

The Bible has held its unique position among the literatures of the world because of the general belief that it is in a peculiar sense the record of a revelation of God's word and will given directly to holy men. There are many who think that with the completion of the last books of the New Testament this communication of the word of God suddenly ceased, and that our only means of knowing His will to-day is through this written record; others believe that in rare instances the word has since come to a few highly exalted souls, though the truth has often been colored by the peculiar personality of the individual; still others believe that one of the marvellous truths of the Christian dispensation is that there is free and unhindered communion between the Father and every one of his children, and that nothing is more precious and assuring than the voice of the Father speaking to His child. This immediate communion between God and man has been a truth especially dear to Friends. Many members of the Society unmistakably have intelligibly heard the Divine voice, and to them important truth has been revealed, but it is not enough to maintain that a chosen few have received "openings of the truth." Quakerism stands for the unlimited, universal truth that man is in a literal sense a Temple of God, and that every man has the possibility of knowing, not by logic and verbal proof, not by testimony or tradition, but by the witness in his inmost being, that he is a son of God to whom the Father reveals His will and utters His messages. It is a confession either of unfaithfulness or of the untruthfulness of our principles if we support our position alone by appealing to revelations made in past ages, for we believe God communes with every man who knows His voice and does His will so far as it has been revealed to him in every age and generation. What would be thought of the scientist who should devote all his time to proving that life was possible on the earth

from the fact that the ground is covered with fossils which once were alive and possessed of all the functions of life. It would be much more to the point for him to demonstrate his position and illustrate his views by showing the marvellous presence of life in any one of its myriad forms everywhere about us in air or earth or sea. So the Christian brings discredit upon the present power of God and upon the spiritual nature of man by always appealing to past records for establishing truth, and never finding within himself any evidence for faith in an ever living, present, and loving Father. The constitution of man has not changed, and we all believe that God is the "same yesterday, to-day and forever;" why then should He cease to speak to us, if He ever did speak to His people? The world is not slow to believe a man when he declares that he received the word of God directly, provided his whole life and work gave evidence of his thorough sincerity. It seems to us that there never was a time when there was more need of the testimony of those who can carry conviction by speaking messages which have come to them directly by the inspiration of the Almighty, and is there not danger of our faith in immediate guidance of the Spirit becoming weak and untenable if we always endeavor to establish the truth by appealing to those who have gone before us instead of showing that we are to-day recipients of His messages, and mouthpieces of His word? — *Friends' Review, Phila.*

THE QUAKER IDEAL.

A little book with the above title written by Francis Frith, a minister in the Society, and published by the *British Friend*, has been placed in my hands, and the perusal of it has afforded me so much satisfaction that I feel constrained to make random extracts from its pages in the hope that others may thus be induced to give the work that careful and serious perusal which