

ing a Quaker divorce. George Fox suggested many regulations on this subject. He advised among other things, when persons had it in contemplation to marry, that they should lay their intentions before the Monthly Meetings, both of men and women. He advised also that the consent of their parents should be previously obtained and certified to these. Thus he laid the foundation for greater harmony in the approaching union. He advised again that an inquiry should be made if the parties were clear of engagements or promises of marriage to others, and if they were not that they should be hindered from proceeding. Thus he cut off some of the causes of the interruption of connubial happiness by preventing uneasy reflections or suits at law after the union had taken place. He advised also in the case of second marriages that any offspring resulting from the former, should have their due rights and a proper provision secured to them, before they were allowed to be solemnized. Thus he gave a greater chance for happiness by preventing mercenary motives from becoming the cause of the union of husbands and wives. But George Fox, as he introduced these and other salutary regulations on the subject of marriage, so he introduced a new manner of the celebration of it. He protested against the manner of the world, that is against the formal prayers and exhortations as they were repeated, and the formal ceremonies as they were practised by the parish priest. He considered that it was God who joined man and woman before the fall, and that in Christian times, or where the man was truly renovated in heart, there could be no other right or honorable way of union. Consistently with his view of the subject, he observed that in the ancient scriptural times, persons took each other in marriage in the assemblies of the elders, and there was no record from the Book of Genesis to that of Revelations, of any marriage by a priest. Hence it became his new

Society, as a religious or renovated people, to abandon apostate usages and to adopt a manner that was more agreeable to their new state. George Fox gave in his own marriage an example of all that he had thus recommended to the Society. Having agreed with Margaret Fell, the widow of Judge Fell, upon the propriety of their union as husband and wife, he desired her to send for her children. As soon as they were come, he asked them and their respective husbands if they had anything against it or for it, desiring them to speak, and they all severally expressed their satisfaction therein. Then he asked Margaret if she had fulfilled her husband's will to her children. She replied that the children know that, whereupon he asked them whether if their mother married they should not lose by it, and he asked Margaret whether she had done anything in lieu of it which might answer it to the children. The children said that she had answered it to them, and desired him to speak no more about that. He told them that he was plain and that he would have all things done plainly, for he sought not any outward advantage to himself. So after he had acquainted the children with it, their intention of marriage was laid before Friends, both privately and publicly, and afterwards a meeting being appointed for the accomplishment of their marriage, in the meeting-house in Bristol, they took each other in marriage in the plain and simple manner as then practiced and which he himself had originally recommended to his followers. Thus it will be perceived that though more than two centuries have passed away, the principles of Friends in regard to this subject remain the same, although the practice in its accomplishment has been much simplified or modified. At the time of the rise of Friends, the custom or law required the publication of the bans three Sundays in succession from the pulpit, and to be affixed to the church door before the accomplishment of the