

So we inherit that sweet purity  
 For which we struggled, failed and  
 — agonized  
 With widening retrospect that bred  
 despair.  
 Rebellious flesh that would not be sub-  
 dued,  
 A vicious parent shaming still it's child,  
 Poor anxious penitence, is quick dissolved ;  
 Its discords, quenched by meeting  
 harmonies,  
 Die in the large and charitable air.  
 And all our rarer, better, truer self,  
 That sobbed religiously in yearning song,  
 That watched to ease the burden of the  
 world,  
 Laboriously tracing what must be,  
 And what may yet be better—saw within  
 A worthier image for the sanctuary,  
 And shaped it forth before the multitude.  
 Divinely human, raising worship so  
 The higher reverence more mixed with  
 love—  
 That better self shall live till human Time  
 Shall fold its eyelids, and the human sky  
 Be gathered like a scroll within the tomb,  
 Unread forever.  
 This is life to come,  
 Which martyred men have made more  
 glorious  
 For us who strive to follow.  
 May I reach  
 That purest Heaven; be to other souls  
 The cup of strength in some great agony,  
 Enkindle generous ardor, feed pure love,  
 Beget the smiles that have no cruelty,  
 Be the sweet presence of a good diffused,  
 And in diffusion even more intense,  
 So shall I join the choir invisible,  
 Whose music is the gladness of the world.

MARY ELLA W. CLARK.

## THE SYMPHONY OF SILENCE.

The subject of our Silent Meetings may be a hackneyed one, yet new phases of it are being revealed to the writer in his own private experience, which are, it seems to him, of very great importance to the Society which seeks to find in silence a basis for religious worship. From anything we may say we do not want it inferred that we are not in sympathy with the custom of public speaking as practised by Friends, that is, when moved to do so by the acknowledged head of the church. Our ministers, we believe, are not accorded any more sympathy

and esteem than they deserve for their self sacrificing and laborious efforts in fulfilling the demands of the ministry. But our present concern is a consideration of the conditions that promote what is called a Silent Meeting held in the *life*. While we rejoice as a Society in the peculiarity of making silence the basis of our religious worship, yet it seems to us that many of our own members are too ignorant of the conditions of the silence that is *living*. Too often do we hear such expressions as these, "If we only had a minister here we could keep up our meetings." We would invite our neighbors in if we knew there was going to be speaking."

In passing I would invite the reader to reflect, and if his observations are at all similar to those of the writer, they will inform him that meetings where the ministry has been customary are as prone to decay as where it is not. I can too easily recall memorable instances where the meetings died out under the powerful preaching of, I believe, inspired ministers. It was not the fault of the ministers or the vocal ministry, but it was there the same as in silent meetings, the silence—the basis of our meetings for worship—was not kept *living*. Hence it is important to our Society to consider what are the conditions that constitute a *living* silence.

God created man in His own image—that is spiritual, for "God is a spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit." Then worship, far from being done with the lips or with musical instruments, must be done by the spirit in man. There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth it understanding. Then God does impart understanding, wisdom, knowledge to man. Man is commanded to pray, "pray without ceasing." So an interchange of thought goes on between man and God, a communing between the finite and the Infinite.