

a religion founded upon the authority of any outward standard, but were, indeed what they called themselves, "Followers of the Light," or "Children of the Light."

As stated by Fox, it was no new doctrine that he preached, but "the appearance of the Lord's everlasting truth breaking forth again in His eternal power in this our day and age in England." So men and women trained in all the various forms of religious belief, keeping still their faith in the creeds of the sects to which they belonged regarding the importance of the ordinances and the authority of the scriptures, agreed in this one principle that *God manifests His will in the human soul as much to-day as at any former time, and that every thing which is unrighteous is made apparent by this Divine illumination.* That this is true history anyone must conclude who reads the works of George Fox, William Penn, Isaac Pennington, Edward Burroughs, and other Friends of their day, who have written on the subject. Running through their writings one discovers various opinions upon the nature of Christ, the authority of the scriptures, and the value of the ordinances of the Churches, but there is a universal harmony of expression in all these writings regarding the manner in which a knowledge of God's will is now, and ever has been, revealed to men. There was no doubt in the minds of any of the Children of the Light upon the one point of doctrine, "that there is an ever-present revelation of the Spirit of God in each individual soul, and that this Light is universal.

They adopted no creed and formulated no ordinances, the *one* article in their common faith was "Mind the Light!" Most historians who have attempted to portray Quakerism have overlooked this fact and so have failed to show to the world the essential difference between this and all other religious faiths. Bancroft, alone so far as I know, rises to a true appreci-

ation of Quakerism, when he sums it up thus: "The Quaker has but one word, *the Inner Light*, the voice of God in the soul. That light is a reality, and therefore in its freedom the highest revelation of truth; it is kindred with the Spirit of God, and therefore, in its purity should be listened to as the guide to virtue; it shines in every man's breast and therefore joins the whole human race in the unity of equal rights."

As instances of what I deem a faulty treatment of the subject we may take the article on "Friends" in the American Cyclopædia by W. M. Ferris, and the article in the Encyclopædia Britannica under the title "Quakers," by the Right Hon. Sir Edward Fry., F. R. S. Each of these articles gives an admirable history of the rise of the Society of Friends, of their testimonies and of their attitude toward ordinances of the Christian Church, but when they come to portray the belief of Friends regarding "the great doctrines of Christianity embodied in the apostle's creed," they find no settled practice, nor unanimity of view, and that which both writers present, though it is couched in the most guarded language, has been assailed by both orthodox and liberal Friends as failing to represent the truth.

In the recent "Parliament of Religions," two different bodies of Friends met to set forth to the world a statement of what each considered the faith of the Society of Friends. In the main these two statements were in accord as to sentiment, the noticeable difference being more in the phraseology than in the meaning. But aside from the distinctive faith of Friends each contained additional matter. The writer of one of the statements, when entering upon this stage of his article, being aware of the difference of opinion, even among members of his own division of the Society, upon some of the doctrines he defined, felt compelled to say, here "I speak only as an individual member." The writer of