

these spiritual and social comminglings. Others of our friends who contemplate attending the Yearly Meeting remain with us during the intervening week.

E. H. COALE.

Holder, 9th mo. 5th, 1893.

THE FRIENDS AND THE ABOLITIONISTS.

One occasionally sees in the literature of the day, though not so often now as formerly, allusions to the coldness which certain bodies of Friends, notably those of Philadelphia displayed towards earnest abolitionists during the years immediately preceding the civil war. This is spoken of in a tone of regret and apology, which indicates that a harsher tone might be taken if one were disposed to be strictly just. I ask the opportunity to put on record, in a perfectly impartial sheet, an opinion which I formed at the time, and have since entertained; and as for its soundness I can only say that I well knew honored Friends on both sides of the question while it was yet a living question.

Among Friends everywhere in this country there never was doubt as to wrongfulness of slavery, or the duty of every one to do all he could to effect its extinction. The only question was as to what could be done to that end. Some thought the best means of effecting the abolition of slavery was incessant denunciation, and the active working of the underground railroad. Others thought to bear testimony against the system, to refrain from any encouragement or use of it, and to favor the election to national offices of men of the same principles, was about all that could be done by persons who were not residents of slave-holding States, and had no part in their government. These views did not prevail so far as to prevent an earnest and diligent corps of anti-slavery advocates from following the policy I have attributed to them. The result was a war that besides the incalculable evils

of all wars—the robbing and plunder, the wasting and burning, the hatred and revenge, inseparable from the operations of armies, cost half a million lives, and ten thousand million dollars, besides our annual pension list of nearly two hundred million more.

In all the rest of the civilized world—in all Europe and America, Africal slavery and white serfdom, just as cruel an institution, have been abolished peaceably by legislation, without I may say the loss of a life or a dollar, for the money paid the slave owners was not lost, whereas the money paid the soldiers represented, and very inadequately, the time withdrawn from productive employments, and so lost. Perhaps a large majority of our Northern people thought that in God's own time the same economic causes, aided by that development of the moral sense which has been continuous since the creation, would produce here the same effects which had been gradually wrought in other countries. And such would unquestionably have been the experience here. The movement had once begun, but it was arrested by the vast extension of the cotton culture and by the unpopularity given it by outside interference. So the impatient men pitched in, and slavery was abolished at the expense I have named. And who desires the credit of this? I answer: The conscientious men who could not contemplate in silence the spectacle of slavery. It is true the war was begun by the slave-holders, but he who provokes a quarrel, and then when hard pressed, kills his adversary in self-defence, is by the judgment of mankind held guilty of murder. And such, complicated with a thousand accidental, non-essential circumstances, is the case of our civil war. But for the slave-holders' secession there would have been no war, but for the abolition movement there would have been no secession.

Friends did not foresee—nothing but the infinite wisdom could have foreseen—the consequences of the abolition