

"GEORGE FOX, THE RED-HOT QUAKER."

BY GEO. S. TRUMAN.

Our author then goes on to review the various exercises which George believed to be laid upon him, and then notes that "It was certainly a big contract, and George had his time fully occupied. Never in the whole course of his life could he see anything sinful or oppressive, or a sham, without a burning desire to remedy it, and so he always went at it full tilt, heedless of what might be involved to himself in pain and suffering and persecution. Anyone who understands the times he lived in will not be surprised to learn that in a short time his pursuance of this course of action led him into jail." Here, in company with his companions, his sufferings were great, not only for the want of the necessities but of the comforts of life, which it was understood might have been relieved if well paid for. "But this the Quakers refused to do, having scruples on the score of bribery, and consequently their sufferings were intense." Our author then briefly passes in review the characters of many of those who stood as pioneers in the advancement of truth, and associates with George Fox, bringing it down to the time of Cromwell, whom George did not hesitate to interview in behalf of his friends when occasion required it, and "that Cromwell possessed a certain admiration for Quakers and their ways is not to be doubted"; and on one occasion he expressed "that here was a people whom he could not win by either gifts or honors, but all other sects and people I can." Once, when George had lain in prison for a long time, a Quaker went to Cromwell and begged to be allowed to take his place and finish his sentence for him. This evidence of true affection which the law would not allow to be put to the test, so impressed Cromwell, that, turning to his

great men and Council he said, "Which of you would do as much for me if I were in the same condition"; and here remarks our author: "It is an open question as to whether if the general body of Quakers had remained true to their first principles and evangelical mode of work, there would ever have been any need for a Salvation Army." . . . "Never man had a more curious commission than George Fox. He lived a day at a time, and every day the inner Light in his soul shone upon the path that he was to tread that day. Sometimes he knew months beforehand what the Lord would require of him next. If his mission was blessed with much fruit, he gave thanks and passed on. If it ended in what we call failure or disaster, his heart was in perfect peace; God had sent him, and it was a part of the Quaker creed that God's errands never fail."

"Carlyle says: 'No grander thing was ever done than when George Fox, stitching himself in a suit of leathern, went forth determined to find truth for himself and to do battle for it against all superstition and bigotry.'" Once having found that truth, his whole life was one continual battle for liberty to follow it. There is no doubt about it, if George Fox and his followers had failed in their mission or shirked their responsibilities, the world would be a much worse place to live in than it is to-day. Liberty of conscience would soon have been a thing of the past, and religion would have been hopelessly and inextricably mixed up with politics. But George boldly defended the inner sanctuary of the soul. With its secrets no stranger might interfere. The Voice that only he could hear speaking to him there, he would and did obey. "That this was unpromisingly done, the religious world of to-day owes a debt of gratitude to the Quakers. They were a curious people, simple and steadfast, and true to their inward leadings. George does not seem to have been in any sense a