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THE INNER LIFE

BY

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

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THE INNER LIFE

THE AGENCY OF EVIL.

From the Supernaturalism of New England, in the Democratic Review for 1843.

IN this life of ours, so full of mystery, so hung about with wonders, so written over with dark riddles, where even the lights held by prophets and inspired ones only serve to disclose the solemn portals of a future state of being, leaving all beyond in shadow, perhaps the darkest and most difficult problem

which presents itself is that of the origin of evil,—the source whence flow the black and bitter waters of sin and suffering and discord,—the wrong which all men see in others and feel in themselves,—the unmistakable facts of human depravity and misery. A superficial philosophy may attempt to refer all these dark phenomena of man's existence to his own passions, circumstances, and will; but the thoughtful observer cannot rest satisfied with secondary causes. The grossest materialism, at times, reveals something of that latent dread of an invisible and spiritual influence which is inseparable from our nature. Like Eliphaz the Temanite, it is conscious of a spirit passing before its face, the form whereof is not discerned.

It is indeed true that our modern divines and theologians, as if to atone for the too easy credulity of their order formerly, have unceremoniously consigned the old beliefs of Satanic agency, demoniacal possession, and witchcraft, to Milton's receptacle of exploded follies and detected impostures,

"Over the backside of the world far off,
Into a limbo broad and large, and called
The paradise of fools,"—

that indeed, out of their peculiar province, and apart from the routine of their vocation, they have become the most thorough sceptics and unbelievers among us. Yet it must be owned that, if they have not the marvellous themselves, they are the cause of it in others. In certain states of mind, the very sight of a clergyman in his sombre professional garb is sufficient to awaken all the wonderful within us. Imagination goes wandering back to the subtle priesthood of mysterious Egypt. We think of Jannes and Jambres; of the Persian magi; dim oak groves, with Druid altars, and priests, and victims, rise before us. For what is the priest even of our New England but a living testimony to the truth of the supernatural and the reality of the unseen,—a man of mystery, walking in the shadow of the ideal world,—by profession an expounder of spiritual wonders? Laugh he may at the old tales of astrology and witchcraft and demoniacal possession; but does he not believe and bear testimony to his faith in the reality of that dark essence which Scripture more than hints at, which has modified more or less all the religious systems and speculations of the heathen world,—the Ahriman of the Parsee, the Typhon of the Egyptian, the Pluto of the Roman mythology, the Devil of Jew, Christian, and Mussulman, the Machinito of the Indian,—evil in the universe of goodness, darkness in the light of divine intelligence,—in itself the great and crowning mystery from which by no unnatural process of imagination may be deduced everything which our forefathers believed of the spiritual world and supernatural agency? That fearful being with his tributaries and agents,—"the Devil and his angels,"—how awfully he rises before us in the brief outline limning of the sacred writers! How he glooms, "in shape and gesture proudly eminent," on the immortal canvas of Milton and Dante! What a note of horror does his name throw into the sweet Sabbath psalmody of our churches. What strange, dark fancies are connected with the very language of common-law indictments, when grand juries find under oath that the offence complained of has been committed "at the instigation of the Devil"!

How hardly effaced are the impressions of childhood! Even at this day, at the mention of the evil angel, an image rises before me like that with which I used especially to horrify myself in an old copy of Pilgrim's Progress. Horned, hooped, scaly, and fire-breathing, his caudal extremity twisted tight with rage, I remember him, illustrating the tremendous encounter of Christian in the valley where "Apollyon straddled over the whole breadth of the way." There was another print of the enemy which made no slight impression upon me. It was the frontispiece of an old, smoked, snuff-stained pamphlet, the property of an elderly lady, (who had a fine collection of similar wonders, wherewith she was kind enough to edify her young visitors,) containing a solemn account of the fate of a wicked dancing-party in New Jersey, whose irreverent declaration, that they would have a fiddler if they had to send to the lower regions after him, called up the fiend himself, who forthwith commenced playing, while the company danced to the music incessantly, without the power to suspend their exercise, until their feet and legs were worn off to the knees! The rude wood-cut represented the demon fiddler and his agonized companions literally stumping it up and down in "cotillons, jigs, strathspeys, and reels." He would have answered very well to the description of the infernal piper in Tam O'Shanter.

To this popular notion of the impersonation of the principle of evil we are doubtless indebted for the whole dark legacy of witchcraft and possession. Failing in our efforts to solve the problem of the origin of evil, we fall back upon the idea of a malignant being,—the antagonism of good. Of this mysterious and dreadful personification we find ourselves constrained to speak with a degree of that awe and reverence which are always associated with undefined power and the ability to harm. "The Devil," says an old writer, "is a dignity, though his glory be somewhat faded and wan, and is to be spoken of accordingly."

The evil principle of Zoroaster was from eternity self-created and existent, and some of the early Christian sects held the same opinion. The gospel, however, affords no countenance to this notion of a divided sovereignty of the universe. The Divine Teacher, it is true, in discoursing of evil, made use of

the language prevalent in His time, and which was adapted to the gross conceptions of His Jewish bearers; but He nowhere presents the embodiment of sin as an antagonism to the absolute power and perfect goodness of God, of whom, and through whom, and to whom are all things. Pure himself, He can create nothing impure. Evil, therefore, has no eternity in the past. The fact of its present actual existence is indeed strongly stated; and it is not given us to understand the secret of that divine alchemy whereby pain, and sin, and discord become the means to beneficent ends worthy of the revealed attributes of the Infinite Parent. Unsolved by human reason or philosophy, the dark mystery remains to baffle the generations of men; and only to the eye of humble and childlike faith can it ever be reconciled to the purity, justice, and mercy of Him who is "light, and in whom is no darkness at all."

"Do you not believe in the Devil?" some one once asked the Non-conformist Robinson. "I believe in God," was the reply; "don't you?"

Henry of Nettesheim says "that it is unanimously maintained that devils do wander up and down in the earth; but what they are, or how they are, ecclesiastics have not clearly expounded." Origen, in his Platonic speculations on this subject, supposed them to be spirits who, by repentance, might be restored, that in the end all knees might be bowed to the Father of spirits, and He become all in all. Justin Martyr was of the opinion that many of them still hoped for their salvation; and the Cabalists held that this hope of theirs was well founded. One is irresistibly reminded here of the closing verse of the *Address to the Deil*, by Burns:—

"But fare ye weel, Auld Nickie ben!
Gin ye wad take a thought and mend,
Ye aiblins might—I dinna ken—
Still has a stake
I'm was to think upon yon den
Fen for your sake."

The old schoolmen and fathers seem to agree that the Devil and his ministers have bodies in some sort material, subject to passions and liable to injury and pain. Origen has a curious notion that any evil spirit who, in a contest with a human being, is defeated, loses from thenceforth all his power of mischief, and may be compared to a wasp who has lost his sting.

"The Devil," said Samson Occum, the famous Indian preacher, in a discourse on temperance, "is a gentleman, and never drinks." Nevertheless it is a remarkable fact, and worthy of the serious consideration of all who "tarry long at the wine," that, in that state of the drunkard's malady known as delirium tremens, the adversary, in some shape or other, is generally visible to the sufferers, or at least, as Winslow says of the Powahs, "he appeareth more familiarly to them than to others." I recollect a statement made to me by a gentleman who has had bitter experience of the evils of intemperance, and who is at this time devoting his fine talents to the cause of philanthropy and mercy, as the editor of one of our best temperance journals, which left a most vivid impression on my mind. He had just returned from a sea-voyage; and, for the sake of enjoying a debauch, unmolested by his friends, took up his abode in a rum-selling tavern in a somewhat lonely location on the seaboard. Here he drank for many days without stint, keeping himself the whole time in a state of semi-intoxication. One night he stood leaning against a tree, looking listlessly and vacantly out upon the ocean; the waves breaking on the beach, and the white sails of passing vessels vaguely impressing him like the pictures of a dream. He was startled by a voice whispering hoarsely in his ear, "*You have murdered a man; the officers of justice are after you; you must fly for your life!*" Every syllable was pronounced slowly and separately; and there was something in the hoarse, gasping sound of the whisper which was indescribably dreadful. He looked around him, and seeing nothing but the clear moonlight on the grass, became partially sensible that he was the victim of illusion, and a sudden fear of insanity thrilled him with a momentary horror. Rallying himself, he returned to the tavern, drank another glass of brandy, and retired to his chamber. He had scarcely lain his head on the pillow when he heard that hoarse, low, but terribly distinct whisper, repeating the same words. He describes his sensations at this time as inconceivably fearful. Reason was struggling with insanity; but amidst the confusion and mad disorder one terrible thought evolved itself. Had he not, in a moment of mad frenzy of which his memory made no record, actually murdered some one? And was not this a warning from Heaven? Leaving his bed and opening his door, he heard the words again repeated, with the addition, in a tone of intense earnestness, "Follow me!" He walked forward in the direction of the sound, through a long entry, to the head of the staircase, where he paused for a moment, when again he heard the whisper, half-way down the stairs, "Follow me!"

Trembling with terror, he passed down two flights of stairs, and found himself treading on the cold brick floor of a large room in the basement, or cellar, where he had never been before. The voice still beckoned him onward; and, groping after it, his hand touched an upright post, against which he leaned for a moment. He heard it again, apparently only two or three yards in front of him "You have murdered

a man; the officers are close behind you; follow me!" Putting one foot forward while his hand still grasped the post, it fell upon empty air, and he with difficulty recovered himself. Stooping down and feeling with his hands, he found himself on the very edge of a large uncovered cistern, or tank, filled nearly to the top with water. The sudden shock of this discovery broke the horrible enchantment. The whisperer was silent. He believed, at the time, that he had been the subject, and well-nigh the victim, of a diabolical delusion; and he states that, even now, with the recollection of that strange whisper is always associated a thought of the universal tempter.

Our worthy ancestors were, in their own view of the matter, the advance guard and forlorn hope of Christendom in its contest with the bad angel. The New World, into which they had so valiantly pushed the outposts of the Church militant, was to them, not God's world, but the Devil's. They stood there on their little patch of sanctified territory like the gamekeeper of Der Freischutz in the charmed circle; within were prayer and fasting, unmelodious psalmody and solemn hewing of hereties, "before the Lord in Gilgal;" without were "dogs and sorcerers, red children of perdition, Powah wizards," and "the foul fiend." In their grand old wilderness, broken by fair, broad rivers and dotted with loveliest lakes, hanging with festoons of leaf, and vine, and flower, the steep sides of mountains whose naked tops rose over the surrounding verdure like altars of a giant world,—with its early summer greenness and the many-colored wonder of its autumn, all glowing as if the rainbows of a summer shower had fallen upon it, under the clear, rich light of a sun to which the misty day of their cold island was as moonlight,—they saw no beauty, they recognized no holy revelation. It was to them terrible as the forest which Dante traversed on his way to the world of pain. Every advance step they made was upon the enemy's territory. And one has only to read the writings of the two Mathers to perceive that that enemy was to them no metaphysical abstraction, no scholastic definition, no figment of a poetical fancy, but a living, active reality, alternating between the sublimest possibilities of evil and the lowest details of mean mischief; now a "tricksy spirit," disturbing the good-wife's platters or soiling her newwashed linen, and anon riding the storm-cloud and pointing its thunder-bolts; for, as the elder Mather pertinently inquires, "how else is it that our meeting-houses are burned by the lightning?" What was it, for instance, but his subtlety which, speaking through the lips of Madame Hutchinson, confuted the "judges of Israel" and put to their wits' end the godly ministers of the Puritan Zion? Was not his evil finger manifested in the contumacious heresy of Roger Williams? Who else gave the Jesuit missionaries—locusts from the pit as they were—such a hold on the affections of those very savages who would not have scrupled to hang the scalp of pious Father Wilson himself from their girdles? To the vigilant eye of Puritanism was he not alike discernible in the light wantonness of the May-pole revellers, beating time with the cloven foot to the vain music of obscene dances, and in the silent, hat-canopied gatherings of the Quakers, "the most melancholy of the sects," as Dr. Moore calls them? Perilous and glorious was it, under these circumstances, for such men as Mather and Stoughton to gird up their stout loins and do battle with the unmeasured, all-surrounding terror. Let no man lightly estimate their spiritual knight-errantry. The heroes of old romance, who went about smiting dragons, lopping giants' heads, and otherwise pleasantly diverting themselves, scarcely deserve mention in comparison with our New England champions, who, trusting not to carnal sword and lance, in a contest with principalities and powers, "spirits that live throughout, Vital in every part, not as frail man,"—encountered their enemies with weapons forged by the stern spiritual armorer of Geneva. The life of Cotton Mather is as full of romance as the legends of Ariosto or the tales of Beltenebros and Florisando in Amadis de Gaul. All about him was enchanted ground; devils glared on him in his "closet wrestlings;" portents blazed in the heavens above him; while he, commissioned and set apart as the watcher, and warder, and spiritual champion of "the chosen people," stood ever ready for battle, with open eye and quick ear for the detection of the subtle approaches of the enemy. No wonder is it that the spirits of evil combined against him; that they beset him as they did of old St. Anthony; that they shut up the bowels of the General Court against his long-cherished hope of the presidency of Old Harvard; that they even had the audacity to lay hands on his anti-diabolical manuscripts, or that "ye divil that was in ye girl flewe at and tore" his grand sermon against witches. How edifying is his account of the young bewitched maiden whom he kept in his house for the purpose of making experiments which should satisfy all "obstinate Sadducees"! How satisfactory to orthodoxy and confounding to heresy is the nice discrimination of "ye divil in ye girl," who was choked in attempting to read the Catechism, yet found no trouble with a pestilent Quaker pamphlet; who was quiet and good-humored when the worthy Doctor was idle, but went into paroxysms of rage when he sat down to indite his diatribes against witches and familiar spirits!

[The Quakers appear to have, at a comparatively early period, emancipated themselves in a great degree from the grosser superstitions of their times. William Penn, indeed, had a law in his colony against witchcraft; but the first trial of a person suspected of this offence seems to have opened his eyes to its absurdity. George Fox, judging from one or two passages in his journal, appears to have held the common opinions of the day on the subject; yet when confined in Doomsdale dungeon, on being told that the place was haunted and that the spirits of those who had died there still walked at night in his room,

he replied, "that if all the spirits and devils in hell were there, he was over them in the power of God, and feared no such thing."

The enemies of the Quakers, in order to account for the power and influence of their first preachers, accused them of magic and sorcery. "The Priest of Wakefield," says George Fox (one trusts he does not allude to our old friend the Vicar), "raised many wicked slanders upon me, as that I carried bottles with me and made people drink, and that made them follow me; that I rode upon a great black horse, and was seen in one county upon my black horse in one hour, and in the same hour in another county fourscore miles off." In his account of the mob which beset him at Walney Island, he says: "When I came to myself I saw James Lancaster's wife throwing stones at my face, and her husband lying over me to keep off the blows and stones; for the people had persuaded her that I had bewitched her husband."

Cotton Mather attributes the plague of witchcraft in New England in about an equal degree to the Quakers and Indians. The first of the sect who visited Boston, Ann Austin and Mary Fisher,—the latter a young girl,—were seized upon by Deputy-Governor Bellingham, in the absence of Governor Endicott, and shamefully stripped naked for the purpose of ascertaining whether they were witches with the Devil's mark on them. In 1662 Elizabeth Horton and Joan Broksop, two venerable preachers of the sect, were arrested in Boston, charged by Governor Endicott with being witches, and carried two days' journey into the woods, and left to the tender mercies of Indians and wolves.]

All this is pleasant enough now; we can laugh at the Doctor and his demons; but little matter of laughter was it to the victims on Salem Hill; to the prisoners in the jails; to poor Giles Corey, tortured with planks upon his breast, which forced the tongue from his mouth and his life from his old, palsied body; to bereaved and quaking families; to a whole community, priest-ridden and spectresmitten, gasping in the sick dream of a spiritual nightmare and given over to believe a lie. We may laugh, for the grotesque is blended with the horrible; but we must also pity and shudder. The clear-sighted men who confronted that delusion in its own age, disenchanting, with strong good sense and sharp ridicule, their spell-bound generation,—the German Wierus, the Italian D'Apone, the English Scot, and the New England Calef,—deserve high honors as the benefactors of their race. It is true they were branded through life as infidels and "damnable Sadducees;" but the truth which they uttered lived after them, and wrought out its appointed work, for it had a Divine commission and Godspeed.

"The oracles are dumb;
No voice nor hideous hum
Runs through the arched roof in words deceiving;
Apollo from his shrine
Can now no more divine,
With hollow shriek the steep of Delphns leaving."

Dimmer and dimmer, as the generations pass away, this tremendous terror, this all-pervading espionage of evil, this active incarnation of motiveless malignity, presents itself to the imagination. The once imposing and solemn rite of exorcism has become obsolete in the Church. Men are no longer, in any quarter of the world, racked or pressed under planks to extort a confession of diabolical alliance. The heretic now laughs to scorn the solemn farce of the Church which, in the name of the All-Merciful, formally delivers him over to Satan. And for the sake of abused and long-cheated humanity let us rejoice that it is so, when we consider how for long, weary centuries the millions of professed Christendom stooped, awestricken, under the yoke of spiritual and temporal despotism, grinding on from generation to generation in a despair which had passed complaining, because superstition, in alliance with tyranny, had filled their upward pathway to freedom with shapes of terror,—the spectres of God's wrath to the uttermost, the fiend, and that torment the smoke of which rises forever. Through fear of a Satan of the future,—a sort of ban-dog of priestcraft, held in its leash and ready to be let loose upon the disputers of its authority,—our toiling brothers of past ages have permitted their human taskmasters to convert God's beautiful world, so adorned and fitted for the peace and happiness of all, into a great prison-house of suffering, filled with the actual terrors which the imagination of the old poets gave to the realm of Rhadamanthus. And hence, while I would not weaken in the slightest degree the influence of that doctrine of future retribution,—the accountability of the spirit for the deeds done in the body,—the truth of which reason, revelation, and conscience unite in attesting as the necessary result of the preservation in another state of existence of the soul's individuality and identity, I must, nevertheless, rejoice that the many are no longer willing to permit the few, for their especial benefit, to convert our common Father's heritage into a present hell, where, in return for undeserved suffering and toil uncompensated, they can have gracious and comfortable assurance of release from a future one. Better is the fear of the Lord than the fear of the Devil; holier and more acceptable the obedience of love and reverence than the submission of slavish terror. The heart which has felt the "beauty of

holiness," which has been in some measure attuned to the divine harmony which now, as of old in the angel-hymn of the Advent, breathes of "glory to God, peace on earth, and good-will to men," in the serene atmosphere of that "perfect love which casteth out fear," smiles at the terrors which throng the sick dreams of the sensual, which draw aside the nightcurtains of guilt, and startle with whispers of revenge the oppressor of the poor.

There is a beautiful moral in one of Fouque's miniature romances,—*Die Kohlerfamilie*. The fierce spectre, which rose giant-like, in its bloodred mantle, before the selfish and mercenary merchant, ever increasing in size and, terror with the growth of evil and impure thought in the mind of the latter, subdued by prayer, and penitence, and patient watchfulness over the heart's purity, became a loving and gentle visitation of soft light and meekest melody; "a beautiful radiance, at times hovering and flowing on before the traveller, illuminating the bushes and foliage of the mountain-forest; a lustre strange and lovely, such as the soul may conceive, but no words express. He felt its power in the depths of his being,—felt it like the mystic breathing of the Spirit of God."

The excellent Baxter and other pious men of his day deprecated in all sincerity and earnestness the growing disbelief in witchcraft and diabolical agency, fearing that mankind, losing faith in a visible Satan and in the supernatural powers of certain paralytic old women, would diverge into universal skepticism. It is one of the saddest of sights to see these good men standing sentry at the horn gate of dreams; attempting against the most discouraging odds to defend their poor fallacies from profane and irreverent investigation; painfully pleading doubtful Scripture and still more doubtful tradition in behalf of detected and convicted superstitions tossed on the sharp horns of ridicule, stretched on the rack of philosophy, or perishing under the exhausted receiver of science. A clearer knowledge of the aspirations, capacities, and necessities of the human soul, and of the revelations which the infinite Spirit makes to it, not only through the senses by the phenomena of outward nature, but by that inward and direct communion which, under different names, has been recognized by the devout and thoughtful of every religious sect and school of philosophy, would have saved them much anxious labor and a good deal of reproach withal in their hopeless championship of error. The witches of Baxter and "the black man" of Mather have vanished; belief in them is no longer possible on the part of sane men. But this mysterious universe, through which, half veiled in its own shadow, our dim little planet is wheeling, with its star worlds and thought-wearying spaces, remains. Nature's mighty miracle is still over and around us; and hence awe, wonder, and reverence remain to be the inheritance of humanity; still are there beautiful repentances and holy deathbeds; and still over the soul's darkness and confusion rises, starlike, the great idea of duty. By higher and better influences than the poor spectres of superstition, man must henceforth be taught to reverence the Invisible, and, in the consciousness of his own weakness, and sin, and sorrow, to lean with childlike trust on the wisdom and mercy of an overruling Providence,—walking by faith through the shadow and mystery, and cheered by the remembrance that, whatever may be his apparent allotment,—

"God's greatness flows around our incompleteness;
Round our restlessness His rest."

It is a sad spectacle to find the glad tidings of the Christian faith and its "reasonable service" of devotion transformed by fanaticism and credulity into superstitious terror and wild extravagance; but, if possible, there is one still sadder. It is that of men in our own time regarding with satisfaction such evidences of human weakness, and professing to find in them new proofs of their miserable theory of a godless universe, and new occasion for sneering at sincere devotion as cant, and humble reverence as fanaticism. Alas! in comparison with such, the religious enthusiast, who in the midst of his delusion still feels that he is indeed a living soul and an heir of immortality, to whom God speaks from the immensities of His universe, is a sane man. Better is it, in a life like ours, to be even a howling dervish or a dancing Shaker, confronting imaginary demons with Thalaba's talisman of faith, than to lose the consciousness of our own spiritual nature, and look upon ourselves as mere brute masses of animal organization,—barnacles on a dead universe; looking into the dull grave with no hope beyond it; earth gazing into earth, and saying to corruption, "Thou art my father," and to the worm, "Thou art my sister."

HAMLET AMONG THE GRAVES.

AN amiable enthusiast, immortal in his beautiful little romance of Paul and Virginia, has given us in his *Miscellanies* a chapter on the Pleasures of Tombs,—a title singular enough, yet not inappropriate; for the meek-spirited and sentimental author has given, in his own flowing and eloquent language, its vindication. "There is," says he, "a voluptuous melancholy arising from the contemplation of tombs; the result, like every other attractive sensation, of the harmony of two opposite principles,—from the sentiment of our fleeting life and that of our immortality, which unite in view of the last habitation of mankind. A tomb is a monument erected on the confines of two worlds. It first presents to us the end of the vain disquietudes of life and the image of everlasting repose; it afterwards awakens in us the confused sentiment of a blessed immortality, the probabilities of which grow stronger and stronger in proportion as the person whose memory is recalled was a virtuous character.

"It is from this intellectual instinct, therefore, in favor of virtue, that the tombs of great men inspire us with a veneration so affecting. From the same sentiment, too, it is that those which contain objects that have been lovely excite so much pleasing regret; for the attractions of love arise entirely out of the appearances of virtue. Hence it is that we are moved at the sight of the small hillock which covers the ashes of an infant, from the recollection of its innocence; hence it is that we are melted into tenderness on contemplating the tomb in which is laid to repose a young female, the delight and the hope of her family by reason of her virtues. In order to give interest to such monuments, there is no need of bronzes, marbles, and gildings. The more simple they are, the more energy they communicate to the sentiment of melancholy. They produce a more powerful effect when poor rather than rich, antique rather than modern, with details of misfortune rather than titles of honor, with the attributes of virtue rather than with those of power. It is in the country principally that their impression makes itself felt in a very lively manner. A simple, unornamented grave there causes more tears to flow than the gaudy splendor of a cathedral interment. There it is that grief assumes sublimity; it ascends with the aged yews in the churchyard; it extends with the surrounding hills and plains; it allies itself with all the effects of Nature,—with the dawning of the morning, with the murmuring of wind, with the setting of the sun, and with the darkness of the night."

Not long since I took occasion to visit the cemetery near this city. It is a beautiful location for a "city of the dead,"—a tract of some forty or fifty acres on the eastern bank of the Concord, gently undulating, and covered with a heavy growth of forest-trees, among which the white oak is conspicuous. The ground beneath has been cleared of undergrowth, and is marked here and there with monuments and railings enclosing "family lots." It is a quiet, peaceful spot; the city, with its crowded mills, its busy streets and teeming life, is hidden from view; not even a solitary farm-house attracts the eye. All is still and solemn, as befits the place where man and nature lie down together; where leaves of the great lifetree, shaken down by death, mingle and moulder with the frosted foliage of the autumnal forest.

Yet the contrast of busy life is not wanting. The Lowell and Boston Railroad crosses the river within view of the cemetery; and, standing there in the silence and shadow, one can see the long trains rushing along their iron pathway, thronged with living, breathing humanity,—the young, the beautiful, the gay,—busy, wealth-seeking manhood of middle years, the child at its mother's knee, the old man with whitened hairs, hurrying on, on,—car after car,—like the generations of man sweeping over the track of time to their last 'still resting-place.

It is not the aged and the sad of heart who make this a place of favorite resort. The young, the buoyant, the light-hearted, come and linger among these flower-sown graves, watching the sunshine falling in broken light upon these cold, white marbles, and listening to the song of birds in these leafy recesses. Beautiful and sweet to the young heart is the gentle shadow of melancholy which here falls upon it, soothing, yet sad, —a sentiment midway between joy and sorrow. How true is it, that, in the language of Wordsworth,—

"In youth we love the darkling lawn,
Brushed by the owlet's wing;
Then evening is preferred to dawn,
And autumn to the spring.
Sad fancies do we then affect,
In luxury of disrespect
To our own prodigal excess
Of too familiar happiness."

The Chinese, from the remotest antiquity, have adorned and decorated their grave-grounds with shrubs and sweet flowers, as places of popular resort. The Turks have their graveyards planted with trees, through which the sun looks in upon the turban stones of the faithful, and beneath which the relatives of the dead sit in cheerful converse through the long days of summer, in all the luxurious quiet

and happy indifference of the indolent East. Most of the visitors whom I met at the Lowell cemetery wore cheerful faces; some sauntered laughingly along, apparently unaffected by the associations of the place; too full, perhaps, of life, and energy, and high hope to apply to themselves the stern and solemn lesson which is taught even by these flower-garlanded mounds. But, for myself, I confess that I am always awed by the presence of the dead. I cannot jest above the gravestone. My spirit is silenced and rebuked before the tremendous mystery of which the grave reminds me, and involuntarily pays:

"The deep reverence taught of old,
The homage of man's heart to death."

Even Nature's cheerful air, and sun, and birdvoices only serve to remind me that there are those beneath who have looked on the same green leaves and sunshine, felt the same soft breeze upon their cheeks, and listened to the same wild music of the woods for the last time. Then, too, comes the saddening reflection, to which so many have given expression, that these trees will put forth their leaves, the slant sunshine still fall upon green meadows and banks of flowers, and the song of the birds and the ripple of waters still be heard after our eyes and ears have closed forever. It is hard for us to realize this. We are so accustomed to look upon these things as a part of our life environment that it seems strange that they should survive us. Tennyson, in his exquisite metaphysical poem of the Two Voices, has given utterance to this sentiment:—

"Alas! though I should die, I know
That all about the thorn will blow
In tufts of rosy-tinted snow.

"Not less the bee will range her cells,
The fuzzy prickle fire the dells,
The foxglove cluster dappled bells."

"The pleasures of the tombs!" Undoubtedly, in the language of the Idumean, seer, there are many who "rejoice exceedingly and are glad when they can find the grave;" who long for it "as the servant earnestly desireth the shadow." Rest, rest to the sick heart and the weary brain, to the long afflicted and the hopeless,—rest on the calm bosom of our common mother. Welcome to the tired ear, stunned and confused with life's jarring discords, the everlasting silence; grateful to the weary eyes which "have seen evil, and not good," the everlasting shadow.

Yet over all hangs the curtain of a deep mystery,—a curtain lifted only on one side by the hands of those who are passing under its solemn shadow. No voice speaks to us from beyond it, telling of the unknown state; no hand from within puts aside the dark drapery to reveal the mysteries towards which we are all moving. "Man giveth up the ghost; and where is he?"

Thanks to our Heavenly Father, He has not left us altogether without an answer to this momentous question. Over the blackness of darkness a light is shining. The valley of the shadow of death is no longer "a land of darkness and where the light is as darkness." The presence of a serene and holy life pervades it. Above its pale tombs and crowded burial-places, above the wail of despairing humanity, the voice of Him who awakened life and beauty beneath the grave-clothes of the tomb at Bethany is heard proclaiming, "I am the Resurrection and the Life." We know not, it is true, the conditions of our future life; we know not what it is to pass from this state of being to another; but before us in that dark passage has gone the Man of Nazareth, and the light of His footsteps lingers in the path. Where He, our Brother in His humanity, our Redeemer in His divine nature, has gone, let us not fear to follow. He who ordereth all aright will uphold with His own great arm the frail spirit when its incarnation is ended; and it may be, that, in language which I have elsewhere used,

—when Time's veil shall fall asunder,
The soul may know
No fearful change nor sudden wonder,
Nor sink the weight of mystery under,
But with the upward rise and with the vastness grow.

And all we shrink from now may seem
No new revealing;
Familiar as our childhood's stream,
Or pleasant memory of a dream,
The loved and cherished past upon the new life stealing.

Serene and mild the untried light
May have its dawning;
As meet in summer's northern night

The evening gray and dawning white,
The sunset hues of Time blend with the soul's new morning.

SWEDENBORG

[1844.]

THERE are times when, looking only on the surface of things, one is almost ready to regard Lowell as a sort of sacred city of Mammon,—the Benares of gain: its huge mills, temples; its crowded dwellings, lodging-places of disciples and "proselytes within the gate;" its warehouses, stalls for the sale of relics. A very mean idol-worship, too, unrelieved by awe and reverence,—a selfish, earthward-looking devotion to the "least-erected spirit that fell from paradise." I grow weary of seeing man and mechanism reduced to a common level, moved by the same impulse, answering to the same bell-call. A nightmare of materialism broods over all. I long at times to hear a voice crying through the streets like that of one of the old prophets proclaiming the great first truth,—that the Lord alone is God.

Yet is there not another side to the picture? High over sounding workshops spires glisten in the sun,—silent fingers pointing heavenward. The workshops themselves are instinct with other and subtler processes than cotton-spinning or carpet-weaving. Each human being who watches beside jack or power loom feels more or less intensely that it is a solemn thing to live. Here are sin and sorrow, yearnings for lost peace, outgushing gratitude of forgiven spirits, hopes and fears, which stretch beyond the horizon of time into eternity. Death is here. The graveyard utters its warning. Over all bends the eternal heaven in its silence and mystery. Nature, even here, is mightier than Art, and God is above all. Underneath the din of labor and the sounds of traffic, a voice, felt rather than heard, reaches the heart, prompting the same fearful questions which stirred the soul of the world's oldest poet,—"If a man die, shall he live again?" "Man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?" Out of the depths of burdened and weary hearts comes up the agonizing inquiry, "What shall I do to be saved?" "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

As a matter of course, in a city like this, composed of all classes of our many-sided population, a great variety of religious sects have their representatives in Lowell. The young city is dotted over with "steeple houses," most of them of the Yankee order of architecture. The Episcopalians have a house of worship on Merrimac Street,—a pile of dark stone, with low Gothic doors and arched windows. A plat of grass lies between it and the dusty street; and near it stands the dwelling-house intended for the minister, built of the same material as the church and surrounded by trees and shrubbery. The attention of the stranger is also attracted by another consecrated building on the hill slope of Belvidere,—one of Irving's "shingle palaces," painted in imitation of stone,—a great wooden sham, "whelked and horned" with pine spires and turrets, a sort of whittled representation of the many-beaded beast of the Apocalypse.

In addition to the established sects which have reared their visible altars in the City of Spindles, there are many who have not yet marked the boundaries or set up the pillars and stretched out the curtains of their sectarian tabernacles; who, in halls and "upper chambers" and in the solitude of their own homes, keep alive the spirit of devotion, and, wrapping closely around them the mantles of their order, maintain the integrity of its peculiarities in the midst of an unbelieving generation.

Not long since, in company with a friend who is a regular attendant, I visited the little meeting of the disciples of Emanuel Swedenborg. Passing over Chapel Hill and leaving the city behind us, we reached the stream which winds through the beautiful woodlands at the Powder Mills and mingles its waters with the Concord. The hall in which the followers of the Gothland seer meet is small and plain, with unpainted seats, like those of "the people called Quakers," and looks out upon the still woods and that "willowy stream which turns a mill." An organ of small size, yet, as it seemed to me, vastly out of proportion with the room, filled the place usually occupied by the pulpit, which was here only a plain desk, placed modestly by the side of it. The congregation have no regular preacher, but the exercises of reading the Scriptures, prayers, and selections from the Book of Worship were conducted by one of the lay members. A manuscript sermon, by a clergyman of the order in Boston, was read, and apparently listened to with much interest. It was well written and deeply imbued with the doctrines of the church. I was impressed by the gravity and serious earnestness of the little audience. There were here no circumstances calculated to excite enthusiasm, nothing of the pomp of religious rites and ceremonies; only a settled conviction of the truth of the doctrines of their faith could have thus brought them together. I could scarcely make the fact a reality, as I sat among them, that here, in the midst of our

bare and hard utilities, in the very centre and heart of our mechanical civilization, were devoted and undoubting believers in the mysterious and wonderful revelations of the Swedish prophet,—revelations which look through all external and outward manifestations to inward realities; which regard all objects in the world of sense only as the types and symbols of the world of spirit; literally unmasking the universe and laying bare the profoundest mysteries of life.

The character and writings of Emanuel Swedenborg constitute one of the puzzles and marvels of metaphysics and psychology. A man remarkable for his practical activities, an ardent scholar of the exact sciences, versed in all the arcana of physics, a skilful and inventive mechanic, he has evolved from the hard and gross materialism of his studies a system of transcendent spiritualism. From his aggregation of cold and apparently lifeless practical facts beautiful and wonderful abstractions start forth like blossoms on the rod of the Levite. A politician and a courtier, a man of the world, a mathematician engaged in the soberest details of the science, he has given to the world, in the simplest and most natural language, a series of speculations upon the great mystery of being: detailed, matter-of-fact narratives of revelations from the spiritual world, which at once appall us by their boldness, and excite our wonder at their extraordinary method, logical accuracy, and perfect consistency. These remarkable speculations—the workings of a mind in which a powerful imagination allied itself with superior reasoning faculties, the marvellous current of whose thought ran only in the diked and guarded channels of mathematical demonstration—he uniformly speaks of as "facts." His perceptions of abstractions were so intense that they seem to have reached that point where thought became sensible to sight as well as feeling. What he thought, that he saw.

He relates his visions of the spiritual world as he would the incidents of a walk round his own city of Stockholm. One can almost see him in his "brown coat and velvet breeches," lifting his "cocked hat" to an angel, or keeping an unsavory spirit at arm's length with that "gold-headed cane" which his London host describes as his inseparable companion in walking. His graphic descriptions have always an air of naturalness and probability; yet there is a minuteness of detail at times almost bordering on the ludicrous. In his Memorable Relations he manifests nothing of the imagination of Milton, overlooking the closed gates of paradise, or following the "pained fiend" in his flight through chaos; nothing of Dante's terrible imagery appalls us; we are led on from heaven to heaven very much as Defoe leads us after his shipwrecked Crusoe. We can scarcely credit the fact that we are not traversing our lower planet; and the angels seem vastly like our common acquaintances. We seem to recognize the "John Smiths," and "Mr. Browns," and "the old familiar faces" of our mundane habitation. The evil principle in Swedenborg's picture is, not the colossal and massive horror of the Inferno, nor that stern wrestler with fate who darkens the canvas of Paradise Lost, but an aggregation of poor, confused spirits, seeking rest and finding none save in the unsavory atmosphere of the "falses." These small fry of devils remind us only of certain unfortunate fellows whom we have known, who seem incapable of living in good and wholesome society, and who are manifestly given over to believe a lie. Thus it is that the very "heavens" and "hells" of the Swedish mystic seem to be "of the earth, earthy." He brings the spiritual world into close analogy with the material one.

In this hurried paper I have neither space nor leisure to attempt an analysis of the great doctrines which underlie the "revelations" of Swedenborg. His remarkably suggestive books are becoming familiar to the reading and reflecting portion of the community. They are not unworthy of study; but, in the language of another, I would say, "Emulate Swedenborg in his exemplary life, his learning, his virtues, his independent thought, his desire for wisdom, his love of the good and true; aim to be his equal, his superior, in these things; but call no man your master."

THE BETTER LAND.

[1844.]

"THE shapings of our heavens are the modifications of our constitution," said Charles Lamb, in his reply to Southey's attack upon him in the Quarterly Review.

He who is infinite in love as well as wisdom has revealed to us the fact of a future life, and the fearfully important relation in which the present stands to it. The actual nature and conditions of that life He has hidden from us,—no chart of the ocean of eternity is given us,—no celestial guidebook or geography defines, localizes, and prepares us for the wonders of the spiritual world. Hence imagination

has a wide field for its speculations, which, so long as they do not positively contradict the revelation of the Scriptures, cannot be disproved.

We naturally enough transfer to our idea of heaven whatever we love and reverence on earth. Thither the Catholic carries in his fancy the imposing rites and time-honored solemnities of his worship. There the Methodist sees his love-feasts and camp-meetings in the groves and by the still waters and green pastures of the blessed abodes. The Quaker, in the stillness of his self-communing, remembers that there was "silence in heaven."

The Churchman, listening to the solemn chant of wail music or the deep tones of the organ, thinks of the song of the elders and the golden harps of the New Jerusalem.

The heaven of the northern nations of Europe was a gross and sensual reflection of the earthly life of a barbarous and brutal people.

The Indians of North America had a vague notion of a sunset land, a beautiful paradise far in the west, mountains and forests filled with deer and buffalo, lakes and streams swarming with fishes,—the happy hunting-ground of souls. In a late letter from a devoted missionary among the Western Indians (Paul Blohm, a converted Jew) we have noticed a beautiful illustration of this belief. Near the Omaha mission-house, on a high bluff, was a solitary Indian grave. "One evening," says the missionary, "having come home with some cattle which I had been seeking, I heard some one wailing; and, looking in the direction from whence I proceeded, I found it to be from the grave near our house. In a moment after a mourner rose up from a kneeling or lying posture, and, turning to the setting sun, stretched forth his arms in prayer and supplication with an intensity and earnestness as though he would detain the splendid luminary from running his course. With his body leaning forward and his arms stretched towards the sun, he presented a most striking figure of sorrow and petition. It was solemnly awful. He seemed to me to be one of the ancients come forth to teach me how to pray."

A venerable and worthy New England clergyman, on his death-bed, just before the close of his life, declared that he was only conscious of an awfully solemn and intense curiosity to know the great secret of death and eternity.

The excellent Dr. Nelson, of Missouri, was one who, while on earth, seemed to live another and higher life in the contemplation of infinite purity and happiness. A friend once related an incident concerning him which made a deep impression upon my mind. They had been travelling through a summer's forenoon in the prairie, and had lain down to rest beneath a solitary tree. The Doctor lay for a long time, silently looking upwards through the openings of the boughs into the still heavens, when he repeated the following lines, in a low tone, as if communing with himself in view of the wonders he described:—

"O the joys that are there mortal eye hath not seen!
O the songs they sing there, with hosannas between!
O the thrice-blessed song of the Lamb and of Moses!
O brightness on brightness! the pearl gate uncloses!
O white wings of angels! O fields white with roses!
O white tents of peace, where the rapt soul reposes
O the waters so still, and the pastures so green!"

The brief hints afforded us by the sacred writings concerning the better land are inspiring and beautiful. Eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive of the good in store for the righteous. Heaven is described as a quiet habitation,—a rest remaining for the people of God. Tears shall be wiped away from all eyes; there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain. To how many death-beds have these words spoken peace! How many failing hearts have gathered strength from them to pass through the dark valley of shadows!

Yet we should not forget that "the kingdom of heaven is within;" that it is the state and affections of the soul, the answer of a good conscience, the sense of harmony with God, a condition of time as well as of eternity. What is really momentous and all-important with us is the present, by which the future is shaped and colored. A mere change of locality cannot alter the actual and intrinsic qualities of the soul. Guilt and remorse would make the golden streets of Paradise intolerable as the burning marl of the infernal abodes; while purity and innocence would transform hell itself into heaven.

DORA GREEN WELL.

First published as an introduction to an American edition of that author's *The Patience of Hope*.

THERE are men who, irrespective of the names by which they are called in the Babel confusion of sects, are endeared to the common heart of Christendom. Our doors open of their own accord to receive them. For in them we feel that in some faint degree, and with many limitations, the Divine is again manifested: something of the Infinite Love shines out of them; their very garments have healing and fragrance borrowed from the bloom of Paradise. So of books. There are volumes which perhaps contain many things, in the matter of doctrine and illustration, to which our reason does not assent, but which nevertheless seem permeated with a certain sweetness and savor of life. They have the Divine seal and imprimatur; they are fragrant with heart's-ease and asphodel; tonic with the leaves which are for the healing of the nations. The meditations of the devout monk of Kempen are the common heritage of Catholic and Protestant; our hearts burn within us as we walk with Augustine under Numidian fig-trees in the gardens of Verecundus; Feuelon from his bishop's palace and John Woolman from his tailor's shop speak to us in the same language. The unknown author of that book which Luther loved next to his Bible, the *Theologia Germanica*, is just as truly at home in this present age, and in the ultra Protestantism of New England, as in the heart of Catholic Europe, and in the fourteenth century. For such books know no limitations of time or place; they have the perpetual freshness and fitness of truth; they speak out of profound experience heart answers to heart as we read them; the spirit that is in man, and the inspiration that giveth understanding, bear witness to them. The bent and stress of their testimony are the same, whether written in this or a past century, by Catholic or Quaker: self-renunciation,—reconciliation to the Divine will through simple faith in the Divine goodness, and the love of it which must needs follow its recognition, the life of Christ made our own by self-denial and sacrifice, and the fellowship of His suffering for the good of others, the indwelling Spirit, leading into all truth, the Divine Word nigh us, even in our hearts. They have little to do with creeds, or schemes of doctrine, or the partial and inadequate plans of salvation invented by human speculation and ascribed to Him who, it is sufficient to know, is able to save unto the uttermost all who trust in Him. They insist upon simple faith and holiness of life, rather than rituals or modes of worship; they leave the merely formal, ceremonial, and temporal part of religion to take care of itself, and earnestly seek for the substantial, the necessary, and the permanent.

With these legacies of devout souls, it seems to me, the little volume herewith presented is not wholly unworthy of a place. It assumes the life and power of the gospel as a matter of actual experience; it bears unmistakable evidence of a realization, on the part of its author, of the truth, that Christianity is not simply historical and traditional, but present and permanent, with its roots in the infinite past and its branches in the infinite future, the eternal spring and growth of Divine love; not the dying echo of words uttered centuries ago, never to be repeated, but God's good tidings spoken afresh in every soul,—the perennial fountain and unstinted outflow of wisdom and goodness, forever old and forever new. It is a lofty plea for patience, trust, hope, and holy confidence, under the shadow, as well as in the light, of Christian experience, whether the cloud seems to rest on the tabernacle, or moves guidingly forward. It is perhaps too exclusively addressed to those who minister in the inner sanctuary, to be entirely intelligible to the vaster number who wait in the outer courts; it overlooks, perhaps, too much the solidarity and oneness of humanity; but all who read it will feel its earnestness, and confess to the singular beauty of its style, the strong, steady march of its argument, and the wide and varied learning which illustrates it.

["The good are not so good as I once thought, nor the bad so evil, and in all there is more for grace to make advantage of, and more to testify for God and holiness, than I once believed."—Baxter.]

To use the language of one of its reviewers in the Scottish press:—

"Beauty there is in the book; exquisite glimpses into the loveliness of nature here and there shine out from its lines,—a charm wanting which meditative writing always seems to have a defect; beautiful gleams, too, there are of the choicest things of art, and frequent allusions by the way to legend or picture of the religious past; so that, while you read, you wander by a clear brook of thought, coining far from the beautiful hills, and winding away from beneath the sunshine of gladness and beauty into the dense, mysterious forest of human existence, that loves to sing, amid the shadow of human darkness and anguish, its music of heavenborn consolation; bringing, too, its pure waters of cleansing and healing, yet evermore making its praise of holy affection and gladness; while it is still haunted by the spirits of prophet, saint, and poet, repeating snatches of their strains, and is led on, as by a spirit from above, to join the great river of God's truth. . . .

"This is a book for Christian men, for the quiet hour of holy solitude, when the heart longs and waits

for access to the presence of the Master. The weary heart that thirsts amidst its conflicts and its toils for refreshing water will drink eagerly of these sweet and refreshing words. To thoughtful men and women, especially such as have learnt any of the patience of hope in the experiences of sorrow and trial, we commend this little volume most heartily and earnestly."

The Patience of Hope fell into my hands soon after its publication in Edinburgh, some two years ago. I was at once impressed by its extraordinary richness of language and imagery,—its deep and solemn tone of meditation in rare combination with an eminently practical tendency,—philosophy warm and glowing with love. It will, perhaps, be less the fault of the writer than of her readers, if they are not always able to eliminate from her highly poetical and imaginative language the subtle metaphysical verity or phase of religious experience which she seeks to express, or that they are compelled to pass over, without appropriation, many things which are nevertheless profoundly suggestive as vague possibilities of the highest life. All may not be able to find in some of her Scriptural citations the exact weight and significance so apparent to her own mind. She startles us, at times, by her novel applications of familiar texts, by meanings reflected upon them from her own spiritual intuitions, making the barren Baca of the letter a well. If the rendering be questionable, the beauty and quaint felicity of illustration and comparison are unmistakable; and we call to mind Augustine's saying, that two or more widely varying interpretations of Scripture may be alike true in themselves considered. "When one saith, Moses meant as I do,' and another saith, 'Nay, but as I do,' I ask, more reverently, 'Why not rather as both, if both be true?'"

Some minds, for instance, will hesitate to assent to the use of certain Scriptural passages as evidence that He who is the Light of men, the Way and the Truth, in the mystery of His economy, designedly "delays, withdraws, and even hides Himself from those who love and follow Him." They will prefer to impute spiritual dearth and darkness to human weakness, to the selfishness which seeks a sign for itself, to evil imaginations indulged, to the taint and burden of some secret sin, or to some disease and exaggeration of the conscience, growing out of bodily infirmity, rather than to any purpose on the part of our Heavenly Father to perplex and mislead His children. The sun does not shine the less because one side of our planet is in darkness. To borrow the words of Augustine "Thou, Lord, forsakest nothing thou hast made. Thou alone art near to those even who remove far from thee. Let them turn and seek thee, for not as they have forsaken their Creator hast thou forsaken thy creation." It is only by holding fast the thought of Infinite Goodness, and interpreting doubtful Scripture and inward spiritual experience by the light of that central idea, that we can altogether escape the dreadful conclusion of Pascal, that revelation has been given us in dubious cipher, contradictory and mystical, in order that some, through miraculous aid, may understand it to their salvation, and others be mystified by it to their eternal loss.

I might mention other points of probable divergence between reader and writer, and indicate more particularly my own doubtful parse and hesitancy over some of these pages. But it is impossible for me to make one to whom I am so deeply indebted an offender for a word or a Scriptural rendering. On the grave and awful themes which she discusses, I have little to say in the way of controversy. I would listen, rather than criticise. The utterances of pious souls, in all ages, are to me often like fountains in a thirsty land, strengthening and refreshing, yet not without an after-taste of human frailty and inadequateness, a slight bitterness of disappointment and unsatisfied quest. Who has not felt at times that the letter killeth, that prophecies fail, and tongues cease to edify, and been ready to say, with the author of the *Imitation of Christ*: "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth. Let not Moses nor the prophets speak to me, but speak thou rather, who art the Inspirer and Enlightener of all. I am weary with reading and hearing many things; let all teachers hold their peace; let all creatures keep silence: speak thou alone to me."

The writer of *The Patience of Hope* had, previous to its publication, announced herself to a fit, if small, audience of earnest and thoughtful Christians, in a little volume entitled, *A Present Heaven*. She has recently published a collection of poems, of which so competent a judge as Dr. Brown, the author of *Horae Subsecivae* and *Rab and his Friends*, thus speaks, in the *North British Review*:—

"Such of our readers—a fast increasing number—as have read and enjoyed *The Patience of Hope*, listening to the gifted nature which, through such deep and subtle thought, and through affection and godliness still deeper and more quick, has charmed and soothed them, will not be surprised to learn that she is not only poetical, but, what is more, a poet, and one as true as George Herbert and Henry Vaughan, or our own Cowper; for, with all our admiration of the searching, fearless speculation, the wonderful power of speaking clearly upon dark and all but unspeakable subjects, the rich outcome of 'thoughts that wander through eternity,' which increases every time we take up that wonderful little book, we confess we were surprised at the kind and the amount of true poetic *vis* in these poems, from the same fine and strong hand. There is a personality and immediateness, a sort of sacredness and privacy, as if they were overheard rather than read, which gives to these remarkable productions a

charm and a flavor all their own. With no effort, no consciousness of any end but that of uttering the inmost thoughts and desires of the heart, they flow out as clear, as living, as gladdening as the wayside well, coming from out the darkness of the central depths, filtered into purity by time and travel. The waters are copious, sometimes to overflowing; but they are always limpid and unforced, singing their own quiet tune, not saddening, though sometimes sad, and their darkness not that of obscurity, but of depth, like that of the deep sea.

"This is not a book to criticise or speak about, and we give no extracts from the longer, and in this case, we think, the better poems. In reading this Cardiphonia set to music, we have been often reminded, not only of Herbert and Vaughan, but of Keble,—a likeness of the spirit, not of the letter; for if there is any one poet who has given a bent to her mind, it is Wordsworth,—the greatest of all our century's poets, both in himself and in his power of making poets."

In the belief that whoever peruses the following pages will be sufficiently interested in their author to be induced to turn back and read over again, with renewed pleasure, extracts from her metrical writings, I copy from the volume so warmly commended a few brief pieces and extracts from the longer poems.

Here are three sonnets, each a sermon in itself:—

ASCENDING.

They who from mountain-peaks have gazed upon
The wide, illimitable heavens have said,
That, still receding as they climbed, outspread,
The blue vault deepens over them, and, one
By one drawn further back, each starry sun
Shoots down a feebler splendor overhead
So, Saviour, as our mounting spirits, led
Along Faith's living way to Thee, have won
A nearer access, up the difficult track
Still pressing, on that rarer atmosphere,
When low beneath us flits the cloudy rack,
We see Thee drawn within a widening sphere
Of glory, from us further, further back,—
Yet is it then because we are more near.

LIFE TAPESTRY.

Top long have I, methought, with tearful eye
Pored o'er this tangled work of mine, and mused
Above each stitch awry and thread confused;
Now will I think on what in years gone by
I heard of them that weave rare tapestry
At royal looms, and hew they constant use
To work on the rough side, and still peruse
The pictured pattern set above them high;
So will I set my copy high above,
And gaze and gaze till on my spirit grows
Its gracious impress; till some line of love,
Transferred upon my canvas, faintly glows;
Nor look too much on warp or woof, provide
He whom I work for sees their fairer side!

HOPE.

When I do think on thee, sweet Hope, and how
Thou followest on our steps, a coaxing child
Oft chidden hence, yet quickly reconciled,
Still turning on us a glad, beaming brow,
And red, ripe lips for kisses: even now
Thou mindest me of him, the Ruler mild,
Who led God's chosen people through the wild,
And bore with wayward murmurers, meek as thou

That bringest waters from the Rock, with bread
Of angels strewing Earth for us! like him
Thy force abates not, nor thine eye grows dim;
But still with milk and honey-droppings fed,
Thou ledest to the Promised Country fair,
Though thou, like Moses, may'st not enter there

There is something very weird and striking in the following lines:—

GONE.

Alone, at midnight as he knelt, his spirit was aware
Of Somewhat falling in between the silence and the prayer;

A bell's dull clangor that hath sped so far, it faints and dies
So soon as it hath reached the ear whereto its errand lies;

And as he rose up from his knees, his spirit was aware
Of Somewhat, forceful and unseen, that sought to hold him there;

As of a Form that stood behind, and on his shoulders prest
Both hands to stay his rising up, and Somewhat in his breast,

In accents clearer far than words, spake, "Pray yet longer, pray,
For one that ever prayed for thee this night hath passed away;

"A soul, that climbing hour by hour the silver-shining stair
That leads to God's great treasure-house, grew covetous; and there

"Was stored no blessing and no boon, for thee she did not claim,
(So lowly, yet importunate!) and ever with thy name

"She link'd—that none in earth or heaven might hinder it or stay—
One Other Name, so strong, that thine hath never missed its way.

"This very night within my arms this gracious soul I bore
Within the Gate, where many a prayer of hers had gone before;

"And where she resteth, evermore one constant song they raise
Of 'Holy, holy,' so that now I know not if she prays;

"But for the voice of praise in Heaven, a voice of Prayer hath gone
From Earth; thy name upriseth now no more; pray on, pray on!"

The following may serve as a specimen of the writer's lighter, half- playful strain of moralizing:—

SEEKING.

"And where, and among what pleasant places,
Have ye been, that ye come again
With your laps so full of flowers, and your faces
Like buds blown fresh after rain?"

"We have been," said the children, speaking
In their gladness, as the birds chime,
All together,— "we have been seeking
For the Fairies of olden time;
For we thought, they are only hidden,—
They would never surely go
From this green earth all unbidden,
And the children that love them so.
Though they come not around us leaping,
As they did when they and the world
Were young, we shall find them sleeping
Within some broad leaf curled;
For the lily its white doors closes

But only over the bee,
And we looked through the summer roses,
Leaf by leaf, so carefully.

But we thought, rolled up we shall find them
Among mosses old and dry;
From gossamer threads that bind them,
They will start like the butterfly,
All winged: so we went forth seeking,
Yet still they have kept unseen;
Though we think our feet have been keeping
The track where they have been,
For we saw where their dance went flying
O'er the pastures,—snowy white."

Their seats and their tables lying,
O'erthrown in their sudden flight.
And they, too, have had their losses,
For we found the goblets white
And red in the old spiked mosses,
That they drank from over-night;
And in the pale horn of the woodbine
Was some wine left, clear and bright;
"But we found," said the children, speaking
More quickly, "so many things,
That we soon forgot we were seeking,—
Forgot all the Fairy rings,
Forgot all the stories olden
That we hear round the fire at night,
Of their gifts and their favors golden,—
The sunshine was so bright;
And the flowers,—we found so many
That it almost made us grieve
To think there were some, sweet as any,
That we were forced to leave;
As we left, by the brook-side lying,
The balls of drifted foam,
And brought (after all our trying)
These Guelder-roses home."

"Then, oh!" I heard one speaking
Beside me soft and low,
"I have been, like the blessed children, seeking,
Still seeking, to and fro;
Yet not, like them, for the Fairies,—
They might pass unmourned away
For me, that had looked on angels,—
On angels that would not stay;
No! not though in haste before them
I spread all my heart's best cheer,
And made love my banner o'er them,
If it might but keep them here;
They stayed but a while to rest them;
Long, long before its close,
From my feast, though I mourned and prest them
The radiant guests arose;
And their flitting wings struck sadness
And silence; never more
Hath my soul won back the gladness,
That was its own before.
No; I mourned not for the Fairies
When I had seen hopes decay,
That were sweet unto my spirit
So long; I said, 'If they,
That through shade and sunny weather

Have twined about my heart,
Should fade, we must go together,
For we can never part!
But my care was not availing;
I found their sweetness gone;
I saw their bright tints paling;—
They died; yet I lived on.

"Yet seeking, ever seeking,
Like the children, I have won
A guerdon all undreamt of

When first my quest begun,
And my thoughts come back like wanderers,
Out-wearied, to my breast;
What they sought for long they found not,
Yet was the Unsought best.
For I sought not out for crosses,
I did not seek for pain;
Yet I find the heart's sore losses
Were the spirit's surest gain."

In *A Meditation*, the writer ventures, not without awe and reverence, upon that dim, unsounded ocean of mystery, the life beyond:—

"But is there prayer
Within your quiet homes, and is there care
For those ye leave behind? I would address
My spirit to this theme in humbleness
No tongue nor pen hath uttered or made known
This mystery, and thus I do but guess
At clearer types through lowlier patterns shown;
Yet when did Love on earth forsake its own?
Ye may not quit your sweetness; in the Vine
More firmly rooted than of old, your wine
Hath freer flow! ye have not changed, but grown
To fuller stature; though the shock was keen
That severed you from us, how oft below
Hath sorest parting smitten but to show
True hearts their hidden wealth that quickly grow
The closer for that anguish,—friend to friend
Revealed more clear,—and what is Death to rend
The ties of life and love, when He must fade
In light of very Life, when He must bend
To love, that, loving, loveth to the end?

"I do not deem ye look
Upon us now, for be it that your eyes
Are sealed or clear, a burden on them lies
Too deep and blissful for their gaze to brook
Our troubled strife; enough that once ye dwelt
Where now we dwell, enough that once ye felt
As now we feel, to bid you recognize
Our claim of kindred cherished though unseen;
And Love that is to you for eye and ear
Hath ways unknown to us to bring you near,—
To keep you near for all that comes between;
As pious souls that move in sleep to prayer,
As distant friends, that see not, and yet share
(I speak of what I know) each other's care,
So may your spirits blend with ours!
Above Ye know not haply of our state, yet
Love Acquaints you with our need, and through a way
More sure than that of knowledge—so ye pray!

"And even thus we meet,
And even thus we commune! spirits freed
And spirits fettered mingle, nor have need
To seek a common atmosphere, the air
Is meet for either in this olden, sweet,
Primeval breathing of Man's spirit,—Prayer!"

I give, in conclusion, a portion of one of her most characteristic poems, *The Reconciler*:—

"Our dreams are reconciled,
Since Thou didst come to turn them all to Truth;
The World, the Heart, are dreamers in their youth
Of visions beautiful, and strange and wild;
And Thou, our Life's Interpreter, dost still
At once make clear these visions and fulfil;

Each dim sweet Orphic rhyme,
Each mythic tale sublime
Of strength to save, of sweetness to subdue,
Each morning dream the few,
Wisdom's first lovers told, if read in Thee comes true.

.....

"Thou, O Friend
From heaven, that madest this our heart Thine own,
Dost pierce the broken language of its moan—
Thou dost not scorn our needs, but satisfy!
Each yearning deep and wide,
Each claim, is justified;
Our young illusions fail not, though they die
Within the brightness of Thy Rising, kissed
To happy death, like early clouds that lie
About the gates of Dawn,—a golden mist
Paling to blissful white, through rose and amethyst.

"The World that puts Thee by,
That opens not to greet Thee with Thy train,
That sendeth after Thee the sullen cry,
'We will not have Thee over us to reign,'
Itself Both testify through searchings vain
Of Thee and of its need, and for the good
It will not, of some base similitude
Takes up a taunting witness, till its mood,
Grown fierce o'er failing hopes, doth rend and tear
Its own illusions grown too thin and bare
To wrap it longer; for within the gate
Where all must pass, a veiled and hooded Fate,
A dark Chimera, coiled and tangled lies,
And he who answers not its questions dies,—
Still changing form and speech, but with the same
Vexed riddles, Gordian-twisted, bringing shame
Upon the nations that with eager cry
Hail each new solver of the mystery;
Yet he, of these the best,
Bold guesser, hath but prest
Most nigh to Thee, our noisy plaudits wrong;
True Champion, that hast wrought
Our help of old, and brought
Meat from this eater, sweetness from this strong.

"O Bearer of the key
That shuts and opens with a sound so sweet
Its turning in the wards is melody,
All things we move among are incomplete
And vain until we fashion them in Thee!

We labor in the fire,
Thick smoke is round about us; through the din
Of words that darken counsel clamors dire
Ring from thought's beaten anvil, where within
Two Giants toil, that even from their birth
With travail-pangs have torn their mother Earth,
And wearied out her children with their keen
Upbraidings of the other, till between
Thou tamest, saying, 'Wherefore do ye wrong
Each other?—ye are Brethren.' Then these twain
Will own their kindred, and in Thee retain
Their claims in peace, because Thy land is wide
As it is goodly! here they pasture free,
This lion and this leopard, side by side,
A little child doth lead them with a song;
Now, Ephraim's envy ceaseth, and no more
Doth Judah anger Ephraim chiding sore,
For one did ask a Brother, one a King,
So dost Thou gather them in one, and bring—
Thou, King forevermore, forever Priest,
Thou, Brother of our own from bonds released
A Law of Liberty,
A Service making free,
A Commonweal where each has all in Thee.

"And not alone these wide,
Deep-planted yearnings, seeking with a cry
Their meat from God, in Thee are satisfied;
But all our instincts waking suddenly
Within the soul, like infants from their sleep
That stretch their arms into the dark and weep,
Thy voice can still. The stricken heart bereft
Of all its brood of singing hopes, and left
'Mid leafless boughs, a cold, forsaken nest
With snow-flakes in it, folded in Thy breast
Doth lose its deadly chill; and grief that creeps
Unto Thy side for shelter, finding there
The wound's deep cleft, forgets its moan, and weeps
Calm, quiet tears, and on Thy forehead Care
Hath looked until its thorns, no longer bare,
Put forth pale roses. Pain on Thee doth press
Its quivering cheek, and all the weariness,
The want that keep their silence, till from Thee
They hear the gracious summons, none beside
Hath spoken to the world-worn, 'Come to me,'
Tell forth their heavy secrets.

"Thou dost hide
These in Thy bosom, and not these alone,
But all our heart's fond treasure that had grown
A burden else: O Saviour, tears were weighed
To Thee in plenteous measure! none hath shown
That Thou didst smile! yet hast Thou surely made
All joy of ours Thine own.

"Thou madest us for Thine;
We seek amiss, we wander to and fro;
Yet are we ever on the track Divine;
The soul confesseth Thee, but sense is slow
To lean on aught but that which it may see;
So hath it crowded up these Courts below
With dark and broken images of Thee;
Lead Thou us forth upon Thy Mount, and show
Thy goodly patterns, whence these things of old
By Thee were fashioned; One though manifold.

Glass Thou Thy perfect likeness in the soul,
Show us Thy countenance, and we are whole!"

No one, I am quite certain, will regret that I have made these liberal quotations. Apart from their literary merit, they have a special interest for the readers of *The Patience of Hope*, as more fully illustrating the writer's personal experience and aspirations.

It has been suggested by a friend that it is barely possible that an objection may be urged against the following treatise, as against all books of a like character, that its tendency is to isolate the individual from his race, and to nourish an exclusive and purely selfish personal solicitude; that its piety is self-absorbent, and that it does not take sufficiently into account active duties and charities, and the love of the neighbor so strikingly illustrated by the Divine Master in His life and teachings. This objection, if valid, would be a fatal one. For, of a truth, there can be no meaner type of human selfishness than that afforded by him who, unmindful of the world of sin and suffering about him, occupies himself in the pitiful business of saving his own soul, in the very spirit of the miser, watching over his private hoard while his neighbors starve for lack of bread. But surely the benevolent unrest, the far-reaching sympathies and keen sensitiveness to the suffering of others, which so nobly distinguish our present age, can have nothing to fear from a plea for personal holiness, patience, hope, and resignation to the Divine will. "The more piety, the more compassion," says Isaac Taylor; and this is true, if we understand by piety, not self-concentred asceticism, but the pure religion and undefiled which visits the widow and the fatherless, and yet keeps itself unspotted from the world,—which deals justly, loves mercy, and yet walks humbly before God. Self-scrutiny in the light of truth can do no harm to any one, least of all to the reformer and philanthropist. The spiritual warrior, like the young candidate for knighthood, may be none the worse for his preparatory ordeal of watching all night by his armor.

Tauler in mediaeval times and Woolman in the last century are among the most earnest teachers of the inward life and spiritual nature of Christianity, yet both were distinguished for practical benevolence. They did not separate the two great commandments. Tauler strove with equal intensity of zeal to promote the temporal and the spiritual welfare of men. In the dark and evil time in which he lived, amidst the untold horrors of the "Black Plague," he illustrated by deeds of charity and mercy his doctrine of disinterested benevolence. Woolman's whole life was a nobler Imitation of Christ than that fervid rhapsody of monastic piety which bears the name.

How faithful, yet, withal, how full of kindness, were his rebukes of those who refused labor its just reward, and ground the faces of the poor? How deep and entire was his sympathy with overtasked and ill-paid laborers; with wet and ill-provided sailors; with poor wretches blaspheming in the mines, because oppression had made them mad; with the dyers plying their unhealthful trade to minister to luxury and pride; with the tenant wearing out his life in the service of a hard landlord; and with the slave sighing over his unrequited toil! What a significance there was in his vision of the "dull, gloomy mass" which appeared before him, darkening half the heavens, and which he was told was "human beings in as great misery as they could be and live; and he was mixed with them, and henceforth he might not consider himself a distinct and separate being"! His saintliness was wholly unconscious; he seems never to have thought himself any nearer to the tender heart of God than the most miserable sinner to whom his compassion extended. As he did not live, so neither did he die to himself. His prayer upon his death-bed was for others rather than himself; its beautiful humility and simple trust were marred by no sensual imagery of crowns and harps and golden streets, and personal beatific exaltations; but tender and touching concern for suffering humanity, relieved only by the thought of the paternity of God, and of His love and omnipotence, alone found utterance in ever-memorable words.

In view of the troubled state of the country and the intense preoccupation of the public mind, I have had some hesitation in offering this volume to its publishers. But, on further reflection, it has seemed to me that it might supply a want felt by many among us; that, in the chaos of civil strife and the shadow of mourning which rests over the land, the contemplation of "things unseen which are eternal" might not be unwelcome; that, when the foundations of human confidence are shaken, and the trust in man proves vain, there might be glad listeners to a voice calling from the outward and the temporal to the inward and the spiritual; from the troubles and perplexities of time, to the eternal quietness which God giveth. I cannot but believe that, in the heat and glare through which we are passing, this book will not invite in vain to the calm, sweet shadows of holy meditation, grateful as the green wings of the bird to Thalaba in the desert; and thus afford something of consolation to the bereaved, and of strength to the weary. For surely never was the *Patience of Hope* more needed; never was the inner sanctuary of prayer more desirable; never was a steadfast faith in the Divine goodness more indispensable, nor lessons of self-sacrifice and renunciation, and that cheerful acceptance of known duty which shifts not its proper responsibility upon others, nor asks for "peace in its day" at the expense of purity and justice, more timely than now, when the solemn words of ancient prophecy are as applicable to our own country as to that of the degenerate Jew,—"*Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy*

backsliding reprove thee; know, therefore, it is an evil thing, and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord, and that my fear is not in thee,"—when "His way is in the deep, in clouds, and in thick darkness," and the hand heavy upon us which shall "turn and overturn until he whose right it is shall reign,"—until, not without rending agony, the evil plant which our Heavenly Father hath not planted, whose roots have wound themselves about altar and hearth-stone, and whose branches, like the tree Al-Accoub in Moslem fable, bear the accursed fruit of oppression, rebellion, and all imaginable crime, shall be torn up and destroyed forever.

AMESBURY, 1st 6th mo., 1862.

THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS.

The following letters were addressed to the Editor of the Friends' Review in Philadelphia, in reference to certain changes of principle and practice in the Society then beginning to be observable, but which have since more than justified the writer's fears and solicitude.

I.

AMESBURY, 2d mo., 1870.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE REVIEW.

ESTEEMED FRIEND,—If I have been hitherto a silent, I have not been an indifferent, spectator of the movements now going on in our religious Society. Perhaps from lack of faith, I have been quite too solicitous concerning them, and too much afraid that in grasping after new things we may let go of old things too precious to be lost. Hence I have been pleased to see from time to time in thy paper very timely and fitting articles upon a *Hired Ministry* and *Silent Worship*.

The present age is one of sensation and excitement, of extreme measures and opinions, of impatience of all slow results. The world about us moves with accelerated impulse, and we move with it: the rest we have enjoyed, whether true or false, is broken; the title-deeds of our opinions, the reason of our practices, are demanded. Our very right to exist as a distinct society is questioned. Our old literature—the precious journals and biographies of early and later Friends—is comparatively neglected for sensational and dogmatic publications. We bear complaints of a want of educated ministers; the utility of silent meetings is denied, and praying and preaching regarded as matters of will and option. There is a growing desire for experimenting upon the dogmas and expedients and practices of other sects. I speak only of admitted facts, and not for the purpose of censure or complaint. No one has less right than myself to indulge in heresy-hunting or impatience of minor differences of opinion. If my dear friends can bear with me, I shall not find it a hard task to bear with them.

But for myself I prefer the old ways. With the broadest possible tolerance for all honest seekers after truth! I love the Society of Friends. My life has been nearly spent in laboring with those of other sects in behalf of the suffering and enslaved; and I have never felt like quarrelling with Orthodox or Unitarians, who were willing to pull with me, side by side, at the rope of Reform. A very large proportion of my dearest personal friends are outside of our communion; and I have learned with John Woolman to find "no narrowness respecting sects and opinions." But after a kindly and candid survey of them all, I turn to my own Society, thankful to the Divine Providence which placed me where I am; and with an unshaken faith in the one distinctive doctrine of Quakerism—the Light within—the immanence of the Divine Spirit in Christianity. I cheerfully recognize and bear testimony to the good works and lives of those who widely differ in faith and practice; but I have seen no truer types of Christianity, no better men and women, than I have known and still know among those who not blindly, but intelligently, hold the doctrines and maintain the testimonies of our early Friends. I am not blind to the shortcomings of Friends. I know how much we have lost by narrowness and coldness and inactivity, the overestimate of external observances, the neglect of our own proper work while acting as conscience-keepers for others. We have not, as a society, been active enough in those simple duties which we owe to our suffering fellow-creatures, in that abundant labor of love and self-denial which is never out of place. Perhaps our divisions and dissensions might have been spared us if we had been less "at ease in Zion." It is in the decline of practical righteousness that men are most likely to contend with each other

for dogma and ritual, for shadow and letter, instead of substance and spirit. Hence I rejoice in every sign of increased activity in doing good among us, in the precious opportunities afforded of working with the Divine Providence for the Freedmen and Indians; since the more we do, in the true spirit of the gospel, for others, the more we shall really do for ourselves. There is no danger of lack of work for those who, with an eye single to the guidance of Truth, look for a place in God's vineyard; the great work which the founders of our Society began is not yet done; the mission of Friends is not accomplished, and will not be until this world of ours, now full of sin and suffering, shall take up, in jubilant thanksgiving, the song of the Advent: "Glory to God in the highest! Peace on earth and good-will to men!"

It is charged that our Society lacks freedom and adaptation to the age in which we live, that there is a repression of individuality and manliness among us. I am not prepared to deny it in certain respects. But, if we look at the matter closely, we shall see that the cause is not in the central truth of Quakerism, but in a failure to rightly comprehend it; in an attempt to fetter with forms and hedge about with dogmas that great law of Christian liberty, which I believe affords ample scope for the highest spiritual aspirations and the broadest philanthropy. If we did but realize it, we are "set in a large place."

"We may do all we will save wickedness."

"Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

Quakerism, in the light of its great original truth, is "exceeding broad." As interpreted by Penn and Barclay it is the most liberal and catholic of faiths. If we are not free, generous, tolerant, if we are not up to or above the level of the age in good works, in culture and love of beauty, order and fitness, if we are not the ready recipients of the truths of science and philosophy,—in a word, if we are not full-grown men and Christians, the fault is not in Quakerism, but in ourselves. We shall gain nothing by aping the customs and trying to adjust ourselves to the creeds of other sects. By so doing we make at the best a very awkward combination, and just as far as it is successful, it is at the expense of much that is vital in our old faith. If, for instance, I could bring myself to believe a hired ministry and a written creed essential to my moral and spiritual well-being, I think I should prefer to sit down at once under such teachers as Bushnell and Beecher, the like of whom in Biblical knowledge, ecclesiastical learning, and intellectual power, we are not likely to manufacture by half a century of theological manipulation in a Quaker "school of the prophets." If I must go into the market and buy my preaching, I should naturally seek the best article on sale, without regard to the label attached to it.

I am not insensible of the need of spiritual renovation in our Society. I feel and confess my own deficiencies as an individual member. And I bear a willing testimony to the zeal and devotion of some dear friends, who, lamenting the low condition and worldliness too apparent among us, seek to awaken a stronger religious life by the partial adoption of the practices, forms, and creeds of more demonstrative sects. The great apparent activity of these sects seems to them to contrast very strongly with our quietness and reticence; and they do not always pause to inquire whether the result of this activity is a truer type of practical Christianity than is found in our select gatherings. I think I understand these brethren; to some extent I have sympathized with them. But it seems clear to me, that a remedy for the alleged evil lies not in going back to the "beggarly elements" from which our worthy ancestors called the people of their generation; not in will-worship; not in setting the letter above the spirit; not in substituting type and symbol, and oriental figure and hyperbole for the simple truths they were intended to represent; not in schools of theology; not in much speaking and noise and vehemence, nor in vain attempts to make the "plain language" of Quakerism utter the Shibboleth of man-made creeds: but in heeding more closely the Inward Guide and Teacher; in faith in Christ not merely in His historical manifestation of the Divine Love to humanity, but in His living presence in the hearts open to receive Him; in love for Him manifested in denial of self, in charity and love to our neighbor; and in a deeper realization of the truth of the apostle's declaration: "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."

In conclusion, let me say that I have given this expression of my opinions with some degree of hesitation, being very sensible that I have neither the right nor the qualification to speak for a society whose doctrines and testimonies commend themselves to my heart and head, whose history is rich with the precious legacy of holy lives, and of whose usefulness as a moral and spiritual Force in the world I am fully assured.

II.

Having received several letters from dear friends in various sections suggested by a recent communication in thy paper, and not having time or health to answer them in detail, will thou permit

me in this way to acknowledge them, and to say to the writers that I am deeply sensible of the Christian love and personal good-will to myself, which, whether in commendation or dissent, they manifest? I think I may say in truth that my letter was written in no sectarian or party spirit, but simply to express a solicitude, which, whether groundless or not, was nevertheless real. I am, from principle, disinclined to doctrinal disputations and so-called religious controversies, which only tend to separate and disunite. We have had too many divisions already. I intended no censure of dear brethren whose zeal and devotion command my sympathy, notwithstanding I may not be able to see with them in all respects. The domain of individual conscience is to me very sacred; and it seems the part of Christian charity to make a large allowance for varying experiences; mental characteristics, and temperaments, as well as for that youthful enthusiasm which, if sometimes misdirected, has often been instrumental in infusing a fresher life into the body of religious profession. It is too much to expect that we can maintain an entire uniformity in the expression of truths in which we substantially agree; and we should be careful that a rightful concern for "the form of sound words" does not become what William Penn calls "verbal orthodoxy." We must consider that the same accepted truth looks somewhat differently from different points of vision. Knowing our own weaknesses and limitations, we must bear in mind that human creeds, speculations, expositions, and interpretations of the Divine plan are but the faint and feeble glimpses of finite creatures into the infinite mysteries of God.

"They are but broken lights of Thee,
And Thou, O Lord, art more than they."

Differing, as we do, more or less as to means and methods, if we indeed have the "mind of Christ," we shall rejoice in whatever of good is really accomplished, although by somewhat different instrumentalities than those which we feel ourselves free to make use of, remembering that our Lord rebuked the narrowness and partisanship of His disciples by assuring them that they that were not against Him were for Him.

It would, nevertheless, give me great satisfaction to know, as thy kindly expressed editorial comments seem to intimate, that I have somewhat overestimated the tendencies of things in our Society. I have no pride of opinion which would prevent me from confessing with thankfulness my error of judgment. In any event, it can, I think, do no harm to repeat my deep conviction that we may all labor, in the ability given us, for our own moral and spiritual well-being, and that of our fellow-creatures, without laying aside the principles and practice of our religious Society. I believe so much of liberty is our right as well as our privilege, and that we need not really overstep our bounds for the performance of any duty which may be required of us. When truly called to contemplate broader fields of labor, we shall find the walls about us, like the horizon seen from higher levels, expanding indeed, but nowhere broken.

I believe that the world needs the Society of Friends as a testimony and a standard. I know that this is the opinion of some of the best and most thoughtful members of other Christian sects. I know that any serious departure from the original foundation of our Society would give pain to many who, outside of our communion, deeply realize the importance of our testimonies. They fail to read clearly the signs of the times who do not see that the hour is coming when, under the searching eye of philosophy and the terrible analysis of science, the letter and the outward evidence will not altogether avail us; when the surest dependence must be upon the Light of Christ within, disclosing the law and the prophets in our own souls, and confirming the truth of outward Scripture by inward experience; when smooth stones from the brook of present revelation shall prove mightier than the weapons of Saul; when the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, as proclaimed by George Fox and lived by John Woolman, shall be recognized as the only efficient solvent of doubts raised by an age of restless inquiry. In this belief my letter was written. I am sorry it did not fall to the lot of a more fitting hand; and can only hope that no consideration of lack of qualification on the part of its writer may lessen the value of whatever testimony to truth shall be found in it.

AMESBURY, 3d mo., 1870.

P. S. I may mention that I have been somewhat encouraged by a perusal of the Proceedings of the late First-day School Conference in Philadelphia, where, with some things which I am compelled to pause over, and regret, I find much with which I cordially unite, and which seems to indicate a providential opening for good. I confess to a lively and tender sympathy with my younger brethren and sisters who, in the name of Him who "went about doing good," go forth into the highways and byways to gather up the lost, feed the hungry, instruct the ignorant, and point the sinsick and suffering to the hopes and consolations of Christian faith, even if, at times, their zeal goes beyond "reasonable service," and although the importance of a particular instrumentality may be exaggerated, and love lose sight of its needful companion humility, and he that putteth on his armor boast like him who layeth it off. Any movement, however irregular, which indicates life, is better than the quiet of death. In the overruling

providence of God, the troubling may prepare the way for healing. Some of us may have erred on one hand and some on the other, and this shaking of the balance may adjust it.

JOHN WOOLMAN'S JOURNAL.

Originally published as an introduction to a reissue of the work.

To those who judge by the outward appearance, nothing is more difficult of explanation than the strength of moral influence often exerted by obscure and uneventful lives. Some great reform which lifts the world to a higher level, some mighty change for which the ages have waited in anxious expectancy, takes place before our eyes, and, in seeking to trace it back to its origin, we are often surprised to find the initial link in the chain of causes to be some comparatively obscure individual, the divine commission and significance of whose life were scarcely understood by his contemporaries, and perhaps not even by himself. The little one has become a thousand; the handful of corn shakes like Lebanon. "The kingdom of God cometh not by observation;" and the only solution of the mystery is in the reflection that through the humble instrumentality Divine power was manifested, and that the Everlasting Arm was beneath the human one.

The abolition of human slavery now in process of consummation throughout the world furnishes one of the most striking illustrations of this truth. A far-reaching moral, social, and political revolution, undoing the evil work of centuries, unquestionably owes much of its original impulse to the life and labors of a poor, unlearned workingman of New Jersey, whose very existence was scarcely known beyond the narrow circle of his religious society.

It is only within a comparatively recent period that the journal and ethical essays of this remarkable man have attracted the attention to which they are manifestly entitled. In one of my last interviews with William Ellery Channing, he expressed his very great surprise that they were so little known. He had himself just read the book for the first time, and I shall never forget how his countenance lighted up as he pronounced it beyond comparison the sweetest and purest autobiography in the language. He wished to see it placed within the reach of all classes of readers; it was not a light to be hidden under the bushel of a sect. Charles Lamb, probably from his friends, the Clarksons, or from Bernard Barton, became acquainted with it, and on more than one occasion, in his letters and *Essays of Elia*, refers to it with warm commendation. Edward Irving pronounced it a godsend. Some idea of the lively interest which the fine literary circle gathered around the hearth of Lamb felt in the beautiful simplicity of Woolman's pages may be had from the *Diary of Henry Crabb Robinson*, one of their number, himself a man of wide and varied culture, the intimate friend of Goethe, Wordsworth, and Coleridge. In his notes for First Month, 1824, he says, after a reference to a sermon of his friend Irving, which he feared would deter rather than promote belief:

"How different this from John Woolman's Journal I have been reading at the same time! A perfect gem! His is a *schone Seele*, a beautiful soul. An illiterate tailor, he writes in a style of the most exquisite purity and grace. His moral qualities are transferred to his writings. Had he not been so very humble, he would have written a still better book; for, fearing to indulge in vanity, he conceals the events in which he was a great actor. His religion was love. His whole existence and all his passions were love. If one could venture to impute to his creed, and not to his personal character, the delightful frame of mind he exhibited, one could not hesitate to be a convert. His Christianity is most inviting, it is fascinating! One of the leading British reviews a few years ago, referring to this Journal, pronounced its author the man who, in all the centuries since the advent of Christ, lived nearest to the Divine pattern. The author of *The Patience of Hope*, whose authority in devotional literature is unquestioned, says of him: 'John Woolman's gift was love, a charity of which it does not enter into the natural heart of man to conceive, and of which the more ordinary experiences, even of renewed nature, give but a faint shadow. Every now and then, in the world's history, we meet with such men, the kings and priests of Humanity, on whose heads this precious ointment has been so poured forth that it has run down to the skirts of their clothing, and extended over the whole of the visible creation; men who have entered, like Francis of Assisi, into the secret of that deep amity with God and with His creatures which makes man to be in league with the stones of the field, and the beasts of the field to be at peace with him. In this pure, universal charity there is nothing fitful or intermittent, nothing that comes and goes in showers and gleams and sunbursts. Its springs are deep and constant, its rising is like that of a mighty river, its

very overflow calm and steady, leaving life and fertility behind it."

After all, anything like personal eulogy seems out of place in speaking of one who in the humblest self-abasement sought no place in the world's estimation, content to be only a passive instrument in the hands of his Master; and who, as has been remarked, through modesty concealed the events in which he was an actor. A desire to supply in some sort this deficiency in his Journal is my especial excuse for this introductory paper.

It is instructive to study the history of the moral progress of individuals or communities; to mark the gradual development of truth; to watch the slow germination of its seed sown in simple obedience to the command of the Great Husbandman, while yet its green promise, as well as its golden fruition, was hidden from the eyes of the sower; to go back to the well-springs and fountain-heads, tracing the small streamlet from its hidden source, and noting the tributaries which swell its waters, as it moves onward, until it becomes a broad river, fertilizing and gladdening our present humanity. To this end it is my purpose, as briefly as possible, to narrate the circumstances attending the relinquishment of slaveholding by the Society of Friends, and to hint at the effect of that act of justice and humanity upon the abolition of slavery throughout the world.

At an early period after the organization of the Society, members of it emigrated to the Maryland, Carolina, Virginia, and New England colonies. The act of banishment enforced against dissenters under Charles II. consigned others of the sect to the West Indies, where their frugality, temperance, and thrift transmuted their intended punishment into a blessing. Andrew Marvell, the inflexible republican statesman, in some of the sweetest and tenderest lines in the English tongue, has happily described their condition:—

What shall we do but sing His praise
Who led us through the watery maze,
Unto an isle so long unknown,
And yet far kinder than our own?
He lands us on a grassy stage,
Safe from the storms and prelates' rage;
He gives us this eternal spring,
Which here enamels everything,
And sends the fowls to us in care,
On daily visits through the air.
He hangs in shades the orange bright,
Like golden lamps, in a green night,
And doth in the pomegranate close
Jewels more rich than Ormus shows.

.....

And in these rocks for us did frame
A temple where to sound His name.
Oh! let our voice His praise exalt,
Till it arrive at heaven's vault,
Which then, perhaps rebounding, may
Echo beyond the Mexic bay.'

"So sang they in the English boat,
A holy and a cheerful note;
And all the way, to guide their chime,
With falling oars they kept the time."

Unhappily, they very early became owners of slaves, in imitation of the colonists around them. No positive condemnation of the evil system had then been heard in the British islands. Neither English prelates nor expounders at dissenting conventicles had aught to say against it. Few colonists doubted its entire compatibility with Christian profession and conduct. Saint and sinner, ascetic and worldling, united in its practice. Even the extreme Dutch saints of Bohemia Manor community, the pietists of John de Labadie, sitting at meat with hats on, and pausing ever and anon with suspended mouthfuls to bear a brother's or sister's exhortation, and sandwiching prayers between the courses, were waited upon by negro slaves. Everywhere men were contending with each other upon matters of faith, while, so far as their slaves were concerned, denying the ethics of Christianity itself.

Such was the state of things when, in 1671, George Fox visited Barbadoes. He was one of those men to whom it is given to discern through the mists of custom and prejudice something of the lineaments of absolute truth, and who, like the Hebrew lawgiver, bear with them, from a higher and purer

atmosphere, the shining evidence of communion with the Divine Wisdom. He saw slavery in its mildest form among his friends, but his intuitive sense of right condemned it. He solemnly admonished those who held slaves to bear in mind that they were brethren, and to train them up in the fear of God. "I desired, also," he says, "that they would cause their overseers to deal gently and mildly with their negroes, and not use cruelty towards them as the manner of some hath been and is; and that, after certain years of servitude, they should make them free."

In 1675, the companion of George Fox, William Edmundson, revisited Barbadoes, and once more bore testimony against the unjust treatment of slaves. He was accused of endeavoring to excite an insurrection among the blacks, and was brought before the Governor on the charge. It was probably during this journey that he addressed a remonstrance to friends in Maryland and Virginia on the subject of holding slaves. It is one of the first emphatic and decided testimonies on record against negro slavery as incompatible with Christianity, if we except the Papal bulls of Urban and Leo the Tenth.

Thirteen years after, in 1688, a meeting of German Quakers, who had emigrated from Kriesbeim, and settled at Germantown, Pennsylvania, addressed a memorial against "the buying and keeping of negroes" to the Yearly Meeting for the Pennsylvania and New Jersey colonies. That meeting took the subject into consideration, but declined giving judgment in the case. In 1696, the Yearly Meeting advised against "bringing in any more negroes." In 1714, in its Epistle to London Friends, it expresses a wish that Friends would be "less concerned in buying or selling slaves." The Chester Quarterly Meeting, which had taken a higher and clearer view of the matter, continued to press the Yearly Meeting to adopt some decided measure against any traffic in human beings.

The Society gave these memorials a cold reception. The love of gain and power was too strong, on the part of the wealthy and influential planters and merchants who had become slaveholders, to allow the scruples of the Chester meeting to take the shape of discipline. The utmost that could be obtained of the Yearly Meeting was an expression of opinion adverse to the importation of negroes, and a desire that "Friends generally do, as much as may be, avoid buying such negroes as shall hereafter be brought in, rather than offend any Friends who are against it; yet this is only caution, and not censure."

In the mean time the New England Yearly Meeting was agitated by the same question. Slaves were imported into Boston and Newport, and Friends became purchasers, and in some instances were deeply implicated in the foreign traffic. In 1716, the monthly meetings of Dartmouth and Nantucket suggested that it was "not agreeable to truth to purchase slaves and keep them during their term of life." Nothing was done in the Yearly Meeting, however, until 1727, when the practice of importing negroes was censured. That the practice was continued notwithstanding, for many years afterwards, is certain. In 1758, a rule was adopted prohibiting Friends within the limits of New England Yearly Meeting from engaging in or countenancing the foreign slave-trade.

In the year 1742 an event, simple and inconsiderable in itself, was made the instrumentality of exerting a mighty influence upon slavery in the Society of Friends. A small storekeeper at Mount Holly, in New Jersey, a member of the Society, sold a negro woman, and requested the young man in his employ to make a bill of sale of her.

[Mount Holly is a village lying in the western part of the long, narrow township of Northampton, on Rancocas Creek, a tributary of the Delaware. In John Woolman's day it was almost entirely a settlement of Friends. A very few of the old houses with their quaint stoops or porches are left. That occupied by John Woolman was a small, plain, two-story structure, with two windows in each story in front, a four-barred fence inclosing the grounds, with the trees he planted and loved to cultivate. The house was not painted, but whitewashed. The name of the place is derived from the highest hill in the county, rising two hundred feet above the sea, and commanding a view of a rich and level country, of cleared farms and woodlands. Here, no doubt, John Woolman often walked under the shadow of its holly-trees, communing with nature and musing on the great themes of life and duty.

When the excellent Joseph Sturge was in this country, some thirty years ago, on his errand of humanity, he visited Mount Holly, and the house of Woolman, then standing. He describes it as a very "humble abode." But one person was then living in the town who had ever seen its venerated owner. This aged man stated that he was at Woolman's little farm in the season of harvest when it was customary among farmers to kill a calf or sheep for the laborers. John Woolman, unwilling that the animal should be slowly bled to death, as the custom had been, and to spare it unnecessary suffering, had a smooth block of wood prepared to receive the neck of the creature, when a single blow terminated its existence. Nothing was more remarkable in the character of Woolman than his concern for the well-

being and cornfort of the brute creation. "What is religion?" asks the old Hindoo writer of the Vishnu Sarman. "Tenderness toward all creatures." Or, as Woolman expresses it, "Where the love of God is verily perfected, a tenderness towards all creatures made subject to our will is experienced, and a care felt that we do not lessen that sweetness of life in the animal creation which the Creator intends for them under our government."]

On taking up his pen, the young clerk felt a sudden and strong scruple in his mind. The thought of writing an instrument of slavery for one of his fellow-creatures oppressed him. God's voice against the desecration of His image spoke in the soul. He yielded to the will of his employer, but, while writing the instrument, he was constrained to declare, both to the buyer and the seller, that he believed slave-keeping inconsistent with the Christian religion. This young man was John Woolman. The circumstance above named was the starting-point of a life-long testimony against slavery. In the year 1746 he visited Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina. He was afflicted by the prevalence of slavery. It appeared to him, in his own words, "as a dark gloominess overhanging the land." On his return, he wrote an essay on the subject, which was published in 1754. Three years after, he made a second visit to the Southern meetings of Friends. Travelling as a minister of the gospel, he was compelled to sit down at the tables of slaveholding planters, who were accustomed to entertain their friends free of cost, and who could not comprehend the scruples of their guest against receiving as a gift food and lodging which he regarded as the gain of oppression. He was a poor man, but he loved truth more than money. He therefore either placed the pay for his entertainment in the hands of some member of the family, for the benefit of the slaves, or gave it directly to them, as he had opportunity. Wherever he went, he found his fellow-professors entangled in the mischief of slavery. Elders and ministers, as well as the younger and less high in profession, had their house servants and field hands. He found grave drab-coated apologists for the slave-trade, who quoted the same Scriptures, in support of oppression and avarice, which have since been cited by Presbyterian doctors of divinity, Methodist bishops; and Baptist preachers for the same purpose. He found the meetings generally in a low and evil state. The gold of original Quakerism had become dim, and the fine gold changed. The spirit of the world prevailed among them, and had wrought an inward desolation. Instead of meekness, gentleness, and heavenly wisdom, he found "a spirit of fierceness and love of dominion."

[The tradition is that he travelled mostly on foot during his journeys among slaveholders. Brissot, in his *New Travels in America*, published in 1788, says: "John Woolman, one of the most distinguished of men in the cause of humanity, travelled much as a minister of his sect, but always on foot, and without money, in imitation of the Apostles, and in order to be in a situation to be more useful to poor people and the blacks. He hated slavery so much that he could not taste food provided by the labor of slaves." That this writer was on one point misinformed is manifest from the following passage from the *Journal*: "When I expected soon to leave a friend's house where I had entertainment, if I believed that I should not keep clear from the gain of oppression without leaving money, I spoke to one of the heads of the family privately, and desired them to accept of pieces of silver, and give them to such of their negroes as they believed would make the best use of them; and at other times I gave them to the negroes myself, as the way looked clearest to me. Before I came out, I had provided a large number of small pieces for this purpose, and thus offering them to some who appeared to be wealthy people was a trial both to me and them. But the fear of the Lord so covered me at times that my way was made easier than I expected; and few, if any, manifested any resentment at the offer, and most of them, after some conversation, accepted of them."]

In love, but at the same time with great faithfulness, he endeavored to convince the masters of their error, and to awaken a degree of sympathy for the enslaved.

At this period, or perhaps somewhat earlier, a remarkable personage took up his residence in Pennsylvania. He was by birthright a member of the Society of Friends, but having been disowned in England for some extravagances of conduct and language, he spent several years in the West Indies, where he became deeply interested in the condition of the slaves. His violent denunciations of the practice of slaveholding excited the anger of the planters, and he was compelled to leave the island. He came to Philadelphia, but, contrary to his expectations, he found the same evil existing there. He shook off the dust of the city, and took up his abode in the country, a few miles distant. His dwelling was a natural cave, with some slight addition of his own making. His drink was the spring-water flowing by his door; his food, vegetables alone. He persistently refused to wear any garment or eat any food purchased at the expense of animal life, or which was in any degree the product of slave labor. Issuing from his cave, on his mission of preaching "deliverance to the captive," he was in the habit of visiting the various meetings for worship and bearing his testimony against slaveholders, greatly to their disgust and indignation. On one occasion he entered the Market Street Meeting, and a leading Friend requested some one to take him out. A burly blacksmith volunteered to do it, leading him to the gate

and thrusting him out with such force that he fell into the gutter of the street. There he lay until the meeting closed, telling the bystanders that he did not feel free to rise himself. "Let those who cast me here raise me up. It is their business, not mine."

His personal appearance was in remarkable keeping with his eccentric life. A figure only four and a half feet high, hunchbacked, with projecting chest, legs small and uneven, arms longer than his legs; a huge head, showing only beneath the enormous white hat large, solemn eyes and a prominent nose; the rest of his face covered with a snowy semicircle of beard falling low on his breast,—a figure to recall the old legends of troll, brownie, and kobold. Such was the irrepressible prophet who troubled the Israel of slave-holding Quakerism, clinging like a rough chestnut-bur to the skirts of its respectability, and settling like a pertinacious gad-fly on the sore places of its conscience.

On one occasion, while the annual meeting was in session at Burlington, N. J., in the midst of the solemn silence of the great assembly, the unwelcome figure of Benjamin Lay, wrapped in his long white overcoat, was seen passing up the aisle. Stopping midway, he exclaimed, "You slaveholders! Why don't you throw off your Quaker coats as I do mine, and show yourselves as you are?" Casting off as he spoke his outer garment, he disclosed to the astonished assembly a military coat underneath and a sword dangling at his heels. Holding in one hand a large book, he drew his sword with the other. "In the sight of God," he cried, "you are as guilty as if you stabbed your slaves to the heart, as I do this book!" suiting the action to the word, and piercing a small bladder filled with the juice of poke-weed (*playtolacca decandra*), which he had concealed between the covers, and sprinkling as with fresh blood those who sat near him. John Woolman makes no mention of this circumstance in his Journal, although he was probably present, and it must have made a deep impression on his sensitive spirit. The violence and harshness of Lay's testimony, however, had nothing in common with the tender and sorrowful remonstrances and appeals of the former, except the sympathy which they both felt for the slave himself.

[Lay was well acquainted with Dr. Franklin, whosometimes visited him. Among other schemes of reform he entertained the idea of converting all mankind to Christianity. This was to be done by three witnesses,—himself, Michael Lovell, and Abel Noble, assisted by Dr. Franklin. But on their first meeting at the Doctor's house, the three "chosen vessels" got into a violent controversy on points of doctrine, and separated in ill-humor. The philosopher, who had been an amused listener, advised the three sages to give up the project of converting the world until they had learned to tolerate each other.]

Still later, a descendant of the persecuted French Protestants, Anthony Benezet, a man of uncommon tenderness of feeling, began to write and speak against slavery. How far, if at all, he was moved thereto by the example of Woolman is not known, but it is certain that the latter found in him a steady friend and coadjutor in his efforts to awaken the slumbering moral sense of his religious brethren. The Marquis de Chastellux, author of *De la Felicite Publique*, describes him as a small, eager-faced man, full of zeal and activity, constantly engaged in works of benevolence, which were by no means confined to the blacks. Like Woolman and Lay, he advocated abstinence from intoxicating spirits. The poor French neutrals who were brought to Philadelphia from Nova Scotia, and landed penniless and despairing among strangers in tongue and religion, found in him a warm and untiring friend, through whose aid and sympathy their condition was rendered more comfortable than that of their fellow-exiles in other colonies.

The annual assemblage of the Yearly Meeting in 1758 at Philadelphia must ever be regarded as one of the most important religious convocations in the history of the Christian church. The labors of Woolman and his few but earnest associates had not been in vain. A deep and tender interest had been awakened; and this meeting was looked forward to with varied feelings of solicitude by all parties. All felt that the time had come for some definite action; conservative and reformer stood face to face in the Valley of Decision. John Woolman, of course, was present,—a man humble and poor in outward appearance, his simple dress of undyed homespun cloth contrasting strongly with the plain but rich apparel of the representatives of the commerce of the city and of the large slave-stocked plantations of the country. Bowed down by the weight of his concern for the poor slaves and for the well-being and purity of the Society, he sat silent during the whole meeting, while other matters were under discussion. "My mind," he says, "was frequently clothed with inward prayer; and I could say with David that 'tears were my meat and drink, day and night.' The case of slave-keeping lay heavy upon me; nor did I find any engagement, to speak directly to any other matter before the meeting." When the important subject came up for consideration, many faithful Friends spoke with weight and earnestness. No one openly justified slavery as a system, although some expressed a concern lest the meeting should go into measures calculated to cause uneasiness to many members of the Society. It was also urged that Friends should wait patiently until the Lord in His own time should open a way for the deliverance of the slave. This was replied to by John Woolman. "My mind," he said, "is led to consider the purity of the Divine Being, and the justice of His judgments; and herein my soul is covered with awfulness. I

cannot forbear to hint of some cases where people have not been treated with the purity of justice, and the event has been most lamentable. Many slaves on this continent are oppressed, and their cries have entered into the ears of the Most High. Such are the purity and certainty of His judgments that He cannot be partial in our favor. In infinite love and goodness He hath opened our understandings from one time to another, concerning our duty towards this people; and it is not a time for delay. Should we now be sensible of what He requires of us, and through a respect to the private interest of some persons, or through a regard to some friendships which do not stand upon an immutable foundation, neglect to do our duty in firmness and constancy, still waiting for some extraordinary means to bring about their deliverance, God may by terrible things in righteousness answer us in this matter."

This solemn and weighty appeal was responded to by many in the assembly, in a spirit of sympathy and unity. Some of the slave-holding members expressed their willingness that a strict rule of discipline should be adopted against dealing in slaves for the future. To this it was answered that the root of the evil would never be reached effectually until a searching inquiry was made into the circumstances and motives of such as held slaves. At length the truth in a great measure triumphed over all opposition; and, without any public dissent, the meeting agreed that the injunction of our Lord and Saviour to do to others as we would that others should do to us should induce Friends who held slaves "to set them at liberty, making a Christian provision for them," and four Friends—John Woolman, John Scarborough, Daniel Stanton, and John Sykes— were approved of as suitable persons to visit and treat with such as kept slaves, within the limits of the meeting.

This painful and difficult duty was faithfully performed. In that meekness and humility of spirit which has nothing in common with the "fear of man, which bringeth a snare," the self-denying followers of their Divine Lord and Master "went about doing good." In the city of Philadelphia, and among the wealthy planters of the country, they found occasion often to exercise a great degree of patience, and to keep a watchful guard over their feelings. In his Journal for this important period of his life John Woolman says but little of his own services. How arduous and delicate they were may be readily understood. The number of slaves held by members of the Society was very large. Isaac Jackson, in his report of his labors among slave-holders in a single Quarterly Meeting, states that he visited the owners of more than eleven hundred slaves. From the same report may be gleaned some hints of the difficulties which presented themselves. One elderly man says he has well brought up his eleven slaves, and "now they must work to maintain him." Another owns it is all wrong, but "cannot release his slaves; his tender wife under great concern of mind" on account of his refusal. A third has fifty slaves; knows it to be wrong, but can't see his way clear out of it. "Perhaps," the report says, "interest dims his vision." A fourth is full of "excuses and reasonings." "Old Jos. Richison has forty, and is determined to keep them." Another man has fifty, and "means to keep them." Robert Ward "wants to release his slaves, but his wife and daughters hold back." Another "owns it is wrong, but says he will not part with his negroes,—no, not while he lives." The far greater number, however, confess the wrong of slavery, and agree to take measures for freeing their slaves.

[An incident occurred during this visit of Isaac Jackson which impressed him deeply. On the last evening, just as he was about to turn homeward, he was told that a member of the Society whom he had not seen owned a very old slave who was happy and well cared for. It was a case which it was thought might well be left to take care of itself. Isaac Jackson, sitting in silence, did not feel his mind quite satisfied; and as the evening wore away, feeling more and more exercised, he expressed his uneasiness, when a young son of his host eagerly offered to go with him and show him the road to the place. The proposal was gladly accepted. On introducing the object of their visit, the Friend expressed much surprise that any uneasiness should be felt in the case, but at length consented to sign the form of emancipation, saying, at the same time, it would make no difference in their relations, as the old man was perfectly happy. At Isaac Jackson's request the slave was called in and seated before them. His form was nearly double, his thin hands were propped on his knees, his white head was thrust forward, and his keen, restless, inquiring eyes gleamed alternately on the stranger and on his master. At length he was informed of what had been done; that he was no longer a slave, and that his master acknowledged his past services entitled him to a maintenance so long as he lived. The old man listened in almost breathless wonder, his head slowly sinking on his breast. After a short pause, he clasped his hands; then spreading them high over his hoary head, slowly and reverently exclaimed, "Oh, goody Gody, oh!"—bringing his hands again down on his knees. Then raising them as before, he twice repeated the solemn exclamation, and with streaming eyes and a voice almost too much choked for utterance, he continued, "I thought I should die a slave, and now I shall die a free man!"

It is a striking evidence of the divine compensations which are sometimes graciously vouchsafed to those who have been faithful to duty, that on his death-bed this affecting

scene was vividly revived in the mind of Isaac Jackson. At that supreme moment, when all other pictures of time were fading out, that old face, full of solemn joy and devout thanksgiving, rose before him, and comforted him as with the blessing of God.]

An extract or two from the Journal at this period will serve to show both the nature of the service in which he was engaged and the frame of mind in which he accomplished it:—

"In the beginning of the 12th month I joined in company with my friends, John Sykes and Daniel Stanton, in visiting such as had slaves. Some, whose hearts were rightly exercised about them, appeared to be glad of our visit, but in some places our way was more difficult. I often saw the necessity of keeping down to that root from whence our concern proceeded, and have cause in reverent thankfulness humbly to bow down before the Lord who was near to me, and preserved my mind in calmness under some sharp conflicts, and begat a spirit of sympathy and tenderness in me towards some who were grievously entangled by the spirit of this world."

"1st month, 1759.—Having found my mind drawn to visit some of the more active members of society at Philadelphia who had slaves, I met my friend John Churchman there by agreement, and we continued about a week in the city. We visited some that were sick, and some widows and their families; and the other part of the time was mostly employed in visiting such as had slaves. It was a time of deep exercise; but looking often to the Lord for assistance, He in unspeakable kindness favored us with the influence of that spirit which crucifies to the greatness and splendor of this world, and enabled us to go through some heavy labors, in which we found peace."

These labors were attended with the blessing of the God of the poor and oppressed. Dealing in slaves was almost entirely abandoned, and many who held slaves set them at liberty. But many members still continuing the practice, a more emphatic testimony against it was issued by the Yearly Meeting in 1774; and two years after the subordinate meetings were directed to deny the right of membership to such as persisted in holding their fellow-men as property.

A concern was now felt for the temporal and religious welfare of the emancipated slaves, and in 1779 the Yearly Meeting came to the conclusion that some reparation was due from the masters to their former slaves for services rendered while in the condition of slavery. The following is an extract from an epistle on this subject:

"We are united in judgment that the state of the oppressed people who have been held by any of us, or our predecessors, in captivity and slavery, calls for a deep inquiry and close examination how far we are clear of withholding from them what under such an exercise may open to view as their just right; and therefore we earnestly and affectionately entreat our brethren in religious profession to bring this matter home, and that all who have let the oppressed go free may attend to the further openings of duty.

"A tender Christian sympathy appears to be awakened in the minds of many who are not in religious profession with us, who have seriously considered the oppressions and disadvantages under which those people have long labored; and whether a pious care extended to their offspring is not justly due from us to them is a consideration worthy our serious and deep attention."

Committees to aid and advise the colored people were accordingly appointed in the various Monthly Meetings. Many former owners of slaves faithfully paid the latter for their services, submitting to the award and judgment of arbitrators as to what justice required at their hands. So deeply had the sense of the wrong of slavery sunk into the hearts of Friends!

John Woolman, in his Journal for 1769, states, that having some years before, as one of the executors of a will, disposed of the services of a negro boy belonging to the estate until he should reach the age of thirty years, he became uneasy in respect to the transaction, and, although he had himself derived no pecuniary benefit from it, and had simply acted as the agent of the heirs of the estate to which the boy belonged, he executed a bond, binding himself to pay the master of the young man for four years and a half of his unexpired term of service.

The appalling magnitude of the evil against which he felt himself especially called to contend was painfully manifest to John Woolman. At the outset, all about him, in every department of life and human activity, in the state and the church, he saw evidences of its strength, and of the depth and extent to which its roots had wound their way among the foundations of society. Yet he seems never to have doubted for a moment the power of simple truth to eradicate it, nor to have hesitated as to his own duty in regard to it. There was no groping like Samson in the gloom; no feeling in blind wrath and impatience for the pillars of the temple of Dagon. "The candle of the Lord shone about him," and his path lay clear and unmistakable before him. He believed in the goodness of God that leadeth to repentance; and that love could reach the witness for itself in the hearts of all men, through all

entanglements of custom and every barrier of pride and selfishness. No one could have a more humble estimate of himself; but as he went forth on his errand of mercy he felt the Infinite Power behind him, and the consciousness that he had known a preparation from that Power "to stand as a trumpet through which the Lord speaks." The event justified his confidence; wherever he went hard hearts were softened, avarice and love of power and pride of opinion gave way before his testimony of love.

The New England Yearly Meeting then, as now, was held in Newport, on Rhode Island. In the year 1760 John Woolman, in the course of a religious visit to New England, attended that meeting. He saw the horrible traffic in human beings,—the slave-ships lying at the wharves of the town, the sellers and buyers of men and women and children thronging the market-place. The same abhorrent scenes which a few years after stirred the spirit of the excellent Hopkins to denounce the slave-trade and slavery as hateful in the sight of God to his congregation at Newport were enacted in the full view and hearing of the annual convocation of Friends, many of whom were themselves partakers in the shame and wickedness. "Understanding," he says, "that a large number of slaves had been imported from Africa into the town, and were then on sale by a member of our Society, my appetite failed; I grew outwardly weak, and had a feeling of the condition of Habakkuk: 'When I heard, my belly trembled, my lips quivered; I trembled in myself, that I might rest in the day of trouble.' I had many cogitations, and was sorely distressed." He prepared a memorial to the Legislature, then in session, for the signatures of Friends, urging that body to take measures to put an end to the importation of slaves. His labors in the Yearly Meeting appear to have been owned and blessed by the Divine Head of the church. The London Epistle for 1758, condemning the unrighteous traffic in men, was read, and the substance of it embodied in the discipline of the meeting; and the following query was adopted, to be answered by the subordinate meetings:—

"Are Friends clear of importing negroes, or buying them when imported; and do they use those well, where they are possessed by inheritance or otherwise, endeavoring to train them up in principles of religion?"

At the close of the Yearly Meeting, John Woolman requested those members of the Society who held slaves to meet with him in the chamber of the house for worship, where he expressed his concern for the well-being of the slaves, and his sense of the iniquity of the practice of dealing in or holding them as property. His tender exhortations were not lost upon his auditors; his remarks were kindly received, and the gentle and loving spirit in which they were offered reached many hearts.

In 1769, at the suggestion of the Rhode Island Quarterly Meeting, the Yearly Meeting expressed its sense of the wrongfulness of holding slaves, and appointed a large committee to visit those members who were implicated in the practice. The next year this committee reported that they had completed their service, "and that their visits mostly seemed to be kindly accepted. Some Friends manifested a disposition to set such at liberty as were suitable; some others, not having so clear a sight of such an unreasonable servitude as could be desired, were unwilling to comply with the advice given them at present, yet seemed willing to take it into consideration; a few others manifested a disposition to keep them in continued bondage."

It was stated in the Epistle to London Yearly Meeting of the year 1772, that a few Friends had freed their slaves from bondage, but that others "have been so reluctant thereto that they have been disowned for not complying with the advice of this meeting."

In 1773 the following minute was made: "It is our sense and judgment that truth not only requires the young of capacity and ability, but likewise the aged and impotent, and also all in a state of infancy and nonage, among Friends, to be discharged and set free from a state of slavery, that we do no more claim property in the human race, as we do in the brutes that perish."

In 1782 no slaves were known to be held in the New England Yearly Meeting. The next year it was recommended to the subordinate meetings to appoint committees to effect a proper and just settlement between the manumitted slaves and their former masters, for their past services. In 1784 it was concluded by the Yearly Meeting that any former slave-holder who refused to comply with the award of these committees should, after due care and labor with him, be disowned from the Society. This was effectual; settlements without disownment were made to the satisfaction of all parties, and every case was disposed of previous to the year 1787.

In the New York Yearly Meeting, slave-trading was prohibited about the middle of the last century. In 1771, in consequence of an Epistle from the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, a committee was appointed to visit those who held slaves, and to advise with them in relation to emancipation. In 1776 it was made a disciplinary offence to buy, sell, or hold slaves upon any condition. In 1784 but one slave was to be found in the limits of the meeting. In the same year, by answers from the several subordinate meetings, it was ascertained that an equitable settlement for past services had been effected between the emancipated negroes and their masters in all save three cases.

In the Virginia Yearly Meeting slavery had its strongest hold. Its members, living in the midst of slave-holding communities, were necessarily exposed to influences adverse to emancipation. I have already alluded to the epistle addressed to them by William Edmondson, and to the labors of John Woolman while travelling among them. In 1757 the Virginia Yearly Meeting condemned the foreign slave-trade. In 1764 it enjoined upon its members the duty of kindness towards their servants, of educating them, and carefully providing for their food and clothing. Four years after, its members were strictly prohibited from purchasing any more slaves. In 1773 it earnestly recommended the immediate manumission of all slaves held in bondage, after the females had reached eighteen and the males twenty-one years of age. At the same time it was advised that committees should be appointed for the purpose of instructing the emancipated persons in the principles of morality and religion, and for advising and aiding them in their temporal concerns.

I quote a single paragraph from the advice sent down to the subordinate meetings, as a beautiful manifestation of the fruits of true repentance:—

"It is the solid sense of this meeting, that we of the present generation are under strong obligations to express our love and concern for the offspring of those people who by their labors have greatly contributed towards the cultivation of these colonies under the afflictive disadvantage of enduring a hard bondage, and the benefit of whose toil many among us are enjoying."

In 1784, the different Quarterly Meetings having reported that many still held slaves, notwithstanding the advice and entreaties of their friends, the Yearly Meeting directed that where endeavors to convince those offenders of their error proved ineffectual, the Monthly Meetings should proceed to disown them. We have no means of ascertaining the precise number of those actually disowned for slave-holding in the Virginia Yearly Meeting, but it is well known to have been very small. In almost all cases the care and assiduous labors of those who had the welfare of the Society and of humanity at heart were successful in inducing offenders to manumit their slaves, and confess their error in resisting the wishes of their friends and bringing reproach upon the cause of truth.

So ended slavery in the Society of Friends. For three quarters of a century the advice put forth in the meetings of the Society at stated intervals, that Friends should be "careful to maintain their testimony against slavery," has been adhered to so far as owning, or even hiring, a slave is concerned. Apart from its first-fruits of emancipation, there is a perennial value in the example exhibited of the power of truth, urged patiently and in earnest love, to overcome the difficulties in the way of the eradication of an evil system, strengthened by long habit, entangled with all the complex relations of society, and closely allied with the love of power, the pride of family, and the lust of gain.

The influence of the life and labors of John Woolman has by no means been confined to the religious society of which he was a member. It may be traced wherever a step in the direction of emancipation has been taken in this country or in Europe. During the war of the Revolution many of the noblemen and officers connected with the French army became, as their journals abundantly testify, deeply interested in the Society of Friends, and took back to France with them something of its growing anti-slavery sentiment. Especially was this the case with Jean Pierre Brissot, the thinker and statesman of the Girondists, whose intimacy with Warner Mifflin, a friend and disciple of Woolman, so profoundly affected his whole after life. He became the leader of the "Friends of the Blacks," and carried with him to the scaffold a profound hatred, of slavery. To his efforts may be traced the proclamation of emancipation in Hayti by the commissioners of the French convention, and indirectly the subsequent uprising of the blacks and their successful establishment of a free government. The same influence reached Thomas Clarkson and stimulated his early efforts for the abolition of the slave-trade; and in after life the volume of the New Jersey Quaker was the cherished companion of himself and his amiable helpmate. It was in a degree, at least, the influence of Stephen Grellet and William Allen, men deeply imbued with the spirit of Woolman, and upon whom it might almost be said his mantle had fallen, that drew the attention of Alexander I. of Russia to the importance of taking measures for the abolition of serfdom, an object the accomplishment of which the wars during his reign prevented, but which, left as a legacy of duty, has been peaceably effected by his namesake, Alexander II. In the history of emancipation in our own country evidences of the same original impulse of humanity are not wanting. In 1790 memorials against slavery from the Society of Friends were laid before the first Congress of the United States. Not content with clearing their own skirts of the evil, the Friends of that day took an active part in the formation of the abolition societies of New England, New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia. Jacob Lindley, Elisha Tyson, Warner Mifflin, James Pemberton, and other leading Friends were known throughout the country as unflinching champions of freedom. One of the earliest of the class known as modern abolitionists was Benjamin Lundy, a pupil in the school of Woolman, through whom William Lloyd Garrison became interested in the great work to which his life has been so faithfully and nobly devoted. Looking back to the humble workshop at Mount Holly from the stand-point of the Proclamation of President Lincoln, how has the seed sown in weakness been

raised up in power!

The larger portion of Woolman's writings is devoted to the subjects of slavery, uncompensated labor, and the excessive toil and suffering of the many to support the luxury of the few. The argument running through them is searching, and in its conclusions uncompromising, but a tender love for the wrongdoer as well as the sufferer underlies all. They aim to convince the judgment and reach the heart without awakening prejudice and passion. To the slave-holders of his time they must have seemed like the voice of conscience speaking to them in the cool of the day. One feels, in reading them, the tenderness and humility of a nature redeemed from all pride of opinion and self-righteousness, sinking itself out of sight, and intent only upon rendering smaller the sum of human sorrow and sin by drawing men nearer to God, and to each other. The style is that of a man unlettered, but with natural refinement and delicate sense of fitness, the purity of whose heart enters into his language. There is no attempt at fine writing, not a word or phrase for effect; it is the simple unadorned diction of one to whom the temptations of the pen seem to have been wholly unknown. He wrote, as he believed, from an inward spiritual prompting; and with all his unaffected humility he evidently felt that his work was done in the clear radiance of

"The light which never was on land or sea."

It was not for him to outrun his Guide, or, as Sir Thomas Browne expresses it, to "order the finger of the Almighty to His will and pleasure, but to sit still under the soft showers of Providence." Very wise are these essays, but their wisdom is not altogether that of this world. They lead one away from all the jealousies, strifes, and competitions of luxury, fashion, and gain, out of the close air of parties and sects, into a region of calmness,—

"The haunt
Of every gentle wind whose breath can teach
The wild to love tranquillity,"—

a quiet habitation where all things are ordered in what he calls "the pure reason;" a rest from all self-seeking, and where no man's interest or activity conflicts with that of another. Beauty they certainly have, but it is not that which the rules of art recognize; a certain indefinable purity pervades them, making one sensible, as he reads, of a sweetness as of violets. "The secret of Woolman's purity of style," said Dr. Channing, "is that his eye was single, and that conscience dictated his words."

Of course we are not to look to the writings of such a man for tricks of rhetoric, the free play of imagination, or the unscrupulousness of epigram and antithesis. He wrote as he lived, conscious of "the great Task-master's eye." With the wise heathen Marcus Aurelius Antoninus he had learned to "wipe out imaginations, to check desire, and let the spirit that is the gift of God to every man, as his guardian and guide, bear rule."

I have thought it inexpedient to swell the bulk of this volume with the entire writings appended to the old edition of the Journal, inasmuch as they mainly refer to a system which happily on this continent is no longer a question at issue. I content myself with throwing together a few passages from them which touch subjects of present interest.

"Selfish men may possess the earth: it is the meek alone who inherit it from the Heavenly Father free from all defilements and perplexities of unrighteousness."

"Whoever rightly advocates the cause of some thereby promotes the good of the whole."

"If one suffer by the unfaithfulness of another, the mind, the most noble part of him that occasions the discord, is thereby alienated from its true happiness."

"There is harmony in the several parts of the Divine work in the hearts of men. He who leads them to cease from those gainful employments which are carried on in the wisdom which is from beneath delivers also from the desire of worldly greatness, and reconciles to a life so plain that a little suffices."

"After days and nights of drought, when the sky hath grown dark, and clouds like lakes of water have hung over our heads, I have at times beheld with awfulness the vehement lightning accompanying the blessings of the rain, a messenger from Him to remind us of our duty in a right use of His benefits."

"The marks of famine in a land appear as humbling admonitions from God, instructing us by gentle chastisements, that we may remember that the outward supply of life is a gift from our Heavenly Father, and that we should not venture to use or apply that gift in a way contrary to pure reason."

"Oppression in the extreme appears terrible; but oppression in more refined appearances remains to be oppression. To labor for a perfect redemption from the spirit of it is the great business of the whole

family of Jesus Christ in this world."

"In the obedience of faith we die to self-love, and, our life being 'hid with Christ in God,' our hearts are enlarged towards mankind universally; but many in striving to get treasures have departed from this true light of life and stumbled on the dark mountains. That purity of life which proceeds from faithfulness in following the pure spirit of truth, that state in which our minds are devoted to serve God and all our wants are bounded by His wisdom, has often been opened to me as a place of retirement for the children of the light, in which we may be separated from that which disordereth and confuseth the affairs of society, and may have a testimony for our innocence in the hearts of those who behold us."

"There is a principle which is pure, placed in the human mind, which in different places and ages hath had different names; it is, however, pure, and proceeds from God. It is deep and inward, confined to no forms of religion nor excluded from any, when the heart stands in perfect sincerity. In whomsoever this takes root and grows, they become brethren."

"The necessity of an inward stillness hath appeared clear to my mind. In true silence strength is renewed, and the mind is weaned from all things, save as they may be enjoyed in the Divine will; and a lowliness in outward living, opposite to worldly honor, becomes truly acceptable to us. In the desire after outward gain the mind is prevented from a perfect attention to the voice of Christ; yet being weaned from all things, except as they may be enjoyed in the Divine will, the pure light shines into the soul. Where the fruits of the spirit which is of this world are brought forth by many who profess to be led by the Spirit of truth, and cloudiness is felt to be gathering over the visible church, the sincere in heart, who abide in true stillness, and are exercised therein before the Lord for His name's sake, have knowledge of Christ in the fellowship of His sufferings; and inward thankfulness is felt at times, that through Divine love our own wisdom is cast out, and that forward, active part in us is subjected, which would rise and do something without the pure leadings of the spirit of Christ.

"While aught remains in us contrary to a perfect resignation of our wills, it is like a seal to the book wherein is written 'that good and acceptable and perfect will of God' concerning us. But when our minds entirely yield to Christ, that silence is known which followeth the opening of the last of the seals. In this silence we learn to abide in the Divine will, and there feel that we have no cause to promote except that alone in which the light of life directs us."

Occasionally, in *Considerations on the Keeping of Negroes*, the intense interest of his subject gives his language something of passionate elevation, as in the following extract:—

"When trade is carried on productive of much misery, and they who suffer by it are many thousand miles off, the danger is the greater of not laying their sufferings to heart. In procuring slaves on the coast of Africa, many children are stolen privately; wars are encouraged among the negroes, but all is at a great distance. Many groans arise from dying men which we hear not. Many cries are uttered by widows and fatherless children which reach not our ears. Many cheeks are wet with tears, and faces sad with unutterable grief, which we see not. Cruel tyranny is encouraged. The hands of robbers are strengthened.

"Were we, for the term of one year only, to be eye-witnesses of what passeth in getting these slaves; were the blood that is there shed to be sprinkled on our garments; were the poor captives, bound with thongs, and heavily laden with elephants' teeth, to pass before our eyes on their way to the sea; were their bitter lamentations, day after day, to ring in our ears, and their mournful cries in the night to hinder us from sleeping,— were we to behold and hear these things, what pious heart would not be deeply affected with sorrow!"

"It is good for those who live in fulness to cultivate tenderness of heart, and to improve every opportunity of being acquainted with the hardships and fatigues of those who labor for their living, and thus to think seriously with themselves: Am I influenced by true charity in fixing all my demands? Have I no desire to support myself in expensive customs, because my acquaintances live in such customs?"

"If a wealthy man, on serious reflection, finds a witness in his own conscience that he indulges himself in some expensive habits, which might be omitted, consistently with the true design of living, and which, were he to change places with those who occupy his estate, he would desire to be discontinued by them,—whoever is thus awakened will necessarily find the injunction binding, 'Do ye even so to them.' Divine Love imposeth no rigorous or unreasonable commands, but graciously points out the spirit of brotherhood and the way to happiness, in attaining which it is necessary that we relinquish all that is selfish.

"Our gracious Creator cares and provides for all His creatures; His tender mercies are over all His works, and so far as true love influences our minds, so far we become interested in His workmanship, and feel a desire to make use of every opportunity to lessen the distresses of the afflicted, and to

increase the happiness of the creation. Here we have a prospect of one common interest from which our own is inseparable, so that to turn all we possess into the channel of universal love becomes the business of our lives."

His liberality and freedom from "all narrowness as to sects and opinions" are manifest in the following passages:—

"Men who sincerely apply their minds to true virtue, and find an inward support from above, by which all vicious inclinations are made subject; who love God sincerely, and prefer the real good of mankind universally to their own private interest,—though these, through the strength of education and tradition, may remain under some great speculative errors, it would be uncharitable to say that therefore God rejects them. The knowledge and goodness of Him who creates, supports, and gives understanding to all men are superior to the various states and circumstances of His creatures, which to us appear the most difficult. Idolatry indeed is wickedness; but it is the thing, not the name, which is so. Real idolatry is to pay that adoration to a creature which is known to be due only to the true God.

"He who professeth to believe in one Almighty Creator, and in His Son Jesus Christ, and is yet more intent on the honors, profits, and friendships of the world than he is, in singleness of heart, to stand faithful to the Christian religion, is in the channel of idolatry; while the Gentile, who, notwithstanding some mistaken opinions, is established in the true principle of virtue, and humbly adores an Almighty Power, may be of the number that fear God and work righteousness."

Nowhere has what is called the "Labor Question," which is now agitating the world, been discussed more wisely and with a broader humanity than in these essays. His sympathies were with the poor man, yet the rich too are his brethren, and he warns them in love and pity of the consequences of luxury and oppression:—

"Every degree of luxury, every demand for money inconsistent with the Divine order, hath connection with unnecessary labors."

"To treasure up wealth for another generation, by means of the immoderate labor of those who in some measure depend upon us, is doing evil at present, without knowing that wealth thus gathered may not be applied to evil purposes when we are gone. To labor hard, or cause others to do so, that we may live conformably to customs which our Redeemer discountenanced by His example, and which are contrary to Divine order, is to manure a soil for propagating an evil seed in the earth."

"When house is joined to house, and field laid to field, until there is no place, and the poor are thereby straitened, though this is done by bargain and purchase, yet so far as it stands distinguished from universal love, so far that woe predicted by the prophet will accompany their proceedings. As He who first founded the earth was then the true proprietor of it, so He still remains, and though He hath given it to the children of men, so that multitudes of people have had their sustenance from it while they continued here, yet He hath never alienated it, but His right is as good as at first; nor can any apply the increase of their possessions contrary to universal love, nor dispose of lands in a way which they know tends to exalt some by oppressing others, without being justly chargeable with usurpation."

It will not lessen the value of the foregoing extracts in the minds of the true-disciples of our Divine Lord, that they are manifestly not written to subserve the interests of a narrow sectarianism. They might have been penned by Fenelon in his time, or Robertson in ours, dealing as they do with Christian practice,—the life of Christ manifesting itself in purity and goodness,—rather than with the dogmas of theology. The underlying thought of all is simple obedience to the Divine word in the soul. "Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father in heaven." In the preface to an English edition, published some years ago, it is intimated that objections had been raised to the Journal on the ground that it had so little to say of doctrines and so much of duties. One may easily understand that this objection might have been forcibly felt by the slave-holding religious professors of Woolman's day, and that it may still be entertained by a class of persons who, like the Cabalists, attach a certain mystical significance to words, names, and titles, and who in consequence question the piety which hesitates to flatter the Divine ear by "vain repetitions" and formal enumeration of sacred attributes, dignities, and offices. Every instinct of his tenderly sensitive nature shrank from the wordy irreverence of noisy profession. His very silence is significant: the husks of emptiness rustle in every wind; the full corn in the ear holds up its golden fruit noiselessly to the Lord of the harvest. John Woolman's faith, like the Apostle's, is manifested by his labors, standing not in words but in the demonstration of the spirit,—a faith that works by love to the purifying of the heart. The entire outcome of this faith was love manifested in reverent waiting upon God, and in that untiring benevolence, that quiet but deep enthusiasm of humanity, which made his daily service to his fellow-creatures a hymn of praise to the common Father.

However the intellect may criticise such a life, whatever defects it may present to the trained eyes of

theological adepts, the heart has no questions to ask, but at once owns and reveres it. Shall we regret that he who had so entered into fellowship of suffering with the Divine One, walking with Him under the cross, and dying daily to self, gave to the faith and hope that were in him this testimony of a life, rather than any form of words, however sound? A true life is at once interpreter and proof of the gospel, and does more to establish its truth in the hearts of men than all the "Evidences" and "Bodies of Divinity" which have perplexed the world with more doubts than they solved. Shall we venture to account it a defect in his Christian character, that, under an abiding sense of the goodness and long-suffering of God, he wrought his work in gentleness and compassion, with the delicate tenderness which comes of a deep sympathy with the trials and weaknesses of our nature, never allowing himself to indulge in heat or violence, persuading rather than threatening? Did he overestimate that immeasurable Love, the manifestation of which in his own heart so reached the hearts of others, revealing everywhere unsuspected fountains of feeling and secret longings after purity, as the rod of the diviner detects sweet, cool water-springs under the parched surfaces of a thirsty land? And, looking at the purity, wisdom, and sweetness of his life, who shall say that his faith in the teaching of the Holy Spirit—the interior guide and light—was a mistaken one? Surely it was no illusion by which his feet were so guided that all who saw him felt that, like Enoch, he walked with God. "Without the actual inspiration of the Spirit of Grace, the inward teacher and soul of our souls," says Fenelon, "we could neither do, will, nor believe good. We must silence every creature, we must silence ourselves also, to hear in a profound stillness of the soul this inexpressible voice of Christ. The outward word of the gospel itself without this living efficacious word within would be but an empty sound." "Thou Lord," says Augustine in his Meditations, "communicatest thyself to all: thou teachest the heart without words; thou speakest to it without articulate sounds."

"However, I am sure that there is a common spirit that plays within us, and that is the Spirit of God. Whoever feels not the warm gale and gentle ventilation of this Spirit, I dare not say he lives; for truly without this to me there is no heat under the tropic, nor any light though I dwelt in the body of the sun."—Sir Thomas Browne's *Religio Medici*.

Never was this divine principle more fully tested than by John Woolman; and the result is seen in a life of such rare excellence that the world is still better and richer for its sake, and the fragrance of it comes down to us through a century, still sweet and precious.

It will be noted throughout the Journal and essays that in his lifelong testimony against wrong he never lost sight of the oneness of humanity, its common responsibility, its fellowship of suffering and communion of sin. Few have ever had so profound a conviction of the truth of the Apostle's declaration that no man liveth and no man dieth to himself. Sin was not to him an isolated fact, the responsibility of which began and ended with the individual transgressor; he saw it as a part of a vast network and entanglement, and traced the lines of influence converging upon it in the underworld of causation. Hence the wrong and discord which pained him called out pity, rather than indignation. The first inquiry which they awakened was addressed to his own conscience. How far am I in thought, word, custom, responsible for this? Have none of my fellow-creatures an equitable right to any part which is called mine? Have the gifts and possessions received by me from others been conveyed in a way free from all unrighteousness? "Through abiding in the law of Christ," he says, "we feel a tenderness towards our fellow-creatures, and a concern so to walk that our conduct may not be the means of strengthening them in error." He constantly recurs to the importance of a right example in those who profess to be led by the spirit of Christ, and who attempt to labor in His name for the benefit of their fellow-men. If such neglect or refuse themselves to act rightly, they can but "entangle the minds of others and draw a veil over the face of righteousness." His eyes were anointed to see the common point of departure from the Divine harmony, and that all the varied growths of evil had their underlying root in human selfishness. He saw that every sin of the individual was shared in greater or less degree by all whose lives were opposed to the Divine order, and that pride, luxury, and avarice in one class gave motive and temptation to the grosser forms of evil in another. How gentle, and yet how searching, are his rebukes of self-complacent respectability, holding it responsible, in spite of all its decent seemings, for much of the depravity which it condemned with Pharisaical harshness! In his *Considerations on the True Harmony of Mankind* he dwells with great earnestness upon the importance of possessing "the mind of Christ," which removes from the heart the desire of superiority and worldly honors, incites attention to the Divine Counsellor, and awakens an ardent engagement to promote the happiness of all. "This state," he says, "in which every motion from the selfish spirit yieldeth to pure love, I may acknowledge with gratitude to the Father of Mercies, is often opened before me as a pearl to seek after."

At times when I have felt true love open my heart towards my fellow-creatures, and have been engaged in weighty conversation in the cause of righteousness, the instructions I have received under these exercises in regard to the true use of the outward gifts of God have made deep and lasting impressions on my mind. I have beheld how the desire to provide wealth and to uphold a delicate life

has grievously entangled many, and has been like a snare to their offspring; and though some have been affected with a sense of their difficulties, and have appeared desirous at times to be helped out of them, yet for want of abiding under the humbling power of truth they have continued in these entanglements; expensive living in parents and children hath called for a large supply, and in answering this call the 'faces of the poor' have been ground away, and made thin through hard dealing.

"There is balm; there is a physician! and oh what longings do I feel that we may embrace the means appointed for our healing; may know that removed which now ministers cause for the cries of many to ascend to Heaven against their oppressors; and that thus we may see the true harmony restored!—a restoration of that which was lost at Babel, and which will be, as the prophet expresses it, 'the returning of a pure language!'"

It is easy to conceive how unwelcome this clear spiritual insight must have been to the superficial professors of his time busy in tithing mint, anise, and cummin. There must have been something awful in the presence of one endowed with the gift of looking through all the forms, shows, and pretensions of society, and detecting with certainty the germs of evil hidden beneath them; a man gentle and full of compassion, clothed in "the irresistible might of meekness," and yet so wise in spiritual discernment,

"Bearing a touchstone in his hand
And testing all things in the land
By his unerring spell.

"Quick births of transmutation smote
The fair to foul, the foul to fair;
Purple nor ermine did he spare,
Nor scorn the dusty coat."

In bringing to a close this paper, the preparation of which has been to me a labor of love, I am not unmindful of the wide difference between the appreciation of a pure and true life and the living of it, and am willing to own that in delineating a character of such moral and spiritual symmetry I have felt something like rebuke from my own words. I have been awed and solemnized by the presence of a serene and beautiful spirit redeemed of the Lord from all selfishness, and I have been made thankful for the ability to recognize and the disposition to love him. I leave the book with its readers. They may possibly make large deductions from my estimate of the author; they may not see the importance of all his self-denying testimonies; they may question some of his scruples, and smile over passages of childlike simplicity; but I believe they will all agree in thanking me for introducing them to the Journal of John Woolman.

AMESBURY, 20th 1st mo., 1871.

Haverford College.

Letter to President Thomas Chase, LL. D.

AMESBURY, MASS., 9th mo., 1884.

THE Semi-Centennial of Haverford College is an event that no member of the Society of Friends can regard without deep interest. It would give me great pleasure to be with you on the 27th inst., but the years rest heavily upon me, and I have scarcely health or strength for such a journey.

It was my privilege to visit Haverford in 1838, in "the day of small beginnings." The promise of usefulness which it then gave has been more than fulfilled. It has grown to be a great and well-established institution, and its influence in thorough education and moral training has been widely felt. If the high educational standard presented in the scholastic treatise of Barclay and the moral philosophy of Dymond has been lowered or disowned by many who, still retaining the name of Quakerism, have lost faith in the vital principle wherein precious testimonials of practical righteousness have their root, and have gone back to a dead literalness, and to those materialistic ceremonials for leaving which our old confessors suffered bonds and death, Haverford, at least, has been in a good degree faithful to the trust committed to it.

Under circumstances of more than ordinary difficulty, it has endeavored to maintain the Great Testimony. The spirit of its culture has not been a narrow one, nor could it be, if true to the broad and catholic principles of the eminent worthies who founded the State of Pennsylvania, Penn, Lloyd, Pastorius, Logan, and Story; men who were masters of the scientific knowledge and culture of their age, hospitable to all truth, and open to all light, and who in some instances anticipated the result of modern research and critical inquiry.

It was Thomas Story, a minister of the Society of Friends, and member of Penn's Council of State, who, while on a religious visit to England, wrote to James Logan that he had read on the stratified rocks of Scarborough, as from the finger of God, proofs of the immeasurable age of our planet, and that the "days" of the letter of Scripture could only mean vast spaces of time.

May Haverford emulate the example of these brave but reverent men, who, in investigating nature, never lost sight of the Divine Ideal, and who, to use the words of Fenelon, "Silenced themselves to hear in the stillness of their souls the inexpressible voice of Christ." Holding fast the mighty truth of the Divine Immanence, the Inward Light and Word, a Quaker college can have no occasion to renew the disastrous quarrel of religion with science. Against the sublime faith which shall yet dominate the world, skepticism has no power. No possible investigation of natural facts; no searching criticism of letter and tradition can disturb it, for it has its witness in all human hearts.

That Haverford may fully realize and improve its great opportunities as an approved seat of learning and the exponent of a Christian philosophy which can never be superseded, which needs no change to fit it for universal acceptance, and which, overpassing the narrow limits of sect, is giving new life and hope to Christendom, and finding its witnesses in the Hindu revivals of the Brahmo Somaj and the fervent utterances of Chunda Sen and Mozoomdar, is the earnest desire of thy friend.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE INNER LIFE ***

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