

attendants. In Scarborough Castle, to which he was next sent, his apartment was even worse, having no fire-place, and being so open on the side next the sea that the rain was driven in by the wind. He was often deprived of the food sent to him by his friends for his subsistence. So meekly and firmly did Fox endure all, that he won the respect even of the officers and soldiers who guarded the castle. "He is as stiff as a tree," they said, "and as pure as a bell, for we could never make him bow." Fearful times were those when men, for conscience-sake, were thrust in among the thieves, murderers and felons of Newgate, in overcrowded apartments and filthy cells,—“a very hell on earth;” when a law was enacted prohibiting all meetings of Quakers, and transporting them to Jamaica on the third offence; and while good men and women were languishing in loathsome dungeons, flatterers were crowding round the Nell Gwynns of a licentious court, and ribaldry and licentiousness were stalking abroad unblushingly. In the midst of all this, the destroying angel entered London, and from street to street the Plague advanced, breathing death all around. The awful rumble of the death-cart filled the air, and the deserted streets resounded with the appalling cry, “Bring out your dead.” A year later, and the Great Fire wrapped London in flames, leaving four hundred streets strewn with ruins and thirteen thousand houses reduced to ashes. But all these terrors had no effect in arresting persecutions, and the prisons were as crowded as ever with sufferers for conscience-sake. But is there not

“Some sort of goodness in things evil,  
Would men observingly distil it out?”

It was, strange to say, in the midst of this gloomiest period of English history that the immortal allegory of “The Pilgrim’s Progress” had birth; and that in Bedford jail, John Bunyan, like another Jacob, was dreaming of a ladder whose top reached to heaven, and of ascending and descending angels. John Milton, too, old and blind, was completing his great poem, “Paradise Lost,” in the very year of the Great Plague. 1659

Thus, then, for years, Quakerism struggled on and gathered strength, in spite of every effort to destroy it. No sooner was George Fox released from prison than he undauntedly resumed his labors, traversing almost every county in England and Wales, making numbers of converts wherever he went, and in his preaching tours visiting Scotland, Ireland, Holland, and even America, and