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F SWARTHMORE LECTURE, 1951

# QUAKERISM: A FAITH FOR ORDINARY MEN

BY  
R. DUNCAN FAIRN

1428  
2610.69  
LONDON

GEORGE ALLEN & UNWIN LTD  
MUSEUM STREET

## PREFACE

The Swarthmore Lectureship was established by the Woodbrooke Extension Committee, at a meeting held December 7th, 1907: the minute of the Committee providing for "an annual lecture on some subject relating to the message and work of the Society of Friends". The name "Swarthmore" was chosen in memory of the home of Margaret Fox, which was always open to the earnest seeker after Truth, and from which loving words of sympathy and substantial material help were sent to fellow-workers.

The Lectureship has a twofold purpose: first, to interpret further to the members of the Society of Friends their Message and Mission; and, secondly, to bring before the public the spirit, the aims and the fundamental principles of the Friends. The Lecturer alone is responsible for any opinions expressed.

The Lectures have usually been delivered on the evening preceding the assembly of the Friends' Yearly Meeting in each year. The present lecture, in abridged form, was delivered at Friends House, Euston Road, London, N.W.1, on the evening of May 24th, 1951.

A complete list of previous Lectures, as published in book form, will be found at the beginning of this volume.

R. DUNCAN FAIRN was born in 1906 and was educated at a public elementary school, Battersea County (now Henry Thornton) School, and at the London School of Economics, University of London. After taking an Economics Degree with second class honours in Economic History, he obtained the Diploma of Education at the London Day Training College (now the Institute of Education). From 1929 to 1930 he was Education Officer at Pettit Farm, Dagenham, and from 1930 to 1938, with his wife, Warden of the York Settlement. In 1938 he entered the Prison Service, becoming successively deputy governor of Manchester and Wakefield Prisons and governor of the Borstal Institution at Borstal, Rochester. In 1945 he became the first Principal of the Imperial Training School for Prison and Borstal Officers, and in 1948 he was appointed an Assistant Commissioner of Prisons.

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## QUAKERISM : A FAITH FOR ORDINARY MEN

### INTRODUCTION

To look back at the names of my forty-two predecessors—Rufus M. Jones alone achieved the distinction of two Swarthmores—would be a daunting exercise even for those with claims to scholarship and piety. But to this original discomfort is added for me, possessing no claims of that sort, a second, more profound. The Swarthmore lecture was established, I quote from the preface, “first, to interpret further to the members of the Society of Friends their message and mission ; and secondly, to bring before the public the spirit, the aims and the fundamental principles of the Friends”. Curiously, it is twenty years since the word *Quakerism* was last given even a subordinate place in a lecture title, and I have conceived it my duty, therefore, avoiding other temptations to which I might have been expected to succumb, to stick closely to the purposes laid down, but it is just here that the second discomfort arises. As I begin to interpret and proclaim the Christian Gospel as it is expressed through the Society of Friends—let my theme be explicit from the beginning—I know more certainly even than my enemies how far short practice falls behind profession. There are few more poignant words, more searching in their simplicity, or more difficult to evade, than St. Paul’s, “For the good that I would I do not : but the evil which I would not, that I do.”

It is, then, with a great sense of unworthiness, and with no pretensions to learning, that this lecture is given by one who joined the Society of Friends a quarter of a century ago. To help forward my exposition I shall not hesitate to quote where others have said better what I want to say, content if thereby I am a vehicle for the inspiration of their thought and phrase. Nor will you expect me to be too solemn, for

I believe with Professor H. W. Garrod, when he wrote in *Genius Loci*\* of John Stuart Mill's *Autobiography*, that

"no man has a right to be anywhere so solemn, even about himself, as Mill is everywhere. That he is equally solemn about everybody else does not mend matters."

The debt I owe to my friends and those dearest to me will be, to them, obvious, and I will not embarrass them with more open acknowledgement, lest they also be blamed for my shortcomings, which are mine alone.

### A CHALLENGE

In his book, *The Blessing of the Holy Spirit*,† Canon J. E. Fison, of Rochester Cathedral, writes as follows :

"Here the quite outstanding spiritual quality and permanence of their (i.e. the Quakers') contribution to the cause of Christ is matched by their failure to become a sweeping popular movement. They have remained a spiritual *corps d'élite*. All popular enthusiasms for the Spirit have had their day and quickly passed, for the true Holy Spirit of God is not by normal people to be approached or followed apart from those channels of his *kenosis* which the holy catholic church acknowledges : word, ministry and sacraments. Only temporary success attends the evanescent popular movements that in isolation from his ordinances worship him alone. The Quaker movement abides, but it is not popular and never can be. Its glorious exception proves the rule of the Holy Spirit's working among ordinary people in self-effacement and through material channels."

Let us ignore the kind but dangerously flattering adjectives and leave aside the assumption that we reject the "material channels"—we reject in fact only the confining of the Holy Spirit's working to special channels. Let that be left. What of the rest? Is this judgement true? Are we evanescent, destined never to be popular? In the seventeenth century it did look for a time as though Quakerism would be a leading type of religion in England and America. 40,000 people joined the Quaker movement in the first ten years of its life, that is, between 1650 and 1660. To-day there are

\* The Clarendon Press.

† p. 176. Longman's Green & Co.

only about half that number in these islands with a population many times as large. Was that early growth a mere flash in the pan, and at that the peculiar pan of a seventeenth century intoxicated by religion? Perhaps the twentieth-century Yorkshire farmer was right when he said, after meeting some Friends who camped on his land, "The Quakers be funny people. They doan't believe in war, they doan't believe in oaths, they doan't believe in nowt savin' their own inner loights!" Are we an odd, peculiar people, nice but slightly abnormal, destined for ever to be a self-conscious, respected but rather pathetic minority? Or have we, on the contrary, a message and a way of worship for all men, irrespective of class and race, colour or intelligence? We meet at the beginning of the Fourth Century of Quakerism, and it is right that these questions should be asked and, if possible, answered.

### WHAT SORT OF MEN AND WOMEN?

An approach to the solution of some of these questions may first be found by looking at some of the men and women, chosen more or less at random, who have been members of our Religious Society in the 300 years of its existence. Truth requires at the outset the admission that there have been some extraordinary people amongst us, and we think first and obviously of George Fox himself, unquestionably one of the religious geniuses of all time. Fox was no ordinary man. After he had been beaten in 1652 so that he lost all power to move his hand and arm, they were so bruised, he said,\*

"I looked at it in the love of God, and after a while the Lord's power sprang through me again, and through my arm and hand, so that in a moment I recovered strength in my hand and arm in the sight of them all."

But even here we must be on our guard against exaggerating the abnormality, given the faith in "the Lord's power".

\* *Journal*, A.D. 1652.

The present Dean of an English cathedral, when a prisoner of war under the Japanese, was chided by his captors as they beat him because his God no longer helped him. His reply was simply, "But he is helping me or I could not think of you as I do now." William Penn, the courtier and founder of Pennsylvania, has some words on George Fox which are significant—they occur in the Preface to Fox's *Journal*.

"The most awful living, reverent frame I ever felt or beheld, I must say, was his in prayer."

It is the more astonishing that in a century of what Monsignor Ronald Knox would call "enthusiasm", when ranting extravagance was of frequent occurrence, George Fox was marked by gifts of common sense, organizing power and judgement which saved the infant Society of Friends from many of the aberrant dangers which befell similar groups of seventeenth-century seekers.

But Fox was not ordinary, nor was that troubled, misguided but, in the end, glorious spirit, James Nayler. Known too well for his blasphemously triumphal ride into Bristol, it is right that once again those words he spoke two hours before his death should be repeated, words said after he had been robbed and bound.

"There is a spirit which I feel that delights to do no evil, nor to revenge any wrong, but delights to endure all things, in hope to enjoy its own in the end. Its hope is to outlive all wrath and contention, and to weary out all exultation and cruelty, or whatever is of a nature contrary to itself. It sees to the end of all temptations. As it bears no evil in itself, so it conceives none in thoughts to any other. If it be betrayed, it bears it, for its ground and spring is the mercies and forgiveness of God. Its crown is meekness, its life is everlasting love unfeigned; it takes its Kingdom with entreaty and not with contention, and keeps it by lowliness of mind."\*

Against these extraordinary spirits whom can we set? First there is Margaret Fell, the widow of a judge and subsequently wife to George Fox. Mistress of Swarthmore Hall in Ulverston, she was a good wife, a sensible mother and a

\* *Works*, p. 696.

powerful support to the early Quaker community. By Quaker historians she is accounted a member of that remarkable band known as "the valiant sixty",\* drawn mainly from Cumberland, Westmorland, North Lancashire and the Craven district of Yorkshire. More than half of the men were connected with the land, eight were craftsmen or shopkeepers and four were schoolmasters. Four of the women were married to yeomen, two—Margaret Fell herself and Elizabeth Fletcher—were socially of some standing, and three were in domestic service. Together they formed a courageous, outreaching group of Quaker missionaries, but William Penn testifies to their ordinariness.

"Many of them (were) of good capacity, substance and account among men. Some of them wanted not for parts, learning or estate, though then, as of old, not many wise or noble, etc., were called . . . because of the cross that attended the profession of it in sincerity."†

These men and women were not morbid, pathological types or even starry-eyed enthusiasts, "their feet firmly planted in mid-air", but sober, sensible folk, some of them statesmen from the Dales, and all held in good esteem by their neighbours. Somewhat different was Robert Barclay, the author of the *Apology*, a Scottish aristocrat and the only theologian of distinction produced by Quakerism. But he was a member of the same Society as Robert Fowler, the master mariner of Bridlington in Yorkshire, who made the heroic voyage in the *Woodhouse* to Massachusetts in 1657. Penn, already quoted, is too familiar to be more than named. Here are others, some known beyond our borders. John Bellers, who lived from 1654-1735, was a social philosopher with a profound compassion for the poor who earned recognition in Karl Marx's *Das Kapital*. In industry there was Abram Darby of Coalbrookdale, who in the eighteenth century invented the smelting of iron by coke and whose firm was later to refuse military contracts in the French wars. John Dalton, chemist and discoverer of the atomic theory,

\* E. E. Taylor, *The Valiant Sixty*. The Bannisdale Press.

† *First Publishers of Truth*, p. 163.

remained a retiring, humble Friend, despite the honours showered upon him by the scientific world of his day. Elizabeth Fry, besides being a prison reformer known throughout Europe, was also wife, mother and Quaker minister. The Quaker originator of the immortal *Railway Guide*, George Bradshaw, secures recognition down to this day by the printing of the numbered month before the customary name on the title-page. Before Bradshaw there was Edward Pease, sometimes called the father of English railways, for he was the Friend to whom George Stephenson brought his project which led to the opening of the Stockton and Darlington Railway in 1825. Eminent alike as manufacturer, fighter for freedom, and orator, John Bright retains his stature undiminished as one of the spiritual giants of the nineteenth century. Later in the same century we find the great jurist, Sir Edward Fry, together with George Cadbury and Joseph Rowntree, the last two of whom left their mark upon industry, town planning and education.

In later years our Society was catholic enough to have the following diverse company within its membership. I put first the daughter of the author of *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, Mary Hughes, the friend of the under-privileged of East London, who shared absolutely their poverty; in contrast to her we find Sir A. Stanley Eddington, the philosophical astronomer whose faith and lucidity of exposition were evident in his own Swarthmore Lecture, *Science and the Unseen World*. Geraldine S. Cadbury, a generous mother and wise magistrate, was contemporary with Harold J. Morland, chartered accountant, director of the firm of Price, Waterhouse & Co., and one of the most distinguished Yearly Meeting Clerks of this century, who combined imagination, humour and secret generosity with outstanding powers of leadership and judgement. I think also of Alfred and Ada Salter, he both doctor and M.P., who justly earned the affection of the poor of Bermondsey, of Charles Roden Buxton, another M.P., and last, but not least, on the other side of the Atlantic but truly the beloved possession of this side as well, Rufus M. Jones himself, historian, philosopher, prophet and administrator,

to whom Anglo-American Quakerism owes so much over the last fifty years.

These Friends were outstanding, it is true, in their vocations, but they constitute a wide range of human experience, robust and soundly based, the very reverse of peculiar. To them could be added teachers, housewives, craftsmen, doctors, civil servants, farmers, artists, mill, factory and social workers and others of our own day, few of them listed amongst the famous, but whose lives and work are grounded in their faith as members of the Society of Friends.

### SOME CRITICISMS CONSIDERED

THE critic may justly remark that of the names known to him in the foregoing paragraphs, the majority would appear to be of men and women of good and in some cases unusual intelligence. I see no point in denying this. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy *mind*." The great concern of Friends from the earliest days for education followed naturally from their belief in the Inner Light and from the value they set upon serving God with the whole man, mind as well as heart, the will being directed by an instructed intelligence. Here is the noble seventeenth-century prose of a Minute of the Yearly Meeting at Bristol in 1695: "This meeting do desire that, where Friends can, they would get such schools and schoolmasters for their children, as may bring them up in the fear of the Lord and love of his truth, that so they may not only learn to be scholars, but Christians also; and that all parents will take the same care at home that such reproof, instruction, counsel and example may be constantly continued in their respective families, that so from the oldest to the youngest truth may flow itself in its beauty and comeliness to God's glory and all his people's comfort." Let us admit that Quakerism is a faith demanding the service of our minds.

In Mr. Alistair Cooke's *Generation on Trial*,\* he quotes pertinently from G. K. Chesterton's views on trial by a jury

\* Rupert Hart-Davis.

of *ordinary* men. When civilization, Chesterton wrote,

"wants a library catalogued, or the solar system discovered, or any trifle of that kind, it uses up its specialists. But when it wishes anything done which is really serious, it collects twelve of the ordinary men standing round. The same thing was done if I remember right, by the Founder of Christianity."

Quakerism is a serious business and it is for ordinary men, not specialists, clerical or lay.

Another critic may be disarmed at this point. I am not out to prove that Quakerism is the only true way of worship. Humanity, in all its rich, infinite variety, is not to be so "cabin'd, cribb'd, confin'd". All I am concerned to urge is the potential universality of Quakerism; to show that the Quaker way of life and worship is not limited, at least in theory, to one particular race, colour or type. Certain limitations which have emerged in practice will have to be considered later. Small though the worshipping communities of Friends are in some parts of the world, as the representatives from over twenty-five different countries meet in Oxford at the Friends' World Conference in 1952, we can truly rejoice in a Quakerism which is world-wide.

### THE CONTEMPORARY SCENE

HOWEVER strong relatively may have been the appeal of Quakerism in past ages, it may be said that we live in very different times. Before considering the faith that is in us, and its relevance for to-day, we had better first try to understand our day and generation. What sort of age do we live in? What is the contemporary climate of opinion?

A Chief Constable, born in Cumberland, once told me that one day a bunch of heifers got adrift in a market town in his native county. The good wives with their baskets were rushing out of the way when a policeman stretched out both arms in front of the advancing cattle, saying at the same time, "There's nowt to be gained by panic." It is useful to remember that homely counsel at this time. Though

"there's nowt to be gained by panic", we, who have seen two world wars in one generation and are now menaced by a third, would be foolish to under-estimate the consequences of a divided world equipped with destructive powers which may extend to generations unborn. Civilization's power to destroy itself is the stark fact which must be what the great American, Mr. Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes would have called "the inarticulate major premise" of all our thinking. Civilizations have come and gone before; Professor Arnold Toynbee distinguishes twenty-one of them. We may be living in the twilight of the twenty-first.

Our very powers to make destructive war are themselves a special product of that science which provides the framework in which much of our speculation takes place. I am not thinking of the narrow view which holds that those things which can be weighed and measured are alone significant. A young woman scientist at Oxford, prone to this view, told me the other day that even falling in love was probably just a matter of her genes, to which my only comment was, "Wait till you fall!" No: I have in mind that liberal claim to experiment and criticize without prejudice, which is the mark of the true, humble, scientific spirit at its best. Wasn't it T. H. Huxley who said, "Sit down before a fact as a little child"? This claim to free experiment, easily conceded in such disciplines as physics and chemistry, extends beyond music, art and literature, to the springs of human conduct and to religious experience itself, and the probing has gone on for some time. Confronted by an obscurantism too often displayed by orthodox religious people, as in the person of Bishop Wilberforce of Oxford in 1860, the effect has been to come to regard religion as outmoded. In forgetfulness of the fact that it is by their fruits, not by their roots, that ye shall know them, the inference is freely made that anthropology, historical criticism, psychology, philosophical relativism and comparative religion have exposed this most hallowed of man's illusions. And, incidentally, how William Temple would have rounded on the comparative religionists! There is no such thing, he would say, as



comparative religion. Some people are comparatively more religious than others, but that is quite another matter.

One result of the scientific advance of the nineteenth century, a complacent belief in the inevitability of progress, has by recent events been rudely upset. It is a commonplace of history to point to the three crises through which Western man has come in the last 500 years. He met first the Copernican revolution in astronomy, which dethroned the world from its traditional place as the centre of the universe, and reduced it to a unit in one of the smaller star systems of a universe whose stars were as the sands of the sea. Next came the Darwinian dethronement of man, shown to be no longer a special creation, but all of a piece with the rest of created things. Last came the psychological, Freudian attacks on reason itself. Man was seen to be a creature of instinct, the instrument very largely of his subconscious mind. Even if the human mind remained free at all—and that was in doubt—the area of freedom was severely restricted. It was as though man were an actor on a stage in the spot light, darkness enveloping the rest. More recently, in the course of fighting total war, fresh meaning was given to Admiral "Jackie" Fisher's famous dictum, "war is the essence of violence; moderation in warfare is lunacy". Men were found to behave with a brutality seldom if ever recorded in civilized times, and of which there is no evidence in uncivilized. The veneer of civilization turned out to be pathetically thin and the inevitability of human progress a tragic myth. It would almost seem that man stood in need of redemption!

Of another fact about our lives I was reminded in October last year when I was walking over the South Downs, not far from Arundel. To the south was the sea and across the Weald, to the north, in the far distance lay Horsham. It was a day when dark and lowering clouds, with driving rain, gave place in a matter of minutes to the most glorious sunshine from the loveliest of skies. The air became clear, cloud shadows raced over the hills and across the plain, and on the horizon gleamed the sea. Sunshine and rain, light and darkness, joy and sorrow, good and evil, defeat and victory:

this procession of opposites seems to be of the very nature of life itself. We live, it appears, in what philosophical jargon calls a dialectical world. One consequence, however, of regarding experience in this way is that we talk so much of crises, whether in Test cricket or in total war, that the very word crisis has lost any power to move us. We miss the point that originally it meant a judgement. I know nothing of Chinese, but I am told that when some translators had to turn the word "crisis" into Chinese they could find no exact equivalent. More fortunate than those missionary linguists in Africa who had to translate "Lord, dismiss us with thy blessing" as "Lord, kick us out softly", the Chinese translators turned "crisis" into "danger—opportunity". What better way is there of expressing the master theme of a dialectical universe? Is it not just another way of putting Professor Toynbee's attractive theory of the rise and fall of civilizations in terms of challenge and response? "Out of this nettle, danger, we pluck this flower, safety."

But we don't live wholly in a scientific world. Account must be taken of such facts as the Welfare State, the growth of the power of that same State, the increasing size of industrial units, the emergence of Mr. James Burnham's managers, the annihilation of distance and the insidious growth in the art of propaganda. A recent press account told of an American invention by which a speaker's words were played, or rather hurled back at him so that he was reduced to emotional confusion and impotence. We have already become familiar with the technique by which confessions are extorted in political trials. Is the American invention to be the next addition to a diabolical armoury?

If we can no longer say with facile optimism, "God's in his heaven—All's right with the world", we should be fools not to welcome much that we see around us. If we limit our survey to our own country, the fight for the abolition of want claims immediately all who know, either from experience or observation, what the years of unemployment meant between the wars. In 1929 I stood in Annfield Plain, in Co. Durham. Every shop in the main street was boarded up.

Sons were growing up who had never known their fathers to work. Men were everywhere waiting on the corner of the street, waiting, for what? Those were years when wives and mothers never knew but what their men would come home, having received their cards, out of work. And that ever-present dread of unemployment was not peculiar to those years. For 100 years at least, in an intensified form, it was the contingent disaster overshadowing thousands of homes in this country, and that experience has bitten deep into the lives of our people. Then not all would assent to the principle of some recent extensions in the public control of industry, but let the exhilarating sense of experiment linked to social purpose be recognized, difficulties and mistakes though there may be. It is right that political experiments should be criticized. "The price of liberty is eternal vigilance" was never more true than it is to-day. But I want to touch on those things which bring us together rather than upon those which divide. Thus we must rejoice when we look at such movements as the National Trust, the Youth Hostels Association, at the promise in the Education Act of 1944, and at much creative work which is being done for children, especially in the primary schools of the land. There are, too, such gains as the growth of public and private sincerity as distinct from, honesty; and the great improvement over the last quarter of a century in such things as the design of furniture, fabrics and the art of printing. All this and much else is good of the first order, besides which we have those permanent riches, literature, music, painting, the theatre and the like which even Iron Curtains cannot quite cut off from all mankind.

Yet an echo of "Twentieth Century Blues" still lingers. It is not only that a press-button amusement age is tragic in its sterility. It is not only that millions of people are being conditioned by the seductive cosiness of the cinema to accept a scale of values which is demonstrably false. (This is not to be construed as a sweeping condemnation of the cinema, for whose greatest achievements, whether serious or comic, whether Mr. Chaplin and the Marx Brothers, or *Mons.*

*Vincent and Brief Encounter*, I have a vivid appreciation.) Surely the pessimism of our age derives, first, from the progressive dwarfing of man as a person. There is a sublimity about "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" But it is hard to discover the sublime in man versus the state, man versus the impersonal board or man versus the oven of a Nazi concentration camp. It used to be said against the limited liability company that it had neither body to be kicked nor soul to be damned. What of our modern giants in industry and statehood?

Secondly, our modern pessimism springs from the fact that we no longer have what the logicians would call a universe of discourse. We have no common faith or language of understanding and have had to be content with such meretricious substitutes as the democratic way of life, scientific humanism or the dictatorship of the proletariat. The "sickness of an acquisitive society" is not only economic, it is spiritual.

With the good and the evil in life so mixed before us, there will come to many those lines from Wordsworth's *Tintern Abbey* :

The still, sad music of humanity,  
Nor harsh, nor grating, though of ample power  
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt  
A presence that disturbs me with the joy  
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime  
Of something far more deeply interfused,  
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,  
And the round ocean and the living air,  
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man :  
A motion and a spirit, that impels  
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,  
And rolls through all things.

It would be impertinent to praise the haunting cadences of those lines, but something more than a "presence that disturbs me with the joy of elevated thoughts" is wanted by a loyal trade unionist involved in an unofficial strike; by an employer striving to be just to his staff and yet to make that profit without which his business cannot survive; by a

working mother whose family responsibilities clash with her loyalty to Women's Institute or W.E.A. class; or by you and me fighting undistinguished sins. It is in those and similar situations that man asks for a faith which can claim the assent of his whole being and sustain him with power. Do you recall those delicious lines of Rupert Brooke's on a fish's *Heaven*?\*

But somewhere, beyond Space and Time,  
Is wetter water, slimier slime!  
And there (they trust) there swimmeth One  
Who swam ere rivers were begun,  
Immense, of fishy form and mind,  
Squamous, omnipotent and kind;  
And under that Almighty Fin  
The littlest fish may enter in.  
Oh! never fly conceals a hook  
Fish say, in the Eternal Brook,  
But more than mundane weeds are there,  
And mud, celestially fair;

I must not take time by quoting more, though it is all good, but even if Brooke meant to poke fun at orthodox Christianity, doesn't he at least describe one quality which any faith must have? In more technical terms, a religious faith is not only the response of man to a spirit in the universe which calls forth his reverence; it is a belief in a power, greater than but akin to man through which his life is satisfied and stabilized, and which is expressed in both worship and service.

Such a faith must make sense of experience, even though at the end we shall still stand before a mystery, like stout Cortez and all his men, "Silent, upon a peak in Darien." But its authority must be ready to meet criticism; its demands must have coherence; it must be a faith which works.

\* 1914 and other Poems, Sidgwick & Jackson.

## HOW HAS QUAKERISM BEEN PRESENTED?

WHAT have Friends had to say about their own faith? In the first Swarthmore Lecture in 1908, Rufus M. Jones, writing of "the compelling message of the Gospel of Christ", goes on:\*

"God is always and everywhere an infinite Father. His nature is love and tenderness. He shares Himself, He gives Himself, He does the best He can for all His creatures, His method of redemption is love and self-sacrifice. The Divine Heart bears our sins and carries our sorrows, endures the agony which our sins involve, travails with us in the crucible of pain, in the darkness of death, and brings life and immortality to light. All men are meant to be sons of God; they *are* potential sons—they bear in their being the mark and superscription of God; they never travel beyond the tug of Divine love upon them. They are intended for royal destiny. . . . There is a personal Mind, a personal Heart, a personal Will working in all things and through all things forever making man, bringing all things up to better, and overcoming evil and hindrance through love and goodwill."

Perhaps Mr. Fred Hoyle's theory of continuous creation is not so new as some people think.

Or if you would have the basic faith stated differently, I would myself accept as reasonable the following words, drawn up during the recent war by a body of churchmen, differing widely in their attitude to war, but united in their allegiance to Christ. William Temple presided over them and I suspect the statement bears the impress of his faith and phrasing:

"God reigns: God loves: God acts: that is the fundamental truth. From heaven He reigns—creator and upholder of the world, the Father and Friend of man. On the Cross He makes known His love—drawing all men to Himself by that love triumphant over pain and forgiving the sin which wounds Him. In the hearts of His people He acts—extending His rule by the energy of His love constraining them."†

Now back to Rufus Jones, in that first lecture.

"Our supreme testimony, as a Society, has been the testimony to the *real presence* of Christ, as an ever-living Spirit who reveals

\* *Quakerism: A Religion of Life*, p. 30. Allen & Unwin.

† *Is Christ Divided?* A Penguin special, p. 9.

Himself to all souls of vision and loyalty. We have undertaken as a people, to demonstrate and exhibit that true religion is the life of God in the lives of men, to present a Gospel, growing, expanding, progressing with the enlarging life of the race, grounded in the central truth that God is forever humanly revealing Himself, suffering over sin, condemning evil, making hearts burn with His love and sacrifice, and working *now* as He worked formerly in Galilee and Judea. A Friends' meeting is organized and held in bold reliance on the actual presence and communion of the Divine Spirit. Friends have set themselves the task of producing a congregational church with no head but the unseen Christ, the creation of a religious fellowship which is based simply on the response of the membership to this living, though invisible personal Presence."\*

A later attempt to describe our beliefs was made some fifteen years ago, when another Swarthmore lecturer, the late John A. Hughes and I, drawing freely on the Quaker Books of Discipline, produced a statement on our faith and worship at the request of York Monthly Meeting, by whose permission it is here reproduced. I do not wish to change greatly the language we used then.

"Membership in the Christian Church is a high privilege and carries with it a corresponding responsibility. It is, ideally, the outward sign of an inner union with Christ, the living Head, and with the other members of the Christian body. An essential condition of growth in the Christian life is fellowship with one another, and there are certain broad principles of belief and conduct that afford a basis for an association, in and through which living membership can find expression.

"In our own Society the emphasis must always be on both the spiritual and the practical nature of Christianity—the deep and penetrating reality of worship and the claim of Christ to rule our whole life, both inward and outward. Our earnest desire is to hold fast the Christian faith: both as to the Christ of history, and as to the manifestation and working of the Spirit of God in our hearts. This Spirit of God is his Light in the human soul—potentially present in all human souls, and known in actual experience as we turn towards the Light and are obedient to it. From this source all our special testimonies flow.

"Our manner of worship springs from our immediate experience of God and gives expression to it. To those who, hungering after communion with the Divine, find that hunger satisfied in our

Meetings for Worship, the outward forms of religion as ordinarily understood do not appear to be imperative, 'for all experience may be a holy baptism, a perpetual supper with the Lord, and all life a sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God'.

"The spirit of worship should govern the whole of life, and since there is no relation to God which does not reflect itself in our relations with one another, it is out of a deep fellowship that there will arise a growing sense of the Divine purpose in life. There is in fact a deeper spiritual life in a Meeting if its members are interested in one another's activities. Such a fellowship will justly prize the silent waiting upon the Lord in humble dependence upon him, and will find in it a means of strengthening the sense of unity. But silence is not an end in itself, it is a means to a higher experience. Silent worship, when true, is intensely active. In it we offer ourselves to one another and to God, body, mind and spirit, for the doing of his will. The ministry, when it proceeds out of such a living silence, is not simply the expression of personal views of truth or ideals of conduct, but arises out of the shared communion with God, and comes from a sense of call which asks for our obedience. 'If from the motion of God's Spirit', the message, whether little or much, will win its way by persuasiveness and love.

"Led by the spirit of God, we may be enabled to show to those around us that the Christian faith is no mere theoretical belief, but a living realization of the abiding presence of Christ, and a working out of our worship in daily life. A Meeting cannot allow the Christ-like passion for seeking and saving the lost to be dulled without imperilling its own life. Thus our work is twofold: to strengthen the spiritual life of our own members, and to give our message to the world. Each of these is dependent on the other; our message can only be handed on from life to life.

"From our deepest experience we are led to reject war as inconsistent with the spirit and teaching of Christ. As this spirit grows within us, we shall realize increasingly what it is to live in the virtue of that life and power which takes away the occasion of all wars.

"What the consequences should be in our private and public relations we are trying to understand. Our vision is often dull and our failure is great, but we believe that the true Christian way of life is found in the service of others. In our homes and families, in the world of business, political and social activity, we believe that we are called to give practical expression to our faith. The Kingdom of God is a fellowship, and those who would be of it must be companionable. In the words of one of our Advices: 'Live not for yourselves but for others. Remember your responsibility as citizens for the government of your own town

\* *Op. cit.*, p. 17.

and country. Study the causes of social evils. Work for an order of society based on mutual service and directed beyond all material ends to the true enrichment of human lives. Bring all your outward concerns under the ordering of the Spirit of Christ."

## QUAKERISM AND CHRISTIANITY

THERE are certain general matters to which I must now turn. First, Quakerism is a *faith*, and that implies a venture, a committing of one's life, a response of one's being to love—which is God—and grace as they are inwardly revealed. A young priest in the Anglican community at Kelham once said to an older member, "Father, it is our business to do the will of God." "It is", replied the other. "But Father, how do we know what the will of God is?" "That's the joke", replied the wise old man, "we never do!" To those of us used to standing orders how simple it would be to be issued with a sort of Heavenly King's Regulations, wherein we had only to turn to the appropriate sub-section for each spiritual emergency! It is not difficult to see in these days the appeal of what I may term, I hope without offence, such authoritarian faiths as those of Rome and Christian Science—not such a strange coupling as would at first appear. St. Augustine surely had a true insight into the nature of life and faith when he said, "Love God and do what you like," even if that is, for spiritual non-swimmers, a bit like being thrown in at the deep end.

Secondly, as was insisted earlier, Quakerism is an expression of the Christian Gospel. It was not for nothing that William Penn described early Quakerism as "Primitive Christianity Revived". George Fox's announcement, "There is one, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition", is clear enough, and the Barbados Epistle is almost embarrassing in its orthodoxy! References elsewhere in Fox's *Journal*, as in the writings of some other early Friends, might, however, be misunderstood. Occasionally, a note of complete independence is sounded, as though the Children of the Light owed nothing to all that had gone before, ignoring, apparently,

the Christian heritage and experience out of which their insights were developed.

The inescapable Christian basis is put clearly in the following statement presented to Yearly Meeting in 1920 by the Commission on Faith and Order :

"The history of the Society of Friends does not show them as making any marked contribution to speculative theology, but rather as specializing in a type of conduct and corporate witness that they believe to be in harmony with the inward experience of God in the soul . . . We believe that further applications of our belief to life and conduct will be revealed as we are loyal to Jesus Christ and obedient to His Light in our souls."

From the first generation of Quakerism, as the seed and leaven were of the Kingdom of God, so the Light and the Spirit were of Christ. "For they were directed to the Light of Jesus Christ within them," wrote William Penn in the preface to Fox's *Journal*. Our Advices and Queries, which together are amongst the most lovely things in our heritage, are no less clear. The Fifth Query begins :

"Do you maintain a steadfast loyalty to our Lord Jesus Christ as the Head of the Church and the Shepherd of Souls?"

Monsignor Ronald A. Knox, in his *Enthusiasm*,\* writes :

"Fox did not theorize about the Inner Light; he walked in it and was not satisfied until he saw others walking in it."

That light is the light of the Fourth Gospel, "which lighteth every man that cometh into the world". If Friends ever wanted a credal statement it would be to the first chapter of St. John's Gospel that they would turn.

There are some people, as G. K. Chesterton wrote years ago, "too mentally modest to believe in the multiplication table", and so equally there are some Friends whose all-embracing intellectual charity makes them water down, "I believe"; to, "I rather think I feel". To them this grounding of Quakerism in historical Christianity may be embarrassing, but it cannot be evaded, and I have no wish to evade it.

A little more than three years ago, just before the British

\* The Clarendon Press.

mandate was surrendered, I was in Palestine on an official mission. Rifle fire and bomb explosions were our daily portion, but one night I spent peacefully in a police camp at Jenin, on the edge of the plain of Esdraelon. As evening fell, and I was no longer able to see the red anemones which grew amongst the stones, I looked across the plain and there, far away in the hills, were the lights of Nazareth. A day or two later I was in Nazareth itself, passing the well from which Mary, the mother of Jesus, probably drew water. I slept beside the lake of Galilee and bathed in the early morning in its waters. Here Jesus grew up as a child, played, worked, taught and, at the end, set his face towards Jerusalem. As I surrendered myself, the mystery and power of 2,000 years of history filled my mind. The choice presented itself then as it does to us in this Meeting House to-night: either Jesus was an impostor, blasphemous and possibly mad, or he was "the image of the invisible God". "Whom say ye that I am?"

Friends have never dwelt morbidly on what is often called "a sense of sin". Throughout our history the emphasis has been upon a positive faithfulness to the light, upon obedience. Nevertheless, failure, disobedience, sin, have never been regarded merely, so to speak, as breaches of the rules. They must ever be the betrayal of a person. It is from the Cross our Lord forgives "the sin which wounds him".

Quakerism is Christian or it is nothing. "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman . . . Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me." "I am the way, the truth, and the life." I make no apology for this reiteration because I dare not risk being misunderstood. Those who complain that this basically Christian foundation excludes them do but exclude themselves, good men and women though they may be, for one of the humbling discoveries of the professing Christian is to find out how much better some non-Christians are than he is.

As I have insisted upon the ineluctable connection between Quakerism and the Christian Gospel, I must for the sake of

truth also make clear that the emphasis throughout the life of the Society has always been upon "primitive Christianity revived". Much that passes for Christianity would not be accepted by Friends. Legalistic theories of the atonement, for example, would seem to be contrary to the nature of a God who was in Christ *reconciling the world unto himself*, and, equally, a belief in the verbal inspiration of the Bible is to Friends inconsistent with their understanding of both progressive revelation and historical criticism.

### WHAT IS MAN?

So far it has been my aim to show how our faith has been presented, and there is often a tendency, to which Friends generally are liable, to describe Quakerism in terms of what it is *not*, forgetful of the fact that there is little nourishment in a negative. It may be said that these statements are all very well, but they are often couched in language which the ordinary man or woman to-day does not understand. Can Friends speak in a language which he who runs may read?

We were told in *The Friend*, by a correspondent, at the beginning of the year that there were "numerous people who do not understand what the Society is talking about". What are we talking about?

Before such a re-statement is attempted, a prior question must first be answered. Somewhat earlier a brief sketch of the contemporary scene was made. What of man himself? The terms in which our faith is stated will be very largely determined by our appreciation of man's true nature. Who, or what, is man?

Basil A. Howard, in *The Proper Study of Mankind*,\* quotes Dr. T. E. Lawson's "prescription".

"If you take enough water to fill a ten-gallon barrel; enough fat for seven bars of soap; carbon for 9,000 lead pencils; phosphorus for 2,200 match-heads; iron for one medium-sized nail; lime enough to whitewash a chicken coop; and small quantities of magnesium and sulphur, you get, apparently, a man!"

\* Ginn & Co.

Is that all man is? Perhaps Shelley was nearer the truth when he wrote :

We look before and after ;  
 We pine for what is not ;  
 Our sincerest laughter  
 With some pain is fraught ;  
 Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.

This is not the place, nor am I competent, to discuss in detail the accepted facts about man's physical and mental development. On the physical side I am going to assume a general acceptance of evolutionary theory, by which is meant not that man is descended from monkeys but that monkeys and men, so to speak, can be represented on the same family tree. Our membership one of another was put even more excitingly last Christmas by one of the scientific lecturers to children, when he told his audience that if the members would space themselves out it was probable they would contain atoms given out by Julius Caesar with his last breath !

But man is not only a physical body with marks upon it of its long development ; he is also an experiencing person ; " we look before and after ". He is a creature of instinct, that a-moral, unlearned behaviour without which we could not survive either as individuals or as a species ; so also are what we sometimes patronizingly call the lower animals. These animals vary amongst themselves in their capacity for response, imitation and intelligent adaptation. Man appears to be supreme in his manifestation of intelligence at its highest—the power of thought and its expression in language. But there is more to man than that. Just as the iceberg, towering above the waves, is but a small part of that below, so man's conscious mind is related to his subconscious, his subliminal self. In physics the principle of the indestructibility of matter is accepted without question. In the sphere of mental life equally we are coming to see that no experience is ever forgotten in the absolute sense ; it is stored in the subconscious ; and our contemporary thoughts and actions are largely determined by our previous experience,

and not by our individual experience only, but by that of the race itself.

Interest has been aroused recently by the discussion of what are called psychosomatic diseases. From the morbid angle this class of disease is merely testimony to the commonplace that man is strictly not a body and a mind, but is, in fact, a body-mind. The possibility of avoiding this ancient dichotomy is in line with what some would regard as a holistic tendency in the universe, and we can cry triumphantly :

All good things  
 Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more, now, than  
 flesh helps soul.

This is the raw material out of which is fashioned an Edward Wilson, an Albert Schweitzer, an Einstein, the commandant of a Nazi concentration camp, or the young thug who will assault an old woman for the sake of a few pounds.

Implicit in the foregoing is the belief that man is a social being, but one further matter must be made clear if the argument behind this lecture is to be sustained. Everywhere man appears to be a creature with a need to worship. I think the discussion of whether there is or is not something which can be called a religious instinct is largely unprofitable, and I do not propose to enter upon it. But the facts of history seem to show a religious tendency ; in our own day even the ruthless opposition to religion in some quarters is producing some odd results, or are they not so odd? Provided the terms are suitably changed, " New Presbyterian but old Priest writ large " will do as well for this century as for the seventeenth. Even if the object of man's worship be the state or the proletariat—in this context the bourgeoisie is not a competitor—it is clear that he appears to need something greater than himself, to which he can give his allegiance, his reverence, and, at the highest level, his adoration. I know of few finer expressions of this response of man than in Ralph Hodgson's *Song of Honour*,\* where the watcher in the country on a hill at night confesses :

\* Macmillan & Co.

"I heard it all, I heard the whole  
 Harmonious hymn of being roll  
 Up through the chapel of my soul  
 And at the altar die,  
 And in the awful quiet then  
 Myself I heard, 'Amen, Amen,  
 Amen' I heard me cry."

In a slightly different idiom, his ordinands said of Archbishop William Temple, before their ordination, "he showed us the Lord high and lifted up".

We seem to have got from man the body-mind, the creature of instinct, to a person able and willing to adore. This is true, but we are still speaking of ordinary men. There are some folks said to be "as good as gold and fit for Heaven but of no earthly use". I am not concerned with them. Perhaps my long association with what I might call, without misunderstanding, "professional non-conformists", described "more than somewhat" by Damon Runyon, makes me sympathize a little with Professor MacNeile Dixon in his Gifford Lectures for 1937, *The Human Situation*,\* when he wrote :

"Of the more highly praised virtues (save courage and magnanimity) I am, as far as one can oneself judge of such things, deficient in appreciation, and the heaven of my choice would, I fear, contain but few saints or examples of moral perfection. Indeed I am not sure that it would contain any; it would be mainly peopled by agreeable sinners, not too unlike myself for companionship. How sad are the virtuous, and how cheerful and lighthearted so often the profane. How gay and gallant, how amusing so many of the rascals! My affections have, I suppose, betrayed or undermined my moral principles. Holiness is a strong perfume, and a little of it goes a long way in the world. I have never been very clear whether it was compatible with laughter, and I should be very loath to bid an eternal farewell to laughter. For I am one of those who love good sense, and yet love sheer nonsense in as great, almost in a higher degree . . . And my private opinion is that only if you can appreciate nonsense can you appreciate sense."

Of course that is great fun but it is only valid for plastic saints, the unco' guid who are afraid of themselves. Any of

\* p. 14. Edward Arnold & Co.

us who knows a true saint, or a rascal who too easily sinks to something worse, will be able to contradict Dixon at nearly every point, but his impish protest has a cautionary value. We are dealing all the time with ordinary men and women, sinners and saints but most with a mixture of both in their make-up; capable, as the Blitz taught us, of responding to challenge with heroism, self-sacrifice and generosity; but also liable to behave with incredible selfishness and depravity.

One last word on the nature of man. I have asserted that he is a social animal with an obvious need to worship, and I spoke of him earlier as an "experiencing person". In this lecture I have inevitably been concerned with religious experience. How far is this a pious hallucination? If this were a formal treatise on the philosophy of religion, I should necessarily have to consider this question in some detail. I might begin by inviting an examination of the fruits of that experience and asking whether they appear to have an hallucinatory basis. I shall certainly not attempt a so-called logical, scientific proof, which persuades none but the converted and is inappropriate anyway. The validity of religious experience is only to be discovered experimentally. Its truth is of the same order as that in the sublimity of Shakespearean tragedy or in the power of Bach's St. Matthew Passion to send us to our knees in tears. These experiences authenticate themselves but, equally, all are alike subject to criticism and development. In the world of religious experience there is the equivalent of the jazz devotee or, worse, the sentimental ballad addict. But the way of experience must be followed. Jesus did not hand out helpful tracts or philosophical essays to those fishermen 2,000 years ago. He said, *Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.* The way is still the same.



## QUAKERISM: THE BASIC FAITH

WHAT do we believe? Can we carry further the statements in an earlier section? George Fox in his *Epistles* wrote, "Mind that which is pure in you to guide you to God." At the heart of the universe, we believe there is not just a vague mysticism spelt with too many i's; there is love as revealed historically in Jesus of Nazareth and known inwardly both before and since. That love which we call God and Father we necessarily have to think of in personal terms. By this we mean not to limit what cannot be limited, but only that to think in terms of personality is to think in the highest terms we know. God cannot be *less* than personal however much *more* he may be.

So far we should carry the majority of our fellow-Christians with us. But the true foundation of the Christian Gospel as it has been transmitted through Quakerism is the belief that there is a witness to God, that of God, in every man, in direct opposition to the *entweder oder* theology of Karl Barth. Further, that it is possible for a God Who is Love to make His will known to men and women destined for fellowship with Him. It follows from this belief that man's intercourse with his fellows must be based upon its active and energetic expression. That this principle is founded on no shallow optimism is well illustrated by Fox himself, when he wrote from his imprisonment under revolting conditions in Launceston Gaol, bidding Friends live so

"that your carriage and life may preach among all sorts of people and to them; then you will come to walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in everyone; whereby in them ye may be a blessing and make the witness of God in them to bless you".\*

The ordinary man, pausing for a moment from filling up his football pools, objects that he knows nothing of "that of God" in himself, let alone in others. To him we say, as Fox himself says to us, that we must set our minds, our lives, in the way of good. *Go and sin no more.* An act of the whole man is demanded. We cannot have a Quakerism without

\* *Journal*, A.D. 1656.

tears. The way of the Children of the Light is a way of surrender. Quakerism is an experimental religion. We do not, cannot, ask for a formal, static creed to be accepted. Our faith is a way. Once set on that way we ordinary folk can begin to give the pure in us and in others a chance. "Mind (that is, follow) that which is pure in you to guide you to God."

As was said earlier, the Light of God in the heart of every-man has always been identified with the Light of Christ. Friends believe that the Christ of history, that outpouring of the Divine which men saw in Jesus of Nazareth, is also the Christ of experience. Man has been responding to God's leading in all generations, in the days of our paleolithic ancestors, in Socrates and in the great religions of the East, by the shores of Galilee and in our own world to-day.

The Quaker belief in guidance, the result of inward retirement, might be expected to lead to the peculiarities of spiritualism, the petty confessions of "groupism" and the extravagant anarchy of the ranters. From these errors Friends have been saved by the necessary expression of their faith through a corporate society. Seldom has the divine leading been regarded as a kind of *His Master's Voice*, expressing itself independently of the human medium. Quaker experience at its best has resulted in a serenity of mind, a sureness of purpose, a sensitive vision and judgement, in an integrity of life. These results have been attained largely through the union of protestantism and catholicism to be found in our conception of the Church. On the one hand, there is an immediate relation between man's spirit and God, an insistent protestantism. On the other, there is the corporate society to which our individual, human, fallible wills are subject, a catholic fellowship in which we are members of the Body of Christ. The maintenance of a proper tension between the protestant and the catholic elements is one of the chief glories of our heritage. Never is this proper tension more clearly shown than when a Friend with a concern for service brings his concern before his Meeting, that his judgement may be submitted to the leading of the Spirit of God

as it is made known in corporate worship. But whether individually or corporately, our experience is that the will of God can manifest itself through the ordinary faculties of ordinary men and in the common things of everyday life.

### FAITH IN WORSHIP AND PRACTICE

Our faith is inseparable from our way of worship. Because we believe in the Light of God in all men, perceived more clearly as we are obedient to "the promptings of love and truth in our hearts", so we reject both a separate priesthood and an arbitrary distinction between men and women. Ours is a democratic society in which all are called to the service of the ministry, all are "stewards of the mysteries of God". Johnson, in Boswell, has his say against us. When told of a woman Friend's preaching, you remember he remarked, "Sir, a woman's preaching is like a dog's walking on its hinder legs. It is not done well; but you are surprised to find it done at all." We laugh because we love the typical steam-roller parallelism, but we are thankful, not only for the eloquence, a word not thought much of amongst us, but also for the courage, the judgement, and the inspiration of women Friends throughout our history.

So, men and women, equal before God but with a diversity of gifts, we come to worship. Independent of special buildings, though our regular Meeting Houses are clearly convenient, and without ritual, prepared order or ornament, we meet in silence. In this silence all can unite, however great the differences of race, language or spiritual experience. Scalp-hunting Indians in the American backwoods in the eighteenth century, no less than the polyglot members of an Oecumenical Conference at Amsterdam in the twentieth, have worshipped in the silence of a Quaker Meeting.

In the light of modern psychological knowledge it is easy to see how receptive such a gathered meeting can be. The sensitivity of each member to the needs of the others becomes increased, the conditions for thought transference are ideal,

and the way is clear for incursions of the subconscious. When to these purely physical conditions is added the dominant purpose of the assembled company, the worship of God, then the power of a "living" Quaker meeting becomes as natural as breathing and as wonderful. Here is a communion where bread is broken, wine poured out, though the material elements be not present: the will is surrendered, the spirit humbled and purified, and the prayer for forgiveness leads to one of praise and adoration.

Out of this living silence springs the ministry of praise, prayer or challenge. The silence is not so much broken as carried over into speech, when the utterance may be but the brief, unlettered offering of some humble man or woman distilled from their experience of life and God. And at the conclusion of the spoken word the silence flows on. It is a way of worship to which all contribute, whether they speak or not.

As one brought up to love the metrical psalm tunes of the Presbyterian Church and who counts it a privilege to worship in York Minster, say, or in a prison or borstal chapel, I admit that we lose much by the absence of music. But music in worship, unless as good as we can make it, had better not be there at all, and to achieve this standard would demand preparation, a fettering of that freedom of inspiration which is our very life.

It is impossible to consider our method of worship without going on to discuss our meetings for church affairs, or business meetings. A world sickened by vetoes, obstructive minorities, pressure groups and blocs of impotent Great Powers, might do worse than examine the testimony of a community which in the conduct of its church business, as in the administration in two world wars of thousands of pounds' worth of materials in relief services, uses no vote and dispenses altogether with the concept of majority or minority rule. Miss M. P. Follett, in her book *The New State*, called attention to the political implications of this Quaker method of arriving at business decisions some thirty years ago, although I would admit, more than I think Miss Follett does, the need for a measure of agreement on certain fundamental assumptions, an

agreement that would not always be easy to obtain in the political field.

The Quaker meeting for church affairs or committee has its clerk, with or without assistants, who acts as both chairman and secretary. It is the clerk's function to direct the meeting through the agenda of business to be transacted, and at the same time to record by minute the sense of the meeting. The extracting of sense from some meetings calls for no little skill. It is not just a matter of counting speeches for and against. The silence of some is often of greater significance than the speech of others. But the salient point is that, throughout, the proceedings are conducted in the spirit of a meeting for worship, all seeking, however great may be their differences, to know and to do the will of God on the matter before the meeting. Differences can be and are expressed freely, though the mere scoring of debating points is discouraged, and gradually the judgement of the meeting emerges from the exercise. Majority has not gained a victory over minority. All have contributed to a decision represented by the clerk's minute, which is submitted in open meeting and subjected to correction before being finally accepted. Long experience has given us a number of competent clerks and an astonishing faculty on the part of Friends when assembled to grasp, amend and sometimes re-fashion minutes altogether. The spectacle of a meeting in full cry after a clerk, asking him to change the second word of the opening phrase in the penultimate sentence of his minute, is one of the peculiar delights of Quakerism! But the clerk has also his moments of relief. Just as Baron von Hügel praised God for his deafness as he could say his prayers quietly amid abuse, so the experienced clerk knows that when X or Y rises he can go ahead with the drafting of his minute undisturbed: not all Friends are equally gifted with a sense of relevance.

There are disadvantages, naturally, in this way of conducting business. It can sometimes be slow. A meeting must wait for the way forward to be opened. Occasionally the discussion on a subject must be adjourned when the meeting is not ready to come to a decision. Demands are

made upon the patience, forbearance and critical judgement of the individual members. It was a wise Friend who remarked that it was comparatively easy to deal with the Devil when he went about as a roaring lion; but not so easy when he sat on a Quaker committee and asked for a time of silence just when the committee was about to come to a vital decision! The members must indeed be members one of another, knowing and understanding one another, and special qualities are required of the clerk. He must know his membership and be familiar with the matter under discussion, he must be firm but a good listener, decisive without being obtrusive, and be able to express the judgement of a meeting rapidly in legible, terse and felicitous prose. When these conditions are satisfied, there is no surer way of gaining decisions by integration instead of by division; an enriched unity emerges from diversity; every member has had the opportunity to contribute his instructed judgement on the question and the final decision recorded is never in doubt.

This is not the place to go into a detailed discussion of what are often termed our "distinguishing testimonies". They range from such a grave matter as our opposition to war to lesser but still important practices like our refusal to take oaths, to wear mourning at funerals or to erect expensive gravestones with eulogistic inscriptions. Whether of greater or lesser significance, they all derive from our basic faith in God the Father of all, our fellowship with one another as Sons of God, and our belief in the Light of God in every human heart.

#### AT WHAT COST?

WHAT does this faith demand of us ordinary men and women?

Will you consider for a moment the following passage from William Temple's *Readings in St. John's Gospel*?\*

"When we pray, 'Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire', we had better know what we are about. He will not carry us to easy triumphs and gratifying successes; more probably He will

\* p. 288. Macmillan & Co.

set us some task for God in the full intention that we shall fail, so that others, learning wisdom by our failure, may carry the good cause forward. He may take us through loneliness, desertion by friends, apparent desertion even by God; that was the way Christ went to the Father. He may drive us into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. He may lead us from the Mount of Transfiguration (if He ever lets us climb it) to the hill that is called the Place of the Skull. For if we invoke Him, it must be to help us in doing God's will, not ours. We cannot call upon the

Creator Spirit, by whose aid

The world's foundations first were laid

in order to use omnipotence for the supply of our futile pleasures or the success of our futile plans. If we invoke Him we must be ready for the glorious pain of being caught by His power out of our petty orbit into the eternal purposes of the Almighty . . . The soul that is filled with the Spirit must have become purged of all pride or love of ease, all self-complacency and self-reliance; but that soul has found the only real dignity, the only lasting joy. Come then, Great Spirit, come. Convict the world; and convict my timid soul."

Is the cost too great? Dare a people which responded for the purposes of war to a call to "blood, toil, tears and sweat" make itself available for the purposes of God, terrible in their splendour though the promises may be? The beaches of Dunkirk, the bombed streets of Coventry, Plymouth and London, were peopled with ordinary men and women. From their heroism and self-sacrifice we may take courage for this even greater venture. To dare to profess our Quaker faith, to seek the inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God, what qualities must we cultivate and try to exhibit in our lives?

We must, I think, begin with self-knowledge. Of all law-breakers in many ways the most tragic and difficult are "the false pretence merchants". They have deceived others for so long that they have ended up in deceiving themselves. There is something of the false pretence merchant in most of us. It is hard to accept ourselves as we really are, or to see ourselves as others see us, which may not be quite the same thing. My wife and I last year came across an example of this latter difficulty. We were walking one May Saturday in Yorkshire and we stopped at an inn near one of the county's smaller ruined abbeys. The innkeeper was an

old friend, and we duly admired her "Japanese garden", an ornamental array of flowers and plants on a plate. "Ay", she said, "I got t' second prize for 't at Women's Institute Show on Friday." There was a pause. She then continued, "When t' show were over I went up t' judge and I said, 'What's wrong wi' t' plate?'" It is only fair to add that she told us what the judge said! "To thine own self be true" is the kind of sententious moralizing we should expect from Polonius, and it quite begs the question of which self, for we are many. We may have only second-class brains. Let us accept them for what they are and go on.

A schoolmaster, in his reminiscences the other day, said that the qualities he desired to encourage in his schoolchildren were adult courage, kindness and truth. To these three qualities I would add a fourth. It is a quality to be found in what may seem odd reading for Quakers, the late Field-Marshal Wavell's lectures on *The Art of Generalship*. He speaks there of robustness, of a sort of toughness of mind, strong enough to stand the strain of responsibility but without being the enemy of the imagination. He writes:

"I can perhaps best explain what I mean by robustness by a physical illustration. I remember long ago, when I was a very young officer, being told by a mountain gunner friend that whenever in the old days a new design of mountain gun was submitted to the Artillery Committee that august body had it taken to the top of a tower, some hundred feet high, and thence dropped on to the ground below. If it was still capable of functioning it was given further trial; if not, it was rejected as flimsy."\*

Robustness of mind will save us from pre-occupation with self so that we never take offence, and will aid us when we are called to take the unpopular line whilst still holding in charity those who differ from us. These qualities, though not "in widest commonalty spread", are plentiful enough. Whatever our calling, our aim must be to live them out and to call them forth. Raised to increased power through dedication, illuminated by the Light within, they can become the raw material for what Christians understand by the working of the Grace of God.

\* *The Good Soldier*, p. 4-5. Macmillan & Co.

## HOW SHALL OUR FAITH BE COMMENDED?

THE demands, implicit and explicit, in the foregoing are far reaching, but face ordinary men with a crisis, with danger—opportunity, and they rise to the measure of the occasion. I do not think we want to water down the faith and to make excuses for it. We have not to be afraid because its values are not those of the world at large. To believe that there is that of God in all men seems clean contrary to the observations of common sense, and so it is, but we stand before the world believing it to be true, nevertheless. Common sense is not enough.

Do you ever read Prof. R. H. Tawney's *The Acquisitive Society*, published first thirty years ago? He was my history teacher and I owe him much. Listen to his conception of a Christian society.

*"He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble and meek."*

"A society which is fortunate enough to possess so revolutionary a basis, a society whose Founder was executed as the enemy of law and order, need not seek to soften the materialism of principalities and powers with mild doses of piety administered in an apologetic whisper. It will teach as one having authority, and will have sufficient confidence in its Faith to believe that it requires neither artificial protection nor judicious under-statement in order that such truth as there is in it may prevail. It will appeal to mankind, not because its standards are identical with those of the world, but because they are profoundly different. It will win its converts not because membership involves no change in their manner of life, but because it involves a change so complete as to be ineffaceable. It will expect its adherents to face economic ruin for the sake of their principles with the same alacrity as, till recently, it was faced every day by the workman who sought to establish trade unionism among his fellows. It will define, with the aid of those of its members who are engaged in different trades and occupations, the lines of conduct and organization which approach most nearly to being the practical application of Christian ethics in the various branches of economic life, and having defined them, will censure those of its members who depart from them without good reason. It will rebuke the open and notorious sin of the man who oppresses his fellows for the sake of gain as freely as that of the drunkard or adulterer. It will voice frankly

the judgement of the Christian conscience on the acts of the State, when to do so is an offence to nine-tenths of its fellow-citizens. Like Missionary Churches in Africa today, it will have as its aim, not merely to convert the individual, but to make a new kind, and a Christian kind, of civilization."\*

That passage was written without any reference to Quakerism, but it will serve magnificently as a standard by which we should seek to be judged. Quakerism is not a faith for Sundays only. Its claim is to rule the whole of life or nothing. One of the tragedies of history since the Reformation has been the progressive withdrawal of Protestantism from the affairs of the market-place, a withdrawal only arrested in this century. In Catholic mediaeval society, man danced and played as well as prayed, bought and sold as well as was buried, within the ambit of the Church. Great and glaring though the abuses and inconsistencies were, the theory was superb and the practice heroic. There can be no return to those mediaeval days; I am not one of those "homesick in time". But it is this same universality in Quakerism, always implicit in our history and practice, which we must recognize and with boldness proclaim to the world. Our Lord is "the Lord and giver of life".

I have said that this is the standard by which we might seek to be judged, and as I say these words we are judged and condemned. How far we have "come short of the glory of God"! Our invitation to others to join the Society of Friends comes not from achievement but from fellowship: we say to the world, walk with us, "as the forgiven".

There are two further aspects of our faith by which it can be commended. The first is the nature of its authority. It is based primarily not on a book or a church but on the experience of Love—God—in personal, human life. This inward authority frees Friends from fears about the infallibility of either Bible or Church, is progressive in nature, and enables the researches of science, whether in anthropology, psychology or field sociology, to be met with appreciation,

\* pp. 238-9. G. Bell & Sons.

confidence and criticism. Sometimes the theoretical ingenuity of speculation in scientific inquiry has to be faced with a "This we know", and a demonstration from experience that ingenuity and truth are not necessarily identical. The test of this inward authority is essentially scientific. For confirmation it is confronted with the experience and judgement of the group, it is examined for congruence with life, it is measured against "the masterlight of all our seeing", the spirit of Christ Himself.

Secondly, our faith is a democratic enterprise and can claim, therefore, democracy's chief argument in support. This is, quite obviously, not efficiency nor is it necessarily that of rightness. There is no guarantee that a democracy will be right. The supreme argument for democracy is that it is the only form of government which treats its members as significant persons, eliciting from them by consultation their judgement, and so educating them in the widest sense.

Quakerism as a lay religion based on an equal partnership of men and women is, I believe, an educational adventure. By education I do not mean something we do to boys and girls between the ages of five and fifteen, as when a small boy was asked if he had been confirmed and he replied, "Yes, but it didn't take." Elsewhere I have described the educated man or woman as one who can follow the Anglican service from the Prayer Book with intelligence, plot a cross-country journey from Bradshaw and get there, and can undress on the beach with discretion! I think you will see what I am driving at. Education is the progressive winning of citizenship in a commonwealth of value whose riches are of the spirit. Most generalizations about the 20,000 men and women, boys and girls, in the prisons and borstals of this country to-day are wrong. One more true than most is that the great majority are strangers to that commonwealth, knowing little of its riches. Is it so very different for those of us outside prison walls? We, too, are mostly strangers and seek a way to that commonwealth. Quakerism is a way thereto and the wayfarer may learn as he walks in it. When he ceases to learn he will cease to live.

Finally, Quakerism shares with Christianity as a whole the crowning glory of providing the ground for eternal opposition to our modern atheisms. Against the view of man as the creature and servant of the state, as a mere unit of labour in the economic process, or as the subject of the colour bar, the Christian faith alone upholds man as a child of God, a being of infinite value, signed with the sign of the Cross.

## OUR FAILURE

WE are at present a community in this country of some 20,000 souls, in a population of 50,000,000. Apart from our separate, personal unfaithfulness and disobedience to the Light, what other causes are there, to which these primaries have contributed, for our immense failure to convince more of our fellows of the attractiveness of the truth we hold?

A study of our history is instructive. It was noted earlier that the Society of Friends began in the seventeenth century, a century in which religion occupied the place taken by football cup competitions to-day. From the seventeenth to the nineteenth century the British were the people of a book, the Bible in the Authorized Version. Our language, spoken and written, was nourished upon its diction and imagery. And with the Bible went the worship of the God whose commerce with man it recorded. Now all that is changed. The Bible is no longer read in the majority of British homes, in few households is there anything that can be described as family worship, and most churches, those of Rome and Christian Science apart, are half empty. I have limited myself to the experience of these islands, but in the world at large the facts are more or less the same. The Christian Church is a minority once again in a pagan world, and its values no longer command general acceptance.

In retrospect it can be seen that the growth of the early Quaker movement was largely due to the favourable soil in which it was planted. Much that was then assumed must

now be so no longer. The spiritual poverty of many of our Quaker meetings derives from spiritual poverty in the homes we come from. A river cannot rise higher than its source. One thing is certain. If we would be worthy of our history, obedient to the Light and faithful to our Lord, we must return to that store from which our original strength was nourished, the reading and knowledge of the Bible.

The Bible is a collection of books of unequal value but all concerned with one theme: the recording by fallible men of the story and significance of a remarkable people's understanding of God. Equipped with the best critical apparatus we can obtain, we must return to the regular reading, study and learning of the Bible.

"Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off."

"And they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?"

"If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning."

"... they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."

At the very least, these rhythms and this splendid simplicity might once again inform our speech, and "the style is the man". The age which produced the Authorized Version, produced also the first question and answer of the Shorter Catechism.

"What is the chief end of man?"

Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy Him for ever."

In our age, which doesn't read its Bible, a new commandment has been recently drawn up by a sociologist in these words:

"Thou shalt honour the need of every human organism to persist in its own being and to reach its normal completion or actualisation."

I make no comment.

The life of a worshipping community of laymen can only be sustained if worship is a reality in their homes as well as in Meeting. Stephen Grellet, the French Quaker of the

eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, once said that since his conviction by grace he doubted whether

"I have ever broken bread or drunk wine, even in the ordinary course of life, without the remembrance of, and some devout feeling regarding the broken body and the blood-shedding of my dear Lord."

Against the rush of modern life, the competition of the radio and the menace of television, we must make time for the silent grace of recollection before a meal, for the common, daily worship of the family, and for regularity and depth in our private devotions. As A. Neave Brayshaw, father in God to so many of us here, used to remind us, we have as much time as there is, and we spend much of it letting ourselves down lightly. When we say we haven't time we merely mean that we choose to do other things instead. Above all, we need to learn more about the practice of prayer, whether by way of petition, intercession or adoration, cheerfully accepting whatever psychological study has to tell us about its mechanism, but having no doubt about its end. Most of us begin naturally and unashamedly with petition, as in Archbishop Lang's story of the small girl who, when confronted by a bulldog, immediately said, "O God, if you care for little girls at all, now's your chance."\* If, as we believe, prayer is an opening of the whole of our life to the Spirit of God, it is natural we should bring before Him our needs, that before Him we should hold our friends in mind, and that at the end, we should say, Holy, Holy, Holy.

A third cause of our failure may again be due to the circumstances in which the Society began. The licentiousness, for example, of much Restoration drama served too readily to promote that withdrawal from the world by the "plain Friend", the marks of which are still with us. Kenneth Baily, in a letter in *The Friend* last autumn, admirably described the results of that withdrawal. He wrote:

"Too often, I fear, when conversation turns to the radio, the cinema and so on, we disclose a scaly exterior which must make us so unattractive that we should excuse our fellows if they take us for supercilious puritans. If there is that of God in each of us—

\* See *Cosmo Gordon Lang*, J. G. Lockhart. Hodder & Stoughton.

they may think—what a freezing, narrowing of the mind the Good Lord can effect! We still have a puritanical fear of contaminating ourselves in worldliness. We fear that if for one moment we take our eye off the 'seriousness of the present situation' we shall slide down a slippery slope into escapism. In such an attitude there is small courage and too little of the joy which comes from sharing the arts, graces and pleasures of life with our fellows."\*

The good side to all this must not be undervalued. So much is done in the name of sociability which is wasteful, trivial and worse that the Quaker protest has often been well-founded, but the significance of one of our Lord's most telling condemnations must not be missed: *We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced.* Let us not be afraid "to warm both hands at the fire of life", nor think that a life spent exclusively on Quaker committees is the *summum bonum*.

A fourth cause of our failure to attract our fellows in larger numbers is the undeniable fact that, at any rate until recently, Friends were, after the early years, for the most part in what our American neighbours call the higher income brackets. What Professor Arnold Toynbee describes as our "undesigned pilgrimage to the shrine of material prosperity" came about as the quite logical reward of Quaker practice. The Quaker reputation for integrity and honesty, the cultivation of the habit of industry, and a care for education, produced an astonishing range of industrial, scientific and commercial achievement in the first two hundred years of the Society's existence, to which some reference has already been made. Engineering, banking, transport, coal and natural science all provide examples of leadership supplied by a community kept out of the universities, Parliament and the learned professions by religious tests, and out of the armed forces on grounds of conscience. One result of this economic bias is that there has been little correspondence between the vigour of the Quaker testimony against war and any equivalent testimony on the social order. In our day there are signs of change, brought about by the effects of taxation on the one side and by the joining by conviction of less well-to-do Friends on the other. Intelligent observation and a reading,

\* *The Friend*, 29th September, 1950.

for example, of Viscount Templewood's *The Unbroken Thread* will suggest disturbing thoughts about the effect of wealth and social influence on membership of the Society of Friends. It is only the greatest spirits whose loyalty to the Society can withstand their erosive action.

#### NEW OPPORTUNITIES: THE WELFARE STATE

I WANT in conclusion to ask the Society to consider at least one change in its practice and to prepare for fresh opportunities of service if we would be worthy of the faith we hold.

The inquiring non-member, if he opens our Book of Discipline, Part 3, on Church Government, will find that membership may not only be acquired but dissolved. One of the methods of dissolution is by disownment, a process reserved for him who has fallen "into some grave fault and contrary to the private counsel of Friends he persists therein". After careful inquiry, counsel and remonstrance, such a Friend may be disowned by the Monthly Meeting to which he belongs. I say nothing about resignation and dissociation, both of which appear to be the necessary recognition of change. But disownment is the casting out of an offender. The seminal comment on such an action comes from Charles Péguy, in a quotation I owe to H. G. Wood's *Frederick Denison Maurice*.\* Charles Péguy once said:

"What will God say to us, if some of us go to Him without the others?"

We may have to disown the offender's conduct. That is quite another matter. But what right have we to cut a man or woman off from our fellowship, to cast the first stone?

I also want Friends to think carefully, as they are bound to do, about the triennial appointment of those called to the office of elder and overseer, the one charged with a special responsibility for the encouragement of the ministry in our Meetings, the other tending, "as a shepherd tends his flock", the individuals who compose the Meeting. The kind of fellowship disclosed to the world, the quality of instruction

\* Cambridge University Press.



and encouragement given to the young, the effectiveness of the ministry of reconciliation exercised when marriage difficulties occur, to take a few examples, will all be largely determined by the kind of Friends appointed to these two offices. Gifted with discernment and discretion, blessed with humour, charity and imagination, elders and overseers must also be widely read, in touch with modern thought but strongly bound to the life of devotion. Principal J. H. Nicholson of Hull University College, speaking some twenty years ago about tutors in adult education, said they must be "people around whose firesides things happen". That seems to me at least one of the tests we might apply in appointing to these two important offices in the Society.

What service lies ahead of us? As examples I want to touch on two opportunities, the one in education, the other in what has come to be known as the Welfare State.

I have shown already the degree of importance given to education right from the beginning of the Society's existence and it is a matter for rejoicing that so many Friends are teaching in the universities and schools of our land. With the possibilities of expansion inherent in the Education Act of 1944, including the development of county colleges, it is of first importance that Friends should make a generous contribution in terms of personnel to the education service, through both teaching and administration.

But we know that in addition to the general provision of teachers the Society of Friends is responsible for a number of boarding schools, many going back over a hundred years, whose privilege it has been to conduct experiments which are now accepted without question in schools outside our borders. In common with other boarding schools, the Quaker schools have been the subject of much thought in recent years, first on account of anxiety about their survival, but secondly, on whether they ought to survive at all. The Quaker conscience has been uneasy.

Throughout this lecture I have maintained that Quakerism is a democratic society founded on a faith for ordinary men. It is not easy to reconcile a democratic society with the

existence of a group of schools, the fees of which generally are beyond the means of all but a minority, even though that minority be increased by generous bursary provision. It is also remarkable that when the general school system of the country is so arranged as to provide, at full secondary level, differing kinds of education for differing abilities, there is no similar strategy in the Friends' schools. For the most part they are staffed and equipped on the theory that all Quaker children, and especially the better off, are of what is called the "academic type", a gross if fortunate error. I say fortunate because such a uniformity of ability would be disastrous even if it were possible, but the sad fact has to be acknowledged that those few Friends' schools which attempt in any way to meet the needs of the non-academic child have about them an air of "less-eligibility", to use a term coined by the Webbs, whether judged by staffing ratios, premises or even food.

The embarrassingly conservative loyalty of Old Scholars' associations should not be allowed to prevent the Society from making an imaginative experiment once again in its schools. The case for a liberal curriculum with generous provision for leisure time activities has already been proved. Can we now go further, members one of another, so to order our schooling that our children, if their parents choose boarding school life for them—and the opportunity for the Quaker child in the day school of the State system should not be forgotten—may get the best education for which they are suited, irrespective of means or the relative prestige of one sort of education compared with another?

I turn last to the opportunity for service in the Welfare State. Friends have not been wanting in the support of a bewildering variety of worthy causes, from penal reform and the abolition of slavery to adult education and relief service in war. Every year, as the Queries are read in their turn, we are asked, "What place do you give to personal service, and do you undertake this in the spirit of friendship? Do you seek to understand the causes of social evils and to take your right share in the endeavour to remove them?"

The position of this Query in relation to those which precede it shows clearly that the words are meant to refer to spare time, voluntary service. The thought is reinforced in the Advices, where the possibility is held out to the Friend to "retire from business, that he may be free for new service in the way of God's appointing".

Although there is still wide scope for voluntary service undertaken under concern, it is also clear that since those Advices and Queries were first drawn up, there have been fundamental changes in the structure of Graham Wallas's "The Great Society". The segment of private industry is diminishing, its place being taken by local and central government service and by a variety of public boards. Instead of joining an old established Quaker bank or firm of chocolate manufacturers, the modern Friend is more likely to find himself an engine driver on British Railways, an accountant in the Borough Treasurer's office, a factory inspector, a doctor in the National Health Service or a district officer in the Colonies.

These new developments present Friends with a two-fold opportunity. First, as Roger Wilson showed recently in a series of broadcast talks in the Third Programme, there is great scope for voluntary service in partnership with or on the margin of the great state agencies, of which the voluntary care committees under the London County Council are admirable examples. The Welfare State needs interpreting to itself. That can often best be done by the voluntary worker. But secondly, all these new enterprises will deserve the epithets freely hurled at them—that they are soulless and the like—if they are not staffed with people under concern. The conspicuous success of both National Assistance and colonial administration is due very largely to the fact that the staff in each case care deeply about the people for whom they are responsible. Prisons and borstals, county councils and education committees, colonial territories, the nationalized boards, and, let it be added, Messrs. John Smith & Co., Ltd., are all crying out for men and women who care, who are efficient and who will work hard. Here is our reasonable service.

## CONCLUSION

I HAVE come to my limit. I have tried to exhibit the faith of the Society of Friends as of peculiar relevance to the men and women of our day, though it is ageless in its appeal. I have said something about the life and practice of the Society and I have not refrained from criticism.

At the end I return again to the source of the Light. This Inner Light, that of God in all men, to which we are called to be faithful, leads us to the miracle at the heart of the universe, the miracle, as Richard Crashaw puts it :

That the Great Angell-blinding light should shrinke  
His blaze, to shine in a poore shepherd's eye ;  
That the unmeasur'd God so low should sinke  
As Pris'ner in a few poore Rags to lye ;  
That from his Mother's Brest he milke should drinke,  
Who feeds with Nectar Heav'ns faire family ;  
That a vile manger his low Bed should prove  
Who in a Throne of stars Thunders above ;  
That he whom the Sun serves, should faintly peepe  
Through clouds of infant flesh ; that he the old  
Eternal Word should be a child and weepe ;  
That he who made the fire should fear the cold ;  
That Heav'ns high Majesty his Court should keepe  
In a clay cottage, by each blast conrol'd ;  
That Glories self should serve our Griefs and fears,  
And free Eternity submit to yeares.