

"I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight.'" John was arranging the minds and hearts of men for the reception of greater truths. They had lost faith in sacrifices and rituals, and were longing for something better. They had been taught that God was afar off, but when Jesus Christ came he preached: 'Now is the Kingdom of God come near to you.' He came to open to us a higher life, to deliver us from the bondage in which the world has so long groaned. He has come to-day to set us free and guide us on the way to the promised land.

When first accepted and born again we are indeed as babes in Christ, and it is only as we trust in Him and believe in Him that we will realize a growth in the knowledge of the truth. Salvation comes to us when the voice in our souls pleads: 'My son, my daughter, give Me thy heart.' Why does God ask this? That, if we will yield, He may bless us with His love.

The world of sin is a world of darkness, of degradation, of sorrow; He invites us to '*come up higher!*'

When this world seems dark, when friends prove false, when sorrow and affliction come upon us, then the Christian religion comes to lift us up, to cheer and comfort us."

On Second-day the feeling was expressed that, though few in numbers, the Head of all rightly gathered assemblies was in our midst. Those inattendance with minutes were: Sidney Averill of Ill. and Uriah and Hannah Blackburn from Penn. Others were present without minutes, among whom was our aged friend Samuel Tomlinson of Ohio Yearly Meeting. All were welcomed, and their presence was felt to be a strength to the meeting. The reading of the excellent epistles from other Yearly Meetings, baptized us with the feeling of brotherly love for those in distant fields of labor. A concerned Friend, in exhorting to increased faithfulness in our religious duties,

reminded us that, though far advanced in the nineteenth century, the Society of Friends has not yet reached the high standard set up by the Blessed Master.

On third-day the state of the Society, as shown by the answers to the queries gave cause for thankfulness.

We were reminded that plainness of speech is not alone the use of *thee* and *thou*, but we should let our yea be yea, and our nay, nay, endeavoring to say what we mean in such a plain, simple style, without exaggeration, that we may not be misunderstood. That plainness of dress was not in the peculiar cut of coat, but in wearing comfortable clothing, avoiding what was not needed for comfort.

Fourth-day morning: "A man's foes shall be those of his own household" These foes are the wrong thoughts, feelings and desires within ourselves; we need Divine wisdom and love to enable us to conquer them.

First in importance in life is purity, second is gentleness. These are *essentials* in the true home.

We should be careful in all the relations of life, that we neither give nor take offence. The elders were cautioned that they speak tenderly to those who are young in the ministry, lest they crush the tender plant.

If we are in favor of temperance we should show it by doing all in our power to advance the cause; not in our own wisdom but in the wisdom of God. If we are faithful to the voice of Christ in the soul we will be strengthened to bear our testimonies before the world; then we will prosper as a Society.

The earnest plea was uttered that we be faithful morally, religiously and politically in the battle against the rum power, if we would destroy it. "This is the true fast, that ye break every yoke and let the oppressed go free." The yokes of party prejudice and of bondage to alcohol. Oh! that we may be willing to be guided by the Spirit, that we may be sure we are voting *right*. Be careful that we lay no