

as authority the Society of Friends would never have been. When all the religious world held the Bible as the only rule of life, and the highest authority for truth, George Fox, dissatisfied with this worship, turned aside, looked within his own soul and there discovered a guide for life higher than the Scriptures, and an authority for truth absolute and infallible; and on this rock of immediate revelation the Society of Friends was established.

The writings of the early Friends make it beyond a doubt how they held the Scriptures. Robert Barclay, in his "Apology" says, "Nevertheless, because they (the Scriptures) are only a declaration of the fountain, and *not the fountain itself*, therefore they are *not to be esteemed the principal ground of all truth and knowledge*, nor yet the *adequate primary* rule of faith and manners. Nevertheless, as that which giveth a true and faithful testimony of the first foundation, they are and may be esteemed a *secondary* rule, *subordinate to the Spirit*, which is that guide by which the saints are led into the truth; therefore, according to the Scriptures, the Spirit is the *first and principal* leader."

It is maintained that because the early Friends were conversant with and made use extensively both in their sermons and in their writings of expressions of Scripture, that they considered them authority. Now this conclusion does not necessarily follow. In my mind it is no argument in proof that they themselves acknowledged the Scriptures to be authority. In their speaking and in their writing they addressed people who did hold the Scriptures to be authority, and consequently they could not hope to arrest their attention or convince them but by the Scriptures. They quoted the Scriptures not because they themselves considered them authority but because those whom they wished to convince held them in that estimation.

Jesus often submitted himself to the customs of the Jews, such as Baptism,

and the keeping of the Passover, not because he deemed them essential, but to gain their ear for the higher truths he wanted to expound to them. They were a means to an end.

A prominent minister in our Society, I might say, belonging to Genesee Yearly Meeting, once gave this advice to a young and rising minister, who is today one of the most prominent of our speakers, "Thee must learn to shut the bars behind thee." He asked his aged adviser what he meant by that. He told him that he must quote Scripture in proof of his assertions or the people would not receive them. He remembered and acted on this advice, and it has been, in no small degree, one element in his success. Hence the Scriptures are used by our modern ministers as well as by the founders of our Society, not as authority but as a means to an end, and that end is to induce people to go, through spiritual communion, to God who is alone the primal source of all truth, and all knowledge. We reiterate the exhortation of George Fox, "Friends, mind the Light." We entreat all Friends who desire to perpetuate inviolable the ancient testimony and corner stone of our Society, to keep faith in the reality and efficacy of the spirit of God in the soul, and in its supreme and divine authority, and not be allured from it by the sophistry of the world.

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### DIED.

SEAMAN—At his residence, Macedon, Wayne Co., N. Y., John Seaman, aged 73; a member of Farmington Monthly Meeting of Friends.

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### A FEW OF THE HEROES OF CHRISTIANITY.

(Continued from last month.)

Finally we see George Fox on his death bed; let us look here for a test of the efficacy of those doctrines which he had taught. I will quote the words of William Penn, who knew him well: "He was of an innocent life, no busy-