

THE
INWARD LIGHT.

REPRINTED FROM

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What saith the Scripture?—Rom. iv. 3.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE INQUIRER.

CHRISTIAN FRIENDS,

THE outlets by which men forsake the straight way of truth are not many; neither are the causes of perturbation which draw the mind astray very numerous. Religious errors are frequently the offspring of the sordid or evil passions; but sometimes, also, the productions of the nobler properties of the soul, misguided, indeed, by intensity of feeling, into exaggeration of sentiment, and consequently into mistake, but still originating from a pure and exalted principle.

Amongst the nobler properties melancholy takes its station, according to the classification of Aristotle, one of the profoundest analysers of mental operations. “As many as are melancholy are also superior characters,” is the *dictum* of that famous philosopher,—an observation which, if not entirely correct, is nearly so: and melancholy has been the parent of many religious errors.

Persons of melancholy dispositions, pained or disgusted with the moving scene of vanities and iniquities which is ever passing before our eyes in this visible world, but which the multitude behold only to admire, retire within themselves, into the sanctuary of their private distress, and there hold converse with those thoughts of deep research which terminate sometimes in atheism, and sometimes in deep religious error. A person of this temperament, whose religious education has been neglected, and in whose mind the principle of veneration holds inferior sway, after earnest speculation on the inscrutable origin and prevalence of evil, betakes himself to some system of despair, derived from a belief of the eternity of matter, and the autoplasmic faculties of

nature, and so drifting on the gloomy current of the Epicurean ocean, is carried along, incredulous of good, and hopeless of futurity, to that unknown shore from which no voyager returns to solve the secret of the last catastrophe. But he who, of a similar temperament, has, by education or disposition, been brought under the influence of religious feelings, sometimes becomes the victim of superstition, or the advocate of opinions which are strange to the Gospel; in other words, he becomes a heretic: he chooses, out of the ill-lighted recesses of his own troubled mind, some private idea, which has afforded him consolation in his solitary sorrows,—some theory of excellence which he had courted in the dark, till it had become the idol of his soul; and he brings it out at last into daylight, to be admired and loved by others as much as he himself has admired and loved it.

Such a person was George Fox, the author of Quakerism, who dedicated that period of life which is too often devoted to the service of the senses, to the elaboration of his system of mystical religion. Of humble origin, but born of pious parents, he had no one to suggest to him those ideas which he adopted in his juvenile, though gloomy, peregrinations through the country. His trade was that of a shoemaker, having very narrowly escaped an education for the priestly office, according to the original intention of his friends.

Having, from his boyish days, ever entertained serious thoughts, which he cherished more and more as he grew up, he left his home and family in his nineteenth year, with no defined purpose, but to find rest for his soul, and to escape from the intercourse of vain and trifling persons. He has recorded his Hegira in these words:—

“The Lord said unto me, ‘Thou seest how young people go together into vanity, and old people into the earth: thou must forsake all, both young and old, and keep out of all, and be a stranger unto all.’ Thus, at the command of God, on the ninth day of the seventh month, 1643, I left my relations, and broke off all familiarity or fellowship with old or young.”

This is a statement worthy of observation, for it records both a direct mission from God, or his belief in that mission; and also the condition of his mind when he thus burst forth into the wilderness to find that resting-place for his soul which nothing but the gospel, or the system which he afterwards adopted, would ever have afforded him. The first year of his wanderings is very slightly sketched, and the workings of his mind in that period—a very interesting period to the biographer—are not recorded: but, about a year afterwards, he says he was attacked by a “strong temptation to despair. “Sometimes I

kept myself retired in my chamber; and often walked solitary in the chace [forest] to wait upon the Lord."

In London "he was in great misery and trouble." He went amongst the Baptists, but the state of their minds did not suit his deep aspirations after some undefined appearance of holiness; and perhaps he saw many things amongst the Dissenters which were not suited to a profession of religion. In his search after peace he visited several "priests,"—a designation which includes clergymen and dissenting ministers; but they were all physicians of no value for his case, and did not in the least understand the state of their visiter's mind. One priest said it was a medical case, gave him physic, and advised him to be bled:—

"but they could not get one drop of blood either in arms or head, my body being, as it were, dried up with sorrows, grief, and troubles, which were so great upon me that I could have wished I had never been born, or that I had been born blind, that I had never seen any wickedness or vanity."

He was then about twenty-one years old, a time of life when blood is not usually thus deficient; we may, therefore, form some judgment of the state of his mind, which had, by its restless workings, thus attenuated and wasted his body.

Towards the end of the fourth year he thus recapitulates his movements:—

"During all this time I was never joined in profession of religion with any, but gave up myself to the Lord, having forsaken all evil company, and taken leave of father and mother, and all other relations, and travelled up and down as a stranger on the earth, which way the Lord inclined my heart, taking a chamber to myself in the town where I came, and tarrying sometimes a month, sometimes less, in a place."

Here is a very strong case of deep melancholy, and of an unusual and noble origin: it was not that he himself was labouring under a sense of Divine displeasure for his own sins, but for the sins of others. He saw so much vanity and wickedness all around him, and was so afflicted with the spectacle, that, in the opening day of his manhood, he eschewed the society of man, and, for several years, wandered up and down the land, like another Bellerophon, "eating his own soul."* This, as far as I am acquainted with the history of mind, is an unusual case; but whether it may justly be compared with the prefatory solitude of Mohammed, my ignorance of the real motives of the Arabian innovator will not allow me to determine.

George Fox, however, took not with him into his solitude the

* *Ὁν θυμὸν κατεδῶν, πατὸν ἀνθρώπων ἀλειψῶν.* Iliad, vi. 202.

knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, and scarcely sought for it in the appointed way. The temperament of his mind was, indeed, serious even to gloominess, and his thoughts were continually engaged in religious abstractions, so that the sight of the busy world and the thoughtless multitude was inexpressibly distressing to him; but he understood not the glad tidings of the Gospel, he knew not the method of reconciliation between an offended God and fallen man; and to the end of his days he never the least comprehended "the righteousness which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." He went forth from his family as much under the burden of spiritual pride as of a melancholy disposition.

"When I came to eleven years of age," he says, "I knew pureness and righteousness, for while I was a child I was taught how to walk to be kept pure. The Lord taught me to be faithful in all things, and to act faithfully in two ways, viz., inwardly to God, and outwardly to man."

This is a distinct and formal assertion that he was, touching the righteousness of the law, blameless,—that he had attained unto righteousness by the law of works, and that he had fulfilled his duty towards God and man to his entire satisfaction; in short, to use his own words, he "knew nothing but pureness, and innocency, and righteousness." Hence it is obvious that he knew not, or rejected, the fundamental truth of the Gospel, that our obedience to the law cannot produce the righteousness with which we are justified; and that God had, in his dispensation of grace, sent his own Son, in the likeness of our sinful flesh, to sustain the condemnation and punishment of our sins, which he himself merited not, that he might confer upon us who believe a righteousness which we ourselves could never have secured, "even the righteousness which is of God by faith."

Moreover, it is most conspicuous throughout the whole of George Fox's Journal, and all his published works, that he never admitted into his creed "the gift of righteousness," (Rom. v. 15, 17, 18; 2 Cor. v. 21; Psa. xxiv. 5.) It was not likely that in the peculiar discipline of mind which he had proposed to himself he should embrace this doctrine; and it was scarcely possible that he should be brought to understand it, or even to admit it for consideration, during the influence of those visions and Divine messages which he seems to have expected from the first day of his pilgrimage.

Some of these visions, or "openings," were not such as one would think required the aid of special revelation; for instance, in the year 1646, "the Lord opened to him," he says, "that no man, whether he be Papist or Protestant, is a true believer, unless he be born of God,

and have passed from death unto life ;” a doctrine which he must have heard amongst the Dissenters very frequently. And still less does it appear to require an especial lesson from Heaven, that “ being bred at Oxford or Cambridge is not enough to fit and qualify men to be ministers of Christ ;” but this “ the Lord opened to him on a first-day morning, as he was walking in the fields ;” and he adds, “ I saw it clearly as the Lord opened it to me, and was satisfied ; and I admired the goodness of the Lord, which had opened this thing unto me this morning.”

Very many persons, however, have come to a similar conclusion, without that assistance to which the founder of Quakerism attributes his knowledge of this very palpable truth.

But George Fox was not in a mood to make discoveries in an ordinary way, and he advanced steadily from one “ opening ” to another, till he came to that mystery of mysteries which will ever give celebrity to his name—THE INWARD LIGHT. It is worth while to notice some of these messages or revelations, as indications of the state of his mind when he was approaching the great secret of Quakerism. He generally records his actions in language which admits of no other interpretation than that he was a prophet under Divine direction :—

“ At Mansfield there was a company of priests that were looked upon to be tender ; I was moved to go after them.”... ..“ I heard of a great meeting at Leicester, for a dispute wherein Presbyterians, Independents, Baptists, and Common Prayer men were to be concerned. The meeting was in a steeple-house, and thither I was moved by the Lord to go and be among them.”... ..“ I was wrapped up in a rapture in the Lord’s power, and I stepped up, and asked the priest, ‘ Dost thou call this steeple-house a church ? ’ &c.”... ..“ I was moved to go to several courts and steeple-houses at Mansfield and other places, to warn them to leave off oppression and oaths,” &c.

But, as he came nearer to his crowning discovery, his language assumes the most exalted tone of self-deception :—

“ Now I was come up in spirit, through the flaming sword, into the Paradise of God. All things were new, and all the creation gave another smell unto me than before, beyond what words can utter. I knew nothing but pureness, and innocency, and righteousness, being renewed up into the image of God by Christ Jesus ; so that I say I was come up to the state of Adam which he was in before the fall. Creation was opened to me, and it was showed me how all things had their names given them, according to their nature and virtue. I was at a stand in my mind whether I should practise physic for the good of mankind, seeing the nature and virtues of the creatures were so opened to me by the Lord : but I was immediately taken up in spirit to see another or more steadfast state than Adam’s innocency, even into a state in Christ Jesus that should never fall. And the Lord showed me, that such as were faithful to him in the power and light of Christ should come up into that state in which Adam was before he fell, in which the

admirable works of the creation and the virtues thereof may be known, through the openings of that Divine word of wisdom and power by which they were made. Great things did the Lord lead me into, and wonderful depths were opened unto me, beyond what can by words be declared : but as people come into subjection to the Spirit of God, and grow up into the image and power of the Almighty, they may receive the word of wisdom that opens all things, and come to know the hidden unity in the Eternal Being."

There is nothing in the Bhagvat Geeta, that famous volume of Hindu mysticism, beyond this; nor has Krishna, in unfolding the depths of Yogee theology, surpassed this strain of nascent Quakerism. To say that it is incompatible with a belief in the Gospel, would be but a feeble criticism on such a passage, which launches into all the depths of pantheism, and claims a transcendental intercourse with the Spirit of the universe.

Little did George Fox suppose that his unquiet spirit, in travelling round the sphere of religion, had found the common home of the Brahmins, the Druses, the Sufis, and the Platonists;* little did he suspect that he was using their language, and uttering their sentiments; and that, in exalting himself far above all the Christian sectarians with whose opinions he was conversant, he was only escaping into another ground, which heathen religionists had possessed from a remote antiquity; and that he was, in fact, unconsciously treading in their footsteps, echoing their words, and repeating their lessons. Neither did Jacob Behmen, the more modern mystic of Germany, suspect that he too was but copying the Vedanti philosophy of India; and at the same time using almost the very words of the founder of Quakerism, when he says,—

"In the twenty-fifth year of my age I was surrounded by the Divine light, and replenished with the heavenly knowledge; inasmuch as going abroad into the fields, to a green before Neysgate, at Gorlitz, I there sat down, and viewing the herbs and grass of the field, in my inward light, I saw into their essences, uses, properties, which were discovered to me by their lineaments, figures, and signatures. In like manner I beheld the whole creation," &c.

And again,—

"By a new motion from on high, in one quarter of an hour I saw and knew more than if I had been many years together in the University; for I saw and knew the Being of all beings, the byss and the abyss, and the eternal generation of the Holy Trinity, the descent and original of the world and of all

[* The language of Plato is almost identical with that of Fox. For instance, he says, "The purification of the soul is only its separation from the body—its accustoming itself to retire and lock itself up: then we may know within ourselves the pure essence of things which perhaps is nothing else but THE TRUTH." (See "Notes on Mysticism," by J. E. Howard, p. 87.)—EDS.]

creatures, through the Divine wisdom. I knew and saw, in myself, all the three worlds, namely, the divine, then the dark world, then the eternal invisible world ; and I saw and knew," &c. &c.

George Fox having now reached the apex of all possible knowledge, and having entered into the Paradise of God,* and having put on the image of God in righteousness and holiness, was in a condition to discover and divulge the inward light, which not only was the cause of his own deification, but was destined to be the soul and life of that extraordinary system which, by its rise and progress, disturbed not a little " three generations of articulate-speaking men."

" Now the Lord God," says he, " opened to me by his invisible power, that every man is enlightened by the Divine light of Christ, and I saw it shine through all ; and they that believed in it came out of condemnation to the light of life, and became the children of it ; but they that hated it, and did not believe in it, were condemned by it, though they made a profession of Christ. This I saw in the pure opening of light, without the help of any man ; neither did I then know where to find it in the Scriptures, though afterwards, searching the Scriptures, I found it."... .. " I was sent to turn people from darkness to the light, that they might receive Jesus Christ."... .. " I was to direct people to the Spirit that gave forth the Scriptures, by which they might be led into all truth, and so up to Christ and God, as they had been who gave them forth. I was to turn them to the grace of God, and the truth in the heart."... .. " I saw that Christ died for all men, and was a propitiation for all, and enlightened all men and women with his Divine and saving light ; but that none could be a true believer but who believed in it."

This is the origin of the doctrine of the Inward Light, as recorded by him who invented it : and having thus traced its origin, I shall now proceed to examine its acknowledged consequences, and the influence which it exercises on the whole body of Quaker theology.

The doctrine of the Inward Light was a splendid conception of provident fanaticism, having in it a germ of power calculated to rule over the minds of men, and to fulfil, or rather to exceed, all the wishes of him who invented it, and of those who subsequently moulded it to their purposes. Well did William Penn describe it as " the root of the goodly tree of doctrines that grew and branched from it ;" for this has been the mustard-seed of Quakerism, which, taking root, has sprung up into a tree of gigantic dimensions, outstripping all its associates in the paradise of mysticism.

It was in the power of this theory that George Fox and his

* " Moreover, when I was brought up into the image of the Lord God in righteousness and holiness, and into the Paradise of God, the Lord let me see," &c.

coadjutors were enabled to go forth into the world, and, for fifty years at least, to throw down and build up according to their wishes. With this doctrine they persuaded those who were disposed to hearken to them, that they had within them that which could place them at once on the very apex of superiority, and exalt them far above all religionists then existing on the face of the earth. They had no need of teachers, of religious guides, or scriptural instruction. Even the Scriptures themselves, though containing the truth, need not be studied by one who could turn to that inward light which is in all men; for that being itself the original fountain of truth, and the instructor of the truth also, would far more certainly teach its disciples the mysteries of the faith than any knowledge of the Scriptures, however accurate. Indeed, the principal use of Scripture was not, independently, and *per se*, to teach, but rather to be a faithful amen and witness to the doctrines of Quakerism, as evolved in the visions of light, which could and did teach all the truths of Scripture, quite independent of the written word: thus a Quaker might be his own Bible, having the word within him, and reading it, not through printed sentences, but in the internal illuminations of original truth: and how should it be otherwise? for the light within is God himself. God is in every man, and Christ is in every man, and the Holy Spirit is in every man born in the world: the whole Deity is there, and they that have the Deity within must surely be far more profoundly and accurately instructed than if they were indoctrinated by any written word, or any other (miscalled) spiritual guide.

Let, then, all men turn inwards: they would find Christ within, who would reveal unto them all the deep things of God by an immediate communication of doctrine from himself, in a manner as far superior to the teaching of books as the Divine nature is superior to paper and printer's ink.

And here then, too, was a glorious emancipation from all the doubts, perplexities, controversies, and uncertainties in which other people (falsely called Christians) were continually exercised. Here they would find themselves immediately in a region of light and knowledge, above the darkling divisions of Christendom; for their guide was to be truth itself, pure, divine, and uncontaminated by admixture with any terrene thoughts or dogmas of mortals,—the uncreated ray of the Word, the glory and effulgence of the God of truth himself. Let them, then, cease from all teachings of man, and, within the inclosure of Quakerism, hearken to the immediate inward prophecies and direct revelations of God and Christ, which would bring the

disciples of the light into certainty, and invest them with the privileges of infallibility, which no power of man should be able to gainsay. This was "the everlasting Gospel,"—this was the mystery whereby those who received it were at once placed on an equality with the apostles and the prophets, and made to see and know all things by the very same inspiration which dictated the written Scriptures. Here, too, was the door of perfection; for they that followed the monitions of the inward light would be led on into entire sinless purity, and, independent of any imputed righteousness, ascend, through increasing degrees of sanctification, till the whole man would become entirely divine, and be as holy as the seed, that is, as God himself is holy. This was the cleansing power of the truth which it was the glory of the Quakers to unfold.

And as Quakers would be perfect, and possess the holy and Divine nature, so might they be vessels of ministerial grace, chosen to teach the truth to others by immediate revelation: all Quakers, men and women, might teach and preach; and why not? The inward light is a general, a public possession; it is in all born into the world,—male and female are one in it: they have only to give in their adhesion to the truth, (*i. e.* Quakerism,) and to settle down into the tranquillity of abstraction, waiting, in a state of mental emptiness and intellectual inanition, for the visitings and dictations of the internal monitor. Their thoughts must be gathered in from all temporal, yea, and from all spiritual things also: they must not be musing on doctrine, but offer their minds a *tabula rasa*—a pure blank, to the Great Teacher, who, from his invisible throne within their hearts, would give forth the oracles of eternal truth, and, through their mouths, deliver the doctrines, the messages, the commands which must claim the assent, and secure the unhesitating obedience of all the children of light.

Great indeed would be the opposition of the various sects, (all of them tied up in chains of darkness,) and much would the written Scripture be quoted against the Quakers; but the disciples of the light would be taught, by the infallible oracle, to confute all opposition; knowing, of a certain truth, that every thing which they did not find testified within themselves must be false, as nothing could be true which the inward light did not seal with its unerring approbation.

Such is the outline of this famous theory; and, if bidding high for superior privileges and lofty prerogatives would secure the applause of the inconsiderate, the vain, and the ignorant, we need not wonder that it soon attracted a swarm of votaries to embrace its marvellous

pretensions, and to become participants in its ineffable advantages. The above analysis would, indeed, give but a faint idea of all the claims and assertions put forth by the advocates of the inward light. I therefore now proceed to show, by abundant extracts from the acknowledged doctors of Quaker divinity, what the mystical school has taught on the subject.

The first authority shall be from Edward Burrough's prefatory epistle to that bulky volume "The Great Mystery,"* by George Fox, a book that has now become scarce, but which ought to be reprinted by the Friends' Yearly Meeting, if they wish to enforce and perpetuate the opinions of their founder.

"We found this (inward) light to be a sufficient teacher to lead us to Christ, from whence this light came; and thereby it gave us to receive Christ, and to witness him to dwell in us; and through it the new covenant, we came to enter into, to be made heirs of light and salvation; and in all things we found the light which we were enlightened withal, and all mankind, which is Christ, to be alone and only sufficient to bring to life and eternal salvation; and that all who did own the light in them which Christ hath enlightened every man withal, they needed no man to teach them, but the Lord was their teacher, by his light in their own consciences, and they received the holy anointing."....."And while we waited upon the Lord in silence, as often we did for many hours together, with our minds and hearts towards him, being stayed in the light of Christ within us, from all thoughts, fleshly motions and desires, in our diligent waiting and fear of his name, and hearkening to his word, we received often the pouring down of the Spirit upon us, and the gift of God's holy and eternal Spirit, as in the days of old; and our hearts were made glad, and our tongues loosed, and our mouths opened, and we spake with new tongues, as the Lord gave us utterance, and as his Spirit led us, which was poured down upon us, on sons and daughters; and to us hereby was the deep things of God revealed, and things unutterable was known and made manifest, and the glory of the Father was revealed; and then began we to sing praises to the Lord God Almighty and to the Lamb for

* The whole title of this book is as follows:—

"The Great Mystery of the Great Whore unfolded, and Antichrist's Kingdom revealed unto destruction; in answer to many false doctrines and principles which Babylon's merchants have traded with, being held forth by the professed ministers and teachers and professors in England, Ireland, and Scotland, taken under their own hands, and from their own mouths, sent forth by them from time to time, against the despised people of the Lord called Quakers, who are of the seed of that woman who hath been long fled into the wilderness. Also, an invasion upon the great city Babylon, with the spoiling of her golden cup and delicate merchandise, whereby she hath deceived the world and nations. And herein is declared the spoiling of her prey, in this answer to the multitude of doctrines held forth by the many false sects which have lost the key of knowledge, and been on foot since the apostles' days, called Anabaptists, Independents, Presbyters, Ranters, and many others; who, out of their own mouths, have manifested themselves not to be of a true descent from the true Christian churches; but it's discovered that they have been all made drunk with the wine of fornication received from the Whore which hath sitten upon the Beast, after whom the world hath wondered. By George Fox. Rev. xviii. 18, 19. London, 1659."

ever, who had redeemed us to God, and brought us out of the captivity and bondage of the world, and put an end to sin and death ; and all this was by, and through, and in, the light of Christ within us. And much more might be declared hereof, that which could not be believed if it were spoken, of the several and particular operations and manifestations of the everlasting Spirit that was given us, and revealed in us, but this is the sum ; life and immortality was brought to light, power from on high and wisdom was made manifest, and the day everlasting appeared unto us, and the joyful Sun of Righteousness did arise and shine forth unto us and in us ; and the holy anointing, the everlasting Comforter we received, and the babe of glory was born, and the heir of the promise brought forth to reign over the earth, and over hell, and death. * * *

And thus we became followers of the Lamb whithersoever he goes ; and he hath called us to make war in righteousness, for his name's sake, against hell and death, and all the powers of darkness, and against the beast and false prophet, which hath deceived the nations : and we are of the royal seed, elect, chosen, and faithful ; and we war in truth and just judgment, not with weapons that are carnal, but by the sword that goes out of his mouth, which shall slay the wicked, and cut them in pieces. And after this manner was our birth and bringing forth, and thus hath the Lord chosen us, and made us an army dreadful and terrible, before whom the wicked do fear and tremble.† * * * And they that follow the Lamb shall overcome, and get the victory over the beast, and over the dragon, and over the gates of hell ; for the Lord is with us, and who shall be able to make us afraid ?”

This notable passage may be taken as a general introduction to the subject ; and a splendid portraiture it is of Quakerism, as viewed in the mass ; for who, after reading its assertions, could doubt that the Society of Friends were going forth to overturn all nations, and, in the power of God, to take dominion of the earth, and establish a universal empire of divine Quakers ? “ The babe of glory was born,”—“ they had spoken with other tongues,”—“ the royal seed elect had been gathered into a dreadful and terrible army,” and “ the Lamb should be victorious,” for he was in them, and the battle was his. There can be no doubt that George Fox applied the prophecies in Revelation (xix. 11—16) to his tumultuous Society.

It will here be inquired whether Fox asserts an equality with God for himself and his followers : the following passages from the work itself must answer that question,—they will speak for themselves ; for, though written with some ambiguity, yet it will be easy to ascertain the real meaning, in spite of the studied tortuosity of statement.

[† W. Bayly, “ a true Boanerges ” among the early Quakers, tells us, p. 196, “ There are but two seeds in the whole creation between which enmity is put, that is, the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman, which is Christ in his people, the Immanuel who is now coming in ten thousand of thousands of his saints called Quakers, who tremble at his word ; for they are the people that shall spring up, and spread from the root of Jesse over the face of the whole earth, through the virtue and power of this seed Christ Jesus,” &c.—Eds.]

“ Again, thou makes a great pudder that any one should witness he is equal with God ; and in a Catechism of the assembly of priests, called divines, which they put forth to the nation, (the Assembly’s Catechism,) they have laid down that ‘ the Holy Ghost and the Son is equal in power and glory with the Father ;’ yet, if any one come to witness the Son revealed in him, or come to witness the Holy Ghost in them, as that they gave out Scriptures, or witness the mind of Christ, and witness that equal with the Father, that equality which you speak of, you priests destroy that which you have put forth, and cry out, ‘ Horrid blasphemy !’—*Id.* 67.

“ Christ saith, he is in the Father, and the Father is in him, and he will send them the Spirit of truth, the Comforter, that proceeds from the Father and the Son ; and Christ saith, he was glorified with the Father before the world began ; and yet ye say, the Son is distinguished from the Father from eternity ; and the Son saith he is in the Father, and the Father is in him. And you say, the Spirit is distinguished from the Father and the Son from eternity, and Christ saith it proceeds from him and the Father, and he is the God and Father of the spirits of all flesh, and the substance of all things.”* And is not a human soul earthly ? for you say that Christ had a human soul, and is not human earthly ? And hath a human body, and is not a human body an earthly body ? Is not his body of the seed of Abraham according to the flesh ? and is not his body a glorified body ? Was not the first man of the earth, earthly, and had a human body ? the second man, the Lord from heaven.† And is not the soul immortal, which cometh out from God, which is immortal, and goes into God again ? And is not human, or earthly, mortal ? And are there not three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, and are they not all one ? how, then, are they distinct ? and three that bear record in earth, the Spirit, the water, and the blood, which agree in one ? And Christ saith, ‘ I and my Father are one, and I in the Father, and the Father in me ;’ and he is in the saints, and so not distinct.”—*Id.* 99.

Again, the opponent of G. Fox says,—

“ The wicked sect of the devil maintains an equality with, and that the soul is one being with God, or part of God.”

Answer.—“ The assembly or synod of priests put forth a Catechism, and say that the Holy Ghost and the Son is equal with the Father in power and glory ;

* The meaning of this jargon, if it has any meaning, seems to be that George Fox wishes to deny the three persons of the Trinity, and to assert that there is one God operating with three influences : this God, he says, is the substance of all things, which is also the doctrine of the Vedanti theology of Hindostan.

He obviously denies the human soul of Christ ; in what way, therefore, he viewed the death of Christ it would be hard to determine. And who can determine any thing with certainty when examining the words of a mystic ?

† Sometimes the bad grammar, and sometimes the artifice of George Fox, render his sentences unintelligible. The reader is not to attribute the obscurity of these passages to any typographical error. George Fox was “ above” grammar ; that is to say, he was entirely ignorant of the rules of accidence ; for in the whole of this book from which these quotations are given, I have not found a single instance of plural nominatives united otherwise than to singular numbers of the tenses. We shall presently see what the founder has taught us about the mystery of language.

and this they put forth that people should learn it. What then? If any come to witness the Holy Ghost, they come to witness that which is equal in power and glory with the Father. What if any come to witness the Son of God revealed in them, (which he that hath not him, hath not life,) do they not come to witness him who is equal in power and glory with the Father? This is your own Catechism; and is it blasphemy to confess your own words that ye have given people to learn? God breathed into man the breath of life, and he became a living soul;—God, who hath all souls in his hand. And is not this that cometh out from God, which is in God's hand, part of God, of God, and from God, and to God again? which soul Christ is the Bishop of. And doth not thou speak of a human soul, an earthly soul? and is earthly immortal, and cannot die nor be killed? And is not that which came out from God, which God hath in his hand, taken up into God again, which Christ, the power of God, is the Bishop of, is not this of God's being? And doth not the Scripture say, 'God is all and in all?'—*Id.* 100.

Again, p. 299,—

“Who are come up into the Bishop Christ are one soul.”

Again,—

“The assembly of divines did give a Catechism, &c. Now, every one that cometh to witness the Son of God, and the Holy Ghost, that gave forth the Scriptures, by your own account they witness that which is equal in power and glory with God. Yet, nevertheless, George's words was not spoken as ye preach them, for his words were spoken beyond all creatures, and out of all creatures, and he did not say George Fox.”—*Id.* 127 :—

i. e. G. F. did not say so, but that which was in him, equal in power and glory unto God, said it, and not man.

These passages, it will be said, are as redundant as they are tiresome; and so they are; but it is requisite to exhibit the real sentiments of the inventor of the Inward Light in all their extravagance; and to give the highest pretensions of this doctrine such a prominence as may make all the rest that follows appear not only intelligible, but a necessary sequence. This, then, is to be gathered from what we have seen: the eternal God, in his power and glory, resides within a Quaker, and occupies the whole spiritual man, so that the mind of “the elect royal seed” is the mind of God; and a Quaker, speaking in the light, speaks as God,* and above all creatures, and out of all creatures; what he says, he says not as man but as God,—it is the voice of God, and is the same power which dictated the Scriptures.

* G. Fox, in the preface to “News coming out of the North,” says, “Written from the mouth of the Lord, from one who is naked and stands naked before the Lord, clothed with righteousness, whose name is not known in the world, risen up out of the north, which was prophesied of, but now is fulfilled.” See Switch, p. 177. Jer. xxxi. 8, is there said to be the prophecy alluded to.

This is bad enough; but, alas! fanaticism stops at nothing; for, in the preface to that strange book, "The Battledore," George Fox says,—

"All languages are to me no more than dust, who was before languages were, and am comed before languages were, and am redeemed out of languages into the power where men shall agree."

"Before Abraham was I am:" so said the Redeemer, and so says George Fox; and his deluded disciples fully believed him, as is evident in that letter which Mr. John Wilkinson has published in his powerful book, "Quakerism Examined," from which I copy the following sentences:—

"For G. F. We, thy babes, with one consent being gathered together, in the power of the Spirit, thou being present with us, our souls doth thirst and languish after thee, and doth challenge that right we have in thee, O thou bread of life, without which bread our souls will starve. O, for evermore give us this bread! O thou fountain of eternal life! our souls thirst after thee; in thee alone is our life and peace, and without thee we have no peace; for our soul is much refreshed by seeing thee, and our life is preserved by thee, O thou father of eternal felicity!"

Signed by seven individuals.*

* Mr. Wilkinson informs us that, "in the 'Appeal to the Society of Friends,' by Elisha Bates, a fac-simile is given of George Fox's letter to Oliver Cromwell, in which he unequivocally arrogates to himself Messiahship, for he calls himself "the Son of God," and says that "his kingdom is not of this world."

James Nayler, however, disputed this pretension with George Fox, and proclaimed himself "the Son of God." For this he fell into great disgrace with the Quakers, in addition to his troubles with the committee of Parliament.

In "The Battledore" there are given numerous specimens of different languages, Oriental and European, and the greater part of these specimens are signed by the initials "G. F.," to indicate that George Fox, by his Divine power, could speak all languages,—that he had, in fact, the gift of tongues.

[We subjoin one extract from another letter, of a similar character, which is the more remarkable, because William Penn, in two of his pieces, ("Judas and the Jews," and "Invalidity of Faldo's Vindication,") justifies the expressions, calling them "innocent and scriptural," and assures us that the author, Josiah Coale, "lived and died a faithful servant of God."

"Dear George Fox, who art the Father of many nations, whose life hath reached, through us, thy children, even to the isles afar off, to the begetting of many again unto a lively hope, for which generations to come shall call thee blessed; whose being and habitation is in the power of the Highest, in which thou rulest and governest in righteousness, and thy kingdom is established in peace, and the increase thereof is without end."

We observe that W. P. justifies these expressions. It would occupy too much space to insert all that he says; but the curious reader, by turning to the two tracts above-mentioned, may find his reasons given at length; and that so far from regretting the use of such language, he pleads for it as quite proper and right. George Wyeth, also, in his "Switch for the Snake," alludes to the same letter, and adopts W. P.'s justification of it.—Eds.]

After these enormous pretensions, it would be but a slight matter to assert that the Quakers are infallible:—

“Christ acts all in them,” says George Fox; “and that is it which leads the saints to divide and discern all things, both temporal and spiritual; the spiritual wisdom of God, which gives them a spiritual understanding, which men must rule withal, but not with their own, that comes to nought. And you that have not that which is infallible to judge in, you know not the Spirit of Christ; neither can you judge of persons or things that have not the infallible judgment, nor have the spiritual man; neither have you the word of God in your hearts, nor Christ, which is eternal and infallible; all which the Quakers have, to judge persons and things.” (*id.* 5.) “This I say—none be ministers of the Spirit, none have the Spirit of Christ, nor the Holy Ghost, nor the Spirit of the Father speaking in them, but those who have that which is infallible, and in that which is infallible. And they are in the lying spirit and in hypocrisy that are out of it: so ye do well to confess that ye have not the infallible Spirit; for how can they but delude people that are not infallible?” “The Quakers have a spirit given to them beyond all the forefathers, which we do witness, since the days of the apostles, in the apostacy; and they can discern who are saints, who are devils, and who are apostates, without speaking ever a word, they that be in the power and the life of truth; and the natural man knows not the things that be in another man. (89.) Who witness these conditions they were in that gave forth the Scriptures, they witness infallibility, and an infallible Spirit, which is now possessed and witnessed amongst those called Quakers. The devil, false prophets, antichrists, deceivers, the beast, the mother of harlots, none of these can witness an infallible Spirit, nor the well nor the fountain, but the letter; though they may get all the sheep’s clothing, and come in likeness of a lamb or a sheep to deceive people withal; but being out of the Spirit that Christ, the prophets, and apostles was in, that gave forth Scriptures, they are not infallible as they were, but with that they are all judged out,” &c. (105.) And again:—“You that do not instruct and preach by the same immediate infallible Spirit as the prophets and apostles was in, you be all in an usurped authority, out of the Spirit; for whom God sends he sends immediately, and they know his infallible Spirit; and none knows the Scriptures of truth of you all, since the days of the apostles, in the night of the apostacy, but who are in the infallible Spirit which the prophets and apostles was in.”

Infallibility, the most precious jewel in the Pope’s tiara, was thus inscribed on the phylactery of every Quaker, and the natural pride of the human heart was consequently fostered into the most revolting extravagances of inflated ignorance. The Quakers’ meeting was not for the purpose of examining, searching, and expounding the holy Scriptures; the reading of the Bible was banished from their public assemblies,* and to this day has never been allowed amongst them;

[* Though holy Scripture was not to be read in their meetings, yet it would appear that what was given forth in the life might be. We have before us some specimens, the addresses of which we subjoin:—

“A General Epistle, given forth from the Spirit of the Lord, to be read in his fear, in the assemblies of the church of the first-born, gathered in these northern countries, and in

“the same immediate infallible Spirit which gave forth the Scriptures” was within the disciples of George Fox, and the principal fountain of eternal truth flowed forth from their own hearts. Why then should they consult the Scriptures? It could not be necessary; it might be superfluous; nay, it might be mischievous, for it might seem as if they were turning their backs on the God within them, if they turned to any other teaching than such as he vouchsafed them. They had within themselves a rule of faith and practice superior to the Scriptures, and to that it was their business to attend.

“We may not call the Scriptures,” says Barclay, “the principal fountain of truth and knowledge, nor yet the first adequate rule of faith and manners; because the principal fountain of truth must be the truth itself, *i. e.* that whose authority and certainty depends not upon another. When we doubt of the streams of any river or flood we recur to the fountain itself, and having found it there we desist; we can go no further, because there it springs out of the bowels of the earth, which are inscrutable. Even so the writings and sayings of all men we must bring to the word of God, I mean the eternal word, and if they agree thereunto we stand there. For this word always proceedeth and doth eternally proceed from God, in and by which the unsearchable wisdom of God, and unsearchable counsel and will conceived in the heart of God, is revealed unto us.”

The word within a Quaker’s heart was not to be tried by the Scriptures, but the written Scriptures were to be tried by the word or light within; and if there was, by this process, an apparent accordance, it would be satisfactory, because it would thereby prove to the Quaker that the prophets and apostles had entertained the same views as himself.*

This mystery is thus stated by William Penn:—

“The Scripture is much like the shadow of the true rule, which may give us some ground to guess what the rule itself is, as a chart or map of a country how

all countries and islands wherever the people of the Lord are scattered over the face of the earth.” By William Dewsbury, 1668.

“Unto all that wait in Zion,” &c., “containing three letters, written at three sundry times, unto the gathered of God into the covenant of endless life,” &c. “Let these be sent abroad, to be read in the assemblies of the people of the true and living God, when they are met together in God’s holy fear.” By William Green, 1664.—Eds.]

* “Whilst travelling last year (1834) in Ireland, I met a physician, who had been educated as a Friend, and professed entire concurrence with the doctrines of Barclay, though he believed not in the Lamb slain for sin. When the concluding verses of the ix. of Hebrews were quoted, ‘Without shedding of blood is no remission,’ he refused to receive it as Scripture, because it did not meet the witness of the Spirit in his own mind; and he then instanced other passages, which he rejected on the same principle. Thus an unregenerate man, taught by Barclay to believe that God dwelt in him, was determining what he would and what he would not receive as Scripture, and using the very principle of Barclay in defending his rejection of the blood of the covenant.”—*Remonstrance to the Society of Friends*, by B. W. Newton, p. 46.

it lies, yet not the very place itself; and in this respect it may be a kind of secondary rule, carrying with it a testimonial confirmation that what we are led by is the true Spirit, because the people of God in old time enjoyed the same; as the eternal Spirit, first of all, confirms the Divine authority of the Scriptures unquestionably to us, that they are a declaration of the will and pleasure of Almighty God to the sons of men in several ages of the world. He that is so inward with a prince as to know, *viva voce*, what his mind is, heeds not so much the same when he meets it in print, (because in print,) as because he has received a more living touch and sensible impression from the prince himself, to whose secrets he is privy. And this the Scriptures teach us to believe is a right Christian's state and privilege 'for,' said the apostle, 'We have the mind of Christ,' and, 'The secrets of God are with them that fear him,' and, 'Guide me by thy counsel, and bring me to glory.'" (ii. 106.)

It therefore became an established rule that the Quakers spoke and taught that which was above the Gospel, because what they said was a new flow of the original fountain, coming forth fresh from God; whereas the Gospel was a record of the same will of God, but recorded centuries ago, and much corrupted by errors of transcribers, printers, and translators; besides, the Gospel in the Scriptures was a record chiefly for the age in which it was written, whereas the Quakers' gospel was a Divine inspiration, having a direct reference to the present acts and wants of the church. Thus James Parnel, a martyr of the sect, who died in prison, in the year 1656, has in his book, entitled, "Christ Exalted into his Throne, and the Scripture owned in its Place," not scrupled to assert that the light of the Quakers is the great Gospel:—

"And if you priests do allege there is a false light, as well as a true light, I answer that it is in you, which blinds your minds, so that you cannot receive the Gospel, but from you it is hid, (2 Cor. iv. 3, 4;) and therefore you bring another Gospel, calling the four books, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, the Gospel, in which these four books will witness against you," &c.

He quotes a passage of Paul, in his second epistle to the Corinthians, as describing the Quaker Gospel, 'the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, which is the image of God;' and in opposition to this he names another Gospel, the four books of the evangelists, but only to assert that these four books would condemn those who opposed the internal and superior Gospel of the Quakers.

Robert Barclay agrees with all the other teachers:—

"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 the Divine revelations 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—as that the whole is greater than its part, that two contradictories can neither be true, nor both false.”—(*Apology.*)

Neither have the genuine Quakers of the present day the least declined from this doctrine; for in the following passage from Dr. Hancock's Answer to “The Beacon,” it will be found that, though the Scriptures are considered sufficiently respectable to receive a high compliment, and to be spoken of with much approbation; yet it is very plainly stated that they are inefficient in the great and crowning work of the Christian religion—the production of a true Quaker:—

“I cannot but make a general remark,” says Dr. Hancock, “that, whilst I trust and believe the holy Scriptures will never cease to be regarded by the Society of Friends as one of the greatest outward helps and blessings to aid the Christian in his course, which, by the goodness of God, we possess, and which, indeed, have been acknowledged as such by the Society, in its advices and by its practice, down to the present time;—nevertheless, though it does not become me to judge my neighbour, neither am I competent to say how far the searching of the Scriptures, without any other help, might make a Christian of another denomination, I am sure that searching the Scriptures alone would never make a true Quaker.”

The naiveté of this confession is admirable, for we must all unanimously confess, that we might search the Scriptures in vain to find any thing the least resembling “a true Quaker.”

An attentive consideration of these extravagances naturally leads one to inquire if the disciples of the Inward Light believed in the outward Christ, who was born of a woman, under the law, and suffered death by crucifixion under Pontius Pilate. This was a question repeatedly put to them; to which they uniformly, as far as I am informed, replied, that they did really and truly believe in the incarnate and suffering Jesus, and that in the usual and proper meaning of the words, without any mental reservation or equivocation whatsoever. George Fox denounces the insinuation as “a slander;” and though he found some fanatics in his peregrinations who rejected “an outward Christ,” he stigmatises the notion as “a wicked imagination and a whimsy.” After such declarations it would be unfair to disbelieve them; nevertheless, it must be confessed that the early Quakers have put forth such statements respecting their “Christ within,” as it would be extremely difficult to reconcile with a belief in an outward, incarnate, and suffering Redeemer. After a close examination of this subject, I believe that the Quaker doctrine may be thus stated:—“Jesus Christ, really and truly, and in the usual meaning of words, was incarnate, and

was crucified on mount Calvary, and rose from the dead, and ascended into heaven; but this was chiefly to testify, by outward signs, that he was the Saviour, and that his salvation was true. This was a public, outward, visible testimony; necessary, also, for the abolition of the Mosaic law; but it was only an outward testimony, comfortable to those who were acquainted with the fact, but not necessary to be known; for Christ, as God, really is, and always was, within all men, and in them he dies, rises again, and ascends into the highest places; and by the inward sanctification of the inward light, which is himself, he renders the elect perfect, and so atones for them by the perfect holiness which he effects inwardly; and thus he is the wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption of all those who turn to the Inward Light, and by it are led, taught, and moulded. It is not, therefore, necessary to have heard of the outward Christ who really suffered on Calvary; neither is it necessary to read the printed Scriptures which narrate the fact; for Christ within teaches effectually, and redeems with a most sure redemption, irrespective of any outward knowledge."

Such is the general outline of the doctrine. I now proceed with quotations to elucidate it. George Fox teaches us—

"Where Jesus Christ is within, the word is there, and God is there, and this is the great mystery of godliness, (1 Tim. iii. 16;) and where the power of God is set, the cross of Christ is felt, for the cross is the power of God; and if it be not the same Christ as did ascend, it is antichrist, it is against him, and is false; which now many hundreds and thousands do witness—Christ within." (*Great Myst.* 173.)

Opponent. "Christ is without his saints in respect of bodily presence."

Answer by George Fox. "How then are they of his flesh and of his bone—and how have the saints his mind and Spirit, and he with them, and they with him, and sit with him in heavenly places?—Ye poor apostates from him, who feel not Christ with you; but he is with the saints, and they feel him. (*id.* 222.) The saints' bodies are the temple of God—and they are not distinct from him, for they sit with him in heavenly places, and he is in them, and they in him. And Christ in you, the mystery, the hope of glory; and he is the head of the church, and so not distinct." (174.)

Opponent. "No man can see God, who is invisible."

Answer. "This is contrary to John, who saith, he that walks in the light shall have fellowship with the Son and with the Father, and so sees him; and it is not a little light by which all things were made and created." (221.) "Whosoever hath Christ within hath the righteousness. Now Christ that suffered, Christ that was offered up, is manifest within; and the saints are of his flesh and of his bone, and eat his flesh and drink his blood, and not another. The Christ that ended the priesthood, ended the temple, law, and first covenant, the seed of God, Christ Jesus, this manifest within. He that hath him hath life, justification, sanctification, and redemption, and so Christ, the same to-day, yesterday, and for ever, who is the hope and the author of their faith; and so all be in the fancy that be out of the state of witnessing Christ that suffered within them, and rose again." (*id.* 131.)

"Christ is not out of the sight of the saints that are in the church; therefore,

you ministers and teachers, that say Christ's body is out of your sights, are not saints, neither are you of his church, which is his body." (12.) "How are the saints of the flesh and bone of Christ? Doth not the Scripture say, 'Christ in you,' and God will dwell in you, and walk in you; and are not the saints of his flesh and of his bone, partakers of the Divine nature?" (17.) "All power in heaven and earth is given to him, Christ Jesus, who is in them, at the right hand of God, who is in the saints' dwelling." (37.)

All these passages abundantly prove that George Fox introduced a mystical Christ, and applied the chief passages of Scripture relating to the incarnate Redeemer to their figurative phantom of the inward light. William Penn faithfully followed in the same line:—

"As at any time," says he, "men have hearkened to the still voice of the word, that messenger of God in their hearts, to be affected and convinced by it, as it brings reproof for sin, which is but a fatherly chastisement; so, upon true brokenness of soul and contrition of spirit, that very same principle and word of life in man has mediated and atoned; and God has been propitious, lifting up the light of his countenance, and replenishing such humble penitents with Divine consolations. So that still the same Christ, Word-God, who has lighted all men, is by sin grieved and burdened, and bears the iniquities of such as so sin and reject his benefits. But as any hear his knocks, and let him into their hearts, he first wounds, and then heals; afterwards, he atones, mediates, and reinstates man in the holy image he has fallen from by sin. Behold, this is the state of restitution! and this, in some measure, was witnessed by the holy patriarchs, prophets, and servants of God, in old time, to whom Christ was substantially the same Saviour, the seed bruising the serpent's head, that he now is to us, what difference soever there may be in point of manifestation." (i. 574.)

Mysticism could scarcely invent any thing more subtile than this, and at the same time more mischievous; and therefore it ought not to excite our surprise that the American Hicksites have inserted this passage in their Confession of Faith, presented to the Court of Chancery, at New York, as a statement both of their own views, and of the real opinions of the early Friends.

Isaac Pennington has inculcated the same view:—

"Though we acknowledge that to know him as he did outwardly come, and was crucified, is a good knowledge, and of great profit and comfort to them who believe, yet we deny that the knowledge of him, as outwardly crucified, is the best of all other knowledge of him or to be preferred to all other ways of knowing him; nor does that Scripture (1 Cor. ii. 2) prove it, for Paul is not speaking there of Christ crucified outwardly in Judea, but of him as he was inwardly crucified in the Corinthians, when Paul first came unto them to preach the Gospel, as the words do plainly import, being rightly translated out of the Greek, 'for I determined not to know any thing *ἐν ὑμῖν*, that is, in you, but Jesus Christ, and him crucified;' this was the apostle's care and travail, to declare and hold forth unto the Corinthians and other Gentiles, Jesus Christ, who was crucified in them in his suffering seed; even that seed of light and truth which suffered, and was crucified in them under the burden of their transgression, according to which, he said to the Galatians

that Jesus Christ was evidently set before their eyes crucified in them, ἐν ὑμῖν," &c.*

And thus have these writers, one and all, deliberately set themselves to the work of perverting the truth, forcing the plain words of Scripture into strange dreams of mysticism, and applying those things which were written of him who died in Jerusalem, to this imaginary power within their own minds, which, if it had any power at all, was nothing but the workings of their own natural conscience. The deduction, however, from these pernicious statements is obvious, that if the true Christ dies and rises again within man's mind, it must be much more safe and certain to turn to this internal Redeemer than to any narrative or doctrine of him, concerning whom the written Scriptures speak: and this the Quakers have frequently asserted, and plainly and broadly declared. As some little variety, however, in the way of proof, I prefer here to adduce the authority of the renowned Elias Hicks, in order to show how accurately this great bugbear of the modern Friends, or spurious Quakers, upholds the tenets of the early Friends:

"Soon after I took my seat in our meeting to-day, my mind was opened into a view of the great need man stands in of a Saviour, and that nothing can give him so full and lively a sense thereof, as a true sight and sense of his own real condition, by which he is not only brought to see the real want of a Saviour, but is also shown thereby, what kind of a Saviour he needs. For it must not only be one who is continually present, but who is possessed of a prescience sufficient to see, at all times, all man's enemies, and every temptation that may or can await him, and have power sufficient to defend him from all, and at all times. Therefore, such a Saviour as man wants, cannot be one without him, but must be one always present, just in the very place man's enemies assault him, which is within, in the very temple of the heart; as no other Saviour, but such a one who takes his residence in the very centre of the soul of man, can possibly produce salvation to him; hence, for a man to look for a Saviour or salvation any where else than in the very centre of his own soul, is a fatal mistake, and must consequently land him in disappointment and error."—*Journal*, 304.

And in another passage, which is the clearest statement of true Quaker doctrine I have any where met with, he says,—

"A favoured open time in our meeting to-day, in which the Gospel was preached in its own authority, and in which the excellency and reality of the Divine principle of grace and truth was opened and explained; showing it to be the same breath of life which was breathed into man on the day of creation, and which constituted the Divine image in man, and is the Lamb or innocent life of God, and which innocent life was slain in our first parents by their first trans-

* Mr. Wilkinson has well and wittily remarked on this passage, "According to this absurd interpretation, or rather misinterpretation, Acts ii. 29 ought to be translated, 'Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre, ἐστὶν ἐν ἡμῖν, is in us unto this day.'"

gression. Hence it is called the 'Lamb slain from the foundation of the world,' agreeably to the Scriptures, but no otherwise slain than by man's rejecting it, and turning away from it into the serpentine wisdom, by which man became dead to the divine life, and that dead to him. Hence the denunciation was fulfilled on man, 'In the day thou eatest thereof,' that is, in the day thou turnest away from the divine life, and presumest to know good and evil for thyself, 'thou shalt surely die;' which was accordingly fulfilled in our first parents in the day of their transgression, and consequently on all their offspring who have followed their example. Agreeably, then, to the apostle Paul's doctrine, it then follows, that as in Adam all die, that is, as in our transgressing like Adam, we take upon us Adam's nature in the fall, which nature is a state of death; so, on the contrary, as we turn inward to the divine light and law, and repent of our transgressions and become sincerely obedient thereunto, by denying ourselves, and taking up our cross daily, we then come into the obedience of Christ; not doing our own will, but the will of our heavenly Father. We then put on Christ, and become partakers of his Divine nature, and thereby come to witness in our own experience, not only that in Adam, that is, in Adam's nature in the fall, which we have taken upon us by our transgression, and not by Adam's, we die, or witness a state of death to the Divine nature: so likewise, in our coming into the obedience of Christ, we take upon us his Divine nature, and thereby are made alive, and come to witness the Lamb which was slain in us, (whilst we remained in Adam's nature,) and to rise from the dead and become Christ in us the hope of glory, or the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. Therefore all the varied names given in Scripture to this divine light and life, such as Emanuel, Jesus, Sent of God, great Prophet, Christ our Lord, Grace, Unction, Anointed, &c., mean one and the same thing, and is nothing less nor more than the Spirit and power of God in the soul of man, as his Creator, Preserver, Condemner, Redeemer, Saviour, Sanctifier, and Justifier."—*ibid*, 380.

This is the transubstantiation of the Quakers, this the fundamental mystery and primary doctrine of their school, which, after an attentive perusal of all the foregoing authorities, may be summed up in two words, CHRIST REJECTED.

It was not possible that justification by faith could be admitted into a creed like this; it was indeed swept away by the torrent of mysticism without a moment's delay, for as it depends entirely on the work and offices of an incarnate Christ, it must of course be removed to make way for the work and offices of the imaginary Christ within; in other words, for the workings of conscience, which is the Christ of George Fox and his disciples. Hence the founder of Quakerism teaches that,—

"Whosoever witnesseth Christ within they witness the end of imputation, they witness the thing itself, the end of their belief, and they possess their sanctification, and such comes to know faith and love. And such as may have all the Scriptures, and preach of justification and sanctification without them, and not within them, be as the Jews, be as the witches, and reprobates if they be not believers in the light of Christ, they cannot witness justification, but condemnation, Christ Jesus, the light, [is] that which reconciles to the Father. (id. 159.) 'By grace are ye saved, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God,' and this in the heart manifested before it is known and possessed; and every one that

knows justification, redemption, righteousness and salvation, this is all known within us ; else people be in the first Adam, not knowing salvation in the ground, justification in the ground, redemption in the ground. If Christ the righteousness of God, redemption, justification, and salvation, be not felt within and found within, they are reprobates (id. 108.) Is not the new creature in Christ? he that is in Christ is a new creature, and is not distinct from him ; and Christ is justification, sanctification, and wisdom, and righteousness, and if he be not within you, ye are reprobates, and where Christ is, he is not without righteousness. Therefore, they are not without righteousness, wisdom, justification, and sanctification, if Christ be within (117.) The apostle says, ye are now nearer than when ye believed, and again he says, Christ is in you, and God shall dwell in you and walk in you ; so such as have Christ in them, they have the righteousness itself without imputation, for they have the end of imputation, the righteousness of God itself ; Christ Jesus, and righteousness, and justification is one, where Christ is known and felt in man they are both felt in one, for Christ is the righteousness of God, and the justification, and Christ is in you—who says they differ ?” *

Intimately connected with the Quaker view of justification, if such a word can indeed be admitted into their creed, is the doctrine of perfection, which George Fox, in perfect coherence with the rest of his system, strenuously inculcated, and which all the great Quaker doctors have unanimously declared to be the life of the Christ within, and the proof and sign of his resurrection and ascension. Quakers are to be justified by their perfection, and this perfection is the power of the God-word, God-seed, God-life within, growing up into the fulness, and glory, and holiness of the Divinity.

“ This doth not exclude growth, says Isaac Pennington, and though a perfect state may be obtained in the perfect gift, yet there is a growth in the perfection ; for Christ was perfect, and in whom was no guile, grew in wisdom and knowledge, and in favour with God and man. And as God is infinite, so, to that which is transplanted into him, there is no end of the growth in him ; but the tree which stands in God’s holy earth, by his pure river of waters, shall grow for ever and ever into his endless life and fulness.”

Elias Hicks, the faithful follower of George Fox, echoes his sentiments :—

* “ That God ever reputed Christ a sinner is by me denied ; and indeed it may be thought strange how some men have made imputed righteousness a fundamental article of their faith, which is so contrary to the whole strain of the Gospel ; a thing which Christ in none of all his sermons and gracious speeches ever willed any to rely on, always recommending to us works as instrumental to our justification.”—Barclay. “ The justification of persons is not from the imputation of another’s righteousness, but the actual performance and keeping of God’s righteous statutes.”—Id. “ Christ’s imputed righteousness is not found in all the Bible.”—Id. “ Justification by the righteousness which Christ hath fulfilled in his own person, wholly without us—we deny, and boldly affirm it, in the name of the Lord, to be the doctrine of devils, and an arm of the sea of corruption which does now deluge the whole world.”—G. Whitehead and William Penn. *Serious Apology*, p. 148.

“ I had to show the assembly that our redemption and salvation principally depended on a right government of our thoughts, and that if men and women were as fearful of evil thinking as they are of evil doing, and as desirous of avoiding one as the other, they would soon find themselves empowered as fully to avoid evil thinking as to avoid evil doing, and this would be a suppression of sin at its first rise.”—Journal, 327.

And George Fox, in his way, says the same thing :—

“ This is the Quaker's light which teacheth them the path of the apostles, and it teacheth men to be holy as God is holy, and perfect as God is perfect. This was the light of Christ, and it bade them to be as Christ is, as he is so are we in the present world.”—117.

“ God doth not accept any, where there is any failing, or who do not fulfil the law, and doth not answer every demand of justice.”—E. Burroughs.—p. 32.

Opinions such as these are above the scrutiny of ordinary investigation, for it is not possible to answer them either by the authority of Scripture or the rules of logic ; the Inward Light is a higher authority than Scripture, and immeasurably beyond the reach of argument ; it might, therefore, for ever have defied the approach of all unfriendly examiners, if the Quaker teachers had invariably sustained themselves in their inscrutable altitudes, and had not occasionally descended to the level of other mortals, for the unwise purpose of giving explanations and repairing their strength by ordinary argumentation. These descents have been fatal to the majesty of their theory, for they have enabled inquirers to discern that this transcendental mystery of Quakerism is nothing but conscience, or reason, or memory, dressed up in the most gorgeous costume. William Penn seems to have thought that what we call the faculty of recollection is the Inward Light :—

“ Methinks, says he, this one demonstration should satisfy all ; when neither man nor Scriptures are near us, yet there continually attends that Spirit of truth that immediately informs us of our thoughts, words, and deeds, and gives us true directions what to do, and what to leave undone. Is not this the rule of life? If ye are led by the Spirit of God, then are ye the sons of God.’ Let this suffice to vindicate our sense of a true and unerring rule,” &c.

If that “ which gives us true directions what to do, and what to leave undone,” be the Spirit, then may it be predicated of dumb animals that they also have the Spirit, the *anima mundi*, according to the Pythagoreans and other ancient philosophers.

“ His quidem signis, atque hæc exempla secuti
Esse apibus partem divinæ mentis, et haustus
Ætherios dixere.”

And indeed some of the Hicksite Quakers have most naturally and

logically gone into open and undisguised pantheism; William Penn, however, would probably have objected to this interpretation of his "satisfactory demonstration," for I find that he elsewhere makes reason to be his great Inward Light:—

"All the disadvantage the protestant is under in this, is that of his greater modesty, and that he submits his belief to be tried, while the other refuses, under the pretence of unaccountable infallibility; to that authority reason demurs; right reason, I mean; the reason of the first nine verses of the first of St. John;* for so Tertullian, and some other ancient as well as modern critics, gives us the word *Logos*, and the Divine reason is one and all, the lamp of God which lights our candle, and enlightens our darkness, and is the measure and test of our knowledge."

And again:—

"The soul then hath eyes as well as the body; and as men may see if they please, when the sun is in the outward firmament, unless they wilfully close their eyes; so may all rational souls see, if they will, by their eye of reason, that spiritual sun which gives us true discerning and discretion to the mind how to think and desire, as the natural sun doth to the body how to act and walk aright."

The greater part of the Quaker theologues do, nevertheless, seem agreed in this, that, what we call conscience† is their Inward Light, and that that faculty of the mind with which man is endowed, and which renders him capable of understanding the moral law of God, is their inward Christ or God-word. This is very intelligibly expressed by Barclay:—

"Seeing, then, it is by this inward gift, grace, and light, that both those that have the Gospel preached unto them come to have Jesus Christ brought forth in them, and to have the saving and sanctified use of all outward helps and advan-

* Augustine proposed, though without any view of affording a help to Quakers, to translate the word ΛΟΓΟΣ by Ratio. In the sense which Penn would give it, it is a Socinian gloss, and an entire rejection of Christ. Let us translate a few of the verses according to his suggestion, in order to display its frontless impiety.—"In the beginning was reason, and reason was with God, and reason was God, the same was in the beginning with God that was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

† The definition of *jus naturale* by Grotius would do exceedingly well for the Inward Light: "*jus naturale est dictatum rectæ Rationis, indicans, actui alicui, ex ejus convenientiâ vel disconvenientiâ cum ipsa naturâ Rationali, esse moralem turpitudinem aut necessitatem moralem, et consequentur ab auctore naturæ, ipso Deo, talem actum aut vetari aut præcipi.*" Or still better by the great heathen orator:—"Est quidem vera lex recta Ratio, naturæ congruens, diffusa in omnes, constans, sempiterna; quæ vocet ad officium jubendo, vetando à fraude deterreat. non erat alia Romæ, alia Athenis; alia nunc, alia posthac; sed et omnes gentes, omni tempore, una lex, et sempiterna et immutabilis continebit, unusque erit quasi communis magister, et Legislatur omnium Deus: ille legis hujus inventor, disceptator, lator, cui qui non parebit ipse se fugiet et naturam hominis aspernabitur."

M. T. Cicero might have been a ministering Friend in some small meeting at Rome.

tages, and also by this same light that all may come to be saved ; and that God invites, calls, and strives with all in a day, and saveth many to whom he hath not seen meet to convey this outward knowledge ; therefore we, having the experience of the inward and powerful work of the light in our hearts, even Jesus revealed in us, cannot cease to proclaim the day that is arisen in it, crying out with the woman of Samaria, ‘Come and see one that hath told me all that ever I have done, is not this Christ?’ that others may come and feel the same in themselves, and may know that that little small thing that reproves them in their hearts, however they have despised and neglected it, is nothing less than the Gospel preached in them ; Christ, the wisdom and power of God, being in and by that seed seeking to save their souls.”

Now, as all men have, more or less, an operative conscience, or, at any rate, such a faculty of the mind as may enable them to discern an evil from a good action, this has been caught at by the Quakers as a proof of the existence of Christ, or God, in the heart of every man,—“the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world :” when, therefore, conscience, by long habit of criminality, is obtuse, and apparently dormant, then is the great power of God reduced to a small, invisible seed,—then is Christ crucified, and lying in his grave ; but when conscience is awakened, and the sinner is endeavouring to reform his life, and to practise virtue, than the seed is bursting forth into life and vigour, Christ is risen, and, having left his tomb, will carry on the man to the perfection of his own Divinity. On this theory the Quakers are enabled to say to all savages, Jews, Turks, and infidels, that they have Christ within them,—in other words, they have a conscience ; and on this theory, they frequently tell us, the heathen, before the incarnation of Christ, saw Christ, knew the true God, and were the true children of light ; and their proof of the fact is in the moral sentences and excellent sayings which can easily be adduced from the heathen writers ; manifesting, indeed, very decidedly, that their conscience was in activity, and therefore proving to a Friend that they had turned to the light within, had followed and believed in the mystical Christ, and were good Christians, or rather good Quakers.

Innumerable passages might be brought forward from the writings of the early Friends, to prove that the inward light is nothing but conscience. I have made a large collection of such proofs, but one more will suffice : it is from the Sermons of Stephen Crisp :

“Now, when they have found this light within, the next question in controversy is, whether this will give men sufficient light for the true knowledge of God, —whether this be sufficient to bring a man to life and salvation ? I am of that judgment that it is sufficient ; and I believe it heartily, and preach it boldly in the name of the Lord, that the light that shines in your heart shines there to give you the true knowledge of God in the face of the Mediator, the Lord Jesus

Christ. You cannot believe this, you will say, for you have had this ever since you were a child, and you know not the least good it hath done you. All our learned men and ministers, go to what sect you will, they speak very slightly of it. This light within is nothing but natural conscience,—a poor light; it is but an *ignis fatuus* that will mislead us, they say. But let me tell thee, the reason why it doth thee no more good is, because thou hast been loose, and wanton, and vain, and wouldst not receive the reproof of it. Reckon but up the time, and call to mind when thou didst receive the reproofs of it, then it did thee some good, and brought thee to remorse, and brought anguish, and sorrow, and trouble into thy mind," &c.... "I will tell you the reason why so many learned men, men of great abilities, speak so slightly and meanly of it,—because it hath done them no good, inward nor outward, that they know. The reason why it doth them no good is, because they don't believe in it: and did Christ ever do any body any good that did not believe in him?"—p. 383.

It must, however, be confessed that the Quakers have throughout, both in principle and practice, acted consistently with their theory; for, believing that what we call conscience is their Christ, they have paid it all possible homage, and done all that could be well devised to enlarge its dominion and augment its power.

A most scrupulous cultivation of the conscience is the chief object aimed at by the ministering Friends in their exhortations; and the whole discipline of the sect tends to the same point,—to secure a conscience void of offence, in all public acts at least, for the members of their Society. This, as far as it goes, is highly praiseworthy, and has secured the applause and approbation of external spectators, now that the days of persecution have passed away: but they who have studied the doctrines of Quakerism, and have understood the subtle theory of the inward light, which is the life and soul of the Society, cannot allow the most shining moral mysticism a higher degree of glory than any morality can claim, when not based on the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that, most certainly, is not the foundation of Quaker morality.

But whilst this extraordinary sect has been successful in inventing and upholding an excellent discipline for social morality, the visions of power and victory with which it was at first introduced into the world have long since been dissipated, and all the brilliant dreams of George Fox and his stormy associates have terminated in a most tame and vapid conclusion.

"The Quakers," said George Fox, "are in the power of God, and in the authority of the Lamb, and are upon the throne. The Lamb and the saints shall get the victory. But it is not a strange thing to us that the whole world should be standing against the light, and against the saints; but their garments they cannot touch. And so wickedness hath budded forth into a rod, but he is

brought forth to rule the nations with a rod of iron, he which was dead and is alive."*

But the rod is broken, and the promised victory of "the saints" has come to nothing, and the nations are still disobedient to his faith, and Quakerism itself is rapidly dying of an incurable atrophy, so that it may be doubted whether one single individual of the Society will be in existence in England in the year 1938.

The Friends of the nineteenth century are not the men of zeal and daring, such as in the morning of Quakerism braved all opposition in order to enforce their dogmas; neither is the rod of persecution now scourging them into an heroic spirit, and lashing their delusions up into a frenzy. Quietly seated under their own vines and their own fig-trees, or managing their speculations in some successful branch of trade, those respectable mystics have received, in the way of tradition, and as a family heir-loom, the great mystery of their sanctuary, but unaccompanied, as at first, with all those external circumstances which made it the wonder and terror of the age that gave it birth. The Inward Light was introduced in an aggressive form, full of menace, and scorn, and defiance, threatening and effecting the overthrow of many most comfortable nests of priestcraft. The testimony of the Inward Light was at first against all hired teachers, whom it classified, most felicitously, under the comprehensive designation of "priests." It sent its prophets into chapels as well as churches, into conventicles as well as cathedrals, into Dissenters' congregations as well as the ceremonious assemblies of the prelatical ritual. Sometimes a prophet, with ashes

* George Fox, and some of his chief helpers, like all fanatics, dealt largely in judgments. In this book of his, from which all these extracts have been given, I find numerous instances of his threats of coming judgment to his opponents, and some delivered in the most revolting language: for instance, to Giles Fermin, of Thalfor, in Essex, he says,—

"Thou shalt feel every one of thine own words shall be thy burden, and they shall come home upon thee, and be crammed into thee again; and, in the day of thy judgment, the witness within thee shall answer"—[We cannot pollute our pages with the remainder.—EDS.]—Id. 120.

Here some of the dreadful imagery of Dante is debased in the low language of Billingsgate. To Thomas Collier, he also says,—

"Thy words shall be thy own burden, and for them thou shalt receive judgment; and this is the word of the Lord God to thee, and thy time is not yet past."

And in the following comprehensive menace he thunderingly expresses all his rage against his opponents:—

"The lamb [*i. e.*, the light within the Quakers,] slays and kills with the sword, and takes them, the beast, the false prophet, and the Devil, and casts them alive into the lake of fire, where they shall be tormented for ever, in the lake that burns with brimstone, by him who kills and slays with the sword, which is the word of his mouth."

on his head, would rush into the Dissenter's chapel, and thus assail the learned Puritan, who was plodding through a huge sermon, in the old scholastic way:—

“Thou green-headed trumpeter! thou hedge-hog! thou grinning dog! thou lizzard! thou whirligig! thou firebrand! thou louse! thou moon-calf! thou ragged tadermalion! thou livest in philosophy and logic, which are of the devil.”*

And all this had a prodigious effect: both Churchmen and Dissenters caught the contagion from these violent innovators. The converts to the new sect became alarmingly numerous, and the new converts were probably the most eager in spreading those principles which are subversive of all ecclesiastical polity, and tend to clear most effectually both church and chapel of their congregations and priests. Men began to ask where all this would end, and they endeavoured to solve the problem by a most cruel persecution; which, of course, only increased the evil by increasing the persecuted sect. At last the Act of Toleration tied up the bloody hands of “the priests,” and then Quakerism, after half a century of agony and contention, gradually subsided into that quiescent state in which we now behold it. The storm of angry passions was overblown, the tragic spirit had now no tragedy to feed on, and the principle which animated them insensibly dwindled away, or exhibited itself only in some occasional “concern” to go with a message to America, where a warm welcome and hospitable houses awaited it, instead of the whips or the gibbet of the first era. But where now is the glory, and where the victories of the Society? Where is that generation of giants, who, in the full impulse of the Inward Light, roamed over the face of the earth, dealing blows with their clubs against the whore, and the false prophets, and the priests of Baal? Alas! if we would look for them in their lineal descendants, we shall find them behind the counter, diligently casting up their ledger, or superintending packages in the well-stored warehouse. The spirit of George Fox was concentrated and condensed in prisons and in dungeons, but it has all but evaporated in the City and on 'Change. The Inward Light is an inert germ in the tutelage of industrious merchants. And, as the old spirit has disappeared, so also, as a necessary consequence, the paramount importance of the fundamental principle is no longer acknowledged by the present generation. The views of early Friends are treated, indeed, with much hereditary respect, but it is the respect which the relic of a Popish saint enjoys amongst its votaries:

* Dr. Owen received this message from one of the early Friends.

when a danger approaches, a war, a plague, an earthquake, or a flood, they bring forth the idol with prodigious ceremony and shows of homage; but when the danger has passed away, they lock up the venerated carcase in its crystal coffin, and piously consign it to a respectful obscurity. So it is with the inward light: it is held in high respect by the modern Friends, but never brought forward except in an emergency. The Quaker ministers are generally afraid now of naming it in the meeting-houses; and it is more the fashion to hint at it by periphrastical expressions than to own its proper title, or to insist on its power. Attending to scruples, or obedience to manifested duty, has now become synonymous with turning inwards to the light, and the old theology is quietly superseded by apothegms of morality, or driblets of self-righteousness.

Lately, however, a season of danger put the creed of the Society to the test; and when "The Beacon" was published by Isaac Crewdson, the Yearly Meeting deemed it to be a crisis which called for their interference. They resolved, therefore,—and the resolution, in my opinion, was most unwise and imprudent,—to send down a Committee into Lancashire, where the author of "The Beacon" resided, to uphold the views of Friends. The decision of the Committee has been published, and it is obvious that in that decision they profess to acknowledge the Inward Light, in its worst interpretation, as the fundamental principle of the Society. In short, they cleave to the old mystical delusion, that a man's conscience is God, or Christ, or the Holy Spirit, or the Inward Light in every man.

"The declaration of our Lord," say they, "that the world, that is, those who are living in the spirit of the world, cannot receive the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, offers, as we think, no real contradiction to the well-known sentiment of Friends, that the light by which the law of God is in measure made known to all men is the light of the Holy Spirit: that sentiment is based on the essential doctrine of the New Testament. When we call to mind, on the one hand, that the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, and that in us, that is to say, in our flesh dwelleth no good thing; and, on the other hand, that this light, although often faint, is pure in its character, testifying against sin, and directing to righteousness; we dare not ascribe it to man's fallen nature."

And again:—

"We regard the doctrine of the Inward Light as absolutely identical* with the

* Isaac Pennington has carried out this assertion to all its possible lengths, even to say that the inward light may teach the history and facts of the Gospel to those who have never heard or read of them:—

"How came the Scriptures to declare of Christ? Was it not from the Spirit? and is not that same light still with the Spirit, by which the Scriptures were given forth? and can

doctrine of the Spirit. The heresy of Elias Hicks consisted not in holding, or pretending to hold, this precious part of Divine truth, but in denying the other parts of this great plan of redemption."

"The Beacon" controversy elicited also a profession of reverential respect for the memory of early Friends; for in the printed Epistle of the Yearly Meeting of 1835 we find the following expressions:—

"Our forefathers in the truth were, as we believe, remarkably visited with the day-spring from on high, and under the fresh and powerful influences of the Holy Ghost were enabled to proclaim among men the purity and spirituality of the Gospel of our Redeemer."

A statement which, of course, is not to be taken in the ordinary sense of the words, as it is quite evident that "the influences of the Holy Ghost" mean only "the light by which the law of God is in measure made known to all men," whether they have heard of the Gospel or not, according to the declaration of the Committee which was sent by the Yearly Meeting into Lancashire.

This, then, is the true state of things at present: the Inward Light is still the orthodox mystery of Quakerism; it retains its place amongst the arcana of the Society, and is the chief article of their creed; but it exists in a state of magnificent repose, cushioned in the praises of its votaries, who, by general consent, seem to think it safer in these days not to bring it forth too much into open day-light. In the first era it was every thing, the sum and substance of the whole Quaker theology; but in this century some new commentators have succeeded in introducing certain opinions, which have effectually restrained the old spirit, and, indeed, rendered its revival nearly impossible. Mr. Gurney, Dr. Ash, and others, have, by their evangelical explanations, insensibly raised the Scriptures as a standard of Divine truth; and this alone is fatal to the supremacy of the Inward Light; for the old method of consulting the Scriptures as a secondary rule, and merely to confirm the teachings of the internal oracle, has been abandoned, and the Scriptures are now consulted for the purpose

he not give it forth without the letter, where he seeth need of it, and vouchsafeth so to do? Why may not men now by the light of the Spirit come to know that Christ is come, dead, and risen, as well as these things were known and believed before the Scriptures were written?" Vol. ii. 472.

Barclay, Penn, and all the leaders, unanimously assert that the inward light works salvation in all men:—

"God hath committed and given unto every man a measure of the light of his own Son, a measure of grace, or a measure of the Spirit. This, 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."—*Barclay's Apology*.

of justifying and upholding the doctrines of Quakerism. In one word, Quakerism is now in an apologetic, and not in an aggressive condition; and its theologians are perfectly contented to keep within the trenches, and to defend themselves, as well as they can, by the authority of Scripture.

This, it must be confessed, is a pitiable position, after so triumphant a commencement, and a sad descent from the lofty altitude which the Society once assumed.

To conclude, I beg here to state, that my remarks have reference only to "the fundamental principle," and its consequences, and that these animadversions extend not to the general bearing and many of the peculiarities of Quakers. There is in the Society, independent of its theology, much to admire, and some things to copy; and I certainly consider that its existence is, in many respects, beneficial, and that it has not remained to this day in vain. The palladium of religious liberty found a refuge within the Quaker sanctuary in days of the worst oppression, when there was no other refuge for it on the face of the earth. The Quakers asserted some principles which never can be valued too highly, and they asserted them, too, in the midst of surrounding darkness, when no other sect could be found to agree with them. The Presbyterians, doating on their tyrannical dogma of the Divine right of the presbytery, never caught a glimpse of religious freedom till the sharp eye-salve of persecution improved their vision, and then they speedily lapsed into Unitarianism. The Independents never till lately had clear views of the separation of Church and State; and none but the Quakers have steadily, honourably, and unflinchingly resisted the extortions, and denied the scriptural legality of Christian priests. The Society of Friends has therefore existed for good, and we are all likely to reap the benefit of its existence; and sincerely is it to be hoped, also, that the principles of peace, for asserting and upholding which the Quakers deserve exclusive praise, will be ere long generally acknowledged as an authentic portion of Christian doctrine.

To speak in terms of eulogy of the moral discipline of the Society would be superfluous, for it speaks for itself; and equally superfluous would it be to advert to the many amiable and intelligent family circles, and the many active philanthropists, which are to be found within its precincts: but when we come to examine the religious creed of the Quakers, and to compare it with the Gospel, "we report it deficient," and declare that it opposes the glory of the Lord our

righteousness—that it has introduced a dangerous interpretation of scripture language—that it has used ordinary terms in a new sense, and with the most refined subtilty invented a mystical Christ, in order to open wide the door of mercy, and to close the door of Divine justice—that it has endeavoured to invalidate the priestly office of him who with his own blood entered into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us—and has essayed to expunge from the faith of Christians this most precious truth, “That as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.”

Such is the tendency of Quakerism; and if all who belong to the society held the old opinions, pure and unmixed with any evangelical alloy, they could scarcely be ranked amongst Christians: but this is not the case, and few, very few indeed, within the influence of the society, follow out the Inward Light into all its legitimate consequences, or indeed believe the doctrines of “the early Friends;” and it is not to be doubted that many, in spite of the vicious standard of tradition, accept the Lord Jesus (and not the Inward Light) as their wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption—are justified by faith, and have peace with God.

My endeavour has been to give a conspectus of doctrine from the Quaker school, and then to discover what this wonder really is which the mystagogues have elevated on so lofty a pedestal; and it seems to be beyond all doubt that the Inward Light is nothing but that faculty of our fallen nature whereby we are able to comprehend the moral law—our guilty and miserable conscience, which has a knowledge of sin, and which certainly does exist in all men, and which has thus been metamorphosed into something divine. After such a superfluity of adoration, to find ourselves bending the knee at last to this light within us, a light which only makes darkness visible, we are amazed at the delusion, and call to mind the words of Origen, concerning another object of false worship:—

“To him that would approach the Egyptian worship, there, first, offer themselves to his view, magnificent consecrated grounds, sacred groves, vast and splendid vestibules, and astonishing temples, and sanctuaries in every part most superb, and ceremonies of adoration exceedingly reverential and full of deep mystery; but when he enters in farther within the fane, behold, the object of worship is a cat, an ape, a crocodile, a goat, or a dog!”

Παρ’ οἷς προσιοντι μεν εστι λαμπρα τεμενη, και αλση, και προπυλαιων μεγαθη τε και αλλη και γεω θανμασιοι, και σκηναι περιξ υπερηφανοι, και θρησκευαι μαλα δεισιδαιμονες

και μυστηριωδες· ηδη δε εισιοντι, και ενδοτερω γενομενω, θεωρειται προσκυνουμενος
αιλουρος, η πιθηκος, η κροκοδειλος, η τραγος, η κυων.

ASYNCRITUS.

POSTSCRIPT.

Having seen the confession of the Yearly Meeting's Committee respecting the Inward Light, and their full accordance with Elias Hicks on that point, it may be instructive to hear what the American teacher has said on the subject:—

“ I was led to open, in a clear manner, the superior excellence of the Divine principle of light and truth, borne testimony to by the Society ever since we have been a people ; and showing, that when this is wanting, or is not given heed to, every thing else will, and must, fail of effecting the great work of our salvation as no other means are adequate to that end.” (*Journal*, 334.) “ I was led to call the attention of my friends to first principles, and to recur to the uprightness, simplicity, and faithfulness of our worthy predecessors, and to record the great and sorrowful deviations therefrom by those who are making the same profession in the present day, in departing from a full reliance on the power and spirit that actuated and governed them. Hence weakness and darkness pervade the minds, by which great reproach is brought upon the Society, and occasion gives for many to speak evil of the truth, and the principle we hold out to the world as the only sure guide to blessedness ; to the wounding of the faithful few, who are yet preserved in a good degree of Gospel simplicity, and who live under a daily exercise for the promotion and advancement of the Messiah's kingdom here on earth, that it may arise, and become the peace and glory of all nations. (*Id.* 372.) “ I was led to stir up Friends to faithfulness in support of our religious testimonies, as the eyes of people were upon us, watching our movements in the time of trial ; Friends separating from each other, and setting up separate meetings, which caused a great breach of unity, and confusion in most of our meetings, which a few years previous thereto had been united together in the bonds of Christian fellowship. But a few individuals, who had gained some influence in the Society, letting in the spirit of jealousy, began to accuse some of the Friends of promulgating unsound doctrines, without any just cause for so doing, by which they greatly disturbed the peace and quiet of society ; and being encouraged therein by several Friends from England, who, as ministers, had obtained liberty from their friends at home, to come over on a visit to Friends in this country, they blew up the fire of discord, until they brought about a division in our peaceful Society ; a small minority of which, in many places, separated themselves from the body, and set up separate meetings, assuming the names of the Yearly, Quarterly, and Monthly Meetings ; and these, in presumption, have taken upon them to deal with and disown the great body of the Society. (*Id.* 408.)