

The history of all religions and civilizations has been but a succession of usurpations, of corruptions, of the rise and fall of empires, where bad men, through base and sordid motives, have used their light to blot out the Light, and crush out the lives of the masses of the people.

But this abuse or perversion of a good gift is no reflection or disparagement of its divine qualities, or of its possession not being an essential to the welfare and the highest good of every human being.

When the masses enjoy the full fruition of this Light, they will wield a mental and moral power to check and suppress its abuse, and keep its corrupt usurpers in subjection.

All Light illuminates, but where the brightest and fullest Light abounds with a combination of the best motives in using it for the greatest good, has it deserved and received its characteristic qualities that entitle it to the designation of a divine or true Light, in the most marked and pre-eminent sense? It is in reality the quantity and quality of the Light with the exceptional good use that is made of it that gives it its notable, special right to be recognized and called divine, to distinguish it from any more feeble, uncertain, artificial, deceptive, misleading Light.

The writers of the New Testament only confirmed and repeated the testimonies of the ancient prophets and other witnesses of the Old Testament in exalting and glorifying this Light, as they have done so often and emphatically throughout the volume. George Fox saw this, and his mind grasped the potent idea the word represented. He knew it was this Light or the illumination of his understanding, by yielding to its teachings, that gave him such confidence in the efficacy of the truths it revealed to him in regard to the errors and corruptions of his age, that he boldly and openly attacked them.

Luther waged a warfare against the corruption of his time and the in-

fallibility and divine authority of the Pope. He substituted for them the letter of the Scripture as the whole revealed will of God; so George Fox, living in an age when creeds and confessions of faith constructed on the letter as construed by the sectarian zealot, the mere belief in which constituted religion in place of an upright life, uttered his protest against the absolute authority of the letter as such. He placed the Light above the letter from his own conviction and in accordance with the testimony of the letter and the Spirit of the Scriptures.

George Fox placed so much emphasis on the authority of this Light, and was so intent in confiding in what it revealed to him as truth and his duty, that he had no respect and but little regard for the legends and popular superstition of his time called religion, as they were the works of darkness.

In his journal he writes: "I was sent to draw people off from all their superstitious ceremonies, Jewish and heathenish customs, traditions and doctrines of men, directing them to the Light of Christ in their own hearts that they might come to know Christ their free teacher, to bring them salvation and to open the Scriptures to them." If the Scriptures are opened by this Light they must be subjected to the scrutiny that will decide what is true and valuable and what is otherwise. He evidently subjected the Scriptures to the same tests of criticism, to the same Light by which he solved every problem or subject that came under his consideration for solution.

To defeat his purposes his enemies denied the divine authority of this Light, and tried to prove it was simply an outward, natural, physical light as furnished by the sun and other luminous bodies. But he enforced his convictions on them, and quoted their infallible authority of Scripture in support of his position.

The Catholics held the Pope above the Bible, and the Protestants the Bible above the Pope, but George Fox placed this universal Light that lighteth every