the Spirit

* See Barclay's Apology and Phipps' Original and Present State of Man.

given to profit withal,' 'a talent,' 'a little leaven,' 'the gospel preached in every creature.'

"That God, in and by this light and seed, invites, calls, exhorts, and strives with every man, in order to save him; which, as it is received and not resisted, works the salvation of all, even of those who are ignorant of the death and sufferings of Christ and of Adam's fall; both by bringing them to a sense of their own misery, and to be sharers in the sufferings of Christ inwardly; and by making them partakers of his resurrection in becoming holy, pure and righteous, and recovered out of their sins. By which also are saved they that have the knowledge of Christ outwardly, in that it opens their understandings rightly to use and apply the things delivered in the Scriptures and to receive the saving use of them. But that this may be resisted and rejected by both; in which then, God is said to be resisted and pressed down, and Christ to be again crucified and put to open shame, in and among men: and to those who thus resist and refuse him, he becomes their condemnation."

"We do not understand this divine principle to be any part of man's nature, nor yet to be any relic of any good which Adam lost by his fall, in that we make it a distinct and separate thing from man's soul and all the faculties of it. There are some that lean to the doctrine of Socinus or Pelagius, who persuade themselves through mistake as if this divine light which we preach up, were some natural power or faculty of the soul, and that we only differ from them in the wording of it, and not in the thing itself. Whereas there can be no greater difference than is betwixt us in that matter; for we certainly know that this light

of which we speak, is not only distinct, but of a different nature, from the soul of man and its faculties.”

After treating at large upon the universal appearance of the Holy Spirit to all men, he adds :

“By this we do not at all intend to equal ourselves to that holy Man, the Lord Jesus Christ, who was born of the virgin Mary, in whom all the fulness of the Godhead dwelt bodily,—so neither do we destroy the reality of his present existence. For though we affirm that Christ dwells in us, yet not immediately, but mediately as he is in that seed which is in us; whereas He, the eternal Word, which was with God and was God, dwelt immediately in that holy Man. He then is as the head and we as the members—he is the vine and we the branches.”

And again, “We do not hereby intend any ways to lessen or derogate from the atonement and sacrifice of Jesus Christ, but on the contrary do magnify and exalt it. For as we believe all those things to have been certainly transacted which are recorded in the Holy Scriptures, concerning the birth, life, miracles, sufferings, resurrection and ascension of Christ, so we do also believe that it is the duty of every one to believe it, to whom it pleases God to reveal the same, and to bring them to the knowledge of it; yea, we believe it were damnable unbelief not to believe it when so declared; but to resist that Holy seed, which, as minded would lead and incline every one to believe it, as it is offered unto them; though it revealeth not in every one the outward and explicit knowledge of it, yet it always assenteth to it, where it is declared.

“Nevertheless, as we firmly believe it was necessary that Christ should come, that by his death and

sufferings he might offer up himself a sacrifice to God for our sins; who, his own-self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, so we believe that the remission of sins which any partake of, is only in and by virtue of that most satisfactory sacrifice and no otherwise; for it is by the obedience of that one that the free gift is come upon all to justification.”

We have thought it proper thus to revive our ancient and acknowledged doctrine, concerning the universality and efficacy of the manifestation of the Holy Spirit or the Light of Christ, which we believe is, in mercy, extended in a greater or less degree, to every man without distinction of nation or colour, during his day of visitation; because in reference to those who have not been favoured with the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, opinions are afloat, the tendency of which is to obscure our well known principle; representing the guide of such, in the things pertaining to salvation, to be a moral faculty, the light of nature, or a sense of the moral law, implanted in the constitution of man, &c., and denying that the declarations of the apostle where he says, “the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal,” and, “The grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men,” have any reference whatever to the circumstances of mankind at large, and that it is very doubtful whether the testimony of the evangelist respecting our Lord Jesus Christ, “that was the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world,” has any such application—sentiments with which we have no unity, being repugnant to our Christian faith.

Another reason for setting forth afresh our belief

on this point is, that some modern writers, under the pretext of upholding the inward light, are promulgating a system which gives that appellation to a phantom of their own creating; and which they also designate as the light of universal reason, the voice of universal conscience, the instinct of Deity, and other similar terms; which they represent as a redeeming principle implanted in man's nature, capable of springing up and producing all that man can know of God, of duty and the soul; and that the soul of man is itself a living fountain of immortal truth. Such delusive notions are entirely at variance with our Christian faith, and appear to us no other than the refined speculations of a disguised deism, which virtually denies the truth of divine revelation, the divinity of Christ, and his various offices in the work of man's salvation.

Our religious Society has never professed or believed in any other principle or power in man, to redeem him from evil, than the Holy Spirit, the light of Christ or the grace of God, which shines in and appears unto all men, and was purchased for us by the sufferings and death of our Lord Jesus Christ; and we consider it a gross abuse and perversion of our Christian character and profession, to connect them with the erroneous notions above alluded to.

Various are the specious forms, in which infidelity is disguised in the present day, in order to conceal its real character, and recommend it to the adoption of the inexperienced and unwatchful; and the nearer it counterfeits the truth, the greater is the danger to be apprehended from its approaches.

When once the mind is set afloat on the troubled

sea of creaturely imagination and vain speculation, no matter at what point in religion it may be aiming, it is liable to be tossed about by every wind that blows, and to be carried away by every plausible theory or argument, which may be started by men of greater cunning or more powerful intellect than its own; and having parted from its heavenly Pilot, it is in imminent danger of making shipwreck of faith and a good conscience.

We feel it to be a duty to warn and caution all our members against imbibing or adopting sentiments, which would tend, in any wise, to shake their confidence in the truths of the Christian religion as they are recorded in Holy Scripture; and to be careful not to put themselves in the way of hearing or reading any thing which would have such a tendency; it having been found by sorrowful experience, that some, who thought themselves fortified against a spirit of unbelief, have had their religious principles gradually undermined, by thus needlessly exposing themselves to temptation.

ON THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

OUR religious Society has always believed that the Holy Scriptures were written by divine inspiration, and contain a declaration of all the fundamental doctrines and principles relating to eternal life and salvation; and that whatsoever doctrine or practice is contrary to them, is to be rejected as false and erroneous; that they are a declaration of the mind and will of God in and to the several ages in which they were written, and are obligatory on us, and are to be read, believed

and fulfilled through the assistance of divine grace. We esteem it an unspeakable favour that it has pleased the Lord to preserve them to us, and the more we come under the government of the same spirit which inspired the holy men who wrote them, the more truly shall we prize them, and delight to read and meditate upon the precious truths they contain.

It continues to be our unabated concern to encourage all our members to practice the frequent perusal of them, with their hearts turned to the Lord, that so he may be pleased to open their understandings to receive that spiritual benefit which he designs they should convey, whether it be in doctrine, correction, reproof, or instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. We also exhort parents and those who have the care of children, to educate them in the knowledge of the Scriptures, which plainly set forth the miraculous birth, holy life, wonderful works, meritorious death, resurrection, glorious ascension, mediation and intercession, of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Saviour and Redeemer, and also the blessed gift of his light and grace, freely dispensed to every man to profit withal.

While we thus highly value those sacred records, and recommend them to the diligent attention of all, we also feel jealous for the honour of our Lord and Master, and for the glory of the gospel dispensation; and it is our desire, that in setting forth the benefits conferred upon us through the Scriptures, our members may be very careful not to be drawn into the adoption of sentiments, or the use of terms or phrases, common with many in our day, which ascribe to the Scriptures,

instead of the Spirit of Christ, the office of bringing the soul under a sense of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, of enlightening and converting it, of unfolding all the duties it is required to perform, and bringing it to the saving knowledge of God and Christ.

We believe the Holy Scriptures to be the words of God, written by holy men as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; but to the Saviour of men, and not to the Bible, belong the titles of the Word of God, the Bread of Life, and the Light. It is He only, who can impart to the soul the sincere milk of the word, and the bread and water of life; who reveals himself and the divine law in the hearts of his humble and obedient children; and if we would partake of the benefits of gospel truth, and come to that knowledge of the Supreme Being and his beloved Son, which is saving, it is indispensably necessary that we draw near to Him, through the Spirit, who is the way, the truth and the life. So far from any advantage arising from setting the Holy Scriptures above their true place, and that which they claim for themselves, we believe that it is productive of serious injury, and may tend to withdraw the faith and attention of the visited soul from the inward appearance and teachings of Christ, the incorruptible Seed and Word of God, by whom alone we can be quickened, regenerated and made alive unto God.

In the progress of this great work, he is often pleased to make use of the sacred records as a means to instruct, encourage and comfort the awakened mind; which, however, is not to turn its attention to them as the guide, and the source of divine light and life, but to draw it unto himself, that it may have life, and ex-

perience the fulfilment of the promise, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children." "Search the Scriptures, said our blessed Lord, to the unbelieving Jews, for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me; but ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life." It is our sincere engagement that we may be individually concerned to hold and use all the gifts, and the means, which our heavenly Father has graciously provided for our conversion and furtherance in the way of life and salvation, in due reverence and esteem. That to Him, and to his beloved Son, and to the word of his grace, the first and highest place and honour, may ever, with all humility, obedience and fear, be ascribed; and to the Holy Scriptures the second place, as a means for which we are bound to be humbly thankful to him, and diligently to improve by the assistance of his Spirit, to our everlasting advantage.

Impressed with the importance of these views, and with the danger of being drawn away from a clear and full acknowledgment of our doctrine herein, we are engaged to revive the following passages from the Apology, viz:

"From these revelations of the Spirit of God to the saints, have proceeded the Scriptures of Truth, which contain a faithful historical account of the actings of God's people in divers ages, with many singular providences attending them; a prophetic account of several things, whereof some are already past and some yet to come; also an ample account of all the chief principles of the doctrine of Christ, held forth in divers precious declarations and exhortations, which,

by the moving of God's Spirit, were upon sundry occasions spoken and written unto some churches and their pastors. Nevertheless, because they are only a declaration of the Fountain and not the Fountain itself, they are not to be esteemed the principal ground of all truth and knowledge, nor yet the adequate primary rule of faith and manners. Yet because they give a true and faithful testimony of the first foundation, they are, and may be esteemed a secondary rule, subordinate to the Spirit, from which they have all their excellency and certainty. For as by the inward testimony of the Spirit we do alone truly know them, so they testify that the Spirit is that guide by which the saints are led into all truth; therefore according to the Scriptures, the Spirit is the first and principal leader. Seeing then we do receive and believe the Scriptures, because they proceeded from the Spirit, for the same reason is the Spirit more originally and principally the rule.

“Though then we do acknowledge the Scriptures to be very heavenly and divine writings, and the use of them to be very comfortable and necessary to the church of Christ; and admire, and give praises to the Lord for his wonderful providence in preserving these writings so pure and uncorrupted as we have them, through so long a night of apostacy, to be a testimony of his truth against the wickedness and abominations even of those whom he made instrumental in preserving them, so that they have kept them to be a witness against themselves; yet we may not call them the principal Fountain of all truth and knowledge, nor yet the first adequate rule of faith and manners, because the principal Fountain of truth, must be the Truth

itself, whose certainty and authority depend not upon another.

“If by the Spirit we can only come to the true knowledge of God;—if by the Spirit we are to be led into all truth, and so be taught of all things; then the Spirit and not the Scriptures, is the foundation and ground of all truth and knowledge, and the primary rule of faith and manners. The very nature of the gospel declareth that the Scriptures cannot be the only and chief rule of Christians, else there would be no difference between the law and the gospel.”

“There are numberless things with regard to their circumstances which particular Christians may be concerned in, for which there can be no particular rule had in the Scriptures; therefore the Scriptures cannot be a rule to them [in those things.] As for instance, some are called to the ministry of the word: Paul says there was a necessity laid upon him to preach the gospel, and woe is unto me if I preach it not. If it be necessary that there be now ministers of the church as well as then, there is the same necessity upon some more than upon others to occupy this place; which necessity, as it may be incumbent upon some particular persons, the Scriptures neither doth nor can declare.

“If it be said the qualifications of a minister are found in the Scriptures, and by applying these qualifications to myself I may know whether I be fit for such a place or not, I answer; The qualifications of a bishop or minister, as they are mentioned both in the Epistle to Timothy and that to Titus, are such as may be found in a private Christian, yea, which ought in some measure to be in every true Christian; so that

this giveth a man no certainty. Every capacity to an office gives me not a sufficient call to it. Again; by what rule shall I judge if I be so qualified? How do I know that I am sober, meek, holy, harmless? Is it not the testimony of the Spirit in my conscience that must assure me hereof? And suppose I was qualified and called, yet what Scripture rule shall inform me whether it be my duty to preach in this or in that place, in France or England, Holland or Germany? Whether I shall take up my time in confirming the faithful, reclaiming heretics, or converting infidels, as also in writing epistles to this or that church? The general rules of the Scriptures to be diligent in my duty; to do all to the glory of God, and for the good of his church, can give me no light in this thing; seeing two different things may both have a respect to that way; yet I may commit a great error and offence in doing the one, when I am called to the other. If Paul, when his face was turned by the Lord toward Jerusalem, had gone back to Achaia or Macedonia, he might have supposed he could have done God more acceptable service in preaching and confirming the churches, than in being shut up in prison in Judea; but would God have been pleased herewith? Nay—certainly. Obedience is better than sacrifice, and it is not our doing that which is good simply, that pleaseth God, but that good which he willeth us to do.

“Moreover, that which, of all things, is most needful for a Christian to know, viz: whether he really be in the faith and an heir of salvation or not, the Scripture can give him no certainty in, neither can it be a rule to him. That this knowledge is exceedingly de-

sirable and comfortable all do unanimously acknowledge; besides, it is especially commanded, 'Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?' 'Wherefore the rather, brethren, give all diligence to make your calling and election sure.' Now I say, what Scripture rule can assure me that I have true faith, and that my calling and election are sure?"

After examining various suggestions he says;

"Moreover the Scripture itself, wherein we are so earnestly pressed to seek this assurance, does not at all affirm itself a rule sufficient to give it, but wholly ascribeth it to the Spirit. 'The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.' 'Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.' 'And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.'"

"If it then be asked whether I think hereby to render the Scriptures altogether uncertain and useless, I answer, not at all: Provided, that to the Spirit, from which they came, be granted that place which the Scriptures themselves give it, I do freely concede to the Scriptures the second place, even whatsoever they say of themselves, which the apostle Paul chiefly mentions in two places, viz: 'Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.' 'The Holy Scriptures are able to make wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for

correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.'

"Secondly: God hath seen meet that herein we should see as in a looking glass, the conditions and experiences of the saints of old, that finding our experience to answer to theirs, we might thereby be the more confirmed and comforted, and our hope of obtaining the same end strengthened; that observing the providences attending them—seeing the snares they were liable to, and beholding their deliverances, we may thereby be made wise unto salvation, and seasonably reprov'd and instructed in righteousness.—This is the great work of the Scriptures, and their service to us, that we may witness them fulfilled in us, and so discern the stamp of God's Spirit and ways upon them, by the inward acquaintance we have with the same Spirit and work in our hearts. The prophecies of the Scriptures are also very comfortable and profitable to us, as the same Spirit enlightens us to observe them fulfilled and to be fulfilled. In all this it is to be observed, that it is only the spiritual man that can make a right use of them: they are able to make the man of God perfect; so it is not the natural man. And whatsoever was written aforetime was written for *our* comfort—our, that is, for the believers, or for the saints; concerning such the apostle speaks. Peter plainly declares, that the unstable and unlearned wrest them to their own destruction. These were they who were unlearned in the divine and heavenly learning of the Spirit, not in human and school literature, in which we may safely presume that Peter himself, being a fisherman, had no skill."

In setting forth the use and service of the Holy Scriptures to the church, as a secondary rule, subordinate to the Spirit of Truth, he further says, "We do look upon them as the only fit outward judge of controversies among Christians, and that whatsoever doctrine is contrary unto their testimony, may therefore justly be rejected as false. And for our parts we are very willing that all our doctrines and practices be tried by them; which we never refused, nor ever shall, in all controversies with our adversaries, as the judge and test. We shall also be very willing to admit it as a positive certain maxim, that whatsoever any do, pretending to the Spirit, which is contrary to the Scriptures, be accounted and reckoned a delusion of the devil. For as we never lay claim to the Spirit's leading, that we may cover ourselves in any thing that is evil, so we know that as every evil contradicts the Scriptures, so it doth also the Spirit in the first place from which the Scriptures came, and whose motions can never contradict one another, though they may appear sometimes to be contradictory to the blind eye of the natural man."

JUSTIFICATION.

THE love of ease naturally leads men to prefer an assent to the truths of religion, rather than submission to the practical operation of it on the heart. It is much easier to profess faith in what Christ has suffered and done for us, than to yield obedience to the daily cross, and endure the portion of suffering inseparable from the baptism of the Holy Ghost, by which the corruptions of the heart are removed.

From the rise of the Society, Friends have unequivocally declared their faith in the efficacy of the propitiatory offering which our Lord voluntarily made of himself for the sins of the whole world. George Fox early testified respecting his crucifixion, that "at that time, the sins of all mankind were upon him, and their iniquities and transgressions, with which he was wounded; which he was to bear and to be an offering for as he was man, but died not as he was God; so in that he died for all men, tasting death for every man, he was an offering for the sins of the whole world." But while they fully believed that remission of sin and reconciliation with God was obtained only through Christ and his most satisfactory offering, they also believed that no man was justified while he continued in sin, whatever might be his profession of faith. These devoted ministers of the gospel as it was opened to them in its primitive purity, accordingly preached in life and doctrine, the indispensable necessity of holiness, without which the Scriptures declare, that no man shall see the Lord; and they placed justification where the apostle places it, in connection with being washed and sanctified, but not as preceding sanctification.

When they went forth in their ministry, they found the different professors pleading for the impracticability of being free from sin in this life, while they considered themselves justified by faith in the Lord Jesus; alleging that our sins were imputed to him, that he suffered instead of us the penalty of infinite wrath and vengeance due to our sins, and thereby fully satisfied divine justice; and they rested in the false hope, that though they lived in sin, Christ was their surety and they were saved by his imputed righteousness.

They argued, that as God has made Christ to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, therefore as our sin is imputed to Christ, who had no sin, so Christ's righteousness is imputed to us, without our being righteous. Friends bore a decided testimony against this sin-pleasing doctrine, declaring that were the sentiment admitted, that God was so reconciled with men as to esteem them just while they were unjust and continuing in sin, he would have no controversy with them, which would make void the great practical doctrines of repentance, conversion and regeneration. Though Christ bore our sins, suffered for us, and among men was accounted a sinner, yet they denied that God ever reputed him a sinner, or that he died that we should be reputed righteous, though no more really so than he was a sinner. They understood the apostle, when he speaks of our being made the righteousness of God in Christ, to mean, that we are to be made really righteous, and not by imputation merely; for he argues against any agreement between righteousness and unrighteousness, light and darkness. Our Lord, in all his doctrines and precepts, enforces the necessity of good works; and although properly speaking, we are not justified for them, yet we are justified in them, agreeably to the apostle James, "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." "For as the body without the spirit is dead, even so faith without works is dead also."

We apprehend that some may be in danger of falling back into the errors against which our early Friends testified; and while endeavouring to counteract the spirit of infidelity, which denies the propitia-

tory efficacy of the death of Christ, they may run into the contrary extreme of attributing the justification of the ungodly to a professed reliance on the atonement and an imputed righteousness, without experiencing true repentance and the sanctification of the Spirit. To the repenting, returning sinner, who of himself has nothing on which to rest his hope of forgiveness and acceptance with his offended Maker, the mediation, intercession, and propitiation of the Redeemer of lost man, is inexpressibly precious. It is through Him alone that the door of hope is opened, and all who receive into their hearts the gift of grace which comes by Him, and yield to its convicting power, by which alone they can be brought to see their sinful state and to repent as in dust and ashes, will in the Lord's time, through faith and submission to him, know the blood of Christ to cleanse them from all sin, and from the guilt of sin.

Robert Barclay lays down the doctrine of Justification in these terms: "As many as resist not the light of Christ, but receive the same, it becomes in them a holy, pure and spiritual birth, bringing forth holiness, righteousness, purity and all those other blessed fruits which are acceptable to God; by which holy birth, to wit, Jesus Christ formed within us, and working his works in us, as we are sanctified, so are we justified in the sight of God, according to the apostle's words; 'But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.' Therefore it is not by our works wrought in our will, nor yet by good works considered as of themselves, but by Christ who is both the gift and the giver, and the cause producing

the effects in us, who as he hath reconciled us while we were enemies, doth also in his wisdom save and justify us after this manner, as saith the same apostle elsewhere; 'Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that, being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a faithful saying; and these things I will that thou affirm constantly; that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works.'

"We renounce all natural power and ability in ourselves, to bring us out of our lost and fallen condition and first nature; and confess that as of ourselves we are able to do nothing that is good; so neither can we procure remission of sins or justification by any act of our own, so as to merit it or draw it as a debt from God due unto us; but we acknowledge all to be of and from his love, which is the original and fundamental cause of our acceptance.

"God manifested this love towards us, in the sending of his beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, into the world, who gave himself an offering for us and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet smelling savour; and having made peace through the blood of the cross, that he might reconcile us unto himself, and by the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot unto God; suffered for our sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us unto God.

"For as much then as all men who have come to man's estate (the man Jesus only excepted) have sinned,

therefore all have need of this Saviour, to remove the wrath of God from them due to their offences. In this respect he is truly said to have borne the iniquities of us all in his body on the tree; and therefore is the only Mediator, having qualified the wrath of God towards us, so that our former sins stand not in our way, being by virtue of his most satisfactory sacrifice removed and pardoned. Neither do we think that remission of sins is to be expected, sought or obtained any other way, or by any work or sacrifice whatsoever; though they may come to partake of this remission who are ignorant of the history. So then Christ by his death and sufferings hath reconciled us to God, even while we are enemies; that is, he offers reconciliation unto us; we are put into a capacity of being reconciled. God is willing to forgive us our iniquities and to accept us, as is well expressed by the apostle; 'God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath put in us the word of reconciliation.' And therefore in the next verses, the apostle entreats them in Christ's stead, to be reconciled to God; intimating that the wrath of God being removed by the obedience of Christ Jesus, he is willing to be reconciled unto them, and ready to remit the sins that are past, if they repent.

"We consider then our redemption in a two-fold respect, both which in their own nature are perfect, though in their application to us, the one is not nor can be, without respect to the other. The first is the redemption performed and accomplished by Christ for us in his crucified body without us: the other is the redemption wrought by Christ in us, which is no less pro-

perly called and accounted a redemption than the former. The first is that whereby a man, as he stands in the fall, is put in a capacity of salvation, and hath conveyed unto him a measure of that power, virtue, spirit, life and grace that was in Christ Jesus, which as the free gift of God is able to counterbalance, overcome and root out the evil seed, wherewith we are naturally as in the fall leavened.

“Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.” Here the apostle holds forth the extent and efficacy of Christ’s death, showing that thereby and by faith therein, remission of sins that are past is obtained, as being that wherein the forbearance of God is exercised towards mankind. So that though men for the sins they daily commit deserve eternal death and that the wrath of God should lay hold upon them, yet by virtue of that most satisfactory sacrifice of Christ Jesus, the grace and seed of God moves in love towards them during the day of their visitation; yet not so as not to strike against the evil, for that must be burned up and destroyed, but to redeem man out of the evil.

“By the second we witness this capacity brought into act, whereby receiving and not resisting the light, spirit, and grace of Christ revealed in us, which is the purchase of his death, we witness and possess a real, true and inward redemption from the power and prevalency of sin, and so come to be really redeemed, justified and made righteous, and to a sensible union and friendship with God. Thus he died for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity; and thus we ‘know

him and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his death.' ”

Richard Claridge on the subject of justification, says :—

“ In a word, if justification be considered in its full and just latitude, neither Christ’s work without us in the prepared body, nor his work within us by his Holy Spirit, is to be excluded, for both have their place and service in our complete and absolute justification. By the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ without us, we truly repenting and believing, are, through the mercy of God, justified from the imputations of sins and transgressions that are past, as though they had never been committed: and by the mighty work of Christ within us, the power, nature, and habits of sin are destroyed; that as sin once reigned unto death, even so now grace reigneth, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord. All this is effected, not by a bare or naked act of faith, separate from obedience, but in the obedience of faith, Christ being the author of eternal salvation to none but those that obey him.”

To those who receive him in his spiritual appearance in the heart, whether they have ever heard of his coming in the flesh or not, he gives power to become the sons of God; and if any through weakness or unwatchfulness fall again into sin, he is their propitiation, and will forgive and blot out their transgression, if they turn again to Him and sincerely repent. As the Lord Jesus is thus revealed in them, converting, regenerating and renewing the soul by his Holy Spirit, if they persevere in faithfulness, they experience Him

to be made unto them of God, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption; they are made one with Him, as the branches with the vine; they put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and in their respective measures are made partakers of the divine nature, and of what he has done for them; so that his obedience becomes theirs, his righteousness theirs, his death and sufferings theirs. Thus they are renewed up into the image which Adam lost by transgression, and walking in the light, as God is in the light, they have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses them from all sin.

BAPTISM AND THE SUPPER.

THE subjects of water baptism and the use of bread and wine, have recently engaged much attention among Christian professors, and we trust the minds of many are gradually preparing for the reception of views respecting them, more consonant with the spirituality of the gospel dispensation. It is therefore highly important, that our members should faithfully support our testimony in these particulars, and be careful not to be "entangled with the yoke of bondage;" "the beggarly elements and carnal ordinances," from which our forefathers were redeemed by the outstretched arm of divine power.

We should ever bear in mind that, the Son of God came into the world to put an end to sin, to finish transgression, and to bring in everlasting righteousness; and that if this all-important work is accomplished, it must be carried on and perfected in the heart of man by the

Spirit of God—no outward ceremonies can ever effect it. The dispensation of types and shadows, with its “divers washings” or baptisms, was finished and passed away when our blessed Lord was crucified; and was succeeded by the more glorious dispensation of the gospel, which is spirit and life to the penitent and obedient soul. The Holy Scriptures plainly declare that there is now but one baptism; and that this one baptism saves the soul; “not by the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but by the answer of a good conscience towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.” Few of the advocates of water baptism contend that it is necessary to salvation; while the New Testament uniformly represents the baptism of Christ, which is with the Holy Ghost and fire, as effectual in purifying the soul from the defilement of sin, and consequently essential to its salvation.

The forerunner of our Lord testified, “I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and fire; whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” These striking figures are a lively representation of the work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of those who submit to his operations, whereby they are thoroughly refined from the pollution of sin, and the transgressing nature winnowed away, so as to prepare the soul for being gathered into the heavenly garner.

To those who thus yield themselves to this fiery baptism, and follow Christ in the regeneration, the

apostle addresses this language; "ye are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power: in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ; buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God, who raised him from the dead."

As many as are thus baptized into Jesus Christ, are baptized into his death; and like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so these also walk in newness of life. "They have put on Christ," and "become new creatures; old things are passed away; behold all things are become new, and all things of God." This, and this only, is the baptism of the gospel, and this is complete and effectual in itself; without the addition of any outward washing or sprinkling,—which relate to the body only, and can never affect the soul.

Our views respecting the participation of the Lord's supper, are of the same character. The passover supper, at which Jesus gave the bread and wine to his disciples, was abolished, with the rest of the Jewish ceremonies, at his death; and although the disciples, from their attachment to the law of Moses, practised it after that event, as they did circumcision, and abstaining from blood and from things strangled; yet we find nothing in Scripture to warrant the assumption that it is a standing ordinance in Christ's church. He himself declares, "except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you: whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last

day; for my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him." When his disciples murmured at this doctrine, he told them, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life."

We believe that this communion of the body and blood of Christ, without which we cannot have eternal life, is inward and spiritual,—a real participation of his divine nature, through faith in him, and obedience to his Spirit in the heart; by which the inward man is daily nourished and strengthened, and kept alive unto God. This is the true communion of saints, in and with Christ Jesus their Lord, and it is not confined to those who have the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, or of the coming and sufferings and death of the Son of God, as the propitiation for sin; but is graciously granted to every sincere and obedient soul, who is faithful to the degree of light and knowledge with which it is favoured, agreeably to the testimony of our Lord himself; "Behold I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him and sup with him, and he with me."

Having thus set forth the views which we as a people have always believed and maintained, in regard to these important doctrines, we think it right renewedly to call the attention of our members to some of those Christian testimonies, into which the Lord was pleased to lead our worthy predecessors, and which it is no less obligatory on us faithfully to uphold at the present day.

DIVINE WORSHIP.

DIVINE worship is the highest and most important duty in which the mind of man can be engaged. It is no less than holding intercourse with the Father of Spirits, and offering the tribute of homage and adoration to "the High and lofty One, who inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy;" but who condescends also, to "dwell with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit; to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." This solemn act is not dependent upon, or necessarily connected with, any thing which one man can do for another; but must be performed between the soul and its Almighty Creator; for "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth."

Acceptable worship cannot be offered, but through the assistance of the Spirit of Christ; he being our Mediator by whom only we can approach unto God, and from whom we must derive, for this engagement, both "the preparation of the heart and the answer of the tongue." In order to experience this necessary qualification, it is our duty to have the mind withdrawn from all outward objects, and reverently and humbly to wait upon the Lord in the silence of all flesh; that so he may be pleased, through the revelation of his Spirit, to give us a true sense of our needs and a knowledge of his will, and enable us to offer a sacrifice well-pleasing in his sight, whether it be in silent mental adoration; the secret breathing of the soul unto Him; in the public ministry of the gospel, or vocal prayer or thanksgiving. Those who thus wait upon the Lord, and depend upon the assistance of his

Spirit, will often be favoured with a broken and contrite heart, a sacrifice which, it is declared, He will not despise—their spiritual strength will be renewed, and they will experience a growth and establishment in the blessed truth. These, however small their number or remote and solitary their situation may be, are the true worshippers whom the Father seeketh to worship him; and to whom the Lord Jesus will fulfil his gracious promise, “Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”

We tenderly entreat all to be constant in assembling with their brethren on first-days, and other days of the week when meetings for Divine Worship are held, in order to bear a public testimony to our dependence upon the Father of mercies, for the blessings we enjoy, and to experience a renewal of our ability to live in his fear, and to labour in his blessed cause and service. Let us not suffer the improper influence of temporal things, an indifferent or lifeless state of mind, the smallness of the number who meet, or the absence of a vocal ministry, to discourage us from diligently attending all our religious meetings; remembering that it is our reasonable service to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God. Where this is the sincere engagement of those gathered, whether it may please him to authorize any public ministry or not, the great minister of the sanctuary, Christ Jesus, will, in his own time, dispense to the waiting soul, that divine consolation or instruction which He sees to be best for it. Let none then, be weary or ashamed of our ancient and noble testimony to the excellence of silent waiting upon God; it having been found, in the experience of many of his servants, a

most profitable exercise of mind, and one which he has graciously been pleased eminently to own and bless.

MINISTRY.

As it is the prerogative of the great Head of the church alone to select and call the ministers of his gospel, so we believe both the gift, and the qualification to exercise it, must be derived immediately from Him;—and that as in the primitive church, so now also, he confers them on women as well as on men, agreeably to the prophecy recited by the apostle Peter, “It shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy;” “and on my servants and on my handmaidens, I will pour out, in those days, of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:” respecting which the apostle declares, “the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.”

The gift being free, the exercise of it is to be without money and without price, agreeably to the command of our Lord, “freely ye have received, freely give.”

The apostle Paul, in speaking of his ministry declares, “I neither received it from man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ;” that the exercise of it was “not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth;” and that his “speech and his preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power; that the faith of his hear-

ers might not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." We believe that the experience of every true minister of Christ will correspond with that of the apostle; and therefore, our religious Society, from its first rise, has borne a constant and faithful testimony against a man-made and hireling ministry, which derives its authority and qualification from human learning and ordination; which does not recognise a direct divine call to this solemn work, nor acknowledge its dependence for the performance of it, upon the renewed motions and assistance of the Holy Spirit, vouchsafed on every occasion; and which receives pay for preaching.

We apprehend, that the selection of one man to speak to an assembly, who is always to perform that service at the stated times of meeting, whether divinely called to it and assisted, or not; to the exclusion of all others, whatever may be their religious exercises or apprehended duty, is an unauthorized assumption of power, greatly prejudicial to the welfare of the church; and a direct interference with the divine prerogative of Christ, whose right it is to dispense his gifts to whom he will, as saith the apostle, "to one is given, by the Spirit, the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge, by the same Spirit; to another faith; to another the gifts of healing—to another the working of miracles—to another prophecy—to another discerning of spirits—to another divers kinds of tongues—to another the interpretation of tongues: But all these worketh that one and the self same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will."

It is our earnest concern, that none of our mem-

bers may countenance or encourage a hireling and man-made ministry, by attending at places where it is allowed, or in any other way; but that all may faithfully uphold our Christian testimony herein, for which our forefathers suffered deeply, both in their property and persons, many of them even unto death.

PRAYER.

PRAYER is a duty inseparable from the life and growth of a Christian. Whenever he is upon the watch, it is the clothing of his spirit. He cannot maintain the watch against the insidious machinations of his unwearied enemy, without the constant aid of the Holy Spirit. This Spirit, which reminds him of his need of holy aspirations to the throne of grace for preservation, and for forgiveness of his misteps when off the watch, influences and prepares his heart to breathe forth fervent desires before the Lord, for strength to stand against the wiles of the devil, that he may be built up and preserved upon the Rock Christ Jesus. When through divine love he is made sensible of the Lord's holy presence, prayer or praise arises in his soul; and thus he is permitted to hold communion with the Father of mercies, the God of all consolation. But it is only through the Spirit of our Holy Intercessor and Advocate with the Father, that the heart is thus influenced and enabled to put up availing prayer. None need doubt that this indispensable qualification will be furnished if they humbly seek it, and are obedient to the divine will in this and other duties.

At those seasons of divine visitation, when the convictions of that grace which strives with all to save

them, are pressing upon the rebellious transgressor, as they are yielded to, a cry for mercy and forgiveness is raised by the Holy Spirit in the heart, which will reach the gracious ear of Him against whom they have sinned, and will be accepted.

Were the command of our Lord to "watch and pray continually," lived up to, there would be no formal prayers; and where that is not regarded, formal prayers will not avail as a substitute. Many of our early Friends had been educated in the habit of "saying their prayers," as it is termed, at stated periods; and when it was given them, in the light of Christ Jesus, to see their own conditions, and that he required a thorough change of heart, they were convinced that those customary prayers, in which the spirit of supplication was not poured forth from on high upon the individual, would not avail anything, and they were restrained from the practice and from teaching them to their children. They clearly saw and felt, that He only, to whom the apostles applied, could teach them how to pray and what to pray for; under his guidance their lives became lives of prayer and watchfulness, and many of them attained to an extraordinary growth and fixedness in the blessed truth.

Like the qualification for gospel ministry, we have always believed that the putting forth of the Shepherd of Israel is requisite for the duty of vocal prayer in our religious assemblies, a service in which the spiritual worshipper can fervently and cordially unite, when it is performed under the anointing of the Holy Spirit. It is one of the most solemn acts in which man can be engaged, and when prostrated in the presence of the great I AM, our words should be few and weigh-

ty. We would carefully avoid discouraging any from a faithful compliance with this duty, when divinely opened to them; but there is need of caution, lest any fall into a habit of kneeling in meetings, as though they could hardly be commenced or concluded properly, without vocal addresses of this nature. Such a practice tends to lessen that reverence and holy fear, which all ought scrupulously to maintain in approaching the sacred presence; and meetings are greatly injured by such unauthorized communications,—sometimes running into lifeless declaration, and also asking amiss, which bring death over a meeting instead of life, and eclipse the excellency of the gift of prayer.

May all then be watchful and attentive to the gentle intimations of our holy high Priest, who will clothe with deep humility and awe; and when he sees it proper, will grant to his servants the spirit of supplication, and strengthen them to offer living prayers, with the spirit and with the understanding also, which will find acceptance with him, and tend to the refreshment of his church and people.

WAR.

It being the nature and design of the Christian religion, to subject the angry and revengeful passions of human nature to its benign influence and government; those who have fully submitted to its transforming power, must necessarily be redeemed from the spirit in which wars and fightings originate. The gospel of Christ breathes peace on earth and good will to men,—and the precepts of its divine Author entirely preclude the indulgence of a disposition which would resent an

injury or inflict one upon a fellow creature. Ye have heard, says he, "that it hath been said, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth; but I say unto you that ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." "I say unto you, love your enemies; bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you, that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven." If then we would be children of God, and joint heirs with Christ, we must love our enemies instead of hating them,—do good to them, instead of injuring them; and not seek to avenge ourselves for wrongs which may be inflicted upon us.

It is also worthy of our serious consideration, that in our Lord's instructions on the subject of prayer, we are taught that the measure of the forgiveness which we receive from our heavenly Father, will be that which we exercise toward our fellow men. "Forgive us our debts,—as we forgive our debtors." "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any, that your Father also, which is in heaven, may forgive you your trespasses." "But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive you." Thus it is evident, that the Spirit of the gospel is that of universal love and forgiveness; and wherever these plain and unalterable commands of Christ are duly regarded, strife, malevolence and discord, must come to an end; "violence will no more be heard in the land, wasting or destruction within its borders;" but the prediction will be fulfilled, "they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not

lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." When we contemplate these blessed effects of the religion of the Prince of peace, and contrast them with the fierce and cruel passions which rage upon the battle-field; the injuries inflicted by man upon his fellow; how many immortal spirits are hurried unprepared, into an awful eternity,—guilty perhaps of a brother's blood; the cry of the mourning widow and of the bereaved orphan; how mournful is the prospect, and how deeply is it to be deplored, that any of the professors of the Christian name should countenance a system, so directly opposed to the precepts of Christ, and so offensive in the sight of heaven.

Although our portion of the land has been long exempted, through divine favour, from the desolating scourge of war, and the members of our religious Society have not been called to suffer as in former years, in support of our testimony on this subject,—yet we greatly desire, that in this day of ease, we may not become indifferent to its importance, or in any degree relax in its faithful maintenance. We feel a fear, lest some among us, for want of due consideration, may be induced to pay those pecuniary demands, which are exacted by the laws, in lieu of military service, or connive at, or encourage the payment of them by others,—a practice highly discreditable to any making profession of the truth, and against which we feel bound to bear our testimony. However remote the connexion may seem, between the payment of such a fine and the cruel operations of active warfare, they are parts of the same iniquitous system. The exaction of such fines, is also an infringement of our liberty of conscience; inasmuch as it requires us to pay for

the exercise of a religious scruple, the free enjoyment of which is a natural and inalienable right. We are therefore engaged again to press upon all, the upright and faithful support of our testimony in this respect; and where a restraint or imprisonment is the consequence, to bear it in a meek and becoming spirit, so as to evince that we are actuated by religious motives. Meetings are enjoined to be careful annually to collect and forward such accounts, agreeably to ancient usage.

SLAVERY.

WE wish, renewedly, to call the attention of Friends, to the righteous testimony which our religious Society has long borne against holding our fellow men in bondage. When we remember that the victims of this system of wickedness and cruelty, are our brethren; children of the same universal parent; for whose souls Christ died as well as for ours, and that they are designed to be fellow-heirs with us of immortality and eternal life,—the sufferings, the degradation and the wrongs they endure, cannot but awaken our sympathies, and incite the inquiry what the Lord is calling for at our hands, in their behalf. The sin of slavery, with its multitude of attendant evils, hangs as a dark cloud over our land, and portends the approaching infliction of divine judgments. We continue to feel an unabated concern for the spread of the testimony against slavery in the earth; believing that as the spirit of the gospel is suffered to prevail among the professors of the sacred name of Christ, it will bring with it peace on earth and good will to men, without

distinction of nation or colour;—"will loose the bands of wickedness, undo the heavy burdens, break every yoke, and let the oppressed go free."

Our forefathers engaged in this concern, under the constraining influence of religious duty and a sense of justice; and as they endeavoured to prosecute the work with a steady reference to the guidance of "the wisdom which cometh down from above; which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits; without partiality and without hypocrisy;" it pleased the Lord eminently to bless the labours of the Society. Knowing that times and seasons are not at our command, but are in the hand of Him who can turn the hearts of men, as a man turneth a water-course in his field, they endeavoured, in their public labours for the promotion of this worthy cause, to feel the way open; to watch the pointing of the Divine finger, and to move in his fear and counsel. Thus they were preserved from rash and imprudent action; from intemperate zeal, and from being swayed by animal excitements, which often impel those who yield to their influence, into measures, which, instead of promoting, retard or frustrate, the objects which they professedly have in view.

When a fierce and angry spirit is indulged, even in opposing what is glaringly wrong, it raises a correspondent feeling in those against whose conduct it is directed; and closes the mind against the force of those arguments, which, if presented in the meek and gentle spirit of the gospel, would probably produce conviction.

We would caution all our members, to beware of

a spirit of this description, on the subject of slavery; and to take care that in the anxiety to be doing something,—political motives, party feelings, unsound principles, and other influences equally at variance with a right exercise of mind, be not mixed up with it; to the great injury of the cause, and of the individuals who suffer themselves to be drawn into such coalitions.

While, therefore, we would encourage all our members to dwell under a lively feeling of the wrongs of our fellow men, and of the enormity of the system by which they are enslaved and oppressed,—we believe their safety and preservation as individuals, and the progress of this righteous testimony, so far as respects our religious Society, very much depend upon their keeping within its bosom in their efforts to promote it; and carefully attending to the unfoldings of duty in their own breasts, by which they would be kept from joining in associations, or engaging in measures, which, however plausible they may appear, would endanger their growth in best things, and their stability and usefulness as members of the body.

TRADE AND LIVING.

WE believe the call of the Lord is renewedly extended to us as a people, at the present time, to come back to the example set us by our primitive worthies, in regard to moderation in trade and business, and simplicity and humility in the style and furniture of our houses,—in our manner of living, and in dress, address and demeanour; that so we may again faithfully uphold our testimony in these respects, in support of which they underwent much reproach and suffering.

Their eye being directed toward an enduring inheritance, and their hearts set upon things above, they sought not after greatness in this world, but passed the time of their sojourning here in watchfulness and fear, and in great simplicity of heart, as well as of living and demeanour; endeavouring by their integrity and uprightness, and the purity of their example, to reach the divine witness in all, and to promote the love of truth and righteousness among men. In minds thus bent on seeking a more glorious inheritance than the things of time can afford, the love of the world could have little influence. They were bright examples of justice, of moderation in business, in their houses, their dress and language, and of the self-denial which the gospel enjoins, in all their conduct and conversation.

But, dear Friends, has not a departure from this simplicity and heavenly mindedness, led many among us into the love and eager pursuit of the riches and honour of the present world; producing the fruits of pride, emulation, and a love of grandeur; bringing in many imaginary wants and foolish fashions; to satisfy which, has led into hazardous speculations and a pursuit of business, incompatible with our holy profession; which has engrossed the time and talents, so as to leave but little of either, or of inclination, to attend to the momentous concerns of religion, to the right education of their children, or the promotion of the welfare of our fellow men. The mind thus absorbed and encumbered, is unfitted for religious thoughtfulness, as well as religious service; and for breathing daily after the spiritual riches, which are enjoyed in humble communion with God.

We believe that the pecuniary distress which pre-

vails so extensively over our country, and those convulsions which have swept away from many, a large portion of their property, are dispensations permitted by infinite Wisdom, to show us the vanity and uncertainty of all temporal possessions, and to turn the minds of the people to the necessity of endeavouring to lay up treasure in heaven, "where neither moth nor rust corrupts, and where thieves do not break through and steal."

Fervent is the solicitude we feel, that we may all "hear the rod, and him who hath appointed it;" and be deeply engaged to have our affections weaned from the perishing things of this life, and fixed upon that which is to come. Thus would our desires be moderated, and our wants circumscribed by the limitations of the holy truth;—pride, avarice and ambition, would be laid in the dust, and we should be constrained, by the love of God shed abroad in our hearts, to seek first the kingdom of heaven, and the righteousness thereof,—in the humble reliance, that He who knoweth what things we have need of before we ask him, will not fail to grant them unto us. In this lowly, humble state of mind, the desire to accumulate money, or to make an appearance in the world corresponding with others, would be mortified and subdued; and as the meek and self-denying followers of Him, who though Lord of all, had not whereon to lay his head, we should be contented with that simplicity and moderation which comport with our Christian profession, and receive with grateful hearts, whatever our heavenly Father saw meet to dispense.

May such as have lost much of their earthly substance, endeavour to profit by the dispensation, as a

fatherly correction from the hand of Him, who afflicteth not willingly; and cheerfully accommodate themselves to the change in their circumstances, by a correspondent reduction in their expenses, rather than seek to recover what they have lost, by an undue extension of business.

We affectionately and earnestly warn all to "take heed and beware of covetousness, which is idolatry;" whether it be in making haste to be rich by embarking in large business, or by indulging a penurious and hoarding disposition in a smaller way. It is a saying which experience abundantly verifies, that "they that will be rich, fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition: for the love of money is the root of all evil, which, while some have coveted after, they have erred from the faith and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."

One of the great deceptions to which mankind are liable, is looking for happiness where it is not to be found; and being ensnared by the love of the world and the deceitfulness of riches, they miss the true enjoyment, as well as the great object, of life, which are only to be found in the love and service of God.

May all then abide under the daily cross, whereby the earthly mind, which hath its delight in the pleasures and treasures, and fashions of the world, may be crucified; that being redeemed out of these things, which so manifestly hinder the progress of the soul heavenward, we may become, more and more, a serious and self-denying people, adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

PARENTS AND CHILDREN.

WE affectionately entreat those who are placed in the responsible stations of parents and caretakers of children, to endeavour to train them up, by precept and example, in a holy life and conversation, and in simplicity and plainness of attire and language; remembering that they are precious lambs entrusted to their care, by the great Shepherd of the sheep, to whom they must give an account for their souls, in the day when he shall make inquisition into their stewardship. Much depends upon the example set before them; the minds of children being very quick in discerning what objects have the first place in the affections of those who are over them.

If they see that the parents' hearts are set upon the things of this life—that they are fond of making a show and appearance among men—running greedily after gain, though perhaps derived from small earnings or penurious savings—or that they are adorning their houses and children with finery and costly things; their infant minds will soon imbibe similar views and feelings, and be estranged from the simplicity of the cross of Christ, and the love of their Redeemer.

In the ordering of divine providence, great influence is attached to the parental relation; and where its duties are faithfully performed in the fear and counsel of the Lord, restraining in the holy authority which he gives, as well as admonishing and persuading them in his love—we believe the declaration will be verified, “train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”

Although we have always believed, that the first-

day of the week is not the Christian sabbath, (that being a state of spiritual rest to the soul) and that there is no inherent holiness in it above any other day, it being our duty to keep every day holy unto the Lord,—and that agreeably to the saying of the apostle, no man is to judge us in respect of an holy day, or of the sabbath days, which are a shadow of things to come; yet we have ever been concerned to enjoin upon all our members, the due observance of that day, as a season of rest from all unnecessary labour, and of religious retirement and meditation.

We wish renewedly to impress upon parents, the importance of having their families collected during that part of first-day which is not appropriated to public worship, that they may be kept from unprofitable company, from idly rambling abroad, or needless visiting; and pass the time in suitable religious reading or other serious employment; that thus they may not only reap the benefit of setting apart one day in the week, more particularly for religious purposes, but that our example as a religious Society may be such as becomes a people professing godliness.

We feel a fear, lest there are some parents who are so bound to their worldly interest, as to have little concern for their offspring, neglecting both their literary and religious education; and others, who are in a state of lukewarmness respecting the everlasting well-being of their interesting charge; and from an unwillingness to cross their inclinations and exercise a salutary restraint, are suffering them to indulge in many hurtful things, and to wander from the path of self-denial.

Great must be the condemnation of such parents, in

a day to come, if they persist in such courses. Instead of "their children rising up and calling them blessed," it may be sorrowfully the case, that the sins of the children will be in some measure chargeable upon the neglect of the parents, and not only be visited upon them by bitterness and anguish in this life, but add to their guilt in that which will never have an end.

O then, look to yourselves, we beseech you, and discharge your trust for God, and for the good of their souls,—exhorting in meekness, and commanding in wisdom; that so you may minister and reach to the witness, and help them over their temptations in the authority of the Lord's power; and when they feel themselves helped and delivered, their souls will bless God on your behalf, and you will reap the comfort of your labour.

We feel a fervent exercise on behalf of the visited children of our heavenly Father, in whose view the glory of this world has been stained, and their spiritual eyes anointed to see the transcendent beauty and excellency of the pure unchangeable truth. We apprehend these are often discouraged, in beholding the declension from ancient zeal and uprightness; and that unless they are watchful, and singly attentive to their heavenly Counsellor, they may be induced to settle down at ease, short of the attainment of that entire redemption and sanctification, which is held up as the mark for the Christian to aim at. Lean not, we beseech you, upon the arm of flesh, in yourselves, or even in the most favoured of the Lord's instruments, but let your dependence be upon God alone. In this day of unsettlement and shaking, there are many voices to be heard which are not in unison with the

voice of Christ Jesus, our holy Shepherd; and your safety will very much depend upon maintaining, through divine assistance, a state of inward retirement and stillness of mind; that so you may be favoured to distinguish his voice from that of the stranger; and reverently to wait on Him for the unfoldings of his blessed will concerning you.

In this state of patient waiting for Christ, and child-like obedience to His requireing, you will be safely led forward in your Christian course, step by step, as He sees you are able to bear it; your experience and knowledge in divine things will be gradually enlarged by Him; you will be preserved from falling into errors in faith or practice; and from running before your guide, and engaging in things, which, however laudable in themselves, are not the work in which He designs you should be employed.

As you thus rely in simple faith upon Him and His teaching, following whithersoever He leads,—but not daring to move without His putting forth, He will not fail, in His own time and way, clearly to open before you the path of allotted service, and to give you wisdom and strength faithfully to walk therein. He will baptize you again and again, with the baptism of His own Spirit, in order that the vessel may be sanctified and kept clean for the reception and occupancy of the gifts which He may see meet to bestow upon you, for the edification of His church; and as you diligently employ these in His fear, and to His glory, depending upon the strength which comes from Him, you will, through His mercy, be numbered among those, who, “having served their generation by the will of God,” shall receive “the end of their faith, even the salvation

of their souls," and hear the consoling language, "Well done, good and faithful servant,—enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

IN presenting these important subjects at this time to the serious and weighty attention of our beloved Friends, we would affectionately and earnestly exhort all to let them have due place in their minds, and to be steadfast and unmoveable in the faithful maintenance of all our doctrines and testimonies, always abounding in the work of the Lord, and scrupulously guarding against every thing which would tend to weaken their attachment to our holy profession.

In connexion with this subject, we believe it right to spread a caution against the indiscriminate reading of books, which purport to be of a religious character. Many of these contain much that is inconsistent with our Christian principles and testimonies,—and though interspersed with other matter, which is sound and instructive, yet this is rather calculated to render such works more injurious, serving as a cover for erroneous opinions, and thus more easily insinuating them into the mind. That the course of reading pursued by individuals, has a direct and powerful tendency to mould their religious sentiments and practices, is a truth abundantly confirmed by observation. It has also been found, in the experience of many, that the frequent and familiar perusal of treatises and forms of expression in reference to religious topics, which are not in accordance with our views of the spirituality and purity of the gospel—and of modes of defining and explaining doctrines, which differ from the simple and scriptural methods used by the Society although they may at first strike us unpleasantly an

as being objectionable, yet by frequent repetition and dwelling upon them, this feeling is lost; the mind is gradually led to look upon them as matters of indifference, or of very little moment, and thus by degrees imperceptible perhaps to its clouded vision, the way is prepared for its departure from a full belief and acknowledgment of the Truth as it is in Jesus.

We believe, that in this way, many sincere and seeking minds, who have been sensible of the day of the Lord's merciful visitation, and measurably yielded thereto, have lost their strength, become involved in doubt and perplexity,—and for want of keeping singly to the unfoldings of the light of Christ, “blindness in part hath happened unto them;” so that after having begun in the Spirit, and run well for a time, they have turned, as it were, to the beggarly elements, and sought to be made perfect by the works of the flesh. Thus, the unsanctified activity of the natural mind getting up, they have grown weary of the path of self-denial and the daily cross, and of “the patient waiting for Christ,”—have marred the work of regeneration in their own hearts, and eventually thrown off their religious profession.

Next to the Holy Scriptures, we would recommend all to read frequently in the writings of our worthy predecessors. In them may be found clear and enlarged views of Christian doctrine and practice, given forth by men who were subject to the divine government in themselves; and having tasted of the good word of life, and the powers of the world to come, could testify from living experience, to the blessed efficacy and truth of the principles they professed. They furnish us also with lively and instructive ex-

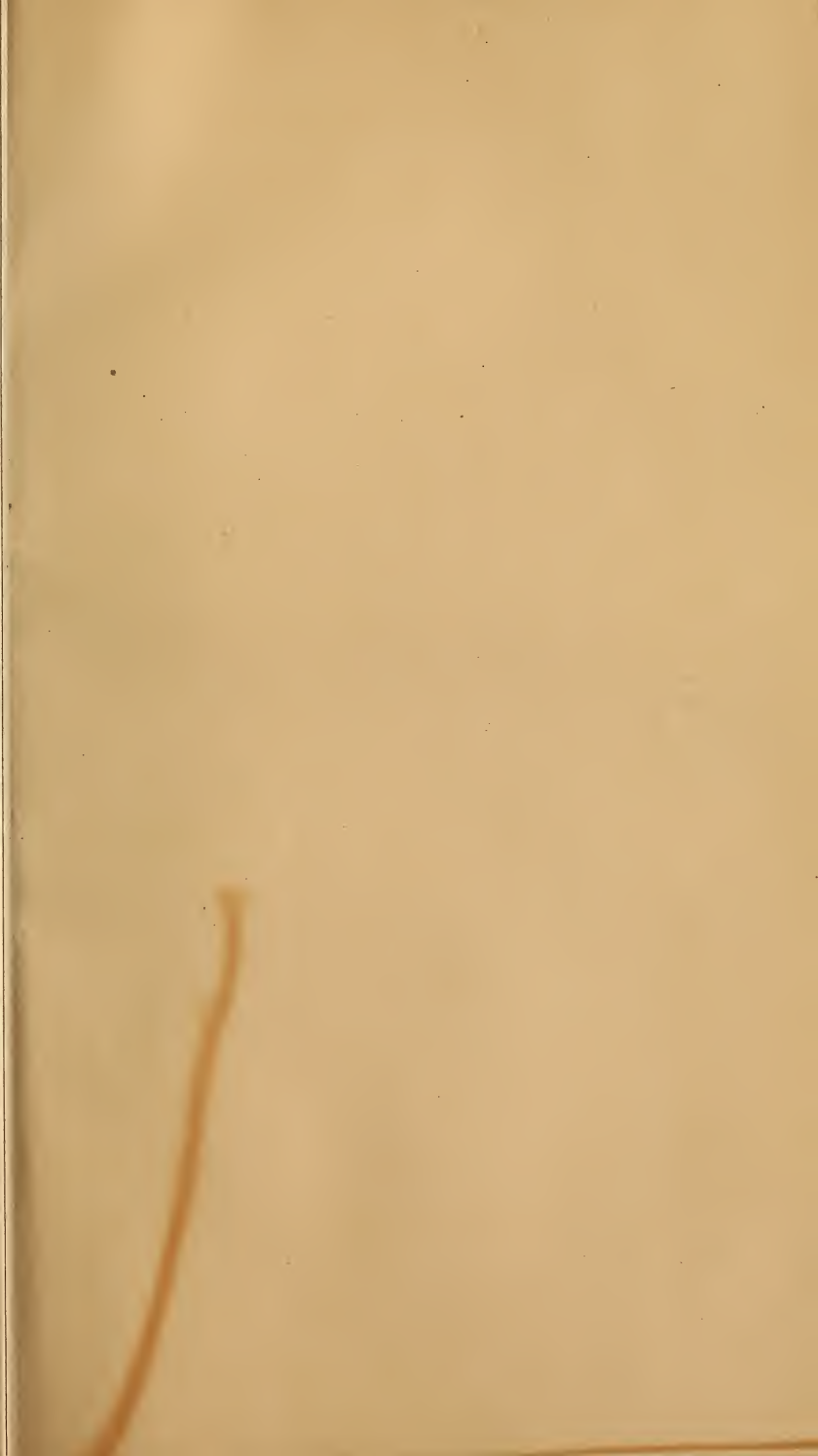
amples of love to God and faith in Christ; of zeal and devotedness to his cause—of patient, unwearied labours, and the meek endurance of privations, reproach, derision, and cruel persecution, even unto death, for the spread of the kingdom of their dear Redeemer, and the testimony of a good conscience; and as a convincing evidence of the reality of their religion, a fulness of peace and joy, and a well-grounded hope of immortality and eternal life, when brought upon the bed of sickness and of death. Let us, then, be conversant with the writings of these devoted servants of Christ, and endeavour, through divine assistance, to follow in their footsteps, and maintain the same faith; that so, in the end, we may reap the same blessed and everlastingly glorious reward.

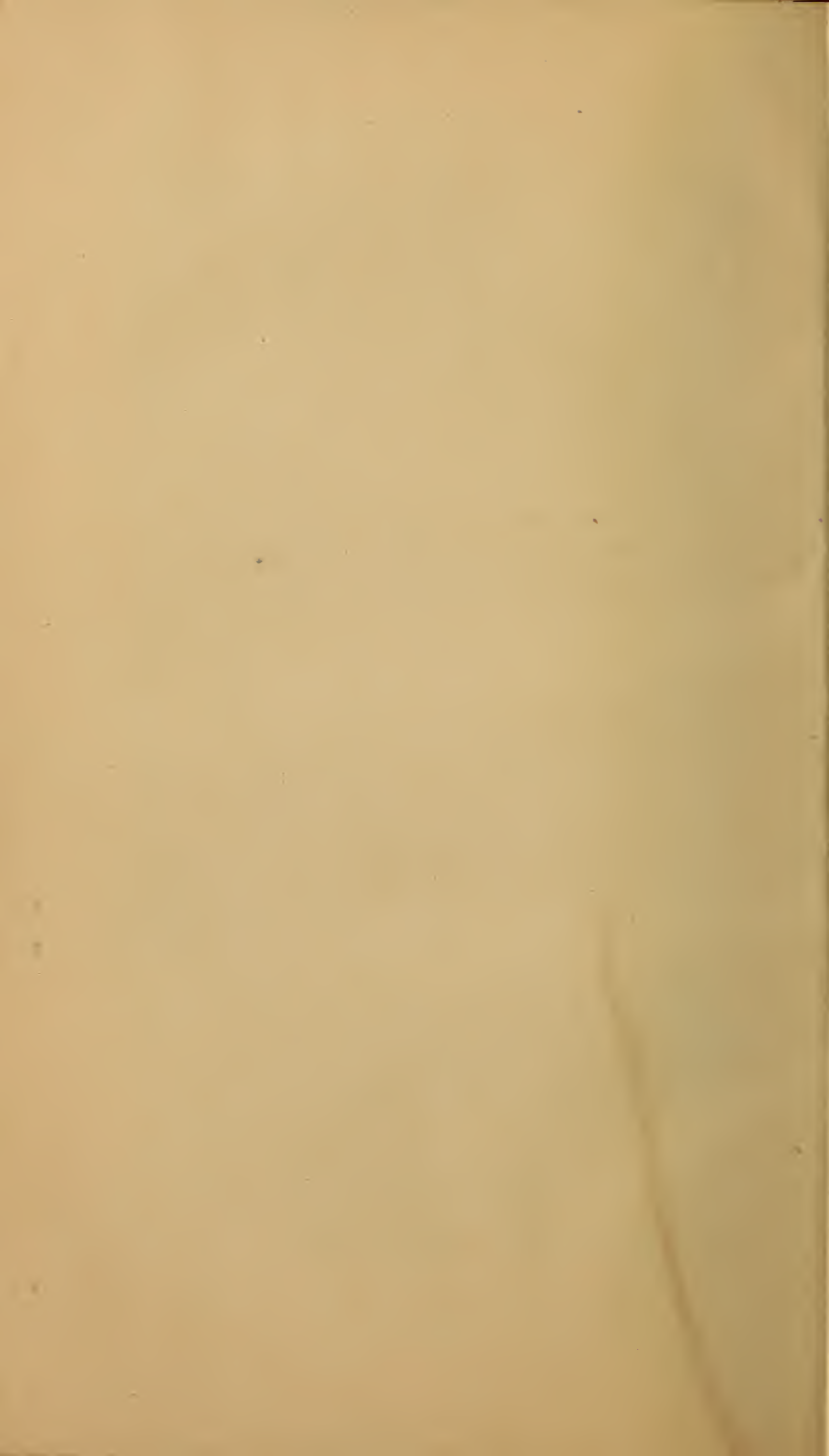
May all carefully avoid a disputatious spirit, that would be cavilling about niceties of doctrine, and questions which gender strife and contention,—seeking to be wise above what is written in the Holy Scriptures,—and to reason and argue about those things, which Divine Providence has not seen meet to reveal to us. And let all beware of resting in a bare acknowledgment, even of the most sound and consistent principles; ever remembering, that a profession of the Truth will add to our condemnation, if we are not endeavouring to live in conformity with it. It is only as we bow to the visitations of divine love, in mercy extended to our souls, and submit to the heart-changing and sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit, that we can show forth in our life and conversation, the blessed effects of the doctrines we profess, even the fruits of the Spirit, which are declared to be “love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

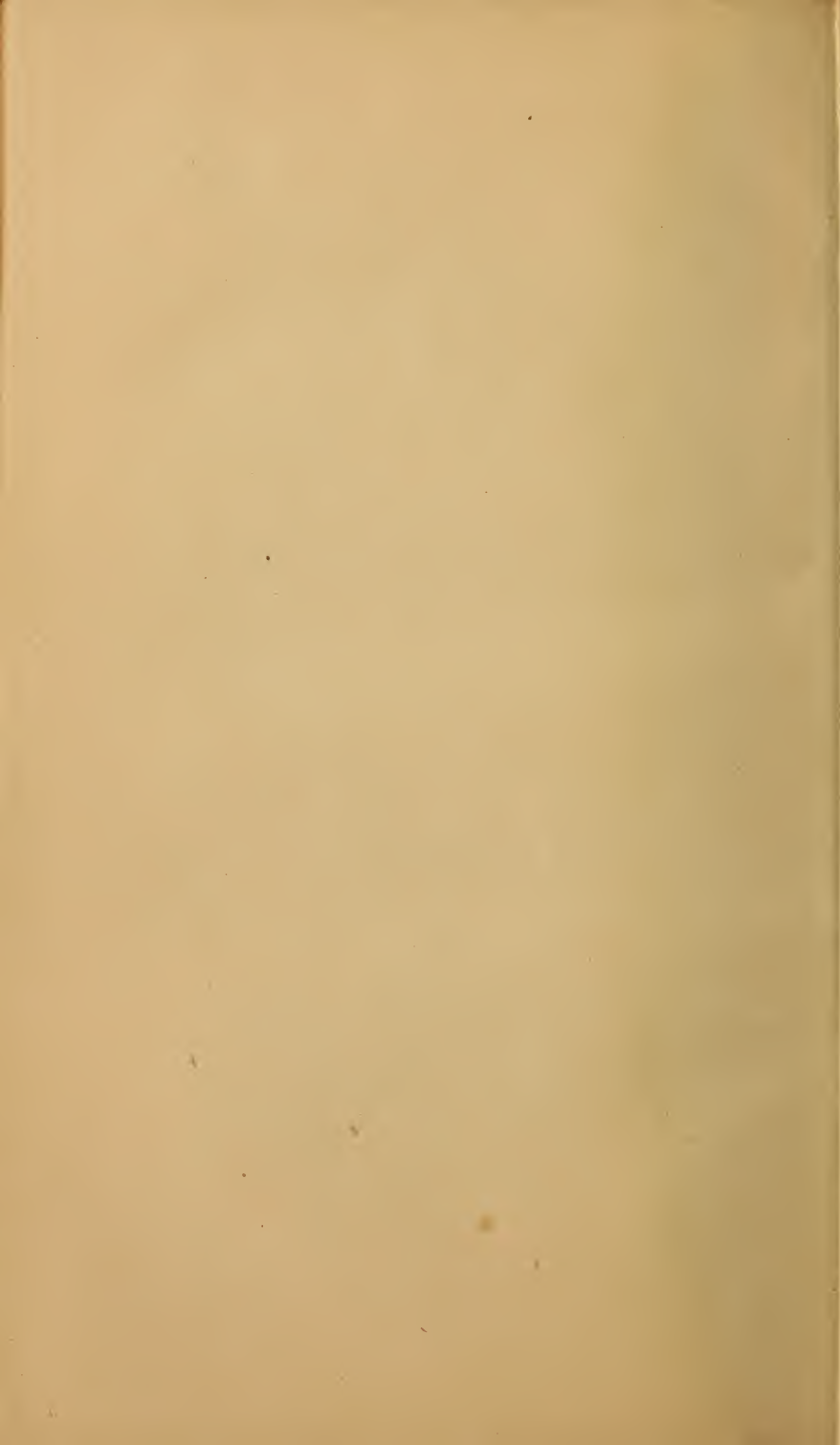
meeekness and temperance." Without these, the most correct belief will be "but as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal." Our blessed Lord has solemnly declared, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." And as we make a high profession of the inward work of the Spirit of Truth, in redeeming the soul from every sinful lust and inordinate affection; separating it from an undue attachment to the things of time and sense, and fixing its hopes on those enduring treasures which are laid up in heaven for the righteous,—so if we fail to show forth these, its certain and happy effects, in our daily walk among men,—we shall not only baulk our holy profession, but bring upon ourselves greater condemnation, than those whose eyes have not been anointed to see so fully into the nature of the religion of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. May we then, dear Friends, under a solemn sense of our great responsibility as His professed followers, be incited to a jealous watchfulness over ourselves, and a holy fear lest we fall short of the mark for the prize of our high calling, which is no less than Christian perfection; that, daily seeking to the Lord for strength and wisdom, we may be enabled to overcome the wicked one,—and doing the will of God from the heart, we may, through His adorable mercy, experience preservation from the evils which abound in the world, and be prepared to stand with acceptance before the Son of Man.

*Signed by direction and on behalf of the Yearly Meeting
aforesaid.*

WILLIAM EVANS, CLERK THIS YEAR.








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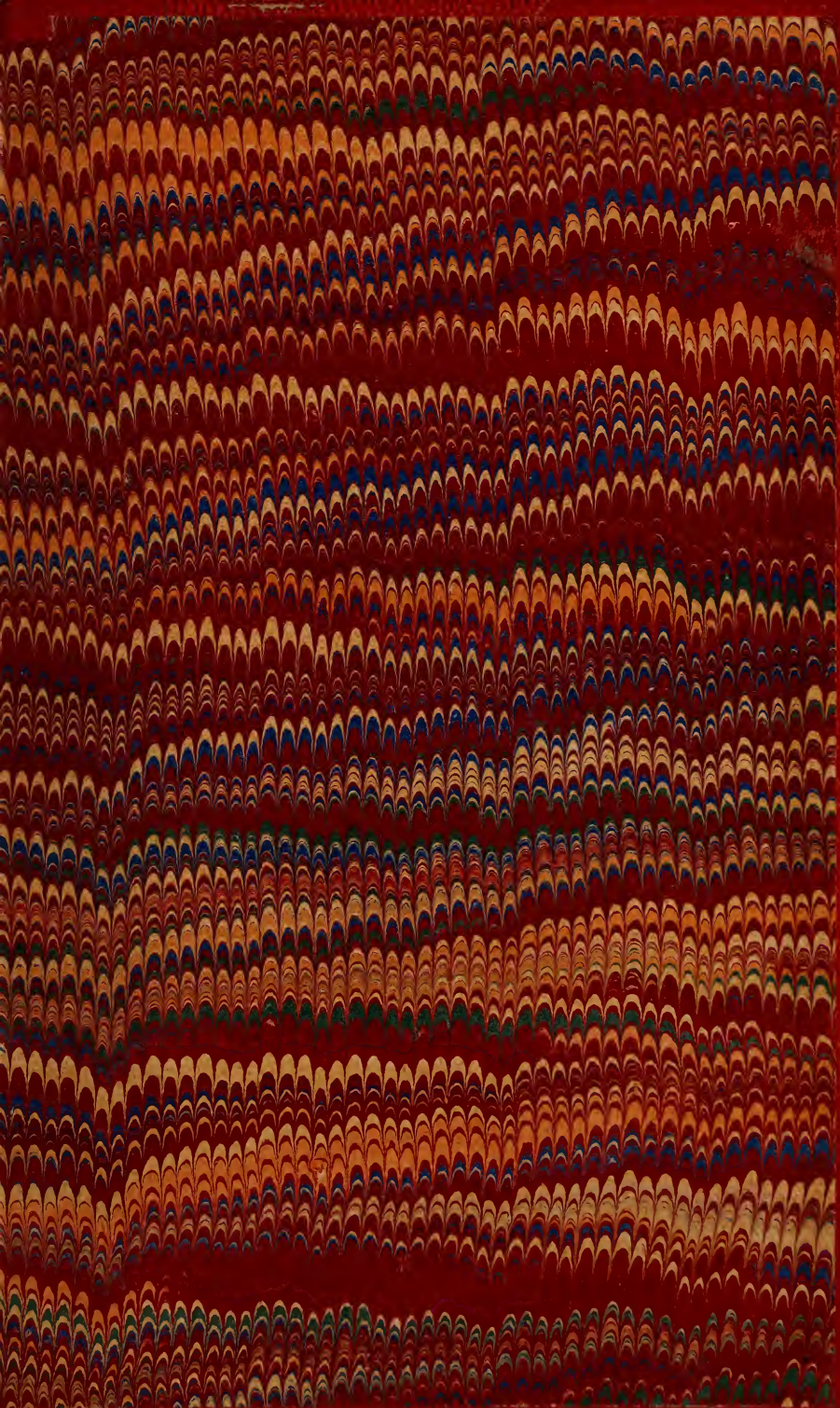


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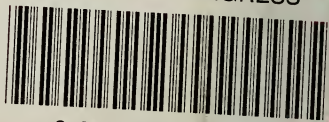
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