

I have divided my thesis into three main parts:

- 1—What is Quakerism?
- 2—What has Quakerism done for the world?
- 3—What is the attitude of Quakerism toward Christian Union.

The term Quakerism is hard to define. We have no creed, and cannot resort to that for our definition. A written creed would be a stumbling block to the progress of Quakerism. We are searchers after the Truth in that Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. Creeds do not keep pace with the evolution of religious thought.

"Our little systems have their day,
They have their day, and cease to be,
They are but broken lights of Thee,
And Thou, O Lord, art more than they."

Quakerism is not a mere belief, nor set of beliefs. It is a life, and a life patterned after the life of Christ.

It is said that the Friends have but the one doctrine—that of Immediate Revelation, or the direct teaching of the Holy Spirit to each soul—now, as in former times. . . . I greatly desire to make the views of the Friends on this subject, as I understand them, clear before us to-night. Not only because it has been the moving force in Quakerism for 250 years, but also because, I believe, it is becoming more and more the moving force in other Christian bodies, and shall, in the near future, be the power which will unite by its baptizing influence a large portion of the religious world into the one spirit. It has been left to the Society of Friends to proclaim its supremacy and its universality.

We take truth for our authority. We do not aver that things are true just because they are found in the Bible. We believe in the Bible because of the truths it contains. We must first have an experimental knowledge of the truth, before we can know it to be the truth, and this is wrought in our souls by the Spirit of God. The value of the teach-

ing in the Bible is not because this man or that man wrote it, but because it was revealed by the Holy Spirit. The Bible from beginning to the end upholds the supremacy of the teachings of the Spirit of God, and nowhere more emphatically than in the life of Christ.

We believe in the declaration of Jesus that God is a spirit. We believe also that a man is spirit—that the most important part of man is spiritual. We believe religion is of the heart, and that our worship of God must be in spirit and in truth. Hence Friends have not deemed the sacraments a necessary part of worship, and have not practiced them—knowing full well that the tendency of forms is to lead to formalism, rites to ritualism, and ceremonies to ceremonialism.

We worship God as the Supreme Being—the Creator and Ruler of all, and attribute to Him the qualities of goodness, love and mercy.

We believe that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, and regard him as "the highest possible manifestation of God in man."

We base our refusal to take the oath upon principle, and think it is emphatically condemned by both Jesus and James.

We have always been advocates of peace and our testimony has been against the shedding of human blood—holding that "Thou shalt not kill," is equally binding upon nations, courts of justice and individuals.

We have been the pioneers in the advocacy of equal rights of women, and have granted those rights in all church work.

The principles for which the early Friends suffered imprisonment and death, have brought liberty to all, and have transformed both church and state. The world is now recognizing their influence in moral and religious reform. What is true of their influence in American affairs is equally true in England.