Dyer
AN

A

BRIEF STATEMENT

OF THE

SUFFERINGS

OF

MARY DYER,

OCCASIONED BY THE SOCIETY CALLED

SHAKERS.

WRITTEN BY HERSELF.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

AFFIDAVITS AND CERTIFICATES;

ALSO,

A DECLARATION FROM THEIR OWN PUBLICATION.

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY WILLIAM S. SPEAR.
1818.

To the Honorable the Senate, and House of Representatives of the State of New-Hampshire, in General Court convened—The great confidence I repose in your candor and wisdom, causes me to lay before you my situation; earnestly entreating you, by all the affections of a mother, that I may again be restored to my long lost children. This I humbly pray.

MARY DYER,

Enfield, June 6, 1818.

A BRIEF STATEMENT, &c.

I, MARY DYER, was lawfully married to Joseph Dyer, in the year 1799; we resided in Stewartstown, in the county of Coos, and State of New-Hampshire. We lived quietly together eleven years, though there had been some disagreeables by my husband's being unsteady, and given sometimes to intoxication. We had five children, and were in good cirsumstances. We were united in a hope of salvation, through Christ. We were of the Baptist profession; yet as there was no church established we stood single characters. The people thought it expedient there should be a church established in those parts. Accordingly, in June 1811, the people assisted the preacher to go to the State of New-York, to move his family among us. When he returned, instead of bringing his family, he brought some Shaker books, and a recommendation from the Shakers in the State of New-York, to those in Enfield, in New-Hampshire, and said he had joined the Shaker's society. This was astonishing and disappointing; and the first information I ever had of the Shakers. Strange as it was, Mr. Dyer was induced to go and see them. I had strong impressions that their belief was contrary to the gospel. Mr. Dyer was anxious I should go with him to make the

Shaker's a visit. In July we went—Mr. Dyer was pleased with them at the first sight, and said he wanted no farther evidence to convince him they were right. It caused me grief to see him so enraptured with new imaginations. Mr. Dyer joined them, intending to set up a society in Stewartstown. We returned after a tedious visit. I could not believe with him, and it was distressing to have that union broke which we had hitherto supported. I endeavored to convince him of their errors by Scripture—(I believed him to be pious,) my reasoning appeared in vain. He said, unless I would be a Shaker he would carry the children to the Shakers and leave me. My sorrow was great—It was the first time I ever knew him discontented with me. I offered to live with him as a slave if he would let me live with my children; but no. Oh! the sorrow at the thought of being separated from my family.* I endeavoured to reason with him again. I observed, in case I should go I could not have his care and protection, unless the Elders should see proper, and perhaps be separated from my children; and if I was not contented to stay, my friends would reject me on the account of going to the Shakers; and I should be left destitute without protection, and childless, without home or friends.

My grief was almost insupportable. He made this reply: In case I would go he would ever provide for and protect me. I should have the care of my children; and in case either of us were discontented, he would have three children, and I should have two. To this he called God to witness. This removed my fears. Then I strove to gain every favorable idea of the Shakers: so that in case I should go I might be contented. After I began to gain so many favorable ideas of them, I observed I thought they might be right. When Mr. Dyer learnt that there was a possibility of my believing in them, and my mind gathered towards them, he appeared displeased. He left reading the Shaker's Bible. Immediately he turned against me and said I should go out of his family, if I did not renounce my belief in the Shakers. He threatened me

* *I have since heard him say he treated me so at that time, he thought I should come to some untimely end.*

severely. I told him I was willing to comply with any thing that was reasonable; but he was so changeable that I could place no dependance on him.

In the month of August, we mutually gave up the idea of being Shakers, and became harmonious. In February, 1812, he went to Portsmouth, N. H. and he called on the Shakers in Alfred. and returned home strong in the belief, that the Shakers were the only true Church. We wrote them a friendly letter, as though they were Christians.

After war was proclaimed between America and Great Britain, as we lived near Canada, Mr. Dyer was anxious to have his family secluded among the Shakers. In autumn, as he went to visit his friends in Connecticut, he took my only daughter, who was then eleven, and my son Orville, who was eight years old, to leave with the Shakers at Enfield, to see how they would like, until he returned—he said perhaps for four or six weeks. When he returned, he had left them there, and brought orders from the Shaker Elders, for me to go there immediately with my other children, and they would provide for us a house and other necessaries to make the family comfortable. I was unwilling to go without my husband; and I had a promise from him, that if I was dissatisfied with the situation, I might fetch my children back. To this he consented.

After a tedious journey, I arrived at Enfield, with my children, January 1st, 1813. I was glad to find my absent children. My little son Orville was sick, though not confined. He was anxious for my care, and desired to return with me. I expected no other but his return, as I did not find any house prepared for me, and every thing was disagreeable. They would not let me have the child, and said, as his father had left him, I should not take him. A brother, older, was so grieved for his younger brother. that he offered to stay in his stead—But no. I then asked for the outside garments of the other children, to return with me to their father. And to my astonishment, they refused me them, and said I might go home without my children; and if I was not contented to live without them, I might come back and live with the Shakers.

The age of my children at this time was this—Caleb M. Dyer, thirteen in August; Betsey Dyer, eleven in Jan-

uary ; Orville Dyer, nine in June ; Jerub, seven in March, Joseph Dyer, four in February. The Elders, " wondered why I came there with my unbelief, filled with my natural and carnal affections, and to think of carrying my children back ; I was the most abominable wretch on earth ; one who had the opportunity which I had, and be so unbelieving, it was terrible." One stamped, and told me never to presume it again ; and " for me to think to carry my children away from the gospel, was dreadful."—Joseph was coming down to live as soon as possible. I must go home and take care of Daniel Taylor's family,* and my children should be no expence there. He called me a mean creature and said many other aggravating things. It appeared as though he meant to aggravate me if possible. I was sure I had need of much of that spirit that was able to endure all things. The scene was so horrible, that an adult sister who went with me to accompany me, wept like a child. I was obliged to depart, and leave all my dear children under the controul of a people, whose tender mercies are cruelties. As I was going away, the Elders said, I must not expose their ill treatment towards my family ; if I did, I should fare the worse. I suspected that Mr. Dyer was confederate with the Shakers, to thus dupe me, and confine my children in this manner, and thereby induce me to comply.

After I arrived at Stewartstown again, I strove to keep my grief concealed, supposing there was no relief for me and my poor defenceless children. At length, the agitation of my mind became insupportable. At a time, as I awoke from sleep, I was in a state of delirium for a short time. My husband said, he " had observed for many days past, that I was in trouble, and he was sure that I should be ruined in case it could not be removed." I wept, and observed that I dare not tell him my troubles, lest he should tell the Shakers, and it would make my case worse. (I was afraid the Shakers would carry my children at a distance if I made any complaint against them.) As he in-

* *This family were believers of the Shaker's faith, in Stewartstown, Coos.*

sisted on knowing the cause, I told him that I could not be separated from my children and live; and to go and live with the Shakers and endure their severity would be awful. I then related to him what the Shakers had said to me. Mr. Dyer said I should go and live at the Shakers and have the charge of my children until he could settle his business, and he would talk to them, and they should treat me better. He then moved me with my furniture to Enfield, in the last of January, 1813.

I was placed in a family of Shakers; they said I must remain there until our property in Stewartstown was disposed of, or changed for some farm near them. They treated me kindly a few months, and I really thought them a good people. They frequently requested me to bear testimony of the way of grace; they said as I had been accustomed to converse upon the subject of religion, I could speak better to the understanding of unbelievers, then they could. Accordingly I did, and held to the doctrine of the New Testament. A person who once had belonged with the Shakers was so honourable, she came to see me; I conversed with her (she was at that time a member of the Baptist church.) She told me "she believed I was a christian; but I was not like the Shakers; and if I continued with them I should be obliged to renounce every thing I thought to be grace." I kept my mind concealed from every person. I argued against the Shakers sometimes, and at other times for them, that I might become acquainted with their belief. I had a good opportunity to inform myself; I improved it by reading their books, questioning and passing amongst them; during which time they requested me not to study the Scriptures, lest it would weaken my faith in them, and it was not necessary for my instruction, as what they said was the word of God.

I soon discovered so much familiarity and deception among them that it caused me to be anxious for my husband's return, that we might both be convinced of their evils, and make our escape. A house appeared to be preparing for our family.

My husband left Stewarstown in November, 1813, and came and took up his abode among the Shakers. But he was placed in one family and I in another, and my children and furniture distributed in the different families. Meantime

I was not allowed to converse with him on the subject. I was severely disappointed in having my family separated. I knew not how to contain myself under the anguish of my heart, as I was a hundred miles distant from my friends and none to depend upon but those whom I found to be great deceivers. But as we were not allowed to shew our griefs to another. I retired and wept in silence, endeavouring as much as possible to be reconciled to my fate.

In a few days my husband came to live in the house where I lived. But the Shakers said "the gospel had separated us and we must not look upon each other as husband and wife; and if I wanted a favour, I must go to the other brethren; and if he wanted a favour, he must call on sister Lucy." The following observations were spoken at different times, that "none were married but those who were united by orders from the head; and that the gift of God would find the man and woman who were created for each other"—and that "they would be placed together in their lot in the church, that this was the intent of God from the creation; the man was the head of the woman, and the woman was created for the man, and she was the *crown* of glory which the man was to receive in his redemption; but none was able to unite agreeably to the will of God, until the way was provided by their first mother" (Ann Lee) or "not as we should make choice, but as the orders were from the head."—They said, that "a man could not be a real Shaker without a woman!

At this time there appeared to be a man selected out who was filled with the spirit of *earth!!* and who was placed in every situation to see me and meet me, and not be discovered by the lower order. Through pretended ignorance I kept at a proper distance. The Elders said "Mary, you must not be so shy." I told them I was afraid I should do something wrong. They replied, "you must throw aside your fears. Mary, and obey us, and that will be pleasing to God, and you must not be so shy, but become acquainted or you will be sorry," and "the world's people think we are afraid of each other, but they do not know the liberties which we take. Mary, you must not be afraid of loving the brethren, we think it a privilege for the brethren to love the sisters, and the sisters to love the brethren.

and if you are faithful you will find the fruits of the gospel. As the Shakers pretend to deny this being their faith I can prove it by their publication. (See pages from 435 to 440, with other places.)

The reflection of these things filled my mind with grief and despair, and I told them I was not fit for a Shaker. I was called upon at various times to confess my sins, and they were dissatisfied that I had no more to confess; and said "Mary, you have not committed sins enough to humble you before us; we had rather have thirty of the wickedest persons you can name, than one like you to make a Shaker of"—and "you must be separated from that spirit which you call God, and be filled with our spirit, then you will thirst for the same we do, and will be willing to comply." They laid my unwillingness to my conscience, and said, "It was Satan trying to keep me out of their kingdom."

I then questioned some of the lower order about these things, and they acquainted the Elders of it; and I was called to an account for it—they said, "Mary, you must not tell a word which we have taught you, for we do not teach all alike, but we instruct each one according to the situation in which we intend to place them!" These scenes were horrible unto me, and without doubt, they have been awoke many a night by my sobs and cries. When I considered the deplorable situation of my helpless children, who must be trained up to deny God, and be obedient to those Elders; Oh! thought I, if I could only escape with my children, my suffering would vanish from my mind.—I could not conceal my grief, and without doubt the Elders suspected that I was intending to leave them, and if possible, take some of my children. They then drew a bond which they intended shoule debar me or my husband from ever taking them again. For many candid reasons I refused to sign the bond, and stated to them the consequences, with all the persuasions that would be natural for a tender mother. They then artfully and subtlely said to me thus—"Mary, this is not done to take your children from you, for we believe you the most fit person to take the care of them. It is only done for a trial of your faith, as Abraham was called to give up Isaac. If you will sign it you shall

have the care of them." It bound as not to molest, though the Shakers should treat them ever so cruelly. They are not bound to educate the children, nor to give them any thing when they become of age, nor to keep them in case they should through misfortune become unprofitable to them —they might cast them upon the town, and they are under no penalty. The Shakers are very severe with children. My husband remonstrated against me; he signed it and compelled me to do the same. I had no relief only to weep.

They then suffered me to have more privilege with my children for a short time. They then took them all from me, and said, "natural affections, must be destroyed," (see Tim. iii. 3.) and "you need not be anxious about the children, they are none of yours," &c. I was compelled to pass by them when they were sick, and see their wishful eyes follow me, and was not allowed to inquire after their healths. Twice they were so sick their lives were despaired of, and I did not know of it until afterwards, though one was in the house where I ate my food. Oh! deplorable to a mother! how can I write for tears! My grief overcome me to that degree, my health became much impaired.—The father and the mother of the church, or of the *meeting chamber*, came to see me. They said, "we have got a gift for you, Mary, to take another step in the kingdom. Mary, the gospel has separated you from your family; you are a free woman; if you will have faith, you shall see the salvation of God. You never have been willing to give yourself up to the people of God, soul and body." I told them I was willing to do any thing that was right. They said, "You are not a judge of right or wrong, neither do you understand the Scriptures. You must be taught the way of God; you must believe, that when we speak, it is the word of God, and obey it as such. What liberty we give you, you may improve, and it is no sin. None can know the will of God but by us, there is no other way for salvation but this," that "we possess a fire that is Christ;" that the word Christ means the anointing which the man Jesus possessed, and you are not willing to bear it, but you must seek after it, and labour to obtain it," which brought to my mind this passage, (see Romans chap. i. from the 20th verse to the end of the chapter:) "This will in-

duce you to enjoy heaven when you come into union and relation according to the order of God." I pretended ignorance. But oh, I thought you were the basest of the depraved. One of the elders said, I must endure a certain scene to prepare me for their holy state; but he did not know as I should be able to endure it and live. Much more was said, but as I have already wrote beyond the delicacy of my sex, in order to give the reader a few ideas of their pernicious practices, I shall state no farther.

After this, they became so bold I was obliged to defend myself. Let us be insulted ever so much, we are not allowed to utter a word of it only to our elders. I went to the elder woman; I told her I should not conform to their practices; that I would not live in such a manner, if any one presumed to insult me again, I should make difficulty for them—(while I write, I can view them with disgust)—With this they were displeased, they used every art in their power to distress me. Many things are so unaccountably strange, that if I should state them it would appear incredible. My calamity become so great that when I saw ragged stragglers pass the street, I coveted their liberty and happiness. At times I would conceal myself to look to God, for strength to assist me. When I returned, they would mock at me, and say, "Mary, how did you feel when you was kneeling down to your God; I do not want any other God to save me, only the God in my Elders." Through my trials my health still decayed; the elders said there was no cure for me. I frequently asked the privilege of taking a journey; to go to my friends, or to the salt water. They would not suffer it; neither would they let me send a letter, nor receive one unless they examined it first. They forbid my opening any letter, if it was given in my hand, until they had seen it.

At this time I had an opportunity to send word to a near connexion, that I desired to see them. The elders found it out; they tried to punish me many ways in consequence of it. Among all my troubles, there was no grief so great as the thoughts of my innocent children being subjected to that people. They did not afford me any medical aid. I was obliged to leave them and go to my friends. Previous to my going, to avoid reproach, I went to all the adults in

the family to know if I had done or said any thing to offend them; the answer was, "nay, nay;" until I came to the Elders; they said, "nay, Mary you have not offended, only you have not got our faith." The last time I had any conversation with my babe, one of the elder women came in the room with violence. She raved and scolded at the child, and called him all the mean names; she caught hold of him and attempted to drag him out. The child was frightened and screamed. I plead with her not to treat him so. Her answer was, I will, he is none of your child, he is mine; she dragged him along. Oh! thought I, this is enough. This was Friday evening; I determined on going away as soon as possible. Saturday I took no part of work with the family. I was soon ordered to go to the Eldress' room; when I felt sufficiently established I went. I always was obedient to their common laws, as there was no other way to search them out.

They threatened me, they flattered me; but it was in vain; I told them freely I was going away. I desired to see my husband. I was permitted to in the presence of four Elders. As I wished to acquaint Mr. Dyer with my situation, I observed, that my health was so low I should continue but a short time if I staid there, neither could I be justified. Mr. Dyer said he was willing I should go away, and he could not desire any one to stay in the trouble I had been in for six months, from my appearauce. I reminded him of his promises before I consented to go to the Shakers. He said he had as good a right to take the care of any other woman as of me; that I was not his wife, and as for the children, they were none of his to give; that he should lose his union if he did. Then I turned to the Shakers. I entreated of them to let me have my babe, and that I would get sufficient bonds that it skould be no expense to the father of them; but no. I plead with them again, as I must be left destitute of any consolation or dependence in the world, I was willing to come on my knees and receive it as a favour, if they would let me have it. They heard to none of my moans or entreaties, but told me positively I should have none. O, what heart could endure it.—I felt the sorrows of an afflicted parent, bereft of her children; my case was desperate; to go any further from

my children was distressing, to stay was death. Who can have sensations with me? Oh! can any? I think some mothers can, but they cannot relieve me. I call for the tender feelings of fathers to have pity on the feminine sex. Let me implore you to remove this heavy yoke of bondage, and break those chains which rend every tender feeling of the heart. I seek for a relief for my situation, and likewise a remedy against further evils of the kind. I cannot write for tears. The Elders charged me not to expose their practices, for it was a secret, and the world never did know it, nor never was to, and if I told it they would deny it and make me the liar.

My husband was going immediately to the town where my relations were. I asked the Shakers to let me go with him, but they would not. The next day I made my escape with my youngest child, though there was a watch placed to guard me and the child. This was the only deceiving thing I did while I was with them. This was in January 1815. I had the comfort of riding eight miles with the dear little creature in my arms. The child said, ma'am why did'nt you take the care of me when we were at the Shakers? The Elders said you was tired of me, and did not wish to take the care of me. How many lies has been told by these gracious people to keep my children.

In February my husband advertised me as his lawful wife. In March 1815, I went with my friends and demanded his care and protection. He promised to take christian care of me. I was glad to go to my husband, have his care, be near my children, and not be compelled to be a Shaker. I did not fear the Shakers torments, if I was not obliged to obey them. They placed me in a room alone, and forbid my going into any other house or apartment; and said it was law for the wife to obey her husband, and if I did not do it he would not be obliged to provide for me. They forbid my writing or speaking to any person separate from the Shakers. They brought my food to me---they ordered me to spin tow. My health was so debilitated that I was not able to sit up a day, without lying down a number of times to rest. I requested some sewing work---they would not permit it---and said, if I

was not contented with my situation, I might go away and provide for myself. I told them I had rather endure any affliction, and have a home provided for me by my husband, than to be alone in the world, though I might be in better circumstances.

James Chapman usually attended my husband when he came to my room. This man was a stranger to me, yet he would talk abusively to me. Once he talked so abusive to me, my husband forbid him, and said it was of no service. I observed to Chapman it was possible he had a wife somewhere he had treated in the same manner. He denied that he ever had a wife. I afterwards learnt he had brought a number of children from his wife.

After I had suffered much severe treatment in this place, which I will mention; while I was in this low state of health, my husband would come into the room where I was confined, and appear to be in a great rage; he would double his fist, and come towards me, and say, confess your sins, and join the people of God, or you will go to hell. At other times he would say, You must do more work, or you will suffer for it; I have a right to punish you as I would a child, if you do not obey me. I begged of him to let me live in peace, while I did live. It appeared my life was to be short, as I was placed. I was constant to work, when I was able to sit up. I would fall into tears, and ask my husband what I had ever done in my life that he should treat me so. He said it appeared to him sometimes as though he should die to treat me as he was obliged to.

I made it my home in this house ten weeks, and no person slept in the house but myself. My health was so low that I begged for some relief. They did not grant me any, and left me alone. My fire went out early in the evening; it was a very cold night. In the morning it was with the utmost difficulty that I dressed myself, and had no fire to kindle. I remained in the cold until eight o'clock! It appeared as though I must die there alone. They would not let me send any word, nor write a letter to a friend, nor suffer any one to speak to me from fear. They said, if I was not contented, I might go away. I told Mr. Dyer I was willing to suffer unto death, if thereby he would be convinced, and liberate the children.

It appears that Providence sent a person to see what my situation was. I was in hopes the Shakers did not discover him, and that I might be able to let him know my situation; but they saw him and come immediately. I had only time to tell him that I wanted some paper to keep a journal on; and further, if I had any friends in the world, I wanted two to come, and see my situation; and let me know what privileges the law allowed me. This was on Monday. Wednesday some persons came to see me—they told me to take my liberty as I used to do, when in Mr. Dyer's care. I took liberty—walked out, and got sight of my children, but must not converse with them. I went twice to Hanover to meeting, though I was forbid going to any but the Shakers. I let the people know of the Shaker's conduct. The Shakers began to be alarmed—they said if I did not go away, they would take my children and carry them where I could not find them. Shortly after two men came and told the Shakers that they must treat me better, and that I ought to have the privilege of doing my own work, and to associate with my friends, and to know and see to the welfare of my children, and to go to meeting where I could answer my own conscience. The Shakers with my husband promised that it should be so. The next morning they sent my husband twenty-eight miles to hire my board. They said this ground is holy, and none shall stay on it but the Shakers. I begged for one child, and observed, as I had staid and endured their treatment until they were obliged to treat me better, now I should not go willingly. They crowded me out of the house and obliged me to get into a carriage. My husband with James Chapman drove the carriage away. I continued in lamentation at the thought of leaving my children behind me; and begged that I might have some of them, or suffer me to live in peace near them, that I could know if they were alive or dead. My husband said, Mary, why do you weep so, you have done the best you could. He requested me to try every way in my power to obtain some of my children, if I could obtain one he would certainly leave the Shakers, then he should be convinced they were wrong. He was one of the best of husbands; and I verily believe he would still have treated me kindly if it had not been for the Shakers.

My husband left me, ond my troubles were such at this time, that I thought I must have lost my reason. I went back to the Shakers—they said my husband was absent—I wandered about the village to get a sight of him and my children, until my grief and fatigue brought ou a sickness, with fainting, so that I thonght I must fall down, and expire. I strove to get to a world's family for relief. I was a number of times obliged to lie down upon the gronnd, when I thought that I should never rise more. As I was more acquainted with Judge Evans' family than any other, I went there. The Judge is knowing to many of my sufferings in consequence of the Shakers' cruelty, and has frequently told me he thought I ought to have some relief, and has said he would assist me as far as was possible. Yet for some cause, best known to himself, it appears he stands militant against me. I am a real sufferer, and I need fathers and friends.

I returned to the place where Mr. Dyer hired my board, and staid until the time had expired,and got better in health. I again went to the Shakers, and told them in presence of Judge Evans, that provided they would let me see my husband and children, and converse with them, absent from the Shakers, I would leave them and never come near them more, they refused—I offered to converse with them in the presence of the Judge; they refused and he went away. They ordered me to leave their house. I requested of them to let me stay until the stage returned the next day; and that I had a right to stay where my husband was, but no. At length my husband entered the room in a passion, seized me in order to thrust me out of the door. I held fast to the door casing, until he tore my clothes very badly; one of the women unclenched my hands so sudenly that I fell backwards upon the floor. When I recovered my senses, my husband, James Chapman, and two Shaker women were standing by me; when they saw me open my eyes, they clenched hold of my feet with my clothes and dragged me out of the door, down four steps to the ground; then through the door yard, out of the gate into the street. They tore off my cap and handkerchief and left me siting on the ground, and told the women not to let me come in. I spoke but twice—I asked Mr. Dyer if he thought it was

Christ he was serving, and told him I should not try to go in. I was past the power of anger or grief. This was in a cold evening in the month of October, and in this situation I was left without a friend or a home ! ! !

I saw my husband take my trunk with all my clothing and my mantle, and carried them out of my sight. In about half an hour my husband came to me and said, I "had better be going to some house for a shelter." I asked him to finish my days, and as he had separated me from every thing but life, I was wiling to die in his hands ! After this, my sufferings were severe ; but the recollection of them are so wounding and distressing to me, I can write no further. When I reflect how I am cut off from the society of my dear babes by my once kind partner in life, I cannot express my grief ! Oh ! how heart rending, and no remedy.

The following is but a faint sketch of some of their abuses to children :—

The Shakers' abuse to children is severe ; they were called up by a bell at half after four in the winter, and half after three in the summer. The second morning after Mr. Dyer left me at the Shakers, I was awoke by a bustle in the hall, adjoining the room where I slept. My impressions were that my sick son was in trouble. I went instantly to the hall ; there I saw a small boy, whom I asked where Orville was—he said he did not know. I was providentially led to a large dark closet, in which I saw a person start. It was my son.—I told him he need not fear, it was his mother. He smiled and came to me. I asked him why he was put there ? He answered that he was cold, and there being no fire to warm me by, I cried, and Moses (a Shaker man) put me here and said he guessed that would warm me. It was a cold morning in January, and he was not fully clothed. I asked him where the remainder of his clothes were ; he obtained them, and I assisted him in puttiug them on, and told him to come out. The child dressed himself in a room without a fire—he then went thirty or forty feet from the outer door to wash at a pump, then returned to the hall to wipe. The latch of the door was so frosty I could scarcely get my wet hand from it—all this he had passed through when he complained of the cold.

The Shakers do not make allowance for children—they

think they must be men and women. Persons who were eye witnesses informed me of a boy seven years old, and of a rude disposition, whom one of the Shakers took down by the side of the pond, and tied a rope round him and hung him on the limb of a tree, and told him he should stay there all night; when he thought proper, he went back and took the child down. After that they concluded they could not subject him to their minds. and they sent for his father, who was a shaker. The child was then put into a shop, where he was kept alone night and day, only when his victuals was carried to him; after that the child was sent to the world. This child had been so frightened about the world's folks, that he was unwilling to leave his prison and go.

I could relate many similar circumstances, but they are lengthy, and even the recollection of them almost overcomes me. If any one is punished it is kept from the knowledge of others if possible. The youth are stinted, until by faith they will do more than a common stint. They are taught to believe that all their extra work adds to their treasure in heaven. They have such faith that some work until a few hours before their decease. How pleasant and delightful is their outward appearance and all civility, while within are task-masters, bondage and slavery; and none are allowed to utter a word if many suffer unto death.—When the Elder was forbidding me to inform any one of my distress, he said if each were allowed to tell the other their trouble, their society would be broken to pieces in a month. Now though all are in trouble, none know of any but their own.

They are without natural affeciion, They have a kind of affection—they love the fair and amorous; but when they become infirm or aged they are set at nought. I think God loved good old Simeon when he went tottering into the temple and took Jesus. I think Jesus displayed natural affection when he pointed his mother to his beloved disciple, and said. behold thy son; and likewise called her his mother. It appears when he saw her grief he could not depart in peace and leave her without protection. He restored Lazarus to his widowed mother—he was an only son.

MARY DYER.

AFFIDAVITS AND CERTIFICATES.

Coos County, Jan. 25, 1816.

THIS may certify, that I the subscriber have been acquainted with Mrs. Mary Dyer from her infancy, and that I have not known or heard of any immoral or irregular conduct or behaviour. JOSEPH PEVERLY, *Town Clerk, of Northumberland.*

I, JEREMIAH EAMES, have been a near neighbour to Mary Dyer ever since she was born, until about fifteen or sixteen years ago, and ever since that time have frequently seen and heard from her; but in all that time never heard of her immorality or bad economy.

JEREMIAH EAMES, *Justice of the Peace, through the state of New-Hampshire.*

I SUSANNA, wife of the above named Jeremiah Eames, do testefy to the same. SUSANNA EAMES.

I BETSY TILLOTSON, do testify, that I have been acquainted with Mary Dyer twenty-four years, and can witness to the foregoing declaration BETSY TILLOTSON.

State of Vermont, County of Essex, Guildhall, May 22d, 1815.

This may certify to whom it may concern, that we the undersigned have been personally acquainted with Mrs. Mary Dyer, the number of years annexed to our names severally, and ever considered her to be a person of a good character, and a person of strict truth and veracity; and one who has always been a faithful woman to her husband, and economical as well as industrious in her business while she had the care of her family.

MICAJAH INGHAM, *Judge of Probate, Essex County, 7 years.*
OLIVER INGHAM, *Judge of Essex County, 11 years.*
DANIEL GOSS, *Justice Peace, 6 years.*
MOSES MORRILL, *Justice Peace, 11 years.*
WARD BAILY, *Justice Peace, 30 years.*
CHRISTOPHER BAILY, *25 years.*

I JEREMIAH EAMES, Jun. Justice of the Peace, do testefy and say, that I lived in Northumberland the most part of the time a near neighbour to Mary Dyer about 20 years, and likewise in Stewartstown about seven years, and agree that the above and foregoing respecting said Mary's character is true. JEREMIAH EAMES Jr.

Also, ELISHA DYER, *Town Clerk*, 20 *years.*
BRAZILLA BRAINARD, 10 *years.*
Slectmen of said Stewartstown.
JAMES LUCAS, Northumberland. }
Justice Peace, 30 *years.* }

We do testify to the above
NATHAN BALDWIN, } *Selectmen of*
JOSHUA MARSHALL, } *Stratford.*

This may certify, That some time about the first day of January 1815, Mary Dyer came to my house in Hanover, with a child, and stated she had been living with the Shakers, and that their conduct and oppression was such, her health was so bad, that she could not stay with them and live; that they took her children from her. While she was talking on the subject of her distress, Joseph Dyer came in, and tore the child from her. She begged of him to let her have it; and stated, as he had promised before she went there, in case she was not contented, she should have two children, he three; and she wanted that one, as it was her babe. He refused her request, treated her violently, and went out. Her trouble appeared to be great, as she was from her friends, and said, he refused to take care of her. We thought her case hard, and that she was much abused.

JEREMIAH TOWLE.
DEBORAH TOWLE.

State of New-Hampshire—Grafton ss.

Then personally appeared Jeremiah Towle and Deborah Towle, and made solemn affirmation that the above declaration by them subscribed, contains the truth and nothing but the truth. Before me

SILAS TENNEY, *Justice of the Peace.*

Hanover, June 11, 1817.

Whereas, we the subscribers have this 6th day of March, 1815. carried Mary Dyer by her request to the people called Shakers, in Enfield; and heard her make a lawful request of her husband, Joseph Dyer, for that privilege, which he stated by his advertisement dated Feb. 1st, 1815, that she had left—namely, a place for her residence, and likewise his care and protection as a husband: and this she desires with liberty of conscience, free from the bondage of the Shaker's faith. After many objections, he consented, and said he would take kind care of her. She wished to send a line back by us, where she had been living. He refused her sending it, or any other word.

JEREMIAH TOWLE.
DEBORAH TOWLE.

State of New-Hampshire—Grafton ss. }
Hanover, June 11, 1817. }

Then personally appeared the above named Jeremiah and Deborah Towle, and made solemn affirmation that the above declaration by them subscribed contains the truth and nothing but the truth.

Before me, SILAS TENNEY, *Justice of Peace.*

I, CALVIN EATON, of Hanover, in the county of Grafton, and State of New-Hampshire, depose and say, That some time in the month of January, 1815, I became acquainted with Mary Dyer, and understood by her that she had lately come from the Shakers—that her situation appeared very distressing, as she was out of health, and without a home or acquaintance, as she said her husband refused to provide for or protect her—that the first of February following. Joseph Dyer advertised her as his lawful wife, and forbid all persons harboring or trusting her on his account. She then returned to Enfield. From information of those who carried her back, I thought it my duty to go and see her and know how her situation was. I went—when I came there I conversed with her husband and some of the Elders. I questioned them to know whether she had done any thing to offend them—they said she was innocent of any crime, only that she would not believe in their faith—and further stated, that any person could not reside there unless they were of their faith, and that her torment would be so great, she would be glad to go away herself. I was then permitted in the room where she was, in company

with a friend, as I requested to see her. Two Shakers went in with us—they said no person should see her, male or female, separate from the Shakers. She appeared to be glad to see us, and said, "she had been wishing to see some person. that she might know whether the law required her to be under the restrictions she was placed in," and added she was forbid going to any other apartment or house, of writing or sending word to any friend, or speak to any person, unless in the presence of the Shakers. and a woman placed over her to order her work, and that no person slept in the house but herself. CALVIN EATON.

State of New-Hampshire—Grafton ss }
June 11th, 1817. }

Personally appeared Calvin Eaton, and solemnly affirmed, that the foregoing deposition by him subscribed, contains the truth and nothing but the truth.

Before me. SILAS TENNEY, *Justice of Peace.*

I, MOODY RICH, of Maidstone, in the county of Essex and State of Vermont, depose and say, That I was present and see Joseph Dyer and Mary Marshall united in marriage in the year 1799—that they lived happily together, until he joined the society of Shakers. After the difficulty which that circumstance occasioned, I went in company with his wife to Enfield, to endeavour to prevail upon him to treat her like a wife, and to permit her to see and converse with her children, but was unsuccessful. He utterly refused to live with her, and assigned no reason but his having joined that society. They would not suffer her to converse with her children even in their presence, although urged by her in the most pressing and affecting manner. I therefore brought her back to her friends; not, however, until I had offered to procure to them good bonds. to any amount, if they would permit her to take one of her children, conditioned that said child should be well supported, clothed and educated; which they absolutely refused. Since which time, I have frequently seen and conversed with said Dyer, and endeavoured to persuade him to grant his wife a support, but he persisted in declaring, "that he considers the marriage contract between them dissolved, in consequence of his union with the Shakers—that he did not consider himself bound to grant her any support whatever, and

that he never would do it." She is now living upon the charity of her friends and relations. Said Dyer, previous to his joining the Shakers, was in easy circumstances, possessed of a handsome property which she had contributed her full share of labour, industry and economy to acquire.

Maidstone, June 7th, 1817. MOODY RICH.

Essex ss.—*Guildhall, June 7th*, 1817.

Personally appeared Moody Rich, and made solemn oath that the foregoing deposition by him subscribed contains the truth and nothing but the truth. Before me,

TIMOTHY FAIRCHILD, *Justice Peace.*

MRS. MARY DYER Dr. to THOMAS J. TILLOTSON, & Co.

March 3d, 1817.	To 4 yds. American Cotton	
	" Cloth, 3s6	$2 34
	" 1 Bandanna Handkerchief	1 13
		$3 47

I hereby certify, that in the month of February, A. D. 1818, I called on Joseph Dyer, the husband of the said Mary Dyer, for payment of the above account, and he refused to pay it, and further said that he should pay no debts of her contracting.

THOMAS S. TILLOTSON.

March 9, 1818.

State of Vermont—Essex ss.
Guildhall, March 9, 1818.

Personally appeared Thomas S. Tillotson, and made oath to the truth of the above account and certificate.

Before me, TIMOTHY FAIRCHILD, *Jus. Peace.*

I, JOHN WILLIAMS, of Hanover, in the county of Grafton and State of New-Hampshire of lawful age, testify and say, that Mary Dyer, at the time she left the Shakers in Enfield, said she came directly to my house in said Hanover. I asked her if the Shakers lived or connected themselves with the women in the manner of the world.—She told me they did not.

Question by Mary Dyer. Did I not tell you at that time that they lived in a much more debauched state than to be married and have children?

Answer by the Deponent. Yes.

Question by the same. Did you not ask me at that time why they did not have children?

Answer by the Deponent. Yes.

Question by the same. Did I not tell you that they had to pass through a certain state of purification, which it would be impossible for them to have children afterwards?

Answer by the Deponent. Yes.

Question by the same. Did you ever hear Joseph Dyer say that Mary Dyer was never willing to give up her children to the Shakers?

Answer by the Deponent. I think I did.

Question by the same. Have you not heard Joseph Dyer say that Mary Dyer was a good wife to him prior to his joining the Shakers?

Answer by the Deponent. Yes.

And the Deponent further saith not.

The foregoing is according to the best of my recollection.

JOHN WILLIAMS.

State of New-Hampshire— Grafton ss.
Enfield, May 25th, 1818.

John Williams personally appeared and solemnly affirmed the foregoing affidavit by him subscribed is just and true.

Before me. JOSEPH MERRILL. *Justice Peace.*

[The above deposition was taken at the request of the Shakers.]

I, JOHN HEATH, of Enfield, in the county of Grafton and State of New Hampshire, testify and say, that when I was twelve years old, my father, together with his family, joined the people called Shakers. After I became twenty one years of age, I was called upon to sign the covenant, which they said I must do or be a reprobate; not knowing the effects of the law, I signed it. After this I lived with them seventeen years and some months; three years and six months in Canterbury, New Hampshire, for which I received some compensation; then fourteen years in Enfield, New Hampshire. From what I experienced while I was with them, I then told them it was my choice to go away and take care of myself. I could obtain no compensation for my work for the last space of time, although

I was a hard labourer—the reason was because I had signed their covenant. This I think to be unjust, that they should bring children up in such ignorance, and thereby take the advantage of their hard earnings.

JOHN HEATH.

Enfield, N. H. June 3d, 1818.

GRAFTON, ss.—Enfield, June 3d, 1818. Then John Heath, signer to the above, made solemn oath that the facts in the above certificate are just and true, before me.

JOSEPH MERRILL, *Jus. Peace.*

I, DANIEL PATTEE, of Canaan, in the County of Grafton, and state of Newhampshire, do testify and state, that when I was about nineteen years of age, I joined a Society of Shakers in Enfield; I continued with them about two years in Enfield, and then went to the state of New York to visit the Elect Lady, and the elders of the church. They assembled at their house of worship, in which were assembled about fifty persons; there I saw Ann Lee locked in arm of a naked man; they placed themselves in the centre of the company. One man asked Ann Lee if he might strip off his clothes—answer, yes, you may all strip—and likewise all of the men stripped off their clothes, and continued in that situation, dancing and carrousing for the space of three or four hours. I further state, that this, and other conduct caused me to leave them—as this was the conduct of the church and leaders of the Society. DANIEL PATTEE.

Canaan, May 27th, 1818.

State of New-Hampshire—Grafton, ss.

Canaan, May 27. 1818. Personally appeared before me the subscriber, Daniel Pattee, and made solemn oath that the facts in the above affidavit by him subscribed, are just and true. JESSE J. FOGG, Just. Peace.

A respectable lady informed me, that she was once a member of the Shaker Society, that they used much ardent spirits. One evening when they were gathered for a meeting, an Elder urged them to drink freely until they behaved very indecent. The next morning, I heard one of the sisters say she was so drunk the night before, she knew nothing from the time the meeting was done in the evening, until

next morning; then she found herself laying across the ELDERS' feet. The lady that told me this, said she did not like to have her name exposed, neither to have it degraded by the Shakers. She is respectable. I wrote this from her mouth as she spoke it.

I, MOSES JONES, of Enfield, N. H. do testify and say, that I once was a member of the Shaker Society; and in the time I was an eye witness of many surprising scenes; some I will mention. When they were gathered in a meeting, they clenched a female of their society with severity, tore off her cap, pulled her hair, threw her down, kicked her, pushed her, dragged her round the room by her hair, and jamked and beat her to that degree, that it was with difficulty that she got her breath. They left her on the floor; and from her appearance she was almost lifeless. I was surprised, and asked the Elder why they treated her so, he answered because she had testified in public as a duty, that their mother, or Ann Lee, was leacherous, and cohabited with the Elders. I see them attempt to cast out devils, to heal the sick, but to no effect. A woman that I was acquainted with from youth, which woman was a regular, steady person, until she, with her husband, joined the Shakers; after that, she become crazy, and continued so until her death. This woman was a subject of their pretensions in healing This, with other conduct too indecent to pen, caused me to believe them deceivers, and I left them.

Grafton, ss.—state of New-Hampshire.—Personally appeared before me the subscriber, Moses Jones, and made solemn oath that the above deposition by him subscribed, is just and true. JESSE J. FOGG, *Just. Peace.*
Enfield, May 30, 1818.

I the subscriber certify, that Moses Jones is a man of respectability, and is a Deacon in regular standing in the Church in Enfield, N. H.

JESSE J. FOGG.

The Shaker's Faith in man's creation and fall—taken from their own publication called Christ's second appearance.

In man's creation, he was not completely happy alone, see p. 21, verse 5, 6. "But the Lord God seeing it was not good for the man to be alone, formed him in two parts, male and female, and these two parts constituted one entire and complete man. Page 7, v. 20, "Among all other living creatures that had yet been formed for Adam, there was not found an help meet, according to that order which was before him." (Meaning the eternal God calling him power and wisdom, or male and female.) V. 21, "And out of the man the Lord God made him an help meet, who was called woman." P. 442, v. 12, "Whatever essential glory man might have possessed, yet it could not have been declarative, so long as he existed alone; it required a suitable correspondent object to increase or augment his glory," &c. P. 21, v. 6, "And in this capacity they were endowed with co-operating faculties, sensations and affections." P. 33, v 9, "Thus in the creation of man, his seed was in himself by the very law of his existence; and had his conduct been regulated according to the perfect law of nature, in the times and seasons which he appointed," &c. Now I speak of the fall.—I speak of the forbidden fruit, or of that part of creation which was to increase or augment man's glory. "I speak in a similitude, p. 33, v. 5, would it not be just and right in a wise and prudent parent, who had planted an apple tree among the trees of his garden, more excellent than the rest, for the express use of his children, to lay them under an entire prohibition from eating or touching that tree until the fruit was ripe? And would it not be time enough for that prohibition to be taken off when the fruit was ready for use? V. 6, "And should the children, through some disorderly influence upon their youthful appetites, be so deceived by

the appearance of the blossoms, or green fruit, as to pluck and eat them, would not this be an express violation of the law of nature in that case, as well as of breaking the express command of the parent?" V. 7, "Here then would be the deceitfulness of the transgression, in corrupting their blood, and continually abusing the tree and themselves under the pretence that the father gave it to them, neither suffering their tree to bring forth ripe fruit, nor themselves to enjoy that benefit from it which their father intended. No union and relation could exist in order, until the woman was raised up in her appointed season, to complete the order in the foundation of the new creation." V. 10, "Therefore, by the very existence of the laws of Creation, Adam and Eve were forbidden to come to the knowledge of generation, until the time appointed by the Creator," &c. P. 35, v. 20, "Did not Adam violate the laws, and become guilty of the highest impiety? v. 21, Nay more, was he not condemned as a traitor? Yea verily, and actually banished from any right to the tree of life. As it is written, Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden —so he drove out the man.

Redemption according to the Shakers Publication, or Christ's second appearing—After Adam had lost all his right to the tree of life, (see p. 35, v. 21) and another was appointed in his stead, who kept all his father's commands, (meaning Christ) shewing that Christ was not a complete savior without the woman, (see p. 434, v. 4,) The world is not one person but many; yet all the world sprang from one man, who is therefore considered the foundation pillar or first father of the human race. But as the first man was not alone in the foundation of the old creation; so neither did Christ Jesus, in his single person, complete the order in the foundation of the new creation, (see p. 455, v. 53,) The Holy Ghost thus signifying that sin could never be taken away by all the blood that could be shed, until Christ should come in the flesh of woman, (p. 435, v. 7.) And as the Church is not composed of the man without the woman, but both are united in the Lord by an inseparable bond of union, it follows of course that such a union and relation sprang from a first man and woman, who were thus united, (v. 9) and as the order in the foundation of the old creation could not be complete by the first man without the first

woman; so the order in the foundation of the new creation could not be complete in the man alone; for the man is not without the woman in the Lord, nor the woman without the man. (v. 8, And whether they are immediately or personally known or not, yet by the spirit of harmony and union flowing through the anointed, there is a relative knowledge of their nature and union; as much as the world relatively know of their foundation pillars, whose image they bare, (p. 552, v. 31,) But the truth is, as God created man male female, in his own image and likeness, and called their name Adam—two in their order and manner of operation, but perfectly one in their nature and union, constituting one entire man, perfect and comdlete in the order of his manhood, so man in his first creation, in both parts of his madhood, relatively shewed forth the glory, order and perfection which essentially constitutek the first cause, and was a pattern of that order and perfection which was to be relieved by Christ in the oew creation.

Now, my friends, as there has been much said by the world about the life of the Shakers, you see they need a woman to be united with the man, to be restored to that Paradise, that Adam and eve stood in before they fell.

Now I will give you to understand how they are to be restored, and how to abide in justification in the Shakers' way. As I have already shown that Christ, in his first appearing, was not sufficient for full restoration, I furthor add, (p. 455, v. 54,) "And therefore the final expiation of sin was a full and final confession of sins, and a full salvation from all sin is the consequence." Now by confessing your sins to God in their Elders, and walking in obedience to the same, you must pass through a state of what they call preparation or purification; then the man is restored to his proper lot in their Church or kingdom; then the woman, which they call his crown of glory, is given to him. Then they must continue in obedience to their leader, which is God, and not gather their fruit without the command; then they shall possess every blessing that was intended for the first pair; in this is ths complete restoration. In obedience, it is no sin.

If I had time I could shew you by their Book, that this is the full work of redemption, and no one can obey God's commands but by them. Now let them come out and own

it, and not keep hid behind the veil. When Christ was crucified, the veil of the temple was rent. You Shakers may deny this, yet you know this to be true; this connection is not your worst. But oh, horrible! the way you take to purify your subjects. I speak that you know to be the truth. Think of the calamities and dissolution that prevails among you on the account. Where it does not cause death, it destroys the capacity of the youth. Myself, if I had not strove against you, should have been under the clods before now. Oh the agonies I have seen people in there on this account. Will not God cause a deliverance for my children from these scenes. You Shakers, you know these things are so. You sometimes call them the judgments of hell, or destroying satan in us, &c. It is too much for a female to speak of your doings. I did not mean to write so plain as I have; but when I know your conduct I cannot withhold; you might know that you are sunk in the very abominations of hell.

I often thought when I was with you, and since I have come away, that if there was no other way for my children's delivery from among you, and to be placed in the liberty of the gospel only for me to give up my life, I would do it. May the God of justice govern the hearts of men, is my desire.

MARY DYER.

Concord, June 12, 1818.

AS I am informed since I have come to Concord, that a few of the people have an impression that my motive in coming to this place is to obtain a divorce from my husband; it is a grief to me to have them so mistaken! I was very particular before the committee, last year, in my observations on this point. My great object is to have the privilege of living with my children—if with my husband, it is well. But as he refuses by word and deed to take care of me, I want my children, and as much property as is thought proper, restored to me; and then give me power in law to govern it. Then I want a law passed, that no mother shall be obliged to part with her children in consequence of the Shakers, or of her husband's joining them. If the Court sees fit to take my fatherless and motherless children out of bondage, and let me be a mother again to them, I shall prize it more than all the wealth, or any other treasure on earth. I am sure my children are sufferers. Do have compassion on me and my children! I am thankful the Governor did not sign the act last year; as I understand it did not free my children. If the Court would have pity, and grant me the power over the children, I desire that the Shakers' Society should be under a penalty (not the Elders in particular) until they bring forward my children and property; that the inhabitants shall not be troubled with searching for them, and to avoid their being carried away. This is my mind and desire.

One thing I will name, in Feb. 1817, Mr. Dyer requested me to get a divorce from him, that he might obtain an Elder's birth; and offered to find me expense money. But no; I respected my husband too much to give him up without I could obtain my children.

MARY DYER.

The following is the Petition of MARY DYER, for Legislative interference, on account of the mal-conduct of the Shakers, and their unjust detention of her children in their custody :

To the Honourable the Senate and the Honourable House of Representatives, in General Court convened—

THE Petition of Mary Dyer, of Northumberland, in the County of Coos, humbly sheweth—That she was lawfully married to Joseph Dyer, of Northumberland, aforesaid, in the year 1799—that they lived happily together in the matrimonial connexion for the space of twelve years, and were blessed with five promising children—that in the year 1811, her husband, the said Dyer, unfortunately attached himself to a Society of Shakers, established in Enfield, in the County of Grafton—that he afterwards, viz. in 1813, deluded your petitioner into a temporary belief of the rectitude of their principles, and the purity of their religious tenets, and she was induced, though with reluctance, to enter under the jurisdiction of the Society at Enfield; the elders having previously by address and deception, in concert with her husband, obtained possession of all the children—That your unhappy petioner, having become completely disgusted with the Society on account of hypocrisy, the gross immorality and iniquity that she discovered in its concerns, and being anxious to open the eyes of her husband, that he might leave the Society with her, that the family might be brought up in usefulness to the world, was (as soon as her wishes were known) denied the sight of her husband, torn from her children, imprisoned in a solitary room, without fire enough, or the means of making enough (although it was in the dead of winter) to keep her comfortable, and various other abuses and indignities were heaped upon her, with denunciations and threatenings of greater torments, and cruelty, in the exercise of their vengance, if she persisted in her intentions of leaving them. That she finally

escaped from them, was pursued, and one of her children, whom she took with her, taken from her by force and violence; and the said Elders denied, and still deny her the privilege of taking from them any of her children, contrary to the express agreement they made with her, when she consented to abide with them—That the said Dyer refuses to perform any of the duties enjoined by the marriage contract, but professes and declares that the samo is absolutely dissolved—That although a competency had been acquired by their joint toil, industry and economy, for the helplesness of infirmity and age, and which your petitioner had fondly hoped to have enjoyed, in the circle of her family and friends; yet after the said Dyer had withdrawn from her all means of support, and placed it in the possession of said society, he has prohibited publicly all persons from harbouring or trusting your petitioner on his account—This he did by order of the society, for the poor misguided man has no will, and performs no act but through their influence. Deserted by him who should have cherished her, and persecuted with malignant rancour by the society she had escaped from, your petitioner in sickness was obliged to appeal to the charity of her friends for aid and subsistence.

Such are the facts that have reduced her to her present deplorable situation, and which she humbly hopes may be deemed worthy of legislative interference. And this state of wretchedness is continually aggravated by her reflections on the mode in which her children, if it should be their unhappy lot to continue under the government of this Society are to be brought up in darkness, in slavery, in the most stupid ignorance and fanaticism, in a manner that they can be of no use to themselves, or to the world; and more than all debarred the privilege of hearing without the walls of their convent, any explanations of the truths of the gospel of our blessed Redeemer, which might enable them to judge of the way they should walk, to obtain the best consolations in this life, and the hopes of happiness in that to come.

Your petitioner has submitted her unhappy case to the Honourable Legislature, confiding in their wisdom, justice and humanity for obtaining relief; and she humbly prays, that she may have an opportunity to furnish evidence to

their Honors of these facts, and of far greater enormities that have been witnessed in the conduct and concerns of this Society. and rests with a humble hope that her cruel trials and sad sufferings may yet operate for the good of community, and be the occasion of some wise and humane legislative provision that will prevent the recurrence of similar grievances, oppressions and offences.

All which is respectfully represented by their grateful and obedient servant. MARY DYER.

CONCORD, JUNE, 1818

ENFIELD, May 28, 1818.

To the Honourable Senate and House of Repretentatives to be convened at Concord on the first Wednesday of June next.

WE the undersigned beg leave to represent. That there is a society of people in said town who are called Shakers, and by their conduct they are disturbing the peace of the community at large. We have been visited time and again by women from a distance, crying in the streets, and going from house to house mourning about their situation. It appears that their husbands, their property and their children, are with said society of Shakers, and the women deprived of every earthly enjoyment, and even deprived, without the greatest difficulty of seeking and conversing with those little babes, which we have reason to believe were taken away by violence from their mothers' arms. We do believe those women, (especially Mary Dyer, who petitioned to your honourable body last year for some relief) have been abused in a most disgraceful and shameful manner.—And, we do further believe that there is no other Society within our knowledge that are so destitute of human feelings, or suffer those distressed females to be so imposed upon. Therefore we pray that there may be a law passed touching their case, similar to a law that has been passed

in the State of New-York for similar cases, or take some other measures to relieve them and all others in a similar situation, and the community from hearing the cries of those distressed women. And as in duty bound will ever pray.

Jonathan Jones,
Daniel Currier,
Nathan Follansbee,
David Huse,
Silvanus Barnard,
John Heath,
John Johnson,
Daniel Stickney,
David Noyes,
Joshua Noyes,
Joshua Martin,
G. W. Johnson,
Gideon Dickenson,
Isaac Jones,
Moses Jones, jr.
Jonathan Sawyer, jr.
Thomas Seaver,
Stephen Sanborn,
John Johnson, 2d,
Stephen Folsom,
John Huse,
Richard Currier,
Timothy Rowe,
Joshua Stevens,
James Huse,
Nathan Currier,
Richard Currier, 3d,
Joseph Merrill,
James Willis,
Nathaniel Goodrich,
Daniel Willis,
John Morgan,
Samuel Hosmer,
Joseph Blake,
Benjamin Choate,
Peter Whittier,
Samuel Jackman, jr.
John Jeffers,
Rowel Colby, jr.
Matthew Pettengill,
Enoch Nichols,
James Morse,
Paul Chase,
Henry Currier,
Benjamin Blake,
William Huse,
Moses Johnson, 3d.