

so called religious societies of the world, were remarkable men and women. In order to fully understand the heroism shown, and the steadfastness with which they adhered to their faith, and conviction of duty by these pioneers of the Society of Friends, and the obstacles which upon every side surrounded them, it will be only necessary to recall the condition of the religious world just before and at the time of the Society's birth. During this period the great civil wars of the United Kingdom had taken place, caused in part by the bitter hostilities between the different religious beliefs, if so it may be called. The reigning King Charles I. and his parliament sought to establish a Church that all must acknowledge, with canons of so stringent a nature, that all who refused to accept its doctrines and be governed by its rules were classed as heretics and disturbers of the public peace, and subject to fines, imprisonment and death. This law produced a very unhappy state of things, and caused all conscientious people, as well as others, who were not protected and supported by the Crown, to feel that their personal liberties were much endangered, and, as was a natural sequence, various leaders sprang up, who, in more or a less degree, got a following; but, for the most part, these new sects imbibed many of the principles of the Established Church, as well as the ritualistic doctrines and ordinances of the Church of Rome, which, in some measure, identified them with the system of the old hierarchy. It was not until nearly a hundred years after the Reformation began that it reached its culmination, in the progress of doctrine, by its severance from Catholicism, that was complete and absolute. It was given to the early Friends to see and to declare that the troubled soul can find access to and acceptance with God, without the intervention of any human priest or ordinance or ceremony whatsoever. Their presentation of the doctrine of the

abiding of the Holy Spirit in the soul of the believer contained the most exalting truth ever announced to man as pertaining to his existence here on earth. An eminent writer has called this "a revelation of the Divine idea of the Universe," and it led him to declare that the preaching of Fox was "the most remarkable incident in modern history." How well we, to-day, know of the truthfulness of this assertion, for the great central truth which was then uttered has echoed and reached down through the corridors of time until to-day nearly all the Protestant Churches have accepted and adopted it as one of their Articles of Faith.

None can fail to understand with what animosity the Spiritual teachings of the early Friends were received. A large proportion of the persecution which they were subjected to was through the instrumentality of those so-called Christians who, with malice in their hearts and falsehood upon their lips, made to the authorities fictitious charges, and were, by these ever-ready tools, incarcerated in dens of filth to endure cold and hunger, and that, too, after having been cruelly beaten. The priesthood were willing agents in formulating charges against all who, in any manner, said aught against their calling or the way in which they performed it. The Established Church had as many changes in its creed and methods as there were rulers. As the king was held to be "the one protector," its only and superior head, King Edward IV., for the purpose, as he set forth, to establish a more Christian unity, issued for the guidance of the Church the 39 Articles of Faith, which were strictly required to be observed, and, it naturally followed, that the Scriptures of Truth were for the most part ignored, and the all-wise God forgotten, and this edict of the King became as an idol to whom they must bow down and do reverence. The Established Church, being under the immediate protection of the Government, was supported by