

Apostles and Disciples of that ancient day, apply them to our needs as the beautiful spiritual application is unfolded, and is peculiarly adapted to our several present wants. Who can for a moment doubt the great social factor which the First-day School is to society at large? It is truly a great "nursery of the Church" and a road to Christianity. With such a mission we can but expect it to raise man higher and higher in ultimate civilization and bring him nearer his God, developing brotherly love in all.

Having noticed it, then, in its general sense, let us view it for a moment in a more special sense, as pertaining to our own First-day School and our religious sect, the Society of Friends. We have found that man is and has been progressive from one age to another. History tells us that from out of the old religious bodies, the State or Established Churches, came the religious Society of Friends, claiming a step higher and far in advance of the old Churches, and more nearly consistent with the teachings of Jesus and with one fundamental idea, "Mind the Light," that light which comes directly from God, which dispels darkness and shines with the brightness of the noon-day sun.

The idea gained ground that each had access to the source of that true Light, and that forms and special ceremonies were not necessary to salvation. This is but one of the many advancements which have been made, and but one of the many proofs that what has satisfied and been sufficient for and in one age, cannot be adequate, in every respect, for the next, without that degree of high attainment, approaching nearer to the state of perfection than it has yet been the lot of any generation to reach. We find that it has been but of late years, comparatively, that the Friends, as a body, have recognized the usefulness of the First day School in promulgating their fundamental doctrines which they deem so precious. This, we believe, then, to mark another great stride in the Church.

There is much for the First-day Schools to do, and, which I am confident, they will do, for the upbuilding of society and the Church, if that great admonition, "Mind the Light" is kept as our motto, "God is unchangeable; He is the same yesterday, to-day and forever." But we must not remain quiet and hold fast to o'd traditions from a false application of this truth, and thus establish a form, in many ways lifeless, in the attempt to tear another down, and thus raise a stumbling block more formidable than the other, perhaps. Rather, then, let us remember that our customs are but human and that, while God remains ever the same, man occupies a social position far below the standard of perfection, and must change or be left behind as intellectual advancement moves on toward that higher, spiritual standard, made manifest as he rises to receive them. The change is gradual. It is necessarily so, as it must carry with it all the social influences which give to it life and strength. If Christianity for the world, could have been established at once, and the well-being of man, as a free agent retained, or, in other words, if a Christian revolution were practicable under existing circumstances or conditions, it would have been realized during the life and sojourn of that great teacher of teachers, Jesus Christ. It was not to be so. Gradual, but sure, are the forces in this evolution, but we should none the less be ready to meet any advancement for which necessity calls or in which duty makes her demands. Our forces should agree upon a plan, and, with the eye single, move onward and upward as opportunity affords.

A cry has been going up from the Society as to its future. With a probable decline in numbers, and deprived of its younger members by their connection with other bodies, or none at all, there arose this inquiry and it needs to be met. I cannot, as one of the younger members of the Society of Friends, believe but that its principles