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THE
QUAKER,

BEING

A SERIES OF SERMONS

BY

MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS.

VOL. I.

TAKEN IN SHORT HAND

BY MARCUS T. C. GOULD,

STENOGRAPHER,

NO. 6, NORTH EIGHTH STREET,

PHILADELPHIA.

1830.

Eastern District of Pennsylvania, to wit:

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the twenty-third day of February, L. S. day, in the fifty-first year of the Independence of the United States of America, A. D. 1827,

MARCUS T. C. GOULD,

of the said district, hath deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof he claims as proprietor, in the words following, to wit:

The Quaker, being a series of Sermons by members of the Society of Friends. Taken in short hand by Marcus T. C. Gould, Stenographer, No. 6, N. Eighth street, Philadelphia.

In conformity to the Act of the Congress of the United States intitled, "An act for the Encouragement of Learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned."—And also to the act, entitled, "An act supplementary to an act, entitled, "An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned;" and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints."

D. CALDWELL,

Clerk of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

The origin, design and execution, of the periodical numbers of which this volume is composed, are so well known as to supersede in a great degree, the necessity of this introduction; as a large proportion of the edition is already in the hands of subscribers. But for the information of future readers, unacquainted with these circumstances and other facts connected with the subject, the following explanation may not be improper.

The unhappy schism, which has for some time existed in the society of Friends, and more particularly within the Yearly Meeting of Philadelphia, has been imputed to a misunderstanding between certain individuals, who have long stood high in the society. Certain charges were made, calling in question the soundness of doctrines delivered by a particular member, who had for near half a century stood as a bright and shining light among his brethren. And as these charges had particular relation to his public communications, he had necessarily to pass the ordeal of public criticism; and as all ears did not hear alike, neither eyes see alike nor tongues speak alike, great diversity of sentiment was soon produced, throughout the society. This led to much altercation and involved many individuals in a series of controversy, which soon elicited the characteristics of two distinct parties—the one distinguished by feelings of peace, good will, and unity with the speaker; the other, by envy and hatred. In the midst of the latter, was erected a standard of persecution, for the defence of which, a number of genial spirits were soon enlisted, who, being held to their loyalty by the ties of consanguinity or other weighty considerations, soon fanned the latent embers of strife to an alarming flame, which has continued to rage with greater or less degrees of intensity for several years. Both parties still claimed to be sound in the faith, according to the established views of early Friends, and each professed to be governed by the same unerring guide, “the light within.”

At this important crisis, the reporter and proprietor of the following work was employed by the joint consent of both parties, to record in meeting the speeches of the individual, whose doctrines were by some pronounced sound, and by others unsound. Since that period he has continued to record and publish the language of the same speaker, and others who stand high as ministers in the society; and the members of the society have continued to read his reports, as the only way of arriving at the truth, in relation to discourses, which were variously represented.

Whatever may be the abstract propriety or impropriety of encouraging these publications in general, the disordered state of the society, has presented but this alternative, viz. to record the language of public speakers as it falls from their lips, that it may be read, and upon its merits condemned or approved while fresh in the minds of the hearers; or, to leave the subject open to perpetual controversy, arising from the frailty of memory and forced construction of opposite partizans.

Under such circumstances, the publication of this periodical was commenced, the prominent object of which is, to give an unvarnished narration of speeches by the most distinguished ministers in the society of Friends, together with occasional extracts from the scriptures and writings of the early members of this society.

THE QUAKER.

SERMON BY ELIAS HICKS, AT DARBY, NOV. 15, 1826.

WE have no new doctrine, nor new gospel to preach; but the same that was preached at the beginning of the world, and has been preached to every rational creature in the world, from the foundation of it. It was preached to our first parents in the garden, when they transgressed and endeavoured to hide themselves among the trees of the garden—among those trees that they had the liberty of using the fruit of, and which they were to dress and keep. And although their liberty was so enlarged, yet there was a requisition that bounded their liberty; for there was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, of whose fruit they were not to eat: “For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”

There was the tree of life likewise in the garden, which they could only partake of as they lived in obedience to the divine commands. Now, what man was it in the beginning—what Adam and Eve was it that were accountable to God? Was it that animal man—was it that poor external creature made of the dust of the earth? Do we not know that this is impossible? Flesh and blood are not accountable; for it is not in bones to think or flesh to reason. The animal nature of man is not accountable

to God, for it has no capacity for it. What, then, was it, that was to nourish that part which was accountable? What were the trees from which they were to draw fruit?

It was the soul—the immortal soul of man,—the invisible spirit, which was accountable to God the creator. And the trees that were placed in the garden for it to dress and keep, were not external trees made of the dust of the earth, but they were planted with the right hand planting of God Almighty—they were those many desires and propensities of the soul, that were requisite to create action and industry, to improve the soul, and to advance it from a state of mere innocency, a state of purity and without sin. Because where there is no law there can be no transgression. Therefore, the soul of man came pure out of the hand of God, and this soul was enclosed in an animal body, as a tabernacle in which it was to be proved and tried.

Now, my friends, we must come to know, that this garden is the same that it ever was—that it stands in the same place—that it encloses the same trees, and that it is our business and duty to dress and keep all these trees, from whence we are to draw nourishment and strength to the soul, and by which we may advance and grow in knowledge; thus extending and expanding till we are capable of comprehending God—till we are capable of knowing him and worshipping him in spirit and in truth. We are to dress and keep these trees in order. What does the gardener do? Does he not cut away every superfluous bud and leaf that would have a tendency to prevent the tree from bearing right fruit, and good fruit? Is it not then the concern and the business of the immortal souls of the children of men to dress and keep these propensities within the limits of the commands of God, and not to let the desire after knowledge extend so far, as

not to wait for the Lord to open instruction? Our first parents were not willing to wait for the Lord to show them good and evil; but undertook to decide for themselves in every thing that had relation to it.

Here, we see, that it was man's impatience, through a desire after knowledge, from whence the temptation arose. For he would exercise his own ability and judge for himself in contradiction to the divine commands. They were anxious to have their eyes opened so that they might become as gods, knowing good and evil, without the aid of God Almighty—without the aid of him in whom was all right knowledge of good and evil comprehended, and which he designed from the beginning of creation to continue and keep under his own prerogative and power. So that no man or set of men can know or distinguish between good and evil, in the sense of the Almighty, but by the instruction of his own spirit, by the instruction of himself: so that we, now, though we are not aware of it, eat more of the fruit of the forbidden tree than our first parents did. We neglect to trim the trees of the garden;—we neglect, under divine instruction to guard our propensities and desires, and to keep them within the bounds of righteousness and truth. So that we see where all transgression arises, and we see where sin and iniquity have their source; therefore we have no new gospel to preach, for the gospel was preached unto Adam and to all his posterity. And what is the gospel but the manifested will of God to man? And how is it manifested? We see every where by the testimony of those who have been inspired of God;—we see what it is that gives to us a knowledge and understanding of things—“All things that are reproveable are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever makes manifest is light.”

Here we see, now, in the beginning of the work, the

truth of the scriptures; and the way is so plain that the way-faring man, though a fool, cannot err therein. Where is there a creature that is not sensible of the truth of this testimony, that if ever they have been reprov'd, it has been by something within themselves—something that has shown them they have done wrong. So in things that appertain to the natural world. There is a twofold revelation. Every thing comes to man by revelation, according to the ordering of God. Take away the light of the sun and all is darkness—take it away and we cannot discover between men and trees, nor between horses and men. We have no knowledge of good and evil in temporal things, but by the light: and here we learn that it is so in spiritual things, that the soul has syritual eyes, ears, and senses; and that nothing can teach or nourish the soul but what is spiritual, because corporeal matter can never strengthen the soul or give it an existence, for it is not the materials of which it is composed. It is invisible—the soul of man is as much so as God is. It can never be comprehended by our natural and external senses in any way. So that here we learn—for when the Almighty speaks to his rational children, he expects them to understand rationally—we learn that nothing can be a recipient for the spirit of God but the souls of men. Therefore, if we gather inward, as has been early recommended,* we may learn and be instructed; for when we meet to wait upon God, unless this is the case, we can learn nothing. Therefore, if I have any work or part in the great work of the gospel ministry, it is one principal part of my calling to urge upon my friends to rally to this everlasting and unchangeable standard of light and life in the soul—which was

* Alluding to a preceding communication by another person.

Christ's work, the work of the apostles, and which George Fox preached as the only means whereby we can ever be reprov'd or justified. Nothing else can truly or rightly reprove or justify the children of men but this light. And what is this light? The apostle tells us, that "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all; and if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanseth us from all sin."

Now how necessary it is for us to consider, what is the soul. Had it ever any material blood? Did its life ever depend on material blood? No such thing:—the material blood of the body has no relation to the soul. It can give it no life, nourishment, or activity. No. The life of the soul is the light and life of God—as we read: for when God created man an accountable creature, we see, as I have already observed, what part was to become accountable. It was no part but the immortal spirit. For we read that, "God breathed into him the breath of life, and he became a living soul;" and had he not transgressed, this life would have continued as the blood of the soul; for the soul never had any other blood that could keep it alive in God. We see here, that the blood is the life of the animal. For we find that the history contained in the Old Testament was given by way of simile. It makes use of the outward blood, which is the life of the animal, as a metaphor, and calls the life of the soul blood, because blood is a great part of the life of man and in all other animals. So the life of God in the soul is the blood of the soul,—the blood of God, the blood of Christ the Saviour; but not the blood of that outward man, born of the Virgin Mary, the son of Abraham and of David. They could never confer any such blood upon their offspring—it is done by Almighty God, and by him only.

Here now we may see where the darkness arises that surrounds Christendom the world over. I have been ready to say, that there is more darkness in Christendom than in any other nation on earth. When we speak to the natives of our country, we have reason to suppose that they have a higher sense of this divine light of God in the soul, than the professors of Christianity generally have. They appeal to it in all cases respecting the soul. They appeal to it abundantly, as I have witnessed among those with whom I have had converse; especially those who have never had intercourse with any except their own nation. Now I want us to sink deep, and to be gathered to this everlasting standard. This has been my engagement and exercise ever since I have been in this ministry. It has been forty years since it was my principal concern to gather people home to this standard of light, and life, and peace. And it is the only thing which can ever save the soul, or cause it to be delivered from the darkness and death which it has brought upon itself by transgression. And it is one in all—the religion of Christ and the gospel is one and all the nations of the earth. And I have no doubt, that there are those in every nation of the earth who have the religion of Jesus—the religion of truth and righteousness,—and that they are saved by it, and by nothing else. You see how love works, but when the soul is destitute of love it is dead; it does not grow and increase in things that are good; but when the love of God is brought into it, when “we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all unrighteousness.” This blood is its life. And what is the life? It is what it is declared to be, the light of men. “In him was life; and the life was the light of men.” And this is “the true light, which

lighteth every man that cometh into the world." So, light is life and life is light; and as God is light, his light is all the light the soul ever had or ever can have. Here we see, then, what the blood of God is--what the blood of Christ is that cleanseth us from all sin. In this light it is qualified to draw that nourishment from the trees in the garden, that was intended should be drawn from them.

Here we have desires and propensities to pursue every thing that is good, and we are never to undertake to pursue any thing contrary to the divine commands, for we have no authority nor right to do it. And it is not only the propensities and desires of the soul that lead and guide us to those things that are necessary to know, and things that nourish the soul, and which propensities it is to guard, to dress, and keep, and to let nothing superfluous arise, nor undertake to do any thing contrary to the divine command, for this would be a breach of divine order; but we have desires and propensities stamped in our animal natures, which go on with the others, to constitute our probationary state. And what should we be worth, if it were not for these? Some consider it hardly consistent with the goodness and wisdom of Almighty God, that we should have these propensities which are to us the cause of so much torment; and yet it is the best possible situation that Infinite Wisdom could have placed man in. For what would he be without these propensities? They are all so good that man could never have made them himself--therefore they must have been made by God his creator, for no other power could have done it.

How easy this is to be seen, when we bring our minds to the light. For, what makes the drunkard? Shall we charge God Almighty with our drunkenness, because he has given us an appetite to drink, without which we could

not live? Is not water a part of our very existence? Hence the Almighty has placed in us the propensity of thirst; and by the workings of our animal nature, in its constituent parts, we are led at times to feel the want of additional moisture. Shall we lay it to Almighty God, because he has placed in us this propensity, and say that he is accountable for our drunkenness? Will we not in humility acknowledge, that it is of ourselves? Because the immortal soul is an agent under God, placed in these earthen tabernacles to direct all their movements. There is nothing more passive than the animal body—it is passive to the soul of man,—as passive as it can be: therefore it answers the design of the Creator. By this, then, we see that the soul only is accountable for drunkenness: for it is the soul that is to guard and govern the actions of the body; and if this immortal soul—this immortal spirit, be in submission to the divine will, to the divine light and life given to it as a rule of action, under the government of the Supreme Being, how it would restrain these appetites: it would be constantly dressing and keeping the trees in order, and were this universally the case, there would not be a drunkard in the earth. What could we do without an appetite to eat, and a desire to procure the things which are necessary for the support of the animal body for the little time it is on earth?

What makes a glutton? The immortal soul joining and enlisting with the passions of the animal body; and instead of acting as a head or governor, it becomes a servant to the passions; and sometimes admits the body to go to an extent in gluttony which destroys its existence as soon as it would have been destroyed by drunkenness. But now if man was attentive and would suffer this light to operate in a right manner, how he would be strengthened and enlightened—how his soul would be enlarged

and increased—how it would expand in divine knowledge, until it would finally be clothed with power to restrain every appetite of the animal man,—and every desire of its own that would have a tendency to lead away from divine order, or aside from the government of truth and righteousness.

Now these two passions for drinking and eating seem simple; but let us look for a moment:—we know what our appetites and propensities are, and can we find one that is not necessary? No. There is not one that could carry on the great work of his creation without these desires and propensities: therefore we are not to murmur at Almighty God, nor to think hard that we have them; but in humility of soul, every enlightened mind will at once acknowledge, that they are one of the greatest blessings that God could have conferred upon his rational creatures, for they constitute our probationary state. And it is only through this state that we can rise from innocence into a state of virtue and of glory. You know that it is by conquest that men, in a moral sense, gain and are exalted. They go through every struggle and trial, for the glory, honour, and praise of men; and so it is in a spiritual sense, if we become rightly sensible of the righteousness of God in his creation, and in the workings of his providence among his creatures. We own every dispensation that he metes out to us—thank him and take courage:—we are engaged to see the accountable principle in the creature; and thus we find that it is nothing but the soul that is accountable to God. Here, as the soul is obedient, it learns and extends, not only in a knowledge and feeling of the nature of God, and all his attributes of love and mercy, wisdom and power; but by attention to the light and life of God in the soul, it grows up till it becomes fitted to be a communi-

cant with God, and partaker of his divine nature, so as to be one with him, and with our great and blessed pattern, Jesus Christ. That prayer of his is then answered, when he prayed that his disciples might be one, as he and the Father were one—"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us."

Here we find out the errors of the people, and in what they consist. Instead of being spiritually minded, they are resting in a carnal mind; they are looking to outward blood as having a tendency to cleanse the soul, when it is no more related to the soul than the dust of the earth: it has no part with it, nor can it take from or add any part to it. It never gave it any life, nurture, nor succour whatever.

Here, now, as we attend to this, we shall become spiritually minded; we shall understand the scriptures of truth and believe them. But there are those who are so blind as to say that they are the rule of faith and practice: but we cannot find from their fruits, that they believe them at all. We read that "to be spiritually minded is life and peace;" but where is there any of these that know any thing of it? "To be carnally minded is death." We are all carnally minded in the state of nature, from which we cannot rise till we leave all things that are behind, and lay hold of that which is before. Let us then cease to be talking of God as of a man, for nothing but the soul is a recipient for the knowledge of God, and there is no way in which it can be communicated but by his own light.

Here, now, all things would be spiritually interpreted; all those types would be opened to us; they would become beautiful figures to lead us on, from the beginning to the end of the Jewish dispensation; beginning with

Moses, through all the prophets, and Jesus Christ the Son of God. That dispensation never ended till Jesus was crucified, till he ascended and was no more to be seen of men, in an external way. He showed his disciples that he must leave them, that there was something else expedient for them, that he must go away that the comforter might come,—the comforter of the soul. But in his external manifestation, he was endued with the power of God to do outward miracles, to relieve the distresses of their animal bodies, that they might partake of the blessings of that good land, their outward heaven; for in that outward Jerusalem that flowed with milk and honey, there was nothing that could have a tendency to nourish the soul, but, being a blessing to their animal bodies, it was a figure. And as they cultivated the land and were obedient, he declared he would bless the land; but when they rebelled against his law, he suffered desolation to be their lot; so that they often suffered from want of food. But the soul was not affected by it, otherwise than as it departed from the line of duty, in an inconsistent way, to gratify the animal body; and as this was the case, as it separated itself from God, it felt his judgment for it.

But as we come to get inward with the light, we come to understand the difference between what gives life to the soul, and what gives life to the animal body; and we see how it is, how it proves the immortality of the soul, for this never can be satisfied with any mortal thing—this desire to seek happiness. Do we not find that this desire in the soul after happiness can never be satiated but by God himself? There is nothing but the immortal, invisible, and only true God that can satisfy the immortal soul. Look at Solomon and all his works; and at our own experience. Do we not find, that all the

riches and glory of this world, are not sufficient to make one soul happy? Do we not know, that the more we seek happiness in this way, the more unhappy we are? This was the case with the great king of Israel, who was the wisest of men, when he undertook to exert his wisdom and power to find happiness in outward things. In riches and wisdom he exceeded all others; and he tried it to the uttermost, but all his efforts finally ended in a full and complete disappointment; and under a sense of his disappointment, he cried out, "Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher, all is vanity." Here he was led to see what was good for the children of men; and he could say, this is the sum of the whole matter, "Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man."

Here we see a beautiful path open to every man and woman; and so plain that the wayfaring man, though a fool, cannot err therein, when we come to the right thing, the light which maketh manifest; for we can get no right knowledge but through this light. As we have need of the light of the outward sun in temporal things, so we must come to know the inward sun, the inward light, to be that from which we must derive all knowledge of spiritual things, and all that relates to the soul and its nourishment—that which sustains and continues it alive in God, and which is the source of its happiness and joy.

Now could the children of men see these things, they would be ready to cry out, How can we be so blind! I have often been astonished, that I could myself have continued in darkness so long as I did, when it is as clear as day; when the soul turns inward, all things open in that clearness that it cannot resist. Here we become true believers in that in which our salvation consists—believers in that light and life, that blood that cleanses the soul

from all unrighteousness. Now the soul being united with the life of God, a birth is brought forth,—a birth of life in the soul. By Almighty power, through a union of the soul with the divine life, the soul is begotten into the likeness of God. Here it is, that he and the Father are one: for every soul begotten unto God, and brought under the influence of his power, can say, “I and my Father are one:” the soul having no desire, intention, or will of its own; all is swallowed up in the immensity of the power and the goodness of God. It is one with him in all his requisitions, calls, and commands; and not because it has got any higher than a son of God. It is not God. Yet we see, according to Jesus’s testimony, that even under the law, those to whom the word of God came were often called gods. For, you may remember reading, that when the Jews accused him of blasphemy because he said he was the Son of God, he referred them to their own law, “Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God? If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not: but if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works.” Here we see it is not by what people profess or believe that we are to judge of them, but by their works and doings. If all their works give evidence that they arise from the love of God; if they are clothed with his love, and wisdom, and humility, this exalts the creature, for it is only the humble soul that is exalted of God. And what encouragement, my friends, we receive through this medium, when we are brought by the light into a feeling of unity with our great pattern, Jesus Christ, and with God our Creator! Oh! see how we come up into an equality

with him—we are swallowed up in his righteousness, having no will of our own, but always at his disposal, going on in the increase of a right knowledge of God's perfections and of his excellency.

Here, under these views, in submission to the inward principle of life and light, every man would come to know God without applying to any but him. And, as is declared, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him; for there is no end to the divine perfections. And when we come into the greatest and fullest experience, even to be swallowed up in the divinity of God Almighty, with a full surrender of soul and spirit to him, every day we may be advancing in greater knowledge—greater divine knowledge; we may go on for our whole lives, and shall witness and know that "day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge." We may learn something every day—some new thing; and yet all in consonance with the old, under the leading of God. And we have no reason to doubt, that in another state of being, we shall be eternally rising higher and higher, for there is no end to the perfection and glory of God—they are not to be compassed in this state of being. Now, I mention these things, my dear friends, for our improvement: and I want us to know what it is that makes us happy—that makes the immortal soul happy? All the riches and glory of this world cannot satisfy the soul. There is nothing but that which is infinite, that which is immortal, that can nourish the soul, comfort it, or make it truly happy.

In this view, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him; but

God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit: for the spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the spirit of God." Here we see now how this speaks to our sense and our common understanding; and how plain the way is when we get into the right way.

Every man and woman must know, that no creature can understand the things of man, except as has been set forth in this conclusive argument of the apostle. So no rational being can know the things of God, but as he comes under the influence of the spirit of God, neither can he enjoy the happiness of God. Therefore it is, that the soul can never be satiated, till it comes under the influence of the holy spirit of God, till it is a partaker of his nature; then it can feel something that satisfies it—something that supports it, and this is immortal like itself. We can know nothing of God but as we are brought into his nature and spirit, no more than the animals below man can enjoy or know the things of a man.

Now this seems to be so explained in the writings called the Scriptures, that we might gain a great deal of profitable instruction, if we would read them under the regulating influence of the spirit of God. But they can afford no instruction to those who read them in their own ability; for, if they depend on their own interpretation, they are as a dead letter, insomuch, that those who profess to consider them the proper rule of faith and practice, will kill one another for the Scriptures' sake. How abominable! And still they will not learn; for they are determined not to learn, but sit down in their own will. Some will set up a particular system, and tell much about old things, the prophets under the law, and about Jesus

Christ in that outward body, asserting that his death made atonement for our sins: because his righteousness so offended the Jews that the wicked priests and Pharisees slew him. But by this he was made a perfect example to us, to show to us that for the testimony of God our creator, we must be willing, as Jesus was, to surrender up every thing unto God; and to do his will in every thing, even if it cost us our natural lives. For if we are brought into the situation that he was in, that we cannot save our natural lives without giving up the testimony that God has called us to bear, we have his example not to do it, though we may feel as he did, that it is a great trial. Yet it is not a sin to act as he did, to plead with the Father, that, if it be possible, he will let this cup pass from us. The Lord Almighty will accept us in it, and he does not consider it a breach of duty. Here we find, that the Son of God saw no alternative; for, if he gave up his testimony in order to save his natural life, he could not be saved with God's salvation: hence he surrendered to the divine will rather than to lose his standing and favour with his Almighty Father;—and what a blessed example it was. Here now what a life of righteousness! The apostle says, that he is our example, that we should follow his steps. But if he had any more power than we have, how could he be an example to us? He had no more power than would enable him to do the will of God, and he had it in its fulness; and of this every rational creature has his proportion. He had more, because he had a much greater work to perform: as he who hath five talents must be faithful according to the knowledge received; and so must they who have but one talent, and then we shall be accepted by the beloved of our souls. And what astonishing ignorance it must be, to suppose that material blood, made of the dust of

the earth can be considered a satisfactory offering for a spiritual being that is all spirit, and no flesh! I say, what astonishing ignorance! and yet what a display of goodness and mercy, to take the example before us as the one we must follow if we would be the children of God. Here he is exalted in his proper station, as a minister, as an outward Saviour to the Israelites by the power which he exerted in outward miracles. And the spirit by which he was actuated is that light and life which is the saviour of the soul: and it was the same light and life which is the light and life of God; for he derived it from God his heavenly Father. And we derive a portion of the same, which is able to save the soul if properly obeyed. Here now he was put upon a level; and for this reason, Jesus called the children of God his brethren: "Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee." He thus united with the church and with his brethren in singing praises to God Almighty; for he was not ashamed to call them his brethren: and so, when we come under the influence of this divine light and life, we shall feel him to be our elder brother, to stand before us—to sit first, at the right hand, as it were, like the oldest son in the family, who had always been faithful to the father and his discipline. But we are not to suppose, that God Almighty has any right hand or any left hand. And when the mother of Zebedee's children requested that one might sit at the right hand and the other at his left, what did he say? He gave a lesson for us—"Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" They began to think that they were able. He told them they should be baptized with it. By which it is probable, from the account, they were sacrificed as he was, and died for their religion. But he says,

with respect to giving them a place on the right or left hand, it was not his to give, but that it should be given to them to whom the Father saw meet to give it. We see now how limited he was in his power, how modest, meek, humble, and lowly of heart. Oh! that we might keep his example before us, and endeavour to imitate it in all our works. Not that his humility would save us, unless we come to have it of our own; and I hope there are none here so ignorant as to suppose, that they can be saved by his imputed righteousness. How derogatory is the idea to the dignity of the Almighty; it rises near unto blasphemy. I greatly desire—yea, it is my prayer and exercise for us, that we may all be gathered home to the standard of light and life in the soul; for there is nothing else—and I believe, that all the men on earth cannot bring one substantial evidence against the assertion—there is nothing else by which the soul can ever be saved, but by an obedience to the manifestation of the will of God by his own spirit in the soul: it is the only thing needful. It is that which gives us a knowledge of God and his will, and enables us to perform it; and therefore it is, that they who are willing and obedient shall eat the good of the land, and none other.

We read, that “the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not:” and it is a sorrowful thing that it is so much so, that, although this light shines in darkness, there are too many that are unwilling that the soul should be regulated by it. Therefore it is these that Antichrist makes use of as the accusers of the brethren. And they cannot help but be so, poor creatures! There is no other way for them to act, without they would

be willing to turn to the light and gather into it. But for the want of this, the scriptures are a sealed book. And instead of being useful, it becomes a curse to them while they are determined to put their own construction upon them: it keeps them in darkness. And there are those who assert, that I disbelieve the scriptures, and that I undervalue them! But there is not a greater falsehood expressed among mankind! And I will assure you, my friends, that what I say is truth. I have loved the scriptures of truth from my youth; I have delighted in reading them; and perhaps there are none who have read them more than myself. And, I presume, according to my knowledge, no man has received more advantage than I have, and continue to have, from reading them. And I am at this time convinced, that wherever I have been called to be a mouth for the Lord, in the line of the gospel ministry, I need not make this apology or declaration. No individual ever brought forth more scripture to prove their doctrines, than I have, when under the influence of divine love and truth, that gave forth the scriptures. Divine Wisdom knowing the state of the people, that they would hardly receive my doctrines unless confirmed by scripture testimony, here immediately, without the necessity for seeking for it, a passage would rise up in consonance with my assertion or declaration. And I appeal to the people, where my lot has been cast, if it has not been my case. Then what infatuation to say, that I undervalue the scriptures! No, my friends, I do not undervalue the scriptures of truth; but I feel it a duty to set them in the right place, and I dare not set them above it. For if I do this, I shall offend my Creator—I shall offend against that light which is my faith and my governing principle, and in which I feel peace with God, and with the children of men every where.

For it is declared in the scriptures, "If a man's ways please the Lord, he will make all his enemies be at peace with him;" and I feel it to be so. In all the adversaries that I have met with, I still feel at peace with all these, and with all the children of men. Let them be enemies to me as much as they can, they cannot make me an enemy to them: therefore the declaration is true, that if a man's ways please the Lord, he will make all his enemies the same as friends to him. Therefore, when they asperse me, they become as a help meet to me, which I do with thankfulness to God acknowledge. For it may be a watchword to me, though it come from even the most hardy sinners. I feel nothing inimical rise up in my heart toward them. They cannot break my peace, nor is it disturbed by it; neither do I regard their evil reports or good reports; for I have nothing to do but to mind my leader, and to obey the light which speaks peace to my soul. I never dare lay my head down to go to rest, until I have consulted respecting the actions of the day, and feel approved of God: for I consider it a great presumption to lie down to sleep without knowing our peace made with our Creator; for how many are taken away in their sleep, and how very uncertain is life. Therefore, could I dare to go asleep till I feel peace with my God, and with all my fellow-creatures? No. I dare not do it. And I speak it not boastingly, for I am a poor unworthy creature, a worm and no man. I speak these things for your encouragement, and let it rest on your minds, and improve the time that you have: and let not a moment pass which you may be improving. I feel it in my own experience. I do not preach these things as mere idle tales, but as the things which mine eyes have seen, mine ears heard, and my hands handled. These I declare unto you, that your faith may

be increased, and that you may be encouraged in the way of salvation, looking to the Lord—remembering that he who improves his one talent rightly, will be as acceptable as he that has five.

PRAYER.

Most gracious and ever blessed God! Be pleased, O Lord, to receive the feeble acknowledgments of thy poor dependant servant, as a return of gratitude to thee for thy abundant mercy to thy poor backsliding creatures. Grant, O gracious God, seeing that thou hast been mindful of us at this season, that thou hast graciously condescended to overshadow us with the wings of thy love, be pleased to seal instruction to every mind. And grant, O heavenly Father, that the feeble knees may be strengthened, and that the hands which are ready to hang down may be lifted up; that so we may all more and more put our trust and whole confidence in thee. Enable us, merciful God, to surrender all our hearts to thee, and to cast down all our crowns at thy holy footstool, that so we may be kept in that humiliation and self-abasement that we feel ourselves reduced to from a sense of our own unworthiness. Create in us a right spirit, O heavenly Father, and renew in us a concern to worship thee in spirit and in truth; that so, gracious God, thy will and not ours may be done in all things, and that thy great and glorious name may be exalted above all. Grant that our knowledge of thee may be increased through the light and grace dispensed; that so it may not be ineffectual, O Father, of leading us off from all our false dependencies, and trust in any thing but thee: and grant that the

glorious light of thy countenance and thy holy spirit may be our leader; and that we may not dare to look away from it for any support, but that we may press unto it more and more—seeking more and more to be united with the full and powerful operations and aidings of thy grace. Enable us to bow before thee, and to go on rightly in the great work that thou hast called us to do; and that all may tend to thy glory, and to the peace and consolation of our souls. Unite us together, O Father, as the heart of one man, that we may join in praise and acknowledgment of thy goodness, and give glory and honour to thy great and excellent name, who remainest to be God over all, blessed for ever and ever more.

EXTRACTS.

“Soon after, there was another great meeting of professors, and a captain named Amor Stoddard came in. They were discoursing of the blood of Christ. As they were discoursing of it, I saw, through the immediate opening of the invisible Spirit, the blood of Christ; and cried out among them, saying, ‘Do ye not see the blood of Christ? see it in your hearts, to sprinkle your hearts and consciences from dead works, to serve the living God?’ For I saw the blood of the new covenant, how it came into the heart. This startled the professors, who would have the blood only without them, and not in them. But captain Stoddard was reached, and said, ‘Let the youth speak,’ ‘hear the youth speak,’ when he saw they endeavoured to bear me down with many words.” 1648.

George Fox, Journal, Phil. ed. Vol. I. p. 101.

“The blood of the old covenant was the life of the beasts and other creatures; and the blood of the new

covenant is the life of Christ Jesus, who saith, ‘Except ye eat my flesh, and drink my blood, ye have no life in you.’ John 6. So the blood of the new covenant *is not according to the old*; and so with this blood of the new covenant must every one feel their hearts sprinkled, if they have life; and in this new covenant they shall all know the Lord, &c. And by this blood of Jesus, his life in the new covenant, they are justified, in whom we have redemption, and the forgiveness of sins; and Christ hath purchased his church with his own blood, his life, and their faith doth stand in his blood, which is the life of the Lamb. Therefore the apostle saith, ‘If ye walk in the light, as he is in the light, then have ye fellowship one with another, and the blood of Christ Jesus his Son cleanses from all sin.’ *G. Fox*. See *A Testimony Concerning the Blood of the Old Covenant and the Blood of the New Covenant.*” *Doctrinals*, p. 644.

“The Lord saith, ‘The life of all flesh is the blood,’ and whosoever did eat it was to be cut off; for the life of all flesh, the blood, was to be offered upon his altar to make atonement for their soul, as the Lord required.

“Thus the first covenant was dedicated with the blood, which was the life of *all flesh*: but the new and second covenant is dedicated with the blood, the life of Christ Jesus, *which is the alone atonement unto God*, by which all his people are washed, sanctified, cleansed, and redeemed to God.” *Ibid.* p. 646.

“We are taught, led, and guided by, and are possessors of a measure of the same spirit of grace and truth that was in that person, Christ, our elder brother, that suffered patiently the contradictions and false accusations of sinners, as a lamb, without the gates of Jerusalem, of

whose resurrection and life we are eye-witnesses, even of his majesty and glory, and the coming of his kingdom with power, full of grace and truth."

William Bayly's Works, p. 169.

"What did all the types, veils, and shadows, under the law signify? Did they signify *another veil*? Did they signify or shadow out that which was *outward*? Or did they shadow out and signify that inward life, virtue, and saving power, which was the substance of all?

"Is not the substance, the life, the anointing called Christ, wherever it is found? Doth not the name belong to the whole body, (and every member in the body,) as well as to the head? Are they not all of one; yea, all one in the anointing? Was not this the great desire of his heart to the Father, that they all might be one, even as the Father and Christ were one? (John xvii. 21, 23.) And so being one in the same spirit, one in the same life, one in the same divine nature, (2 Pet. i. 4.) even partakers of God's holiness, (Heb. xii. 10,) Christ is not ashamed to call them brethren, (Heb. ii. 11.) nor is the apostle ashamed to give them the name *Christ*, together with him. (1 Cor. xii. 12.) The body is the same with the head; one and the same in nature; and doth not the name belong to the nature in the whole? So that the name is not given to the vessel, but to the nature, to the heavenly treasure, to that which is of him in the vessel, to that which the Lord from heaven begets in his own image and likeness, of his own substance, of his own seed, of his own spirit and pure life."

Penington's Works, Vol. II. p. 21, 4to. ed.

THE QUAKER.

SERMON BY ELIAS HICKS, AT CHESTER, NOV. 16, 1826.

THE most skilful and wise mariner would be unwilling to trust himself, without a pilot acquainted with the shoals and rocks that lurk in secret by the side of almost every port in the world: he would consider it entirely unsafe. And if this be the case, in our passing from one port of this world to another; if there be such serious necessity that we apply to and find such a pilot, and not risk our lives and our all in this world: then how much more necessary is it, as it respects our passage from the city of destruction to the new Jerusalem, that we find a pilot so well experienced as to show us all the shoals and rocks, and point our way through the turbulent sea of this unstable world.

We can all of us discover, who have made any observation, that for the want of such a pilot thousands and tens of thousands suffer shipwreck on this passage. The wise mariner would not put to sea without a pilot, nor in a ship without a rudder and a helm; and these must be well fastened and secured.

Well now, my friends, I feel bound to inform you, that in these latter days—(not apprehending that it has not been always the case—) but in these latter days there is a

pilot who offers his services to all the children of men; and he is so perfect that he never fails to carry all who put themselves under his direction, through this world of trials and tribulations, and to land them safely in the celestial city. And what is more, he is not only a pilot, but a helm and rudder, whose bands have never been broken, and never can be. And although we have a chart that points out these things—that points out the rocks and shoals, and informs us where this pilot is, and where he has ever been;—and although we have experienced in our own minds its truth, yet how few there are that understand it, or are willing to believe it. They are therefore venturing on in their course without an experienced pilot; and I need not mention the armies of thousands and tens of thousands, who suffer for want of such a pilot. And yet if they would consider rightly, they would find none to blame for the want of him but themselves.

I say I feel bound in spirit to inform you, that there is such a pilot that will carry every individual of us safe to the celestial city. And it seems to have been my concern for a long term of years, to lead my brethren and sisters, in every department where my lot has been cast; to lead their attention and direct them home to this pilot—this standard which has never failed any—this foundation upon which all may build safely, and never be disappointed.

We find in that chart—in that little book called the New Testament, an outward testimony concerning it; and I take it, that all who have arrived at the years of understanding have read this chart, and learned where the pilot is, yet for some cause they do not understand the language, or they are not disposed to seek this unerring guide. And this is the cause of all the miseries

and disappointments that the children of men have experienced since the foundation of the world. Through all this course and extent of time there has been a remedy for all these things—an effectual remedy, which has never failed those who have made use of it as proposed. And I will appeal to the judgment of every rational soul present for the truth of this declaration, for they all have it, and if they will they may come to know its truth.

We read it in the description of the life, testimony, and doctrines of Jesus of Nazareth, in that outward chart as recorded by his followers; and it is expressed in such literal and plain language, that it would seem none could misunderstand it, who are not disposed to persuade themselves to act in contradiction to it, for the sake of gratifying their own lustful desires, and for the sake of amusing themselves while passing on through this vale of tears. But they will know before long what will be the consequence.

Now can any plead it as an excuse, if they be cast away upon the coast, if they meet with disappointment and dismay; can they complain that it was for the want of being informed that there was such a medium, such a rudder, such a helm, such a pilot, that they might have taken on board their vessel, and who never has and never will fail to carry safely over the sea of this world, to the new Jerusalem? We read in the few expressions of Jesus of Nazareth, who the pilot is that can do this for us. He told his followers that he was not the one that could do it; that it was expedient for them that he should go away. He saw that he would be assailed by his enemies, and that through their unbelief, though they had seen the way opened, yet being unwilling to adopt it, they would slay him and put an end to his existence

on earth ; and that it was expedient for them that he should go away, that this pilot, this comforter, this safe deliverer of the soul, would not come unless he did go away. But if Jesus would go away he would give place to him ; because they had looked to him as an outward comforter, therefore he could be no more than an outward comforter to them, although comprehending in himself greater power than any that had gone before him, and by which he did many miracles to convince them, yet all these were outward and only evident to their external senses ; but he could not save them otherwise than to relieve them from their outward afflictions and perils. That this was absolutely the case is evident from the necessity of his departure, that so his followers should have nothing to depend on ; that they should see their total want, and their inability to do any good thing, or to take one step in the right way ; and by which they might see that it was in the wisdom of God that they were thus brought to feel their own insufficiency, and so to humble themselves as never to seek to man or any external thing that is mortal. For every thing that these external eyes see is mortal ; and therefore it never can be a saviour to that which is immortal. And how correct it was—how blessed it was, that he had given them this direction to come out of all dependence on man, that so they might find out the pilot, the comforter,—and that they must trust in him. “Tarry at Jerusalem—” Now Jerusalem signifies a place of quiet. “Tarry at Jerusalem till ye shall receive power from on high.”

Here we are certified that nothing has ever opened the knowledge of God rightly and clearly, so as to produce salvation, but God himself, as man is willing to wait for him, and know his power to descend from on high, and to be above every thing that man has at his own com-

mand. Then only would they have power to bear testimony of the divine life of Jesus Christ, and of his perfect work in the fulfilment of his mission on earth. "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Here now we have something so plain, that nothing but unwillingness can hinder us from profiting by it.

No man or woman ever had a qualification to bear testimony of the righteous life of Jesus Christ, that which we must all come to experience, and in which our salvation must consist, but those on whom the Holy Ghost has descended: and all others are impostors, even in the present day.

Now we have clear evidence of this. No human being can become a gospel minister, or be qualified for it, till he is called to it by the Holy Ghost. We see this in the united testimony of Christendom, that none are fit to be ministers till they are called of God; and no one is called of God till he receives the descendings of the Holy Ghost in the same way and manner as the Apostles did. Because, as creatures, they can have no true knowledge of God but by his spirit, neither can they know his will till by his spirit he reveals it. And we are all sensible that nothing can receive it—that nothing is a recipient for the will of God to man but the rational soul; and that nothing can understand it but that which receives it: therefore nothing can become a son of God but the rational and immortal soul.

Well, Jesus tells them to wait for the comforter, the spirit of truth. He tells them what it will do when it comes: "And when he is come he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment."

Here he shows us the rocks and the shoals. Here is the work and the design of the pilot that is qualified for every purpose in his office. He can point out with clearness every thing that would shut up our way, and open the way wherein the channel would always be open and the water deep, so that we might pass the ocean of this world in safety, amidst all its rocks and shoals. Don't you believe this my friends? Have you cause to doubt it? When we read the account, and more especially when we turn inward to what is to be known of God in our own hearts, (for what is to be known of God is revealed in the hearts of the children of men,) we must believe that there never was, and never can be any other true medium. Why then shall man refuse and misunderstand things so plain, so clear, and so self evident? For I presume the offers of this pilot are self evident, more or less, to all the children of men; for God has left none without this knowledge; as, agreeably to the doctrine of the prophet, he has set before the children of men good and evil, life and death. But at the same time he has never forced one, he has never constrained one by any coercive means into a state of bliss; but he has made us free agents, and endowed us with a portion of his own liberty, that we can choose for ourselves, though it be in opposition to his clear and manifest will. For though He were to stand present and command us to do a certain thing, yet he has given us liberty to do the contrary.

These are rational truths, to every rational creature under heaven; for I conclude there is not one in this large assembly who has not been guilty of doing it more or less. Now look at it, my friends, my dear young friends!—The oldest may look back to youth and see how often they have resisted the Almighty, and yet that he has never attempted to coerce them, but only by love

and reproof from the source of life and of every endearing mercy, to draw them to himself. And does not this agree with the experience of all others? Do we not feel an evidence of it in ourselves? Have you not been brought to see as I have been, when I stood upon the brink of eternal ruin, and when, if Almighty goodness had cut me off in my sins, I must have declared forever before angels and men, that it was just; that I deserved it all for thus slighting his tender mercies, and rising up against the God of my salvation, the God of my life and existence? How wonderful is his kindness and mercy!

Now we see from what I have said, that God leaves not a stone unturned; but that he is ever willing to conduct us safely through all the waves of the tempestuous sea of this unstable world. Then, my friends, we should know a coming unto him with full purpose of heart, to seek after him till we find him. Wait for this pilot; for it was not any more necessary for the followers of Jesus to wait, than it is for every individual now present, or under heaven. It is as much our duty now, and the language will apply as much to us, as it did to them—"Tarry at Jerusalem till ye receive power from on high." For if we are brought once to see the weakness of all our own efforts, we shall see that if we had lived in the time of Jesus Christ, and been with him, all these must have failed: and we must come to know it, and learn that every thing external must fall infinitely short of delivering the soul from sin. There is nothing but the power and wisdom of God that can do it. And there are none of us who can become acquainted with this power and wisdom, till we are concerned to wait according to the testimony of Jesus to his followers. But we have no outward Jerusalem to wait in, and there is no need of it, but we are to wait at Jerusalem—a place

of quiet, with a willingness on our part to know redemption effected in us. We are not to expect it through hearing preaching, or running after ministers or what not; for we shall find that it has all been insufficient to do the work for us.

Now when the soul becomes thus wearied with striving in its own ability and desires; when it becomes still and waits in a state of emptiness, it will begin to know sweet communion with the Father of spirits: but this cannot be the case till it is gathered inward to see its own insufficiency, imbecility, ignorance, and weakness; till it is ready to cry out with one formerly, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" This, my friends, is a hopeful state; and I would to God that every one might be brought to this straitened state; for we must all be brought to it before we can see the insufficiency of all that we can do—of all the preaching, and all the books in the world. Should even Jesus Christ appear as he did outwardly among the people at Jerusalem, it would all fail us entirely—it would do no more for us than it did for them, in that day. And what did it do for those whom he so much loved, his disciples? When he left them, they were not changed at all in any respect, only they were brought to believe, through a revelation in themselves, that Jesus was the true Messiah. There was still in them the same spirit of revenge as when he first met with them; for they would call down fire from heaven to destroy the inhabitants of a certain village because they did not receive him! So when he was taken by the soldiers he allowed them to have a sword or two, to prove them, and to show them that they had made no proficiency as Christians. And why? Because nothing external can change the soul; all the books, all the prophets, all the men in the world must fail, as nothing ex-

ternal can save the internal and invisible soul. It would do us no good to have him come again; yet there are some men and women so foolish and unwise as to believe that he will again appear outwardly: but I believe that should he come now, he would stand as great a chance to be crucified as he did in that day; for his righteousness would so exceed ours, that we should be unwilling to conform to the cross, and this would set him at a distance from us. When we look with an eye of understanding and a heart to discern, we must be convinced of this. We see how these disciples acted. They were poor fishermen, and many of them were rough, mean and poor. Peter appeared as rough as any of them; and when challenged with being a disciple of Christ, he in fear denied it—he denied the second time, and when inquired of the third time what did he do? He was determined not to be brought to it at that time, and to remove all their doubts he fell to cursing and swearing. He was willing to do any way to screen himself from that which he ought to have been willing to suffer for his master. Now what change was there in him? He saw that he had done wrong, and repented, and was forgiven, no doubt. Here he began to learn a little, but it was only a little that he could learn or know till he attended to the requisition and command of his master, to wait at Jerusalem, out of all self ability, or any dependence on his own power to extricate himself. Here it was that the divine spirit awakened him and showed him where he was, and what he was. And now he saw that every thing which had been told him by Jesus was realized in his own experience; and then it was that he was ready to testify of his master and teacher. Yes, from solid and self evident experience in himself, being led by the same light as his master; for agreeable to the testimony, “in him was

life, and the life was the light of men;" and every man and woman that comes into the world has a portion of that light and life that was in him. Here now is the pilot, my friends; for "all things that are reprobable are made manifest by the light, and whatsoever maketh manifest is light," and nothing but light; and "God is light," and this light was dispensed by God Almighty to his son, in a sufficient degree to enable him to effect every thing connected with his design in sending him; and when he had enough to do this, he had the fulness of the spirit, for God does not deal in superfluities. What did Jesus want more than to finish his mission and life, agreeably to the design of his heavenly Father? Now we read that Jesus had the fulness of his Father's spirit; and we have also a portion of the same; and can we suppose that the Almighty, in the riches of his mercy, in the justice and equity of his nature, would not give us as great a fulness according to what he requires of us, as he would give to any other being? It would not comport with his dignity, to give more than was necessary, because it could not be used and might be abused. This puts all the children of men on equal ground, and makes Jesus our pattern. His example becomes the point after which we are to aspire; for his righteousness must be the criterion of judgment; because having come to perfect obedience, doing in all things that for which he was sent by his Father, he has shown by his example that all are able to obey him. For he was tempted in all things as we are; and he could not have been tempted, if he had not had the liberty to make a wrong choice; for no other being can be tempted, and never was tempted; and there is none such but God Almighty. He cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt any man. We are never tempted but when we are excited to in-

dulge those propensities, that God has fixed in our human nature, beyond the bounds which he has fixed—the bounds of reason and truth. Whenever we do this, we do wrong, and here is the beginning of sin. To do what is necessary to be done is no sin—to be tempted is no sin; but to comply with the temptation and indulge our human nature in the fulfilment of its lusts—to become drunkards because God has fixed in us a propensity to drink, here we commit great sin. God Almighty has fixed in us these propensities, and we could not do without them. But man goes on to indulge the propensity for drinking, till he becomes a drunkard—therefore it is only the abuse of this propensity, that constitutes sin; for these propensities are necessary to support our animal bodies, according to the design of our creation. And this it is that constitutes our probationary state, which is the best state that Almighty goodness could have placed in us. Don't you think it is? And should we then find fault with it, and think hard of our Creator because he suffers us to be tempted? There is no other way that divine wisdom could place us, to answer the end and design of our creation; for we were not created to be mere ciphers. As we come out of the hand of our Creator we are innocent and clear from all defilement, but if we had no wants, there would be nothing to stimulate us to action. Hence our probationary state of trial puts us to doing that which will raise us up and give us inclinations to do virtuous acts; to raise us up into a state of glory, fit to have union and communion with the Father of spirits,—with perfect wisdom, according to his eternal counsel.

The great thing that is wanting is, to come to the pilot, to come to the means, to believe in it, and receive it in love, as was designed, and as it is offered to us.

For this Comforter, Jesus told his followers, when he shall come, shall reprove the world of sin. And every man and woman has an evidence of the fulfilment of what Jesus said; and it is a solemn truth unto all those who have received this Comforter, that when he comes he brings them into judgment for their sins: they feel terrified. But the same that reproves us for our sins, if we believe in it, will turn us from our sins, and then it will be our Comforter; for this same spirit of truth guards us now from evil and is become our Comforter; because the Lord Almighty, through our repentance, now forgives us, justifies us, and receives us into his arms of everlasting love, if we do not transgress again.

We see now how this agrees with the doctrines of all the wise and good of every age of the world. It is not by the religious works which we have done, by praying, preaching, or entering, upon our knees, into resolutions in our own wisdom, that will do us any good, or that is good; for nothing that we can do is good but what is done in submission to the will of our Heavenly Father. Justice, common justice requires of every rational creature, that he shall have no will of his own. What would we think of our plough, a machine of our own making, if we had power to give it animation, and yet, as it had not made itself and could not form another plough, if it should rise up and refuse to do our work, how unjust it would be? Man is a machine made by Almighty God, and enlivened and animated in such a manner with an immortal soul, that if it does God's will it shall rise into a state of bliss, into a state of union and communion with its Creator. But if it rebels and turns away, it has the reward of its own doings; for every act has its own reward; therefore if our acts are evil our reward will be misery, and if virtuous it will be peace

and happiness, and nothing can take it from us; for it was the design of God that every act should receive an adequate reward.

Now what I feel concerned for is, to gather us home to this standard; and I feel but very little else to do, and have had for the last forty years but little more than to call my fellow creatures to this. I speak from experience, I am not telling an idle tale. I tell you things which I have seen, which mine ears have heard; things which I have felt, and things that I know to be true. These things I communicate to encourage you to do as Jesus recommended his disciples to do—to seek the Comforter. “Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near.” It is through this Comforter that all our knowledge of God must come; and all that ever was, among rational beings under heaven, came through this medium and none other. Here then we should not be quarrelling about the way which we should pursue as Christians. But by our believing that we can help ourselves to heaven by the aid of the scriptures, a mere written book, at the same time that we understand it so diversely, sets us to warring and quarrelling—and all this too for God’s sake; while at the same time we do not truly believe it at all. See now, has not this been long enough the case for every rational being to be instructed, and to see, that instead of its being a sufficient rule of faith and practice, it is the reverse, for while it is depended on as such, it hinders from coming to the truth. The scriptures never told us that they were a sufficient rule; but they recommend us to that from which they themselves had their origin—the spirit of truth. Therefore we must know, that if they could not be written except by inspiration of God, they cannot be understood but by inspiration. And hence the scrip-

tures tell us that we must go to inspiration to understand them. And when we are willing to come to the true pilot, the true rule, which is one and the same in all ages—the unchangeable spirit of truth, or grace of God, and we may give it as many names as man may fix upon it, but it all results in one and the same thing, *God in man, showing to man what his will is.*

How did our first parents come to know it? Had they written books, or had they angels or devils to give them this knowledge of God? No: none of these things at all. God showed himself to their immortal spirits, and held converse with their immortal souls. He does not hold converse with these mortal bodies; for it is not in bones to think or flesh to reason. Therefore if we consider rightly, we shall see that these animal bodies are not accountable, they cannot be accountable at all. Do we not see that these animal bodies are as passive to the mind, as meal is to the leaven?

Then shall these bodies suffer vengeance in eternal fire? Why, it can only be those who make gods like themselves, that can suppose that Almighty goodness will punish these bodies for the sins of the soul. No: and we learn from experience that these bodies are only susceptible to external afflictions, which bring about their termination. And this was the design of Providence, that the body should serve only as a tabernacle for the soul during its probation; therefore it is not accountable to God: it is the immortal soul only that is accountable to God, for its not governing these bodies and keeping them in the right line; for if it did, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, a great part of the diseases which afflict mankind would scarcely be known in the world.

But the soul enlisting with the passions, deserts the God of its life, and is drawn away from the Majesty of

heaven as its only Lord, and endeavours to decide for itself, between good and evil; when it is as impossible for it to decide between good and evil, right and wrong, as it is to create itself; because there is none in heaven or in earth that has knowledge sufficient to decide between good and evil, but God Almighty—He is the only decisive power; and therefore he condescends to be ever with us. Our own reason shows us it must be so, for every effect must rest upon its cause. And if God withdraw his presence every thing must go into annihilation, for it cannot stand any longer than he sustains it. It is a truth which the apostle says, that “he fills all things.”—There is not a leaf, or a plant that grows, but it is his power that sustains it, or it would die and fall into annihilation.

Here then we see his goodness and the extent of his power and wisdom when we contemplate the works of creation, and more especially when we look at ourselves; for the first step is to know ourselves. By effects we can trace their causes—we can see that we have no power to make ourselves, or to exist for one moment—we may be gay, strong, and nimble to-day, and to-morrow a lifeless corpse; and all the power on earth cannot help us. Here it is, that we come to know ourselves as we are. Here we become convinced that somewhere there is power sufficient to create us, to sustain us, and to continue us in existence; and Divine Wisdom, by that unerring witness that he has placed in the soul gives us a knowledge of ourselves, and of the operation of his own power. And here, by attention and care, we gradually learn not only to know God, but to form a clear sense of what our duty is, so that we are entirely satisfied to give ourselves up to God; and then it is, that we can sail peaceably over the ocean of time

—every day is peaceful and pleasant—there is no uneasiness about shoals or rocks; the water is deep enough for our vessel. We can sit down at evening and reflect upon its passage, and be thankful that Almighty goodness has been with us to direct our course—here we give up to him, and he speaks peace to our souls.

And how dare any rational creature lie down till he is at peace with God? I acknowledge to you, and that without boasting, that I dare not lay down my head and go to sleep, till I have an evidence that if I never awake in this life, I shall awake in the arms of the beloved of my soul. And what presumption it is for any one to do it in and under the influence of sin; when he knows and has seen so clearly, the uncertainty of time: for life is uncertain, but death is certain. It must be nothing but a kind of drunkenness that can lead him to do it. He must be drunk with the pleasures and amusements of time, or he never could do it. No rational creature could ever do it in his right mind, till he felt an evidence of peace, and that God had forgiven all his sins.

Now this will be our experience—it cannot be otherwise, my friends, if we apply to the Comforter; if we mind the doctrines of Jesus, and the effects produced on his disciples by their attending to his direction. Here man must learn of God by the manifestations of his own life, in qualifying us to do what he intended we should do. For the great and chief end of man is, to glorify God and enjoy him. Here now we are enabled to do it—every act glorifies him—we feel him to be glorified in us, because the result of our doings is peace, joy, and thanksgivings of soul; and thus God Almighty is glorified in our view, and exalted above every thing in our estimation.

I don't want to express a great many words, but I

want you to be called home to the substance. For the scriptures and all the books in the world can do no more—Jesus could do no more than to recommend to this Comforter, which was this light in him. “God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. And if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another:” because the light is one in all, and therefore it binds us together in the bonds of love; for it is not only light but love, that love which casts out all fear. So that they who dwell in God dwell in love, and they are constrained to walk in it, and if they “walk in it they have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.” But what blood, my friends? Did Jesus Christ the Saviour ever have any material blood? Not a drop of it, my friends—not a drop of it. That blood which cleanseth from all sin, was the life of the soul of Jesus. The soul of man has no material blood: but as the outward material blood, created from the dust of the earth, is the life of these bodies of flesh; so with respect to the soul, the immortal and invisible spirit, its blood is that life that God breathed into it. As we read in the beginning, that “God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into him the breath of life, and man became a living soul.” He poured his life into his soul, and it became alive to God.

The apostle had no allusion to the outward blood of Jesus, when he thus expressed himself. Because he left all these things behind, when he came into a right experience of the gospel state. “Wherefore,” says he, “henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.” Because he had come to Christ within.

And what is Christ, properly speaking? If we attend to the scriptures, we shall see that it means nothing but the anointing spirit of God. Jesus the anointed, was called Christ in the outward manifestation, but it was only the spirit—the light, as the apostle said, that was in Him—it was that only that was all the anointing he had, according as the Psalmist has wisely expressed himself in the view which he had of him. “Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity, therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.” He had a greater anointing than the rest of his brethren, because this he had after he had fulfilled the commandments of the old law. Then this anointing, with which he was anointed, and which the prophets had so fully experienced to qualify them, this qualified him to introduce the new covenant that Jeremiah speaks of. And this he did under the influence of the Holy Spirit, which is the law and rule of this covenant, and supersedes all other laws. When Jesus calls up the ordinances of the old law, he says: “Ye have heard that it hath been said, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, but I say unto you, that ye resist not evil.”

Now with respect to the morality of the law, what is it? Is it worth any thing to us? Has not the doctrine of Christ superseded all, and forbid us to go back to any part of it? Certainly it has, if we understand it rightly. We must not seek revenge. “Whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee; and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away. Love your enemies, bless them

that curse you, do good to them that hate you"—“If thine enemy hunger, give him meat; if he thirst, give him drink.”

“Ye have heard that it hath been said, thou shalt not forswear thyself. But I say unto you, swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God’s throne: nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.” Is it possible, that language could ever forbid oaths more completely than it has here? “But let your communications be, yea, yea; nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.” Now if all were, by self denial, to comply with this doctrine, could such take an oath to bring shame and reproach upon their profession? For I consider it a real reproach for a christian to take an oath; as those that will take oaths will fight, and thus break Christ’s commands, and again turn from him. But if we come to the doctrine of Jesus and obey the light, this makes the ten commandments of no avail to us, because we are raised above them. We have the perfect law written upon the table of the heart, which supersedes all the laws of men; and this law calls for the crucifying operation of self denial, and it is by this that we overcome the world. Here we see the excellency of this power, which as it is submitted to, brings into the religion of Christ, and teaches all to live peaceable and quiet lives; for it is above all the powers of the world. And here a just government cannot but submit and let us go on in peace and quiet. They can never rise up to oppose us, but join their hands to encourage us in this blessed way; for all outward law is superseded in the true christian. For when we come to this true spirit of the gospel, it unites us with God and with every

thing that is good among men. This is what we should labour after, my friends.

How we are blessed with opportunities to come up to the fulness of the Christian dispensation! Our magistrates and our government permit it. There is no other nation blessed with the benefits that we have. But we have not come to the Comforter,—this pilot, this power that will enable us to follow the counsel of Jesus; to lead the same life that he did; to attain and enjoy the same righteousness that he did. And we never can get it, but as he got his. And there is no other way that we can be benefited by the example of Jesus Christ. He does not call on us to do those miracles which he did, but greater than he did. “He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works shall he do; because I go unto my Father.” “Yet a little while and the world seeth me no more, but ye see me; because I live, ye shall live also.”

Every christian must come up under the influence of the same light that guided Jesus Christ—that Christ that was his Saviour and preserver; and that power which enabled him to do his work will enable us to come on in the same path. “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.” But we must not do it for a show merely, but from a sincere heart; as Jesus never did any thing but from the impression of the divine word in him; and then we shall begin to walk in that righteous path that he walked in. As he says “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” And, my friends, it was the work that was the way—the path that he trod is the same path and course of self denial that we must tread, and which is untrodden by every creature, till he comes to be led by the same spirit that led our great pattern. In that way, his righteousness becomes

ours; and this is the only righteousness that ever saved an individual in the world—and that is obedience to the manifestation of the will of God to him. This was Abraham's righteousness. He saw at a distance this peaceful dispensation, and conformed to it as far as the situation and condition of man would bear at that day. And of how much greater punishment shall we be worthy if we do not do better than we do, generally speaking? You may remember what Christ said. "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! Woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sack-cloth and ashes."

If they had not so great light, their sins were not so great; and yet theirs were not so great as Jerusalem's. And might it not now be said—"Woe unto thee, America! for if the mighty works which have been done in thee, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago." For we have a day much higher than any thing that outward miracles could give. For they were the weakest evidence that Almighty goodness could ever have given: but they were suited to the low and degraded state of the people; which was the case with the poor Israelites. This was a darling mercy of God unto them—to give them a dispensation suited to their low condition.

We have it now on record—only take up the precepts of Jesus; only look at his example, and his direction to his disciples, and see if we can find any thing, any testimony worthy to be compared with it. They could only be pointed to the substance while under the law of carnal commandments, because they were afraid of the divine presence. They wanted to enjoy temporal good—the good of a temporal heaven—that good land—that they might rejoice in the things of time; and these were pro-

mised them on condition of being faithful to submit to the religion which he gave them. Hence he enjoined sacrifices to break down the will. Now this was the design of the Almighty in all his dispensations, to break down the will; because in a want of conformity of that to the divine will consists all our misery.

Here now, how can we help, my friends, but see how necessary it is to follow the direction of Jesus, to wait for the Comforter. When we do this, we shall feel the effects of that power which reproveth the world of sin; "For he dwelleth with you and shall be in you, teaching you all things, and bringing all things to your remembrance."

Now do you believe this doctrine when you read it? No; you don't believe. You seem to understand it, but yet you do not understand it: for one would suppose that if it were rightly understood it could not be treated so lightly. Do not mankind turn directly from it? Instead of attending to it, they make teachers of their own; they send men to learn to preach, and set them up in churches, and they take the words of a book to be their rule and guide; and we see what mischief it has brought about in Christendom. It gives them no power to overcome their passions; for they can only obtain this by doing as the disciples were commanded by Jesus, "to wait for power from on high." They can curse and swear, and then go and preach or hear preaching. Now is it not consistent to believe what I have said, that our punishment will be greater than that of the inhabitants of Jerusalem; because our light is greater and our opportunities greater?

We see that the Jewish Scribes, Pharisees, and Priests, were under the power and dominion of the Roman Emperor, yet they had such power that they put to death the Messiah, and their followers persuaded the Roman

officers to indulge them in their violence. And so it is now, if we judge by the fruits of those who stand like the Scribes, and Pharisees, and Priests of the Jews. If they could get the civil power in their hands, we have no reason to doubt, that the same kind of persecutions would take place, as in the days of Jesus, or among the Christian professors in the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries. O then, let us be individually endeavouring to gather to the light, and wait on the Lord that we may see his counsel; then shall we believe in the doctrine of his son. And what was this? Tarry at Jerusalem,—wait for the Comforter. He never directed to himself, but all he wanted was to lead their minds to the spirit of truth, to the light within, and when he had done this, he had done his office. And what we have to do is, to retire to this law which is written upon the tablets of the heart. Therefore it is the life of this law that is the blood of the soul, and this inward law is the light of the soul, and it is this life that cleanses us from all sin.

But time would fail me to open all these things; and I am not willing to be tedious to my hearers—I feel my own infirmity. I felt nothing when I came into this meeting, nor had I a desire after any thing, but to centre down into abasement and nothingness: and in this situation I remained for a while, till I found something was stirring and rising in my spirit. And this was what I laboured after,—to be empty, to know nothing, to call for nothing, and to desire to do nothing. Now my whole drift is, to gather the minds of the people to the light within, which is the same as the grace of God, the manifestation of the spirit that reproves for evil. It was this that Jesus recommended to his disciples—it was this light which George Fox preached—it is an emanation from God in the soul of man, by his power and spirit; and he is every where, for in him we live, move, and have our being.

[Here the speaker sat down for a moment, and then rose and delivered in substance the following testimony.]

He felt it his duty on the present occasion to express his deep abhorrence for war, which he considered one of the greatest of evils—He spoke of peace and love, which would raise a people above all wars and powers of wars in the world. In the example of William Penn and his associates, the principles of the gospel completely triumphed over the asperities of the warlike savage: while on a neighbouring continent, the spirit of war was introduced, and followed by a train of characteristic evils, in which was shed the blood of thousands. He trusted that in so large an assembly, there might be a considerable number who had been led to see the inconsistency of war, and if they would be faithful to the light within, they would be brought to bear testimony against it. Here the reformation might go on, till the whole nation would be willing to lay down their arms; and when this should be the case, the powers of the earth would never rise up against them; nor would the people ever feel a desire to arm themselves. Upon this point, he was as clear in his own mind as he could wish to be. He considered that all wars and preparation for wars, have their source in pride and love of dominion; and if a stop was not put to it, he feared that it might eventuate in the overthrow of our happy government. He exhorted his hearers to take warning, to reflect seriously, to lay it to heart. No nation was ever born at once, nor could a reformation be brought about at once. The spread of the gospel was a gradual work, and while the disciples and other professors continued faithful, it grew and increased, but when the spirit of war got in, discord and confusion was the result.

He would acknowledge, before he took leave of this assembly, the satisfaction that he had felt from their quiet and orderly deportment. It carried an encouraging evidence in his mind, that there was good at work in many minds, and he hoped in every one. His spirit rejoiced in him, and he commended them for their conduct. And in the feeling of that love which spread over sea and earth, he bade them, affectionately, *farewell*.

THE QUAKER.

SERMON BY ELIAS HICKS, AT PINE-STREET MEETING, PHILADELPHIA, DECEMBER 10, 1826.

IN looking over this large assembly, my mind has become impressed with a sentiment, which comprehends in it much caution and instruction. It may be (or the substance of it) recorded in the scriptures of truth, but whether it is or not, it loses none of its excellency. It was in this language: "Let love be without dissimulation." Now I conclude, that a degree---at least a profession of love to religion, has been the principal inducement, of collecting so many together at this time; for religion, or the name of it, is a very popular thing in these days, and may therefore lead those who have not much love for it, to profess it, and to attend religious opportunities.

Not that I would judge any present of being in this condition, but only to propose the necessity of examining ourselves, that we may know the foundation of our love. Because we will all agree, that love is the most excellent and powerful principle in heaven or in earth ---its power is above all powers. It will indeed subject all other powers to itself; because God is love, and that love that is of God and in God is stronger than death.

Now a dissembling love is a hypocritical love; for under a profession of it, men and women may cover a great deal of real hatred and ill-will towards their fellow creatures. It is therefore of infinite importance to us, as professors of Christianity, to examine ourselves and try ourselves on this principle. For to be Christians, we must be not only possessed of love, but it must be the ruling principle of all our actions. We have this clearly pointed out and enforced in the example of Jesus Christ, both in his doctrines, and life of good works.

There can be no agreement between hatred and love ; and there can be nothing in love that will ever promote discord among men. Because a Christian must be in the same life, and live with the same blood as Christ did. And you know, my friends, what makes the life of a child of God, one who is truly a child of God, and in the image of God. We are told that in the beginning, "God breathed into man the breath of life, and he became a living soul." And as the support of the animal life is the blood; so it is with the soul: the breath of life which God breathed into it, is the blood of the soul, the life of the soul; and in this sense we are to understand it, and in no other sense. And as animal blood is the animal life, it can reach no higher than animal life.

Here now we may all decide for ourselves under the influence of that gift which the great and all-wise Creator has dispensed to us, agreeably to abundant scripture testimony, and our own individual experience. Because I am ready to conclude, that there is no man or woman so wicked, that they would not in their serious moments acknowledge that they have this gift. For otherwise, my friends and fellow professors, what would ever reprove us of sin? Do we suppose that there is any thing else in heaven or earth that would reprove us for sin, in

the manner that we are reprovèd in ourselves? No; there is nothing else, and therefore we must be convinced that it arises from God; that it is God that reprovès us; and when he thus reprovès us, we may try all our days to get rid of it, but still confusion and distress will follow us so long as we transgress against this life and gift. I say, I dare appeal to the wickedest of men, and they must acknowledge that they do know they have it, and are reprovèd by it.

Now here is the great business of our lives, not only to know this reprovèr, but to know that it is a gift from God, a manifestation of his own pure life, that was in his son Jesus Christ. As the apostle testifies: "In him was life, and the life was the light of men; and that was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." Now can we hesitate a single moment, in regard to the truth of this declaration? No sensible, reflecting mind can possibly do it.

This, then, seems to be my principal concern, and has been for many years—and all that the best teachers ever did or could do, was, to gather people's minds to this gift. This was the concern of Jesus Christ, our great pattern, in regard to the woman of Samaria, at Jacob's well. He reminded her of the known gift of God; by which, had she acted consistently with it, she would have discovered who he was, and have asked of him; as he was the only instructor at that time to Israel. They had refused to be spoken to immediately; they preferred to be spoken to by man: therefore Moses, the prophets, and Jesus Christ spoke to them words communicated by the Holy Spirit. Here we see of what account this gift is to us; that all our present and future happiness depends on a right attention to it. It is able to give us happiness here on earth, and it will enable us to sit in

heavenly places in Christ Jesus---that is, to feel sweet communion of spirit with God our creator, which no external thing can do for us. No traditional Christian can experience it---no mere, traditional Christian, who depends on the letter and not on the spirit. For if we look back, we are made to conclude, from history, that a traditional religion has been a persecuting religion from the beginning of the world, ever since the fall of man to the present day. And we see that it cannot be otherwise, when we reflect seriously. Because, what is tradition? It is something that we learn from men who have gone before us, or who are living with us. It is taking upon trust, what others have done or are doing---pinning our faith upon others' sleeves. And thus we make void the commandments of God by our traditions, as Jesus told the high professors in his day, the rulers and elders in Israel. Now we are to take care and not split on that rock. Our religion must be a religion of experience---a religion of love, arising out of the life-giving presence of our Heavenly Father. "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the spirit of God."

Now do we believe this? We read the scriptures, and say that we believe them; but let us look over our conduct individually, and see whether it comports with this belief; whether we live consistently with this profession. For as I have observed, a profession of religion has become a popular thing: men are led by popularity, which appears to be the ruling principle at the present day, in almost every thing. When any thing becomes popular the multitude run to it.

Here we ought to consider the ground and cause of this deception and from whence it arises. It arises from

the very same source that was pointed out by Jesus to the Scribes and Pharisees. They loved the praise of their fellow creatures; they loved the praise of men more than their God. "For all their works," he says, "they do to be seen of men." Now what an awful state! How deeply it ought to impress our minds---under the consideration, that by nature we are so liable to fall into this condition and state of mind. It has caused a great deal of mourning with many, not only as it regards religion, but even in civil matters and in moral things; for it destroys outward, civil government and moral laws. It makes them worth little or nothing, as popularity becomes the ruling principle; for whether it be right or wrong, is not so much the concern of individuals to investigate, as to run with the current.

I want to speak to your senses, for you must know from experience, that this is too apt to be the case. I am not about to criminate any, or to suppose that there are not exceptions. I hope there are many, and that there are many true hearted men and women who love God sincerely. And if they love him sincerely and above all, they will love religion---for what is true religion? It consists entirely in righteousness, that righteousness which is acceptable in the sight of God. It unites them with God, as it did his blessed Son, and brings them to partake of his holy nature, and they become one with him---as the disciples formerly, were declared to be partakers of the divine nature. Therefore they are divine in proportion as they are swallowed up in the divinity of their Heavenly Father. For every child of God must have the nature of God; as nothing else can qualify him to enjoy the happiness of God, or the happiness that he intends for his rational children. Here now we see the necessity of coming to this blessed principle of love;

for it comprehends every thing---it comprehends all virtue, all power, all wisdom, and all knowledge that is true and real. For if God is love, every thing that man can attribute to him as virtuous---all his gracious attributes, centre in that one point, and must be all swallowed up in divine love.

Here now we see, that if man had not turned away, what blessings he would have attained. The whole creation would have been always under subjection to the divine will, and would have been always united as one; for God is one, and his children one in him. Here we should have gone on, my friends, had man always been faithful; for he has dealt out to us equally in all ages of the world. He has never made any distinction in the manifestation of his love to his rational creatures. He has placed every son and daughter of Adam on the same ground, and in the same condition that our first parents were in. For every child must come clean out of the hands of God: for by his power all are created, however he may have pointed out by his wisdom, a different way for the continuance of this creation. As it regards the first act of creation, in respect to our first parents, he made them male and female, that they might carry on the great work of creation, continually, but always by the aid of his power and assistance; and I want our minds to be gathered back to first principles. And what are these? Why, the same principle, the same divine life, which God breathed into our first parents, he has breathed into every rational soul under heaven.

Now this life is the first principle, and has been the first principle, in every step of reformation since man's fall and disobedience to God, and every thing in which he takes the seat of God in the heart. For when man turns away from God and his commandments---from his

divine law written in the mind, he breaks the covenant that God made with him in the beginning---a covenant of love and life. For the covenant made with man in the beginning has never been altered nor changed, but it is the same that ever it was to all the children of men. Therefore, the covenant of love and life is the breath of life, which the Almighty breathed into man---he breathed into him power and life sufficient to know himself and the God that made him. Here he learns his dependence on him, and that it is his duty to obey him in all things, and never to usurp authority above his commandments. Here now, it is only by gathering to this light that we can gain a place in his favour, and by endeavouring that all our actions should proceed from the movings of this life in the immortal soul---and as this comes to be our case we gain reconciliation with the Father.

Now we see that all the holy men of old have signified this to us in plain terms---“Cease to do evil, learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed”---all these are required, for till we do every thing in our power, by every means put in our hands, we shall not find support from God. “Cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment; (true judgment, my friends;) relieve the oppressed; plead for the widow.” Then---see---not till then---“Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord.” What bounty! what encouragement, my friends! Every thing in me bows before it---“Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” There are no sins so great, in this probationary state, but he stands ready to forgive us, if we turn to him with full purpose of heart and acknowledge our transgressions. He gives us the grace of repentance, and enables us so to walk as to be reconciled to him, and gain a greater establishment

in himself, and in the truth, than when we first came out of his creating hands. For although man was made pure and without defilement---for He declares that all that He made “*was* very good”---yet man had no virtue, for he had no knowledge: we bring no true knowledge into the world with us. But God, in his infinite wisdom and goodness, saw that the only way in which man could rise and be a communicant with him, was to place him in a state of probation, and furnish him with means whereby he might go on in the warfare that this state of probation opened in his soul. For having endued his creature man with propensities both of body and mind, these propensities tempted him to turn aside from the will of his Creator. Here was immediately a warfare begun---God was on one side, and every thing good was united with him and in him. The creature---the rational creature as it was united to the animal body, was of the earth, and therefore earthy. As the apostle says---“The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man,” that is, the birth of God in the soul, is spiritual. Every one that is born of God has this inward birth, this second birth; as we read: “That was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.” And here now, this has been the experience of every rational soul under heaven; and it is the only medium whereby we can ever be united again to God. And if man had not fallen, as we come into the world without knowledge and capacity to do any thing, though innocent; so we must know another birth---a birth of the immortal spirit, which is as invisible as God himself. We must come to witness a birth of the Spirit, a second birth, as Jesus declared to Nicodemus, “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

So that we see, man is a twofold creature, and must

experience a twofold birth. First he is born into the world an animal composed of flesh and blood, all of the earth---all produced out of the dust of the earth. And all flesh and blood returns to the earth again because it is mortal. It is a thing designed in the wisdom of God to continue only for a while, as a tabernacle for the immortal soul to go through its exercises in. And when it has finished its course, a separation takes place: the body returns to dust---to the bosom of its mother earth, and there lies in eternal quiet---and it is not accountable to God; for it is not in bones to think, or flesh to reason. The animal body is not accountable to God, because he has put it under the direction of the immortal soul, and given it sovereignty over it.

Now this is the work of God, for every rational creature sees, that the body is passive to the mind, as meal is to the leaven: for it is the mind that directs the body in all its movements. If the mind says kill, it kills; if it says save alive, it saves alive according to its power. The animal natures, the animal bodies of the children of men can act upon nothing but what is material, and all the bodies on earth can never touch the soul to do it harm, any other than by the animal propensities leading the soul to enlist in the service of the passions.

Now here, we see what excellency there is comprehended in this little sentence: "Let love be without dissimulation." It leads to abhor the evil and to do the good. Here is the work of love, pure, undefiled love ---to leave undone that which is evil, and do that which is good. Here it begins its work---it begins to give a display to the minds of the children of men, what they are to do; neither does it stop here. For it not only leads to abhor the evil and do the good, but it condescends to show in a clear and explicit manner what this

good is. "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another." Here then is the drift and tendency of love. And how it humbles the creature and brings him down, and leads him off from every thing, that carries the least degree of exaltation in it. And it does not stop here, but it commands to "mind not high things, but to condescend to men of low estate." What blessedness is comprehended in this saying, provided we do not rest in the outside and the profession of it---the mere profession of faith and belief; for faith without works is dead. It never did any thing for an individual but to make his condemnation more severe. Finally, love lands us in this blessed condition, that the God of peace will be with us; because, why? We have followed in the course of his appointment; we have submitted to his holy will, manifested by his grace in our souls: and the God of peace will be with all these. And as every positive proposition embraces a negative one of the same value as to the truth of the thing; so here we see in a plain way, that those who have not gone in this course of God's appointment, this peace will not be with them. This negative truth is as clear as the positive.

O my beloved friends and fellow professors! how my soul craves that you may not only hear me but feel me; for I trust I have this one good trait of a Christian, that I love you all sincerely, for God's sake and for your souls' sake. And therefore I don't want to be a judge of your conduct, but to act the part of a counsellor, and encourager to every one. I feel that love which I believe is spread over the whole human race---the love of God, who stands ready to help every one and to give strength and ability to walk in it. I would not dare to suppose any thing contrary to this, as I consider it would be a high offence against God.

But now after looking at the excellency of persevering in this love, it is good to look at both sides of the question, and see what any religion can do, which is not founded in this pure and undefiled love. If our religion is a traditional one, what is it worth? Jesus has told us---the lip of truth has told us, and I believe it sincerely. When speaking to the high professors in that day, the Scribes and Pharisees, he told them in plain and explicit language that they made void the commandments of God by their traditions. Don't you believe it, my friends? If you believe the scriptures you must believe it, and feel and know the effects of this kind of tradition. For the Israelites had a plain, simple law of commandments given them by God Almighty; and it was written by his finger upon tables of stone. And these were broken, through the conduct, or in consequence of the conduct, of the Israelites. For when Moses was a little while separated from them, they went back to their idolatry, which was the condition they were in in their fallen state. But this law was regained and written again; and he added thereto statutes and judgments to Israel. But all was plain; and he speaks to them all as to one individual; for this dispensation, was a figure, type, or shadow of better things, to all those who should come to a knowledge of it.

Now you will acknowledge, I trust, that the Israelites did very illy in not filling up consistently their law, as every Israelite had the means given him, and he had power to live up to it. And we see how unwise they were at the same time, that they did not live up to it, for their outward interest depended on it; and it brought misery and distress upon the people when they deviated from it: because it was so plain that when they turned aside they were confounded. They had a portion of the

divine light in them, sufficient to answer the purpose of the dispensation and to teach them their duty to God. But here they were not contented; they wanted to do something themselves. Their temptation was to have their eyes opened to see right and wrong without God's commandments, and to decide contrary to the law and covenant that thus opened things so clearly to the people. And as they departed from the law that God had given them, it was natural for them to fall into traditions, and these became so powerful that they superseded the law, and thus they made void the law of God.

Now do you not suppose, that the same causes will always produce the same effects? To be sure we are not called on to come into that dispensation—we are not to go back to the things there commanded; for one greater than Moses is come, and has introduced a new covenant, or rather has called the people back to the first dispensation and covenant which God made with his creature man in the beginning, and which is written upon the tables of the heart by the finger of God, and not upon tables of stone, but upon the very tablets of our souls. Here is a law more comprehensive than the law of Moses, and it is clear to every individual of us, as the law was to the Israelites. For I dare not suppose, that the Almighty would by any means make it a doubtful or mysterious one. It would not become God at all to suppose this the case—it would be casting a deep reflection upon his goodness and wisdom. Therefore I conceive that the law written in the heart, if we attend to it, and do not turn from it to build up traditions, or depend on any thing that arises from self, or that is in our own power, but come to be regulated by this law, we shall see that it is the easiest thing to be understood that can be, and that all our benefits depend on our complying with this law.

Here now we see what tradition is. It is a departure from this law; and it has the same effect now, that tradition had upon the followers of the outward law; as a belief in tradition was produced, they were bound by it, and trusted in it. And so people, now-a-days, seem to be compelled to believe in tradition, and thus they turn away from the gospel dispensation, or otherwise the light and life of God's Spirit in the soul, which is the law of the new covenant; for the law is light and the commandment a lamp to show us the way to life.

Be serious, my dear friends, it is an awful thing; and I believe that the hovering wing of divine kindness is near, and that it has brought upon us this quiet state that we may learn of him.

Here we see that we could have no possible tradition—no such thing. Because, as the law was clear to every Israelite, they had no need of tradition; and so with us now, we have the inward law written in our hearts, agreeable to the prediction of Jeremiah. "I will make a new covenant with them." Now this could only have been with Israel, because he had never given such a covenant to any except the Israelites, and all others were reckoned under the law of the first covenant, the covenant of love and life. For when God breathed into them his presence, his own power, and made the soul alive, he put it in a capacity to hear God, to look inwardly and commune with him inwardly and spiritually, while they kept free from transgression.

He told them he would make a new covenant with the house of Israel. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the

land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them."

See, my friends, do you believe these truths? If you don't, you don't believe the scriptures; after all your profession of them, you don't believe them. For by our works we must be tried, and not by a profession founded on belief or faith; nor by faith only; for belief never saved the soul, except when it has become an operative belief---till the soul is led to condescend to those things that are pointed out to it by the light, and to work by it and with it, whereby the soul is brought from under the power and dominion of sin, and is washed clean in the blood of the lamb.

And what is the blood of the lamb? It was his life, my friends; for as outward, material blood was made use of to express the animal life, inspired men used it as a simile. Outward blood is the life of the animal, but it has nothing to do with the soul; for the soul has no animal blood, no material blood. The life of God in the soul is the blood of the soul, and the life of God is the blood of God; and so it was the life and blood of Jesus Christ his son. For he was born of the spirit of his heavenly Father, and swallowed up fully and completely in his divine nature, so that he was completely divine. It was this that operated, in that twofold state, and governed the whole animal man which was the son of Abraham and David---a tabernacle for his blessed soul. Here now we

see, that flesh and blood are not capable of being in reality divine; for are they not altogether under the direction and guidance of the soul? Thus the animal body of Jesus did nothing but what the divine power in the soul told it to do. Here he was swallowed up in the divinity of his Father while here on earth, and it was this that was the active thing, the active principle that governed the animate earth. For it corresponds, and cannot do otherwise, with Almighty goodness, that the soul should have power to command the animal body to do good or evil; because he has placed us in this probationary state, and in his wisdom has set evil and good before us---light and darkness. He has made us free agents, and given us opportunity to make our own election. *

Here now we shall see what is meant by election, the election of God. We see that those who choose the Lord for their portion and the God of Jacob for the lot of their inheritance, these are the elect. And nothing ever did or can elect a soul to God, but in this choice. Here we see this in the whole scope of the scriptures: although they are not sufficient to empower us to see things clearly. Yet the scriptures go to certify us of this truth. And when we come to see in the true light we shall find there is not power in the letter to give us strength; and if we ever have a sufficiency there is but one power that can give it to us. What do the scriptures say? Don't they say that we must go to the spirit, this divine law written upon the tables of our hearts, the light and life of God in our souls?

Oh! my friends, that we were more spiritually minded! The consequence would be, that we should all be united in brotherly love, and understand the truth of that declaration: "Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be

kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another." But by going on in a contrary course---when our religion is traditional, we love to be highest, and lords over God's heritage. This is the result of traditional religion. And we may conclude from the annals of the world, that in every tongue, kindred, and people, where there has been a profession of religion, and where priests have taken the rule, and made traditions popular, and rested in them, it has always eventuated in persecution to the greatest extent that the power of man could exert, to kill and destroy by every cruel way which could be invented.

But in this latter age of the world, what advantages and privileges we have! If we improve them as we ought, and reflect on these things, we shall see the insufficiency of every thing external and mortal, and that no external evidence whatever, not even all the outward miracles wrought by all the servants of God in former ages, ever will cleanse the soul from sin. The principal thing that they could do, was to bring in and open upon the minds of the Israelites a consideration of the First Cause. But we see that they did not give any knowledge of the supreme power and great First Cause; but through the interference of outward miracles, which appeared to be beyond all the power of man, they were led to consider that there was an invisible God, whose power was above all external means and powers.

And this is the way we must come to know God. We must know him in a rational sense, as that power that fills the immensity of space, that is every where present, that cannot alter, that cannot be lessened, and who cannot be exalted above or made greater than what he is. For by and through his wisdom, power, and goodness,

he created the worlds which we behold, and likely ten thousand more which we cannot behold with our external eyes. This we must suppose, from the true sense which we have of him, and from scripture testimony, that "he fills all things," and is every where present--- that he emits of his goodness, and gives a display of it to his rational creature man, whereby he visits his soul and causes him to partake of his divine nature. But he loses nothing---he is eternally the same, unaltered, self-living, and self-preserving principle. And he has given us an outward display of it. And how wonderful it is, when we are led to see the works of creation, to look at the outward sun, how it is constantly emitting its rays on the outward creation: it emits of its power, warmth, and goodness, and yet it never lessens; it never loses any of its essence; it still remains the same as it ever was. See what an index it is to lead us to adore the great Jehovah, the God who made the sun and all the worlds, and who is ever emitting of his goodness, for we feel *that* in us, that the outward sun could not do for us. It opens a light in our souls, that the light of the outward sun has nothing to do with. It only enlightens our outward eyes; but the sun of heaven enlightens the souls of the children of men, and gives them to see spiritual things as clearly as the outward sun does corporeal things. Here how we ought to adore the Almighty wisdom, power, and goodness, to the children of men, in opening so many ways whereby they might improve, if they would keep under a state of subordination to the Creator.

Now this leads us to this point, that the will of man being separated from the will of God is the cause of all the sin, misery, oppression, and every thing that is bad in the world. This is the whole cause of it; because the will of man never can work the righteousness of God.

And yet how men like to have their own will in opposition to that of God their Creator. They will set up governments by the dint of the sword, and agreeable to their own wills---they want to have dominion over their fellow creatures---they want to be glorious in earthly things. They want to get possession of miles of earth, and set up kingdoms and states in their own will. Here we learn that the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. And not only so in moral and corporeal things, which we have a sense of, and a control over, in a certain degree, as animal creatures. But when we come to a knowledge of things in religion, we see what presumption this is, and how we cast the Almighty Sovereign of all things out of the heart, and take his seat in the soul, take his throne from him, and are therefore exalted above all that is called God in us; as Paul describes the man of sin, that should “be revealed, the son of perdition: who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God; or that is worshipped.”

And what is this man of sin, my fellow christians? It is nothing but the will of God’s rational creation separated from the divine will. He has in every sense usurped the place of God, and stands in the throne of God, and makes up his religion according to his own will. If it is not so, why are all these schools and colleges found among men, to teach them to become ministers of the gospel? If it is not so, what are these for? If the Almighty is every where present, and if he comprehends all wisdom and power, he is able to raise up gospel ministers from the most insignificant creatures, and the most despised among the children of men. And when he raises up these, will he select and bring into his service men who are under the government of their own wills? But when he raises up any from the ground, how they

are made to marvel. Yet we see, that they wont learn, though he raises up, as it were from the dunghill, a dear little female, or a male. He endues them with his love and life, that through obedience, filial obedience, they may grow wise unto salvation till they feel redeemed from all sin. Here they come unto that love which will seek the welfare and good of all. Here the moving of this love upon their souls, though they feel themselves so insignificant, raises a desire for the good of others, though it is a great cross to them, considering their obscure state in society, and feeling how unworthy they are. How hard it is for such to give up to God and to be a messenger, and yet how he raises up some of these, and how they glorify his name by what he manifests by his life in their souls.

But now when we turn to other men, who are trusting to human science, all of which is foolishness and perfect nonsense, and cannot help one jot or tittle forward in our soul's redemption, for all such science is deficient and cannot help us to know God; then how reasonable and plain a case it is. Because as God has all power, and comprehends all knowledge; so he is in our souls, and ready to open all knowledge that will do us good; for he has all knowledge of good and evil. Man never brought into the world any knowledge; and he has no power to decide correctly. It is only through the efficiency of this divine light and life or grace of God, that he can decide. And this is given to every one to profit with.

Now it is called light, especially by us of this society, who profess to be christians. This is the foundation which George Fox came out upon---he directed them to "mind the light." But it led many of the professors to be his enemies, and they told strange things about him, that he denied the divinity of Jesus Christ; and they per-

secuted him and his immediate followers. Then why will we not learn when we have such opportunities? Why not bring things home and examine for ourselves, and not pin our faith upon others' sleeves, and be led along by the nose I was going to say, to follow others? It is no wonder that it has led us into darkness, and, therefore, away from the life-giving presence of God, which would give us every thing we need to know, as the sons of men, whose breath is in their nostrils.

I say, dearly beloved, my soul craves it for us, that we may sink down and examine ourselves; according to the declaration of the apostle: "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves: Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you except ye be reprobates?" Now we cannot suppose that the apostle meant that outward man, that walked about the streets of Jerusalem; because he is not in any of us. But what is this Jesus Christ? *He* came to be a Saviour to that nation, and was limited to that nation. He came to gather up, and look up the lost sheep of the house of Israel. But as he was a Saviour in the outward sense, so he was an outward shadow of good things to come; and so the work of the man, Jesus Christ, was a figure. He healed the sick of their outward calamities---he cleansed the leprosy---all of which was external and affected only their bodies---as sickness don't affect the souls of the children of men, though they may labour under all these things. But as he was considered a Saviour, he meant by what he said, a Saviour is within you, the anointing of the spirit of God is within you: for this made the ways of Jesus so wonderful in his day, that the Psalmist in his prophecy concerning him exclaims, "Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity: therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." He had loved righte-

ousness, you perceive, and therefore was prepared to receive the fulness of the spirit, the fulness of that divine anointing; for there was no germ of evil in him or about him: both his soul and body were pure. He was anointed above all his fellows, to be the head of the church, the top-stone, the chief corner-stone, elect and precious. And what was it that was a Saviour? Not that which was outward; it was not flesh and blood: For "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven;" it must go to the earth from whence it was taken. It was that life, that same life that I have already mentioned, that was in him, and which is the light and life of men, and which lighteth every man, and consequently every woman, that cometh into the world. And we have this light and life in us; which is what the apostle meant by Jesus Christ; and if we have not this ruling in us we are dead, because we are not under the law of the spirit of life. For the "law is light, and the reproofs of instruction the way to life."

I want us to be more and more spiritually minded, for all depends on it. The apostle has given this distinction, and has clearly recapitulated it in his argumentation, in nearly the same expressions as the prophet; though not exactly in the same language. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." "Eye hath not seen," that is, the external eye; and the external ear hath not heard, "neither have entered into the heart of man the good things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit: for the spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the spirit of God," that is in him.

This is clear and positive to every one present, if they would only look at it. As there is no creature under man, that can enjoy the happiness, or the things of a man. They must first come to have the nature and spirit of a man; for it is not till then, that they can know the things of a man. So none can know the things of God, but by the spirit of God—certainly so. Hence the necessity to gather inward to the spirit, the light and life of God in the soul; for thus do we become united to God, and when this is the case, we are born again as sure as we are born into this world. For the children of the Lord are taught of the Lord, and in righteousness are they established; and great shall be the peace of these children. May this be our experience, one and all—it is the prayer of my mind.

And Oh! may the dearly beloved youth let these things have place. How frequently has my heart yearned for you. I know what it is to be young---I know the temptations of youth---I know how liable we are to be led astray by our parents, and those who are older than ourselves. If we have not come under the dominion of love, or which is the same thing to us, if our religion is only a traditional one, it is calculated to make us stumbling blocks to the youth. But, my dear young friends, you are all to answer for yourselves: for no man can save his brother, or give to God a ransom for his soul. We are to cast off all such dependence; and yet we are not to dishonour our parents in the least degree. And, my dear young friends, if you come under the influence of the grace of God, you will be enabled to honour your parents more than you can do in any other way; though it should lead you to go directly counter, and to stand directly counter to your parents; which it no doubt will do, if they have no religion but a traditional one. And yet you may act in your places with propriety. For

under the law children were not to be obedient, only in the Lord; so it will be with those children, who are brought under the influence of divine grace.

I know what I say: for often in the days of my vanity, I felt something in me so controlling, as not to do any thing to harm my kind and loving parent by running into practices that would give pain to his mind. I continued watchful not to do it, so that he could have knowledge of it. Here I was led to deceive him; for I could not bear to do it so that he should have knowledge of it, as I knew it would grieve him. And though we may hide it from them, this is better than wickedly to go to disregard and wound the feelings of our tender parent: and even if he is wrong, we must be careful not to wound or grieve him. Thus children under the influence and guidance of the grace of God will submit to and close in with its requisitions, and thus they will honour their parents, though they are led for a time to counteract their minds and wishes; yet never otherwise than the nature of the case requires. But these dear children, if they have persevered in this line, they have after a while, so brought their parents down into due consideration, that I have considered them the actual saviours of their parents. Then see what a blessing children may be to their parents—and thus the parents are made to rejoice that their children have thus conducted themselves.

I speak this for the encouragement of the dear youth; and I desire that they may gather inward to the gift of divine grace, which I am persuaded will never lead them astray from their duty to their parents, but make them love them, although they cannot obey man rather than God, but must obey God rather than man. Therefore, dear children, I want you all to feel for yourselves, that you are accountable creatures—that life is uncertain, and that there is no certainty of another day. Dare we then

lie down to take our rest with a defiled heart ; when we feel condemnation and confusion ? If we do, what presumptuous creatures we are—we cannot believe that we are accountable creatures. I dare not do such a thing as this---I dare not lay down my head to sleep till my peace is made with my heavenly Father ; so that if I should never open my eyes again, I may have confidence to believe in his mercy, and that he will receive me into favour. I don't speak these things boastingly, for I consider myself, oftentimes, the most unworthy of all the children of men. I have no merit ; I claim no merit, for any thing I do. I ascribe all, as our blessed pattern ascribed all, to the power, and wisdom of my heavenly Father. And so it will be with all who are obedient to his grace---they will come to feel it operating in them, as God over all, blessed for ever and ever.

[After *Elias Hicks* had delivered the foregoing discourse, *Jonathan Evans*, an Elder of Pine-Street Meeting, arose and expressed himself, in substance, as follows.]

I believe it to be right for me to say, that our Society have always believed in the atonement, mediation, and intercession of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ—that by him all things were created, in heaven and in earth, both visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, principalities, or powers.

We believe that all things were created by him, and for him; and that he was before all things, and that by him all things consist. And any doctrine which goes to invalidate these fundamental doctrines of the christian religion, we cannot admit, nor do we hold ourselves accountable for.

Great efforts are making to make the people believe, that Jesus Christ was no more than a man; but we do not believe any such thing, nor can we receive any such doctrine, or any thing which goes to inculcate such an idea.

We believe him to be King of kings, and Lord of lords, before whose judgment seat every soul shall be arraigned and judged by him. We do not conceive him to be a mere man; and we therefore desire, that people may not suppose that we hold any such doctrines, or that we have any unity with them.

[*Isaac Lloyd*, another Elder of the same meeting, also remarked,]

I unite with *Jonathan Evans*,—we never have believed that our blessed Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, came to the Jews only: for he was given for God's salvation, to the ends of the earth.

[*Elias Hicks* added,]

I have spoken; and I leave it for the people to judge—I don't assume the judgment seat.

Willet Hicks hoped that this large assembly would gather into quiet, which had been in some measure interrupted; as it was very visible that there was a great want of religious life. He said he was not replying to any thing that had been said, for he did not notice it. It must be evident to all, that there was a want of life among the professors of the Christian religion. We all unite in this, I trust, but individually, we are ascribing it to various causes, among which we enumerate many things. But this is visible and tangible, that it is all the effect of a cause; and there is but one cause that has produced this effect among us, and that is a departure from the guidance and influence of the Holy Ghost---this is the ground and cause of all this evil and wickedness.

Those that believe the blessed Master's testimony, that the Holy Ghost would be sent, and that it would lead and guide into all truth, must believe this; and we have the evidence in ourselves, that his declaration is true. For we have found that the Holy Ghost is come, and that its office is to lead and guide into all truth, all those who obey it. Therefore we know of a truth, according to the testimony of the scriptures, that the Holy Ghost is given unto men to lead them to the kingdom of God. And it will as certainly, lead every son and daughter of Adam to the city of God, as ever the star led the wise men of the east to Bethlehem of Judea, where the babe was, if they will only attend to it. And it will be unto them as "a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night," to mark the holy way to God. This was promised, and is given unto men for their leader, their comforter and their guide. Therefore, a departure from this, is the cause of all the sin and wickedness in the world. And Oh! that men would come

home and acknowledge its power, and live under its influence.

I am desirous that people should be well grounded in this principle of light and life; “for by their fruits ye shall know them,” and “the fruits of the spirit,” Paul says, “are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, charity,” and the whole catalogue of virtues. And when we see *these* fruits brought forth, such as love, joy, peace, and all the train of virtues, we must judge by this rule, that, that which produces them is good.

But what are the fruits of the flesh? They are hypocrisy, envy, jealousy, hatred, malice, and many other fruits of a similar character. From which we have reason to judge, that those who produce them, have departed from the Holy Spirit of God, by which, as Paul says, we are sealed unto the day of redemption. Therefore I want the minds of the people to be serious. And O ye rising youth! may you seek the God of your fathers; for if you seek him he will be found of you, but if you forsake him he will cast you off. Oh! that you may seek him, in these times that are so trying; when there seems to be few that you can look up to, for an example: for you now see and feel, that you must examine for yourselves. The time is come, when you must look and investigate into the truth for yourselves. Oh! that you may seek the Lord early and steadfastly, that he may lead and guide you into all truth: and in the same measure that this is your engagement, the Lord will be your friend, and guide you in the paths of righteousness and in the paths of peace.

EXTRACTS.

“We do believe that it is the duty of children to honour their parents, as God hath commanded in his law, and as the holy apostle taught, saying, ‘Children, obey your parents in the Lord:’ mark, in the Lord.”

“Now children coming to be led by the Spirit of the Lord, this leadeth them to obey their parents in all righteous things; but if any parent be an idolater, or, an unjust, intemperate person, and do require the child, who hath believed in Christ, to worship an idol, in that case the child must obey God and Christ, though it do forsake father and mother, (or they forsake it;) or if the parents should require the child to do that which it knows is sin against God and Christ, in that case God and Christ is to be obeyed. Christ saith, ‘He that will not forsake father and mother, wife and children, lands and livings, for my sake and the gospel, he is not worthy of me.’ But if parents be unbelievers and idolaters; we do believe it is the child’s duty to be loving and tender to them, and assistant to them what they are able, according to their necessities.”

W. GIBSON. “*The life of God, which is the light and Salvation of men, exalted.*” pp. 96, 97.

“The coming of Christ in that blessed manifestation, [his appearance in the flesh] was to the *Jews only*: he says it himself, ‘He was not sent *but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.*’—Mat. xiii. 24. Again, ‘He came unto his own, and his own received him not.’”—John, i. 11.

Wm. Penn, vol. v. p. 385.

“When he was but twelve years old, he disputed with

the doctors and teachers of the law, hearing and asking them questions, discovering the pure wisdom of the Father which dwelt in him, because it was his Father's business which he was to be about, as he told his mother, Luke ii. 49. And when the Lord led him into the wilderness to be tried, he went and was tempted, that he might fight the battle against his great adversary. And when the spirit of the Lord was upon him, moving him to preach the gospel, he preached the gospel in the spirit and power of the Father, and went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil, as his Father's spirit led and guided him. For he did nothing of himself, or in his own will, or for himself; but all in the will and time of the Father.

'Mine hour is not yet come,' said he to his mother, when she was hasty to have him do that miracle of turning water into wine, John ii. 4. And so when his brethren urged him to go up to the feast, John vii. 3, 4. 'My time,' said he, 'is not yet come; your time is always ready.' ” ver. 5.

I. Penington, vol. 4, p. 99.

“There was the seed that wrought the thing, which seed was the life; and the seed in which he wrought it, which was formed into a vessel like ours, but without sin, in which the pure Lamb appeared, in the pure power of life, *which kept the vessel pure*; and so he who was to be the first fruits, had the honour above all *his brethren*, being *anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows*.

But we are also born of the same seed. He is formed in us; we are formed of him; we are as well of his flesh and blood as he was of ours. And by being thus formed, and feeling him grow up in us, and receiving an un-

derstanding from him, and in him, thus we come to know him, and to understand the words of scripture concerning him. *By feeling and knowing the Lamb in our vessels, we know also what was the Lamb in his vessel.*"

I. Penington, vol. 3. p. 30.

"Christ granted the Jews that they knew him, and whence he was as to his body; and yet for all that, he was the Christ who was to come, whom no man knew from whence he was. What was that, Christ called *me*, speaking to Philip? 'Hast thou not known me, Philip? Hast thou not seen me?' What, dost thou know me after the flesh, after the body? Dost thou take that for me? Have I been so long with you, and do you know me no better than so? *The body is from below, the body is like one of yours*, (only sanctified by the Father, and preserved without sin;) but I am the same spirit, life, and being with the Father, we are one substance, one pure power of life, and we cannot be divided; but he that sees one must needs see both; and he that knows one must needs know both. This is the Lamb of God which John bare witness of, which he said was before him, John 1, chap. 15, which the body was not."

I. Penington, vol. 3. p. 32.

"What is attributed to that body, we acknowledge and give to that body in its place, according as the scripture attributeth it, which is through and because of that *which dwelt and acted in it. But that which sanctified and kept the body pure and made all acceptable in him, was the life, holiness, and righteousness of the spirit. And the same thing that kept his vessel pure, it is the same thing that cleanseth us.* The value which the na-

tural flesh and blood had, was from that ; in its coming from that, in its acting in that, in its suffering through that : yea, indeed, *that* hath the virtue."

I. Pennington, vol. 3. p. 34.

"I came to see the idolatry of all professors as to the *person Christ*, as to the body, flesh, and blood ; and that the faith of most professors went no further than the veil, the outward, and reached not to *Christ the Saviour*, the *life*, the arm and power of God ; not to Christ in spirit, but in flesh."

Thomas Zachary, p. 6.

Baptist says, "Christ was seen with a carnal eye, and his voice heard with a carnal ear. Whereas, Christ said, 'He that seeth me, seeth my Father also.' Now dare he say, that God is such a visible object as may be seen by a carnal eye ? Surely nothing is obvious to the carnal eye, but that which is carnal or outward ; but so is not the invisible. But indeed if the body that Christ took upon him in the virgin, and which was afterwards crucified and put to death, was God, (for he tells of God-man being born of the virgin,) then this would make God visible, and to die when that body was put to death ; which were no less than blasphemy ; whereas God was manifest in the flesh, Christ came in the flesh, 1 Tim. iii., 1 John iv. and so did bear the name Christ, as he was in the flesh."

G. Whitehead, *Light and Life of Christ*, p. 35.

"Quere 1st. Whether there be any more Saviours of the immortal soul but one, that is able to save it, or to bring salvation to it ? Yea or nay ? If you say nay, there is but *One able to save*, and able to destroy, as the Lord

said, ‘Beside me *there is no Saviour,*’ and there is no other *name under heaven* by which men can be saved, but Jesus Christ.

2d. Then whether the visible person of flesh and bones be the *only Saviour*, seeing the apostle saith, *The ingrafted Word is able TO SAVE THE SOUL*; and the Grace of God, that bringeth *salvation*, hath appeared to *all men*! And who was Enoch’s Saviour, and the Prophets’ who were before that visible flesh and bones was?

3d. Whether the visible person of flesh and bones be the *ingrafted Word*? Or whether that person hath appeared to *all men*, seeing that which bringeth *salvation* hath? I leave it to the witness of God in you all to consider and judge. For if you say, the visible man, with visible flesh and bones, is the *alone Saviour*, as you have said, then whether this visible *man* be in the *hearts* of people? For the Apostle preached Christ, the *Word* nigh in the heart and in the mouth, and the ingrafted Word is able to save the soul; so *he did not preach a visible Christ with flesh and bones*, as you do, (which W. B. said was not Christ,) but the Word.”

Wm. Bayly, p. 600.

“But now this being his first coming, he tells his disciples, while he was yet with them, that he must go away, and that it was expedient that he should go away, or else, said he, the comforter will not come, the which if I go away I shall send unto you, even the Spirit of Truth, which shall abide with you for ever, &c. Yet notwithstanding sorrow hath filled their hearts, though he tells them, he would come again unto them, and their hearts should rejoice, and their joy no man should take from them. This was his promise to his disciples, while he was yet personally with them; and to comfort and

strengthen them yet more, he told them, that he that was with them should be in them, &c.

“For they loved his person for the sake of the frame and quality of the spirit that dwelt in him; or else what was his person, being mean and contemptible, to them, more than another person? But for that which dwelt in him they loved him. Let none mistake, I do not slight it, nor the person of any of his brethren, or children, as they are prepared to do the will of their father; but I do know in God’s counsel that it was even so, as it hath been also in these days, among whom God the Father of mercies hath as it were deprived some of his disciples of the personal presence of some of his dear sons and servants, which may be to this end, that the same spirit and life might be felt, possessed, lived to, and enjoyed in themselves, in their own particulars, in which only their eternal well-being consisteth.

“And so he taught them to pray, Our Father, &c. Not to look at his person, and pray to him as a person without them; but bid them pray to their Father, which seeth in secret, who would reward them openly; and he that seeth in secret, searcheth the heart, and trieth the reins. And he bid them pray, Thy kingdom come; and the kingdom of heaven is within, and the heart and reins and the searcher of them is within.”

Wm. Bayly, p. 307.

The Jews were puzzled with a literal knowledge of the Law and Prophets, and about the Messiah to come, according to their understanding of the Prophecies concerning him, and so were kept from the *true* knowledge thereby. Most sorts of those *that now profess Christ*, are puzzled about a knowledge concerning the *outward body, flesh, and blood of Christ*, according as they apprehend the scriptures to speak, and so the *veil* is over *their* hearts likewise, and they cannot *see the eternal Life and substance*, no more than the Jews, but by an outward literal knowledge are kept back FROM THE THING, as the Jews were. See Isaac Penington’s works while a prisoner in Alisbury.

THE QUAKER.

SERMON BY ELIAS HICKS, AT 12TH STREET MEETING, PHILADELPHIA, DEC. 10, 1826.

“VANITY of vanities, saith the preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity.”

This is recorded as the declaration of one of the wisest, if not the wisest of all the men that record and history give us an account of: and from what is recorded of him and of his sayings and doings, we have reason to believe that he was so. And when he was raised and exalted upon the throne of his father David, he was humbled, no doubt, under a consideration of his incapacity, at that time, to govern and rule so great a people. And having done some work that was grateful to the Almighty, he made him an offer, to ask of him what good he should choose? His return was, that it was not for long life, nor riches, nor honour, that he asked, but that the Lord Almighty should endue him with an understanding heart, and wisdom that might qualify him to judge and rule so great a people. And we find that his request was granted—that the Almighty condescended to give him greater wisdom than any other man; and from the account recorded of his wisdom and acts, on various and divers occasions, it seems verified. He even had a knowledge of all the plants in the vegetable kingdom, from the

cedars of Lebanon to the hyssop upon the house-top. He understood, no doubt, all their properties, and their rank among the abundant vegetable tribes. Thus knowing their properties and usefulness, he might have made the greatest physician that ever lived upon the earth, as it related to the external part, or to the animal bodies of the children of men.

Now, there is a good deal to be learned from this account of that great and wise king. It shows us that the way, and the only way for us to attain to a state in which we can proceed and conduct ourselves rightly in all the affairs of life, is by looking to the same source for wisdom and understanding: because, through that medium, we shall gain more true knowledge than man was ever able to arrive at through mere human, rational science. It is that only which can enable us to fill up our place in creation, agreeably to the design of a great and gracious Creator. And we learn further, that although we were endowed with all this wisdom and understanding as men, yet, if it were not used rightly and properly under the divine direction, it might lead us into the greatest folly: for every man and woman has the liberty of exercising the wisdom and understanding which they have, either to do good or evil—either to glorify God or to dishonour him. Here, then, is a precedent for us all. This great man was endowed with so much wisdom and understanding more than any other, in which to take up his mind and exercise himself, in the things of time. He has given us an account of his proceedings in natural things, in building houses, and so forth—I need not mention the particulars, for you have read the account. He endeavoured to find out whether it were possible for a man of the greatest wisdom, to make himself happy by mortal things; by all the riches, glory, honour, and

power, that any man ever could enjoy or possess on earth. And when he had gone through his long struggle, with abundant labour and toil, it landed him in complete disappointment: and this made him cry out in the manner expressed: "Vanity of vanities, vanity of vanities; all is vanity and vexation of spirit." This led him to turn about and take another course; to undo all that he had been doing, as it were; to bear full testimony to all his folly and vanity; and to speak many excellent things, of virtue, of righteousness, of wisdom, and of truth. He wrote many proverbs, and many abundantly wise sayings; and finally summed it all up in a few words: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter; fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man." Here we have the position thrown before us; and although it is comprehended in a few expressions, yet, as we come to reflect upon it and turn it in our minds, it will spread and enlarge, and lead us to various considerations and reflections, in order to find out the way whereby we may put in practice what he said.

What this fear of God is, may be the first thing to be considered. And from what source can it arise, so as to be a part of our business in effecting our whole duty to God? I conceive, my friends, that the fear of God, which has a tendency to do us good, is not a fear that arises from dread—it is not a fear that arises from the dread of torment, or of chastisement, or any thing of this kind; for that may be no more than the fear of devils, for they, we read, believe and tremble. It is, therefore, of great importance to the children of men, that they come to understand what is intended by the fear of God—what kind of fear it must be to ensure any good effect to us.

I conceive, that the true fear of God can never be witnessed in any rational soul, till that soul comes to

know God. And by attention to the manifestations of his will, he will certainly give us this knowledge, for we must know his commandments, and what he requires of us before we can do them: and therefore he has given to every man and woman, a measure and manifestation of his own blessed spirit to profit with; and it is by attention to this spirit that we come to know the divine will. It is through this medium only, that we can have any true knowledge of God; and we never can fear him rightly, till we come to know him rightly. So, then, the first thing is, to seek him, and to seek him in such a way as to find him.

I conceive, that the only medium whereby we can come to a knowledge of God, is by attending to the manifestations of his grace or life in our spirits or souls. Then it becomes incumbent on all of us to give our attention, to draw near, to turn inward to this manifestation of God in our own hearts. And as this comes to be our engagement and concern, he is gracious to manifest himself to us as a God of love, and a God of mercy. And although he is a reprover—although this light, this manifestation of his spirit, reproves for evil; so likewise, my friends, it is that, and that only, that justifies for well doing. And as the creature becomes thus attentive to the voice, or manifestation of the will of the Creator, the soul begins to learn, it begins to have some knowledge of a God—of a God of peace, of mercy, and of wisdom. And by attending strictly, and obeying, in conformity to what he has manifested by his acts towards us—for he labours with us in mercy and loving kindness, and is a searcher of our hearts—he shows us our very state and condition, and is ready graciously to bring us out, or assist us to come out of that lost and undone condition, which we have plunged ourselves into by transgression.

And as we are brought into a state of repentance, and are sincerely sorry for what we have done; so he grants us the gift of repentance, and we come to experience remission of sins, and reconciliation with our Heavenly Father. And having seen our own unworthiness, how unworthy we poor creatures are to receive such mercies, we shall begin to realize the excellency of the divine character; and as we take heed and walk in this light, it will appear more and more beautiful to us; more and more excellent; more and more worthy of all our love. Insomuch, that through faithful attention to this light and life in the soul; although we may love many objects here on earth, (for we find that we are creatures so circumstanced, and that love is such a capacity—or, call it what you will—impressed upon our immortal souls, that we must always love something, and that it is divided between many objects, some loving one thing and some another,) yet there is a chief love, that always determines the will of the creature. Here, now, the connexion that almighty goodness has declared between male and female, induces the greatest love that can exist towards any object that is external; insomuch, that a man will leave father and mother, and cleave to his wife, and they twain become one flesh.

Now this love to one object is above every thing else that is below it. When we are concerned, under a right sense of our transgressions, and the necessity we stand in of divine aid, to be redeemed from them, we shall see that there is nothing in heaven or in earth that can do the work for us but the Almighty. And having experienced, in some good degree, his goodness and mercy, here, by a degree of faithfulness, we begin to see him and know him. Here, now, as we attend faithfully to the operation of his life and love in our souls, it raises our love

above "the love of women:" and as we continue in faithfulness to obey his commandments and requirings, we more and more see his excellency and beauty, till we see him to be altogether lovely.

Here is the way in which we must gradually rise into a state in which we can fulfil the first and great commandment, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." Insomuch, that we can give all up for him, and for his sake; not only all that is dear to us here on earth, but our own lives. This was verified in the example of our great and blessed pattern, Jesus Christ; who, for the love he bore to the truth and the God of truth, readily surrendered his will and life, to the will and mind of his Heavenly Father--such was his love to him. And now we begin to find what it is to love him, and from what source that love which is profitable arises; that it never arises from terror, but from the pure emotions of undefiled love. For every rational creature knows, in himself, that he has an unwillingness to hurt one that he really loves. What is it that a husband won't do for a beloved wife, that he loves as his own life? How fearful he is of doing any thing that might give the least cause of offence! Here, this love is a preserving principle, even in things of time, and in relation to those which are outward and moral. But when we come to love God with all our heart, and soul, and mind, and strength, it becomes the most excellent, and beautiful, and lovely, of all things. Here, our fear is in proportion to our love. Therefore, as this comes to be our experience, it fixes and impresses upon our minds a care, that every step we take may be conformable to our duty to God, according to his requirings. Here, now, when we come to know God, and feel him to be continually with

us, an observer of all our works, and watching over us continually for good, it enables us to put in practice what is comprehended in the saying of the wise man, "Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man." And our duty to our Heavenly Father, and our own best interest, can never be divided: they are one, because Almighty Wisdom has ordained that every act of a man's life shall have its consequent reward, let it be good or evil.

Here, now, we see and discover what folly it is to place our happiness in mortal things, not only from the sayings of this wise king of Israel, but we have experienced it for ourselves; so that if we had never read it nor heard an account of his life and proceedings, yet every rational creature under heaven must acknowledge this fact, if they have set out to make themselves happy. Here is another thing stamped upon the minds of the children of men—a desire after happiness, which nothing can eradicate or satiate, but that which is, like itself, immortal. It has lost its God, and if so, all the world, nay many worlds can never make the soul happy, till it gains its lost prize.

Where is the individual, that has lived to make some trial, to arrive at happiness in temporal things, that has not been disappointed? Will riches give happiness? Will honour, and the spoil of mortals do it for us, or give us real happiness? No, my friends. All experience shows us that the soul is still unhappy. We are tossed up and down—we try one thing, and it eventuates in disappointment; we try another—we pursue a great many various ways, all the time pressing after the one thing needful, happiness to our immortal souls, till many, I trust, and perhaps some present, are brought to the very point that Solomon was. When he had tried every thing

that the wisdom of the world, riches, honour, power, glory, and every thing which the world, or man ever could exert to produce happiness, it landed him in disappointment.

Now I mention these things as they unexpectedly arise in my mind, to draw your attention off from earthly things, and to fix it upon God; for there is no true happiness any where else, for us, but in our God. And, therefore, it is an undoubted truth, that a soul fixed on God its maker, for support and countenance, while passing through this probationary state, is happy beyond all finite comprehension. Now, if this be the case, my dearly beloved fellow professors, what is there that can induce us to procrastinate and put off from time to time the engaging in this great business—the seeking after a true and saving knowledge of God, and his will concerning us; that so we may be brought into that true fear that is brought upon us by love, and manifest it in all our works. And may the Lord enable us at all times to do his commandments; for his commandments are not grievous, my friends, to an obedient soul; they are only grievous to the transgressor, and none other.

Light is come into the world. Jesus declared to the people in his day, “This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light.” Now these are all plain things, for there is no mystery in true godliness—none at all, to those who are willing to open their hearts to the revealing, operating power of divine truth, or the spirit of God within us. Now I’ll appeal to this assembly for the truth of this saying—that every sinner hates the light, because it disturbs his peace, his false rest. And so long as he continues in sin, he will hate the light, and

turn his back upon it. He will silence all his reproofs, and turn away from it, that it may not shine upon his mind and detect his inconsistencies—he loves to walk in darkness.

And why should it be so, my friends? We know it is so in ourselves, for every one has transgressed more or less—we have all been engaged in things which were not right. Here we have a clear view of the source of all the misery and unhappiness of the children of men. It is that we turn away from God. We become careless and unconcerned respecting a knowledge of him; and, therefore, in our darkness we turn away; we, as it were, turn him out of the heart, dispossess him of his throne in our hearts, and take his seat there. Man now takes up for himself a system and manner of proceeding, in order to make himself happy without God. Here he goes on till he is brought up as the wise man was, and as all others, who go on in that way, must be, before they can come to know happiness. I say, we know it to be so; and I may acknowledge, that I have often been astonished how it was possible that a creature, possessed of so much knowledge as man is endued with by his Creator, could deviate so far from the path of rectitude, and from that and that only which can make him happy here and hereafter.

A little in this way my mind seemed impressed, though I had not one word on my tongue to communicate; but as this subject sprung up in my mind, on remembrance of the declaration of Solomon, it seemed to open something that I was willing to speak to this large assembly; that by individually attending to it, they might be induced to turn to the witness for God in themselves, with an engagement to seek their souls' good, and be earnestly engaged to know God's will: and thus, as we come to know his will, we shall find out the way whereby we

shall do good. For you know, my friends, I trust, that nothing which man can say or point us to, will give us a knowledge of the will of our Creator, unless we have the evidence of his own light and grace to enforce it. Therefore, we are not to look to man, to know the will of God; and if we are not to look to man, then certainly not to that which is less than man, the writings of man. We must turn in, to the witness for God in our own hearts. For it is a great truth, that what is to be known of God is manifested only in man. There is the place that he manifests himself. He don't speak to us as carnal, animal, outward creatures. He does not speak to our outward senses; for he is an invisible God, that our external senses can never comprehend, that our external eyes have never seen, and never can see. Well, then, there must be something besides these senses, by which we can come to a true knowledge of God our creator, who is sealed, and ever will be so, to our five senses, or any faculties which men possess; for he is an invisible God. Hence, if we make to ourselves any image or likeness of God, in any outward thing, or even in our imagination, we make an idol, and we break the first commandment given to Israel, by and through Moses—"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them."

Here, now, how awfully careful ought we to be, not to suffer our imaginations to rise up in our minds, to create any thing like an image, or located thing, that can be comprehended in a compass like that of a man, or any thing else in the world. It is as bad as to build up a golden image as Nebuchadnezzar did—it is the same thing. It is just as great idolatry: and we are as great

idolaters as if we were to make an image of any thing which the external eyes have ever seen, and set it up for our God. Now, I apprehend, that there is an abundance of darkness and ignorance among the professors of christianity and religion, in this respect. One would suppose, from observing their works and communications, that they really were, the greater part of them, worshippers of idols and images in the mind; and that they fall down to them, as it were, and worship them—notwithstanding, they are strictly commanded to make no likeness, nor to admit of any image of that which the outward eyes have ever seen, or the outward ears have ever heard. For, although some may say, that the Lord thunders from heaven; and we observe and hear the lightning and thunder, and though we feel, see, and know, that it is of him, yet how it terrifies the sinner! But God is not in any of these things; for the prophet shows us that it is only in the calm that we are to look for him. He is only known and found in the still small voice, like that which said to Elijah, “What doest thou here, Elijah?”

Here, now, my friends, you will see my drift and design—that in the feeling of pure and undefiled love, I feel engaged, to endeavour to rally you to the standard, the everlasting standard of truth—that light, life, and power of the Lord, which has manifested itself in our souls, and which is as invisible to us as our own souls are.

Our immortal souls are invisible to our outward senses; but they see, feel, and know, the operation of this power, either as a reprove or justifier. And when it reproves, we are forced to believe, if we would reflect a little, rationally, for a moment. If we are reproved for any thing that we have done, we feel at once that we have done wrong; for we cannot conceive, that that which is good, would reprove for good; it only reproves for evil. So,

on the contrary, it is that, and that only, which justifies for good. Although it is with man now, as formerly, though they knew God, they glorified him not as God. And that is the case now, my friends, as you will see and believe, not only individually, in your own experience, for all have found it to be so, I apprehend; but when we look around among the children of men, we see that though they know God, they don't glorify him as God, but become vain in their imaginations, and their foolish hearts become darkened. And being ignorant of God, they make images, after the manner of men, and of beasts, and of creeping things. And they make to themselves gods in their own way. So that the great business of our lives—the great business of reformation and salvation, consists in individually turning inward to the light and life of God in our own souls, that manifests God to the children of men—that gift of the spirit of God, that is given to every one to profit with. This gift is one in every soul, and yet it acts differently upon rational creatures, according to their different states and conditions.

Here we learn again the great and deep wisdom of Almighty goodness and mercy, that he does not make one law for all men. But the divine life makes a rule in every mind, and gives a law that will counteract all the evil propensities of the mind.

Our propensities, opinions, and actions, are different; therefore, if we had but one law, it might be written, as to Israel, on tables of stone. But what would that do for us? It would not do for the children of men universally; no, not for any two, unless they were all exactly in the same state. The law of Israel was not made for two but for one, one people circumstanced exactly alike. They had all been in bondage to one person, Pharaoh; they had all suffered under his oppression, and were all

delivered by one act of divine mercy ; and therefore their law was explicitly the same to every Israelite. It required certain things of them, which each individual had it in his power to comply with, therefore they needed but one law and one rule. And so we find, that it speaks to them in the singular number. But now, under the gospel dispensation, when the new covenant which God promised he would make with the children of Israel, has come in course, here now we come to experience the truth of the prophet's declaration : " Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah." This was to be written in their hearts, that they should no longer have to say, " Know the Lord : for they shall all know me from the least of them unto the greatest of them."

So it is, my friends, we are not to look for a law in our neighbour's heart, nor in our neighbour's book ; but we are to look for that law which is to be our rule and guide, in our consciences, in our own souls ; for the law is whole and perfect. " The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." So, here we learn, when thus enlightened—when we come under the influence of divine light, that no creed or profession of faith can ever be made to suit the Christian dispensation ; because it limits the Holy One, and fixes the ground and rule, and it never suits the purpose of one individual of the whole ; because it don't reach to the matter, to the heart ; it don't comprehend the situation and state of the soul. But when the Almighty enters into our souls by his light and life, by his penetrating eye, he sees the evil and the good, and is a searcher of the hearts and a trier of the reins. And here, in his abundant mercy and loving kindness, he makes up a rule for us ; we learn his commandments, and we find that they are not grievous. We have the

law in us, that goes with us every day, and we are to teach it to our children, to recommend them where the law is, and where it must be sought for; and not recommend them to an outward law, made by man, that cannot suit the inward state of any two in the world. But what the Lord Almighty by his own grace, by his own light and spirit opens upon the soul, it is always consistent and perfectly applicable to that soul, and none other; unless there is another soul circumstanced just like it. And even then it would not do to receive it from man, but it must be written by the same divine hand, in each soul. Here we learn the inefficacy of all human means, be they what they will, whether the reason of man without being governed by the divine light; or whether it be the bible, which some call a complete rule of faith and practice; and even some highly professing Christians. But it is not the complete rule of faith and practice; it never made a Christian in the world; neither that, nor any man that ever lived, had power to do it. There is nothing but the immediate manifestation of the divine mind, through the revelation of his own spirit, that we can build any thing on, upon which we can depend.

Now, how concordant this is with the testimony of Jesus, when he queried with his disciples on this wise: "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" They enumerated several characters, according to the views of the people in that day. And people are guessing now as they were in that day. But until we come to this inward, divine law, we shall know nothing rightly of that manifestation: for none of us have seen him, nor any of his works which he acted outwardly. But here we find some are guessing one way, and some another way, till they become cruel respecting different opinions about him, insomuch that they will kill and destroy each

other for their opinions. This is the effect of men's turning away from the true light, the witness for God in their own souls; it throws them into anarchy and confusion.

“But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, thou art the Christ, the son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, blessed art thou Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee.” I conceive, that what he said was merely to show, that he was the great Messiah, or prophet that the Lord had declared he would raise up in Israel, in whom he should put his word, and he should speak what he should command him—this was what he acknowledged. But that was not to be found out by their law. All the books that ever were written were not sufficient to prove that Jesus was the Christ. “Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee.” And what is flesh and blood? Does he not mean by flesh and blood, all that is comprehended in the wisdom and sciences of men as rational creatures—all the science of the Jews? All their philosophy was not enough to reveal Jesus to him when he came. “Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say unto thee, that thou art Peter”—a mere man—“and upon this rock”—this revelation—“I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” Now, when a true Christian comes to this rock, he comes to know it, as before pointed out; and here every one must see, when they build on this divine rock, this revealed will of our heavenly Father, there is no fear; for the gates of hell, and all the wicked men in the world can never shake it—there is no power that can prevail against it. But we see, Christian professors are alarmed at a poor worm going

about, as if he was going to undermine the foundation of heaven. Now what kind of Christians are these? and what sort of a faith is this? It is not worth any thing at all.

But they who are building on this eternal rock, this revelation of the spirit of God, have no fear, because they are brought into subjection to that which is above all fear. They are brought to believe, see, feel, and know, that God is with them. Therefore, perfect love casts out all fear; for it is the strongest principle in heaven or in earth, and will raise us over and above every thing, and bring every thing into subjection to itself. So that here, now, according to the rule, "By their fruits ye shall know them," what are we to think of those that are tottering with fear lest the foundation should be torn from under their feet? But they that are grounded in God's revelation, in his life-giving presence and power, manifested in the soul, it raises them up above all fear; for there is no fear in love, for fear hath torment in it. And those who are afraid, lest they should be shaken off the ground at every little wind of doctrine, fear torments them, and thus keeps them in a tormented state.

I mention these things for our encouragement, dear people! For I love you with an undefiled love; and when I look toward you, it is without respect to persons. For I consider you all my brethren and sisters, made for the same great and glorious end, to glorify God and enjoy him. Hence, I see no other way to do this but to gather inward to the one light and life and spirit; and as that operates on our souls, it will unite us together in love. I don't want to recommend you to outward declarations concerning it, though there are many in the scriptures which point us to the same thing. They might incline your hearts to turn inward, and then you will feel and

find, that wisdom and power which is above all—there you will find the way, the truth, and the life; “For no man knoweth the Father but the Son;” and “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.” And what is the only begotten? Nothing but that which is begotten in every soul can manifest God to the soul. You must know this for yourselves, as nothing which you read in the scriptures can give you a sense of his saving and almighty power. Now, the only begotten is what the power of God begets in the soul, by the soul uniting with the visitations of divine love. It becomes like a union—the soul submits and yields itself up to God and the revelation of his power, and thus it becomes wedded to him as its heavenly husband. Here, now, is a birth of the Son of God: and this must be begotten in every soul, as God can be manifested by nothing else.

All that know the Son of God, are instruments in his holy hands; and all that they ever did, is just what I have been endeavouring to do, to recommend you to that which is sufficient; to rally you to the eternal standard of truth and righteousness, God in man. This you see was the case with his blessed son, Jesus Christ, our holy pattern. He did not recommend the people to any thing else, to any other leader. He told them to tarry at Jerusalem, till they should receive power from on high:—“You shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you:” and then, and not till then, can any rational creature bear witness of Jesus Christ, that he came and filled up his mission, and hence they come to know God and believe in him. And he tells them, that the Comforter, which the Father would send, and which is the same power that the Father endued him with, would enable

them to do great and mighty works : “ And when he is come, he will convince, or reprove, the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, and lead and guide you into all truth,” and consequently out of all error.

Now, what was this Holy Ghost and spirit of truth, and where are we to find it? He did not leave his disciples in the dark—“ He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.” Mind it, my friends. What a blessed sovereign God this is to the children of men—a God who has placed a portion of himself in every rational soul—a measure of his grace sufficient for every purpose, for the redemption of the souls of men from sin and transgression, and to lead them to the kingdom of heaven. And there is no other way. Then don’t put it off any longer; don’t procrastinate any longer; don’t say to-morrow, but immediately turn inward, for the day calls aloud for it—every thing around us calls for us to turn inward, to that which will help us to do the great work of our salvation. And ought it not to be done this very evening? What would become of us, now, if permitted to launch into eternity this night unprepared, without a full and saving knowledge of God? How often do we hear of our fellow-creatures lying down and going to sleep and never waking again! I have often said, how presumptuous it is, for men, as reasonable creatures, sensible of the uncertainty of time, dependent for every thing on an invisible God, to procrastinate and put off their soul’s salvation—to lie down and take their rest in separation from God Almighty and his presence! What presumption it is! What an awful reflection, that we dare do it, when we consider that God has placed an open way of salvation before us, and will complete the work for us by our co-

operating with him—by being willing that we should be the meal and he the leaven. For, here, by turning to him with full purpose of heart, if he should see fit to launch us into eternity this very evening or night, we might come to experience, in his adorable mercy, that he would act toward us as to the thief on the cross. But if we do not take care, there will be nothing for God to bless. We must set about the work in good earnest—there is a part for man to do. We must be willing; we must be submissive; we must be obedient, to the requirements of our Heavenly Father. We must do whatever he requires of us in life and in death. But as we are now together, through God's adorable mercy, for I consider it as his mercy that we are permitted to live from day to day, let us unite and set out in good earnest to seek the Lord, according to the exhortation of the prophet: "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon him."

[Here *Thomas Wistar*, an elder of this Meeting, made some remarks, but owing to the confusion which they occasioned, they were not distinctly heard by the reporter; but from the little that was heard, it was considered, that they were intended as a denunciation, or expression of disapprobation of *Elias Hicks* and his doctrines, somewhat similar to that at Pine-street in the morning. To this *E. H.* replied in substance, that there was probably not an individual present, who could not subscribe to most of what the Friend had said; and that the remarks were therefore unnecessary.]

WILLET HICKS then rose, and after a few introductory remarks, not heard by the reporter, proceeded:—

I have felt my heart covered with love for this very large assembly; and I have craved for them the blessing of preservation, being fellow-candidates with myself for a happy and glorious immortality

with the saints in light. And, I believe, that we are all capacitated by the grace of God, to obtain this happy and glorious state, by rightly attending to the means ordained of God to effect that purpose. And I believe, that if we were to attend to what the apostle recommends, it would lead us in this high and holy way unto God: for he says—"Grieve not the holy spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed until the day of redemption."

This was their fundamental doctrine, to gather to the spirit: in the beginning they were gathered by the Holy Ghost into the visible church; and therefore they could be of one heart and of one soul—their faith was one. And as by the governing influence of the Holy Ghost, the church was gathered, so it remained in this state until they drew off from it: and it was afterwards said—"O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that you should not obey the truth? Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?"

This was the case in the beginning of the Christian religion—they followed the spirit for a time, and then became enveloped in darkness, and confusion was introduced among their leaders, and the church went into the wilderness.

Here we see the effect of forsaking the leading and guidance of the Holy Ghost. And in the early, rising day of the Society of Friends, they seemed to be gathered, from all that was outward, more directly home to that invisible power, and light, and life, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world; thus illuminating the understanding, and leading and guiding into all truth. This is what was promised, that the Holy Ghost would come, and I am one that believes what our blessed Lord said, that the Holy Ghost would come, and that he has come, and we are blessed with his presence. He also said, that it would lead and guide into all truth. And I believe, that all who are attentive to it, as the light shineth in dark places, it will lead and guide them in the path of glory. I believe it will lead us all, with as great certainty, to the

kingdom of God, and to that glorious quiet and peace which the righteous enjoy, as ever the star of Bethlehem led the wise men of the east to Bethlehem of Judea where the babe was: and that a departure from all that is correct, consists in a departure from the guidance of this ground-work, this power, this spirit and Holy Ghost. And Paul says, "that we are all sealed with it till the day of redemption." And I want, that we may not depart from that perfect principle that is given unto man to enlighten their understandings; and I feel desirous thus to call us, to gather to the pure standard of life and light.

It seems with me, to bring to view the remarkable case of Felix. And I believe there are many, and perhaps some within the audience of my voice, who at times have felt as he felt. When Paul "reasoned with him of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled." And I believe there are many who are at times made to tremble, when a greater than Paul, a greater than Apollos, reasons with them in their souls, of temperance, righteousness, and judgment to come—when they feel and know, that they are in an unprepared state to die—when they know, that were the curtain to drop, and they bid adieu to the world, they must be shut out from the divine harmony. Therefore, I feel a living concern to caution you against coming to the same conclusion that Felix did. He says to Paul, "Go thy way for this time, when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." But we have no evidence that he ever called again, to be reasoned with in this powerful manner. He seemed to lose the right time—he seemed to split upon that rock. For, when Felix went out of office as Governor of Judea, Festus came, and Paul was yet a prisoner, for Felix had left Paul bound. He was a man of pleasure, and was not disposed to give it up, though he was made to tremble.

But behold Paul, who stood before him, what a mighty man of God, though yet a prisoner! What a shining and bright example he is to us all—then let us make him our example. For when Paul

was met by a heavenly vision in the way, a light beyond the light of the sun, he gave up to it at once, and followed it. He did not go to consult what men would say, but he took the light and pursued it to his own glory. Therefore, let all who have felt as Felix did, beware; let them consider and take warning in season. It is the language of Paul. He says, pursue the course that leads to glory and to virtue. Have no regard to what men may think or say, but attend to the grace of Almighty God; and if this be the case with individuals in this meeting, they will have cause to thank God. I say, then, beware of the rock that Felix split upon—you may never again see a time in which you can turn about; you cannot depend on tomorrow; a more convenient season for you may never come, before you are summoned by death. How dare we, then, dear people, put off! Therefore, “Grieve not the holy spirit of God,” but attend to it, and it will enlighten us in the way of salvation. And here we shall find, that the fruits of the spirit are unto us peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, and righteousness, gentleness, goodness, faith, and the whole train of virtues. And they that bring forth these fruits will find that the words of the beloved master are true, and that the tree that beareth good fruit is under the influence of the spirit of God, the true light, that produces all these fruits, these graces of righteousness, of peace, of joy, and of truth.

But what are the fruits of the flesh? They are envy, hatred, malice, cruelty, revenge, idolatry, and all evil works. “By their fruits ye shall know them. Do men gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles? A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.” Let us then thank the Lord for his mercies past; and Oh! may my dear brothers and sisters profit by this opportunity. May every soul of my dear friends, brothers and sisters, fervently pray, create in us clean hearts, and renew in us a right spirit of love, that we may come under the government of a right spirit, and have our hope increased in him, and in the guidance of his spirit, and that truth may spread in the world.

For if we come under the guidance of this spirit, no outward things will have power to disturb us. As the prophet says, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is staid on thee."

I recommend you to God, and to that word which was in the beginning, "the word nigh thee, even in thy heart, and in thy mouth." It is that which will say unto thee, when thou turnest to the right hand or to the left, "This is the way, walk in it." Unto this I commend you; and as you are brought in obedience under its holy influence, your minds will be turned unto prayer, that the Lord will be pleased to be with us, and keep us. And I believe that a prayer will arise, and we shall frequently be enabled to express it: "Our Father which art in heaven"—See how this draws us into humility. "Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done"—And we believe that the will of God is the sovereign law in heaven; that the strongest principle that operates in the family of angels and archangels, is the love of God; and that all the saints in heaven and earth are bound by this everlasting cement, the love of God. Then let us come under its influence, and here, as we keep in this state, we shall be prepared to pray, "Thy kingdom come"—the kingdom of peace, of love, the spiritual kingdom. "Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven"—And as our conduct corresponds with the prayer, if we ask we shall receive, if we knock it shall be opened for our acceptance. And then we can say, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us." Here, we are brought upon the Christian ground of humility—here, we come under the dominion of the love of God: otherwise we cannot love our enemies—it is impossible to do it as men. It is only by the power of redeeming love, that we can be brought to love our enemies. We may make a show of love, but nothing short of the love of God can enable a man to love those who traduce him and his character, and injure him. But by this love of God, we can pray for them and do them good. And if we expect forgiveness we must forgive others; and as we hope for mercy, so we must show it to others. For, to every man will be meted out as he has measured,

full and overflowing. “Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.” Here, then, is a positive command, and it is the only way of life and rest, and of entering into the kingdom of God. For the blessed Master has informed us, that it is “not every one that saith Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father that is in heaven.” These are the ones that shall enter into heaven. Don’t you see it is equally consistent with reason and revelation, and that it must be so? For those who enter into heaven, must be subject to the king of heaven, and not those who are in a rebellious state, and will not obey him. And as my beloved friend present has expressed, “Fear God and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man.” Here you see it is all summed up in a few words. “And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.” And if we are taught of the Lord we are taught to ascribe all unto our Father which is in heaven. Therefore, I commend you unto him, and to his holy spirit, by which we are sealed till the day of redemption—craving for you all the blessings of heaven.

EXTRACT.

“Greater impertinency no man can be guilty of, than to affirm or teach, *that there is a revelation not immediate.* It is a direct contradiction in terms; for that which is revealed, must be *immediately*, or else it cannot *rationally* be a *revelation*, but *tradition* rather.

Nay, the scriptures cannot be properly styled the *revelation of the will of God*, till they are first opened by him, who was found worthy to unseal the book; that Spirit of truth, that opens, and none shuts; and shuts, and none opens.

The scripture gives this testimony, to what I affirm, that ’tis the *inspiration of the Almighty which gives understanding.* And none can come to the Father, but by me. *None knows the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son reveals him. None knows the things of God, save the Spirit of God. I will be with you to the end. If any be otherwise minded, God will reveal it to him.* With many the like expressions, which afford us thus much, viz. That since no man knows the mind and will of God, neither can rightly discern of spiritual matters, but as they are revealed and manifested by the spirit of God, the very scriptures themselves are not a revelation to him, but the sense and purpose of them, (so immediately revealed by the eternal spirit,) *is the only TRUE revelation, and the scriptures but a godly tradition.*”

Wm. Penn’s Works, vol. 2, folio, pp. 36, 37.

THE QUAKER.

SERMON BY ELIAS HICKS, AT FRIENDS' MEETING, KEY'S ALLEY,
PHILADELPHIA, DEC. 12TH, 1826.

“PEACE, be still.” This command and requisition was made upon a former occasion; and I apprehend it will apply fully to us. I believe there can be no occasion to demand it more than the present one. The comfort and improvement of this large assembly depends principally upon it. Therefore, it becomes our duty individually, to labour to be still. And, in the first place, we are to still our bodies. This is a work that seems in a degree to be comprehended in our power as men and creatures; hence this is the first step. For we must always do what we can, rightly and justly; for it is by this right labour and industry, that there is something to receive the divine blessing upon.

But this is not enough, my friends—we must endeavour to have our minds still. And here is a much greater work, which it is beyond the power of man to effect of himself. And this shows us the necessity of individually endeavouring to get our bodies still, that so we may retire to that fountain of strength, which only can enable us to experience our minds to be brought into stillness—into silent prostration before the King of heaven. And we are not

to stop here neither, my friends. There is that "little member," that "no man," the apostle says, "has tamed;" although men may have tamed all the brute creation—and that is the tongue. It is a little member; but, as he says, "it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison." It is like a fire, "and it is set on fire of hell." Now there is nothing that can enable us to keep this quiet and silent, but as we bow in perfect submission to the divine will, to the manifestation of the grace of God in our own souls; and without this, we cannot use it in a proper manner. "Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God." And we know, that it does happen among the children of men, that they usurp, as it were, the throne of God, and impeach their fellow creatures and give sentence upon them; and, as far as the tongue can do it, send them down to the bottomless pit of perdition. "My brethren, these things ought not so to be." And it is an evidence to us what state we must come to experience, before we can effect the great purpose for which we are assembled together this morning; which is no less, I apprehend, as to the general motive, than to present ourselves before the Almighty Creator of the universe, the giver of every good and perfect gift, and to wait on him, and worship him in spirit and in truth.

But none can worship him, till all these unruly passions, all these disturbances and troubles, that naturally attend men and women in their natural state, are all brought down into entire subjection to the divine will, and until there is a complete sense of his greatness, and of our nothingness. Here it is, that we are brought into a condition to learn of him. For what will it avail any of us, to come and sit down thus together, to be led, and guided, and instructed in the way of salvation, if we do

not gather into a state, whereby and wherein we can be instructed—into a situation in which we can hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches? And it is my earnest desire, that we may individually labour after this stillness; for this is the travail that ought always to attend our minds when thus assembled together. This leads to an experience and evidence in ourselves, of the mighty power of God, and of our own complete insufficiency to do any good thing. For we must come to this evidence before we can serve him aright; and before we can walk in the way which he has cast up for the ransomed and redeemed to walk in—a blessed way! We must come into this condition, in order to learn our duty, not only to God our creator, but to man our fellow creature. This will open to us all that we are to do, and instruct us in the way in which we can answer the great end of our creation, and we shall always be ready to glorify God and enjoy him.

Hence, we see, as reasonable creatures, that every act of our lives must be to this effect; and every word that we speak ought to have this tendency: we ought to have our words savoury, so as to minister grace to the hearers, and that even in our language and converse with one another. That it may all tend to the glory and honour of the great and adorable I AM, from whom we receive all our power and ability to do any thing, and every blessing which we can have or receive. How awful the consideration, that not only in every word, but in every act, whether we meet together as at present, or whether in eating, drinking, or putting on apparel, it is all to be done to the glory of God. Mind it, my friends, and my dear young friends!

And what way is there for us to do it, so as to give glory to his great name? There is but one way, and that

is to seek unto him for knowledge and instruction, and how to act in small matters as well as in greater; because nothing will bring glory to his name, unless we do it agreeably to his holy will and pleasure. No matter how small the thing is, if it be contrary to the divine will, it is a sin against heaven. We must not plead and reason as finite creatures, as we are, against it; nor shall we, when we have the fear of God in our hearts. We have no right to reason upon consequences, let what will follow; but become wholly passive to the divine light and leaven of the kingdom of heaven in our own souls, otherwise we cannot be leavened into his nature. But as there is a coming in and under his influence; and as we begin to partake of his divine nature, we can commune with the Almighty God of our lives, and God of our salvation. For nothing but the spirit of God can teach us the things of God. So that it is of infinite importance, that we examine every word, every thought, and every action, as in the presence of the Most High, as we certainly are, continually. For he is every where present, and in him we live, move, and have our being. This is what some, of all nations, must know for themselves. For when the apostle was reasoning with a wise people of former days, concerning their idolatry, he says—"As I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, **TO THE UNKNOWN GOD:**" whom the people of Athens ignorantly worshipped. Now, what sort of God was this, my friends? It must have been an imaginary one. They were worshipping something from mere report—it was an unknown God. But this is not the case with the true worshippers of God; for those who worship him in spirit and in truth, must know and feel him to be always present, a continual observer of all their works; for he is a God of infinite knowledge, and by him all our

actions are weighed. I want, therefore, that our minds should become humbled, as being in his holy presence, and that his fear may spread over every mind, from the love which we feel for him. For that fear that cometh from terror hath torment, and it is not the true fear of God; therefore, it is a vain thing for men and women to denounce one another, and to try to scare one another, for they are about as likely to scare them into sin as any way. For every fear that comes from terror has torment in it; as all fear, that does not arise from the true fear of God, hath torment in it,—but the true fear of God is above it all, and it is no slavish fear; for “perfect love casteth out all fear.”

Now, by this consideration we may try ourselves; and it puts us into a capacity to take the apostle’s advice—“Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves: know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?” Here he came to the point in his exhortation; and that which was right in that day, is just as right in the present day. It is as necessary for us now, as it was for them then; and we must know a Saviour in us. For what does he mean by Jesus Christ? Nothing but a saviour, nothing but a redeemer, nothing but a deliverer. Here now, can we find him any where else, according to the apostle’s declaration? If we have not his power and sufficiency in us—if he is not thus over every other power, we cannot be otherwise than reprobates, for none other can change our fallen nature. And as this view of the subject spreads great caution, so it sometimes, if we are willing-minded, spreads great encouragement. For the apostle, no doubt, spoke from his own personal and absolute experience, by which he came to know Christ thus to be in him, that is, when he says Christ, a saviour—the wisdom of God and

the power of God manifesting itself in the soul against sin. And under what epithet shall we speak of it in the most ready way? We may call it light. We see what the great apostle says, "Jesus Christ is in you;" and our eminent friend George Fox was led under the same influence and inspiration that the apostle was when he uttered this declaration; he calls to the light within, as the only source of all true knowledge of God, and from which we must draw all our ability to worship in spirit and in truth.

"God is light;" and here it is that the light begins its work—"All things that are reproveable, are made manifest by the light, for whatsoever maketh manifest is light." But without an every where present God, nothing could do this for the children of men—reprove them for every thing they do, for every act, for every thought, and every word.

Now this is true, my friends, and I have confidence to believe it, from my own experience, that it will convict for every idle thought and word; and that, for every idle word we shall have to give an account in the day of judgment. And when is the day of judgment? When man is brought under the revelation of the divine law, when he knows what the law of God is. Here, now, the judge is always sitting upon the judgment seat. It is not a day and time, as some have vainly, ignorantly, and carnally supposed, at a great distance from us; at what they call the end of the world.

Here now, how some express their darkness; and how they reflect upon the Almighty goodness, to suppose that he is with us, and yet that he will let us go on in sin and wickedness, and not judge us! Can we suppose such a thing for a moment? For indeed what is the end of the world? The creature man knows no other end of the world than the end of his own life, the end of his

probationary state; and to him, this is the end of the world. As man has no knowledge of the world till he is born, so he cannot know any thing of that world which is to come till the soul goes hence, to be here no more. Here their work is completed, and they centre at death in that place where Divine Justice sees fit to place them, as consistent with his goodness and mercy. But when we look at God in the common and carnal view, there arise such strange ideas, as if all the children of men, all the immortal souls of all that have been born on earth, and who have passed away by death, are now located in some subterranean place, the same as in the body of this earth! But, alas! they know nothing about it. They are waiting for a judgment day at a distance. But can God delay judgment, my friends? No such thing. If we attend even to external testimony, we are convinced of this. What did the Saviour say to the thief on the cross? There he was, a poor culprit, who had been a prisoner, likely, for his wicked deeds, a good while, or time enough to reflect on his evil conduct; and as he gathered to that point that is expressed—that point that he was brought to when Jesus was on the cross with him. He repented—he made reconciliation with his Heavenly Father by repentance. Here Jesus saw his condition, and you may remember what he said. In direct opposition to his fellow sufferer, he acknowledged the justice which was upon them; but as for that innocent man, he had done nothing amiss: which drew from him the declaration, “This day shalt thou be with me in paradise.” Here now the spirit of Jesus and the spirit of this thief ascended into paradise; that is, they were brought into a happy state. We speak of ascending and descending, but there is no such thing, unless it is as it relates to a state of mind; because that which is up to-day will be down to-night, for there

is a continual rotation—it is all up and all down, as to what we can see and observe. Yet so carnal are the people, that they think heaven is up, and earth down; and it is because they worship an unknown God, or they would know better than all these things. Had not the judgment then passed? Had it not been pronounced to the thief on the cross, by the Son of God? This shows that he thus declares him a fit inhabitant for heaven, fit for communion with the God of his life, with Jehovah himself; that he was brought into a condition in which he was fit to be continually and for ever with God; where he might continue to praise and magnify his mercy and goodness. O, my friends! when I reflect on these things, and see the carnality of the children of men, my spirit is made to mourn.

When did the creature man first lose paradise? When did he lose heaven? and by what means did he place himself out of it? It was by going counter to the law and manifested will of God his creator. Now, did this alter his situation? Did it send him into any other place? No. It only altered his state and condition, from that in which he was placed by his Creator previous to his transgression; where he was with the Father in all things, and who declared his will without a mediator between him and the soul. It was only when man had fallen into sin and transgression, that he needed a mediator. So, here, when they come to know a reconciliation; when they return back and acknowledge their transgressions, and know a being forgiven for all their sins, here is a reconciliation; and now they set out anew, and conform to the will and law of God, revealed in the secret of their hearts. For the law is not written on tables of stone now, my friends, nor was it ever written, (any thing that could save the soul,) upon tables of stone;

but that law which was written upon tables of stone, was only designed to save the bodies of the Israelites. And the law was not good for Israel, for it was suffered to be a veil between them and their God; but it was broken and rent from top to bottom, and an end put to that dispensation. When Jesus gave up the ghost upon the cross, he said, "It is finished." For he had done his office, his great work. He had finished the law, and abolished all the covenants and ceremonies; all the hand writing of ordinances, which were not for us but against us. And we are now to have access again to the holiest of all, the veil being taken away that covered the ark of the testimony. Jesus has entered into the holy place as our forerunner. And how shall we have access unless we follow him as our forerunner? We must follow up in the same righteousness, under the guidance of the same light that he was led by; for nothing else will enable us to follow him who was holy, into the holiest of all. Here, by his example, we are drawn, and his example shows us the way, and we must do as he did; and he lived under the cross. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." And what was his cross? Was it a wooden cross—or a silver cross—or a golden cross? Was it a cross made by man? No. It was the eternal, unchangeable law of God. This was his cross—this it was that he submitted to: all his propensities and dispositions were crossed and governed by this. He kept this law as his rule, which enabled him to take up his cross against every temptation. For he was "tempted in all points as we are, but without sin;" far he never complied with temptation.

Now it is no sin to be tempted, but the sin consists in yielding to the temptation. We ought not to be alarmed, my friends, because we are tempted with evil sometimes,

even if it should seem as though we must give up—though it should be so powerful in the mind that it becomes a matter of great suffering—though we should seem to feel as if we were doing all that the temptation pointed to, yet all the time we may be struggling against it. And if we have not yielded, but only felt its operation upon our minds, this brings suffering, the right kind of suffering, because of righteousness; and by this we learn obedience. This was the case with our great pattern; he learned obedience by the things he suffered. And nothing else could bring suffering, but these same temptations he passed through, that he might set an example to all who followed him in this way of holiness. And if we take up our cross and despise the shame, this is the great thing, my friends; for I know that the dear young people are afraid of the shame, afraid of the pointing of the finger, and the world's broad laugh. For whenever they turn away from the popular current, let it be never so wicked, all will cry out fool, idiot, and what not. Now we must be strengthened to withstand the torrent of this confusion and folly. And there is nothing that can enable us to stem this torrent, but as we keep under the influence of the divine light, and have a willingness to observe the divine law, let come what will.

Some will get so into the popular current, that they will go to work the work of God by the help and command of man. And I have known some to say to a brother, pray! Now, what presumption! It is taking the seat of God immediately, and presuming to be God, and to be exalted above all that is called God and worshipped. "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth," and not man. Should man undertake to do a single thing in God's work without the command of God?

If he does, he is a fool. This leads him, with the same tongue, to bless God and curse men.

No, my friends, in all our works we ought to admit of but one head, and have but one master. And, therefore, when we attempt to do any thing by the contrivance or agreement of man, we oppose God Almighty, and take his seat in the heart; and here it brings on darkness, death, confusion, and every evil work.

My desire, therefore, is, that we may so sink down in this meeting, as to come to a right view of these things, and be delivered from any attempt arising from the contrivance of the creature, whether to promote religion or any thing else, till we are convinced that it is from the will of our heavenly Father. We must feel his power; we must have an evidence of his light to show us the way; and then we can go on without fear or trembling, as composedly as though we were in heaven; and every thing we do would be agreeable to the will of God. But every thing we do in religion, agreeable to the mind of man, it makes us tremble, because that God is not with us, because we turn away from his counsel—it causes trembling to our bodily frames. But those who do the commandments of God, are as bold as a lion; and nothing on earth—not all the powers of men and devils can make them tremble or fear. They are not afraid of their foundation; they dare set it against all the rolling billows of time. It is an immoveable rock, as Jesus told his disciples. And what was that rock? It was the revelation of the spirit of God—it was the power and presence of God in the soul. “And upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” But we see the rock and foundation that the general body of Christian professors build upon; they are alarmed if a poor worm seems to do something counter to their rock; they

are all alive—they are scared off the ground, and show their foundation to be nothing but sand.

This frequently brings to my mind the saying of good old Joash, when his son Gideon was called of the Lord to go and do the Lord's work, to deliver Israel from their oppressors. He was a very valiant man, and still he felt very doubtful; he felt himself unworthy and insufficient for any thing; and how it brought him down. But it seemed that he could not give up till he proposed to the Lord to give him a sign. The sign was, I think, that a fleece of wool should be spread through the night, and to confirm his faith, in the morning the dew should be upon it, and none elsewhere. Well, he was not satisfied, notwithstanding this was effected; but he would try again: so he turned the fleece, and proposed that there should be dew all over the ground and none on the fleece—and this was also effected. Here he was encouraged; but he had a great work to do at home. There was the altar of Baal, which he was requested to destroy and break down. Well, this he effected in the night season: and in the morning there was a great cry made, about who had thrown down the altar of Baal; and it was finally fixed upon poor Gideon, to have effected it. Well, the men of the city, the prophets of Baal, appealed unto Joash the father of Gideon, that he would give up his son that they might destroy him. But see how wisely he reasoned with them. What, "will you plead for Baal?" Are you afraid of poor Gideon, a mere worm? If Baal be a god, let him avenge himself. He must be a miserable god if he cannot avenge himself.

Now, my friends, won't this apply to all those who are scared off their foundation, and must rise up to help their god, for fear that their foundation will be destroyed? I have often been brought under a view of the carnality that

is prevailing in the systematic proceedings of the professors of Christianity. They are looking to creeds and professions, and they are all idols. And now if a Gideon should rise up to destroy their idol, they want to fall upon the poor instrument—when it would exactly apply, if they would only turn to the scriptures: “If Baal be the god that has given you these things, let your god avenge himself.” He must make a poor god that cannot do this.

Yow see, now, the ground of all the persecutions that have ever been in the world, in regard to religion—that they have all been in consequence of worshipping an unknown god, and not coming to the one living and true God, who is all perfect love and full of power: and those, and those only, that rally under him, and fly to him for refuge, shall be established on the rock of ages, against which the gates of hell can never prevail.

O that we may learn wisdom; and where shall we look for it? Shall we go to books, or to the sciences of men’s wisdom as mortals? No, verily; for it is all foolishness with God. Where we are to apply, we have been told by the apostle: “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.” This ought to be, now, our continual care. And what seemed at first to break in upon my mind was so complete, that it seemed as if it were all that need be said—a being still, and entering into quiet and rest.

The Jewish nation had an outward covenant, but it was all carnal, because it consisted in earthly things—it was outward and material. All their law and covenant was suited to their outward heaven; and all their institutes were agreeable to it. But now, what is the Christian to do? What is man, that desires redemption

from sin, to do? “Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen; I will be exalted in the earth. The Lord of hosts is with us: the God of Jacob is our refuge.”

When we come to offer ourselves before the Almighty, how necessary it is to be still, and to do all that we can to effect that purpose. For we are not, when under discouragements, immediately to fall into fear and dismay. When something happens, as it were, like our waggon falling into the ditch, we are not immediately to cry out to Hercules; but when it is really necessary. Now this is a very instructive page, and although it is a fable, still how full of instruction it is! The man who had his cart stuck in the mud, fell to bawling and crying to Hercules to come and help him. But Hercules looking down upon him, cried out, thou fool, whip thy horses stoutly, and clap thy shoulder to the wheel, and then if thou wilt call on Hercules, he will help thee. Now although this is a fable, under the character of those who may be called heathen, that made it, yet it comprehends great instruction and an excellent moral. So we must now not only be gathered together, but we must set to work in good earnest, and do what the Lord has furnished us with ability to do; and as he has given us the means to exercise, we ought to use all our mental powers to get our bodies quiet, under a consideration that we are now in the presence of the Almighty and merciful God, who will distribute unto us according to our wants and necessities. We are to do all that we can, to be humble, and to show ourselves humble, by stilling our bodies and keeping our minds clear of agitation and unprofitable thoughts. You know how they will get in. Oh, what struggles I have had to keep them down! And when we have sometimes got the victory, if we have not kept up a perfect watch over our

minds, these foolish thoughts will spring up, and we hardly know where they come from. And here our attention is turned away from God.

Then what a continual labour is necessary for us, in our solemn meetings, and whenever or wherever we are meditating on the works of salvation and redemption. Here, as the creature struggles in good earnest, and is desirous of effecting the great purpose which he is aiming at, he comes to experience the divine power to still every thing—every improper cogitation of the mind. For, until this is the case, we cannot receive him into it. He will not come into our hearts when we are full of other guests; nor can we worship him. We may learn a form of prayer; and it may be very good in the expression of words, and at the same time our hearts be filled with vain thoughts; and the creature may be excited to put this form into execution by proposing to pray, while it is a mere outward thing. What an affront this is to the Majesty of heaven! To pray by a form of words! It is a great affront to the Majesty of heaven! For we know not what to pray for, but as the spirit helpeth our infirmities, and teaches us what to pray for. And if we are not attentive to this, if any outward calamity has befallen us, such as dearth, or what not, which may be designed by Almighty God for our good, we may be praying right against his power; praying him to do away these things to gratify us foolish, selfish creatures. But if we are under the influence of the Holy Spirit, we shall be kept from this inconsistency, and shall rather pray that he will increase the dearth and continue it three years, as most likely to effect the great purpose intended by it, to bring us away from earthly attachments, and increase our dependence on him. But now when we experience a little difficulty and affliction, we pray to be delivered from it

to gratify our selfish inclinations. Such prayers are all vain—they are all hypocritical.

But my dearly beloved friends—for I can call you so in that love which knows no bounds—my soul craves that we may bow down to the light and life of God in our own souls—that humiliating power. For the more we receive of it, and the more its power is manifested for our rising up and getting the victory—in the same proportion as we gain a victory over those things that harm us, we shall be more and more humbled in the dust; because it is all of his mercy, for we have no merit of our own. What a tendency it has to regulate our conduct, and to humble us, when we see and reflect on the goodness and mercy of heaven. I want that all should be encouraged; and that not even the drunkard should consider himself as a cast out: no, my friends, not so long as he feels conviction for his drunkenness. For every time he is convicted, he knows it to be the God of his salvation who is calling upon him, and willing to help him out of his lost and dissolute situation. I want that all should hear and obey; for the call has gone forth to the ends of the earth. “For all have heard, but all have not obeyed:” and so with every other one, the thief, the robber, the adulterer, the whoremonger, the fornicator—I want that they should not give up, and sink down into despair. This is the work of the enemy of their souls. Their natural inclination leads them to give up to this animal gratification. But so long as God is in them calling out to them, so long there is hope, my friends; and so long as they are called to hear what the Spirit saith to the churches, every one who has been doing evil may reform and come to God. And what infatuation, that any should ever like doing evil, when they must feel that they are losing more than they can ever gain—as nothing but turmoil and distress is the

portion of the wicked man. For Divine Wisdom has so ordered it, that every rational creature must find the reward of his doings, for in every act, if he has been wicked, trouble and anguish will be the reward; and if just, justification, and joy, and peace, full of glory.

So that we all have a time. The Almighty is doing and will continue to do, all that a gracious God can possibly do for the redemption of his creature man—for the redemption of his rational children. For he has placed them in the most eligible station that an infinite God could have done. For we cannot suppose that he would place them in any other state, than that which would be accordant with his consummate goodness. Here we see as our probation is in the wisdom, mercy, and power of God, we ought not to murmur because we are tempted, for there is a power always at hand, if we attend to the light of truth. There is something which will enable us to rise superior to it, and become victorious, through the manifestation of the will and power of God in our own souls. Be persuaded then, my friends; for we have an abundance of evidence, that the more we are brought under the influence of this holy teacher; the more we are subject to divine grace—the more and more we shall be turned to do the thing that is right—the more and more we shall be united together—the more and more we shall enjoy that social communion, in which all our happiness with one another consists. But by becoming strongly fixed in notions of our own, and by exalting ourselves and considering ourselves better than others, and judging others, our unity is broken, the bond of love is severed, and confusion and anarchy ensue. Here men take the seat of God, for we are only to answer to the Almighty for our views—we are not to be concerned to give an account to man, so long as our views are such as lead us to

love our Creator above all, and our fellow creatures as ourselves. What matter is it what opinions rest in our minds? for we are all to attend to our own salvation: and if we are concerned to do this, will we give way to notions that will hinder this salvation? God is to judge of these things; and man is only to judge of the overt acts of his fellow creatures—such as have a tendency to injure his fellow creatures. But if a brother does all his duty, consistent with the will of God Almighty, we have no right to judge any farther than this, “By their fruits ye shall know them.” We know that love and good works are the only fruits of the right and good tree: but the contrary fruit is the fruit of thorns and briars always and perpetually.

O, my dear friends, how my soul craves it of the God of our lives and of our salvation, that he will enlighten our hearts more and more, and spread abroad the curtain of his love over us, that we may feel it to be what it is—that he may shed abroad his love in our hearts, that so we may love him above all. And we cannot do this till we know him to be above all things glorious and precious to us. We must know him to fill all things, to fill our souls with his glory and majesty; and then it is that we can love him with our whole heart, and our neighbours as ourselves. Here we should be qualified to do to others, as we would that they should do to us. Now here we shall be qualified to fulfil the law, and nothing ever did it or can do it, but as we turn inward and dwell under the influence of his grace; and that will teach us, agreeably to what the apostle declares: “The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men.” And we might know it if we had never read the apostle; for we feel it reproving for sin—it is the gospel preached in every creature under heaven. It was

preached to Adam and Eve in paradise, and it is preached to all, the world over. And every rational soul has the same preacher, the grace of God, the manifestation and life of God in the soul. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men, teaching us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world."

Here all is done for us, by this grace of God, that need be done for us, as we must see, if we believe the apostle, and as we know by our own experience. For we know of nothing else, that ever did the least possible good, in the way and work of the soul's salvation, from what we read or any thing else, but as it is received from the immediate manifestation of God in the soul—the wisdom of God manifesting itself for our help and salvation. And, as the apostle declares, it will give the victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil, and every thing that can hurt or harm us. Therefore, let every one be encouraged, for there is hope for all—there is balm in Gilead, and a physician there. Then let us apply to him for it,—we shall not find it in any outward tree or garden, but in the garden of our own hearts. There he makes his abode—there is the garden that we are to look over, and nurse, and keep, and cut down all the weeds. It is no outward garden that we are to attend to, as it regards our souls' salvation or preservation. Here we deny all unrighteousness and ungodliness, and every thing that hurts and wounds; and it will enable all to love righteousness and to perfect true godliness in the fear of the Lord. Thus we are brought on from step to step, to experience a blessed deliverance—a full reconciliation with our Father in heaven: we shall be brought to place our whole confidence on him, and feel him to be our support. And

as we keep with him, and put our whole confidence in him, nothing can harm us—it makes us happy. And this is the experience of all those that fix their souls on God. For a soul fixed on God its maker, for support and countenance, while passing through this probationary state, is happy beyond all finite comprehension.

JERUSHA CURTIS. It is with me to add a little to what has been said. In remembering the passage, where our blessed Saviour was on the cross with the two thieves, one on the right hand and one on the left, my mind has been impressed with the circumstance, that although one mocked, the other, knowing that he justly suffered, looked unto him and said, When thou comest to the Father, Remember me. He looked to him to make intercession for his transgressions. O, my beloved friends! we shall ever find Christ remains to be as he testified: “I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh to the Father but by me.” Here we see, too, there is no other mediator or intercessor between God and man, and that he is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. And by looking to him we shall be saved, as we may remember, the answer of our blessed Saviour was, “This day shalt thou be with me in paradise.”

PHILADELPHIA PEMBERTON. As there may be in this large assembly those who are not Friends, or members of our meeting—[Great confusion, rendering it very difficult to hear the speaker—Elias Hicks rose, and by words and motions succeeded in restoring a degree of composure: the only words heard were, “My dear friends, do keep still”]—died for and offered up his precious life a sacrifice for us all. He died upon the cross without the gates of Jerusalem, and ascended up on high, and is seated on

the right hand of the Majesty in heaven, there to make intercession for us. And it is only through him, that we can have access to the Father. And if we deny him before men, he will deny us before his Father, and the holy angels. O, how I have desired that none of us may be mistaken—that we may see that it is only and alone through him, that we can be saved; therefore, my dear friends, look well to your standing.

ELIAS HICKS rose and added :—My dear friends, God is a God of order—and it will do me great pleasure to see this meeting sit quiet till it closes. We have, and claim gospel privileges, and that every one may be persuaded in his own mind; and as we have gifts differing, so ought every one to have an opportunity to speak, one by one, but not two at once, that all may be comforted. If any thing be revealed, (and we are not to speak except this is the case,) if any thing be revealed to one, let others hold their peace—this is according to order. And I desire it, once for all, my dear friends, if you love me, that you will keep strictly to this order; it will be a great comfort to my spirit.

OTHNIEL ALSOP then rose, and proceeded as follows. It is a gospel privilege to speak only one by one. I hope, a desire to improve—a desire to know what is truth, is the motive of a large number who have assembled here this day. Even Pilate, who so far complied with the requisition of the Jews, as to consent to the crucifixion of Christ; even Pilate asked, “What is truth?”

And what was the declaration of Jesus Christ the Saviour? “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me.” And when persecuting Saul had received a commission to persecute them

that called on this name—the name of Jesus, he was suddenly arrested in his course. A light shone about him, and those that were with him, exceeding the brightness of the sun, and he was smitten to the earth. And what did he hear? He heard the divine voice, “*Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?*” And he said, “Who art thou Lord?” And the Lord said, “I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.” And he who had been a persecutor was made to suffer much for that name, and was made powerful to stand for that name even in the midst of persecution. So that although he was made sensible that in all places where he came bonds and afflictions awaited him, yet he counted these things as nothing, so that in the end he might win Christ and be found faithfully serving him. And it is so, and it will remain to be so, that those who stand faithful, looking to their divine leader and commander, all the clamour of the world, all the persecution of man, will be of no avail, in turning their feet aside from this straight course. For, what a cloud of witnesses—what a weight of testimony have we, that through this divine name, and by his power, even through the name of Jesus Christ the son of God, and by his power, all things are possible, unto them that stand faithfully to him. When the disciples Peter and John were requested by the man who had been lame from his birth for an alms, what did they say? “Silver and gold have we none; but such as we have give we thee: in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.” And he who had been lame from his birth, under the power of this Saviour of men arose, perfectly restored to wholeness. And when these two apostles were called to account before the rulers of the Jews, who had before persecuted the Lord of life, they stood with all boldness and said, “Be it known unto you that by

the name of Jesus of Nazareth whom ye did crucify, does this man stand before you whole; nor is there salvation in any other. 'This is the stone that was rejected by you builders, which God has made the head of the corner.'" Yea, my friends, it is the living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious: unto whom if you come, he will receive you and forgive all your sins, and your iniquities will be blotted out; for he hath graciously declared, that no man shall come unto him and be rejected. He is the mediator between God and man, and the advocate with the Father. He was the great high priest, whom the apostle declared had passed into heaven, there to appear in the presence of God for us.

Far was it from me, when I entered this house, to open my mouth in this assembly; but I feel myself constrained to bear my testimony to those principles, which have ever been the fundamental principles of this society. It is not for nought, that we are from time to time recommended carefully to instruct our children and families in the diligent perusal of the holy scriptures, wherein are plainly set forth the miraculous conception, birth, holy life, wonderful works, meritorious death, glorious resurrection, and mediation of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. We bear the name of Christians before men; and do we individually feel, that we are not in name only, but in deed and in truth disciples and followers of him who laid down his precious life for us? He entered not into the holy places made with hands, as did the high priests of the Jews, with blood of others: "For then," as the apostle says, "must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world; but now once, in the end of the world, hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."

O, my friends! this is a subject that nearly concerns every one of us. Our religious society has never taught

its members to depend solely on the outward sacrifice. No! it has been far otherwise. We hold it as a fundamental principle that we must attend to the work of God in the heart—the revelation of Christ within. For he declares that those who meet in his name, he will be with them; and that he will be with them unto the end of the world. And he is making good this his promise in the present day; and where two or three meet in his name, that is, in his power, reverently waiting on him, he will appear, and does appear, to the comfort and strengthening, and to the support of these. And he will give strength unto these to stand for his name and testimony, and even in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. These will be enabled to stand under every circumstance; and in the hands of these, as instruments, his cause will go on and prosper. I believe he never will suffer to be wanting, in his church, instruments to stand, firmly to stand, for his cause and testimony. That I feel earnestly desirous, that we may indeed endeavour to get into a state of silent, solemn waiting upon him; that we may be willing to lay aside our own selfish views, that when we come to a meeting for worship, we may feel, that we have no other object in view, than the glory of God, and the good of our own souls and the souls of others.

O, my friends! the cause never was and never will be advanced, by any other course of conduct than this. My very soul was pained in this meeting, when an exercised sister was endeavouring to spread before this assembly the exercise of her mind, to observe, what must have been very evident to every one of us, a disposition in some, I hope not in many, to drown her voice in clamour and noise. My friends, even one of the apostles witnessed something of this kind; but by whom was it? It was not by the disciples of Christ. There was even a clamour raised—

“Away with such a man from the earth; it is not fit that he should live.” But he was moved by none of these things; and some of his followers know, that the cause they are bound to advocate is of too solemn and important a nature, for them to be thus intimidated by noise; they feel that they stand upon the ground of truth. It is my only hope, and it is for the good of the souls of those who are endeavouring to disturb the silence of this assembly, that I have felt constrained to speak. And my soul’s desire for us is, that when we retire to our respective homes, we may, with that light which we have heard recommended to us, the light of Christ within, examine, every one of us, into the motives of our conduct. For there is a judge who will judge every one of us, according to our works, whether they are good, or whether they are evil; and, if we really are followers of that light, we shall be willing that our deeds should be brought to the light. “For he that loveth the truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.” Then may we, every one of us, examine ourselves whether we are indeed children of the light and of the day. And there is a witness for God in the secret of every soul that will tell us; if, in the cool of the day, in the silence of all carnal reasoning, and the will of the flesh, we turn to it with a real desire to see what our condition is, it will show us what our state is. And thus must every soul of us feel convicted, if our motives in coming to assemblies like this, are other than a real desire to know what is truth. And how manifest it is, many times, that in this peaceful state, we may humble ourselves at the feet of the blessed Jesus, take his yoke upon us, and learn of him who was meek and lowly in heart. Then, and not till then,——

[Here, the tokens of disapprobation, which had for some time manifested themselves, were swelled into a degree of confusion, in which a part of the closing sentence was lost.]

ELIAS HICKS then rose, and stated, that he had something which he wished to communicate, and begged that the meeting would please to be quiet. The meeting being again restored to order, he proceeded.

Now I have been learning all the time my friend has been speaking; for we can learn, not only from things that are right, but by things that are wrong; both as it regards spiritual things and temporal things. We have now had an opportunity for several individuals to give their views: and now it is for us to say, and for you to judge. Now, where is the judgment seat, and who is to judge us? Our friend has told us, and we can profit by it, that there is a witness for God placed in every mind; and it was this that enabled the primitive disciples to write what they did, under the influence of the Spirit. Therefore, they wrote according to their views; but no man can unfold these writings, and give a right view of them, except he is influenced by the same spirit that those had who wrote them. It was only the inspiring spirit of God, that enabled the primitive disciples to know God; and without this inspiration no man ever did know God. We learn, likewise, that the name is the *power*; and this is not contained in the five letters that spell JESUS—no one of common sense will suppose this. But it was the power of his heavenly Father that was in him, when actively on earth. He tells us, that it was his Father that enabled him to do all his miracles. He says, “It is not I that do the works, but my Father that is in me. For my Father is greater than I.” See, then, how we can

learn, when we are sober and serious. Then let all our faculties be rightly exercised; let right reason and revelation go hand in hand; for reason is the most noble part of the creature; it gives a distinction between thing and thing. And as it is a gift of God, so we shall find that it is fully so,—a gift to the soul.

Now these are the two witnesses. The witness for God which he has placed in every mind—the revelation of his spirit in the rational and immortal soul of man; and the reason which he has a capacity of exercising in conformity to what the spirit makes manifest. For reason can do nothing of itself; therefore, it is only to decide as things are revealed to us by the light. Our reason would be dormant, as to the things of this world, were it not for revelation. The light of the outward sun is a beautiful index of the sun of heaven, as it reveals all things on our earth; and until it shines upon our earth, reason lies dormant. And so it is, though in itself it has the same capacity, reason lies dormant till things are opened to it by the light of heaven. As by the light of the outward sun we see things upon the earth, we can give unto them names, and can settle on what names things shall be called by. We are thus enabled to speak of things, to regulate things, to add to and diminish from things; and thus, under the operation of reason, we can make them in a measure useful; in a measure a blessing to us. Here we see the ability of this reason; but as reason is lower than divine revelation, it must always be subject to revelation. It knows nothing till revelation gives it materials, by which the soul can act upon them, and improve them.

Here it comes to the one point, that the *name* of Jesus is nothing but the power of God and the wisdom of God. And that it is so, we find from abundance of testimonies

in the inspired writings : but the translators were not inspired men, for they declared against inspiration. Here then, as we have been told, we must come to a revelation in our own hearts, to assure us what is right or wrong; and the scriptures, in their fullest extent, can go no further than to recommend us to God, the one thing needful. And no true minister ever attempted any further, than to recommend to this light and spirit of God. It was the ultimatum of Jesus Christ in his outward manifestation. It was his command not to move or take one step till they had taried at Jerusalem, exempted from all outward dependence; for he wanted to show them that they could do nothing at all, without that power which had enabled him to do the work; and which was a manifestation of his Father's power in him. Here he said, "Tarry at Jerusalem till ye receive power from on high; and ye shall receive it when the Holy Ghost is come upon you." And not till then, can any man bear testimony to the truth of the scripture records. We know, that they who wrote them were inspired men; but then what a diversity of opinions there is about them, and it will be eternally so, while we go to the scriptures only, which can do nothing more than to recommend us to that which Jesus recommended to Martha.

We must now leave it to the people to judge; and I hope, that no soul will believe a single word that I have said, unless it be from mere conviction. Now, if we will let each speak, and then we judge, we shall be profited by it; but if we do not enter into this quiet resignation to our lots, we shall not be profited, as I have observed. And if any speak improperly, though no man take notice of them, yet, no doubt, the witness in the soul would give uneasiness, if they attempted to speak for controversy sake, to give an opinion in opposition to another; and

they could never feel peaceable under it, when left alone. So we must leave this to God, he will do the work in us and for us.

I mention these things to stimulate us to order, in all our meetings. Let the dear children try to be patient, and to be quiet; because it is not allowing a brotherly freedom, to rise up and stop an individual who wants to speak, and because we have an order in our assemblies. And if we keep to the order established, and which we believe to have been set up under the guidance of truth, we shall never be broken to pieces; we shall always be united. But the unity of the Spirit does not need outward laws and rules at all; for every one under the influence of this, is like an epistle written in the heart, and these cannot be separated—neither time nor distance can separate those souls that are united in this divine life and love. But we must, while in these earthen tabernacles, have order for the regulation of these outward bodies—there will ever be need of this order. For one generation passeth away and another cometh; and children, when they come into the world, bring no knowledge with them—they must gain it all here. Some have one view and some another; some are very weak; some can use meat, and some cannot eat meat, and others can eat herbs only; but let not him that eateth, condemn him that eateth not; but let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. And so long as there is harmony—while the outward bond which is to preserve harmony in bodies is maintained, how can there be any confusion in our meeting together, for it can only be a breach of order that leads to confusion, and it will lead to anarchy.

Now, what I want is, that we should not rise up to take the seat of judgment, and to turn God out. But we must consider the discipline that we have made, to be only

outward, and relating to these bodies, because the true discipline is the law of God written in our hearts, and to this we must refer for an interpreter in every thing—it is above every thing else. For God has placed an unerring witness and guide in every soul, and the soul that is faithful to it, will never do any thing to harm a fellow creature, but honour God in all his works.

EXTRACT.

“Heaven is the highest place in either outward and local, or outward and spiritual situation, and therefore it is called *Ouranos*. The heaven in which it is said God dwells, is neither only above the firmament, nor only under the firmament, but both above it and below it, and even every where, where he manifests himself in his love and mercy, goodness, grace and glory : and as he dwells in no place so as to be any where (circumscriptively) included, so in every place ; he is so as to be no where at all excluded. So that if ye ask, Whether it is above the firmament only, and not otherwise ? I say, No ; for it is also under the firmament, or else the Son of Man could not have been truly said to be in heaven (as he is John 3.) in that self-same juncture of time wherein he was standing bodily, and speaking to Nicodemus here on earth, neither could the beast be said (as he is, Rev. 13.) to blaspheme the saints that dwell in heaven, if they were not in heaven whilst here on earth ; for even he and his worshippers (superstitiously) adore whatever they deem to be above the skies, and blaspheme it not. Likewise the apostles’ dwelling (*Politeuma*) was in heaven, (Phil. 3.) whilst they were bodily here on earth. Therefore, heaven is as well under, as above the firmament ; yea, it is in very deed in his people’s hearts, in every humble, broken, and contrite spirit.”

Samuel Fisher’s Works, p. 851.

THE QUAKER.

SERMON BY ELIAS HICKS, AT GREEN STREET MEETING, PHILADELPHIA, NOVEMBER 12TH, 1826.

“**F**EAR not, little flock; for it is your **F**ather’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”

This prophetic declaration of Jesus to his disciples, shortly before his separation from them, has impressed my mind in a way that has afforded instruction and encouragement. He was not willing to leave his disciples comfortless; but in this way to excite a hope in them, that it might establish their patience to wait for the fulfilment of the kingdom of God; for they were not in a condition then to understand or receive it. They had not experienced the birth which is necessary to an introduction into the kingdom; as Jesus, as recorded by one of his apostles, declared, “**E**xcept a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God;” much less can he come into the possession of it. This was a great mystery to Nicodemus—it is a secret, that all the wisdom of the world cannot unfold nor describe, however simple it is in itself. For, as it is explained by him, “that which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit is spirit.” Now this becomes a great point, when we view the thing in the right way; for every birth of the

flesh of animal man, in and through the medium of an animal, must be flesh, and it can be nothing else; and this birth can only be animated by the breath and air of this world, as we find was the case with the son of the virgin. He was animated, like the rest of the offspring of Abraham, with the breath of this world; and he was a child, an infant at his mother's breast. He was nourished at his mother's breast, which could only support flesh. When another birth was spoken of to Nicodemus, it was above his comprehension; he supposed it was a birth of the outward man. But Jesus Christ would unfold to him that it was not a birth of the outward man, that we do not derive it through any external medium. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit is only spirit. I conceive, that it is a very simple thing, when we get rid of the power of tradition and education, and when all our prejudices are removed, which we shall experience by attending to the one thing needful.

“Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the spirit.” Now, most of the instruction contained in the scriptures, is in allegories and similes, as it respects the soul and its salvation. We hear the sound of the wind, but cannot tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth. Here, now, he meant to show Nicodemus, that though he was a ruler of the Jews he was very ignorant; and that this birth of the spirit is an invisible one, to all the comprehension of animal man—it is as invisible as the wind, that we can feel, but cannot see. This seems to be an excellent metaphor, to turn our attention inward, to that feeling sense which we have of the deity, upon our own souls—the impression of the light and life, the im-

pression of the spirit of God. For the disciples could never know any thing of the kingdom of God, from any description given to them by Jesus, till they obeyed his voice, his instructive voice, condescending and submitting to be disappointed as to any thing in the outward manifestation being sufficient, as it related to the salvation of the soul—till they were convinced that it could not be done by any thing external. Not all external means, and all external instruction, could give them an understanding of the way of it. This cannot be understood till the mind becomes quieted and settled, and divested of all its roving and running, all its creaturely exertions, all its willing and doing, and comes into that state that Jesus commanded his disciples to centre into. The soul must become willing to wait as he told them. But he shut up this way while he was in that outward manifestation; for he was like a veil to them, they could not consistently look any higher than their outward master; hence, they could not understand the spiritual design: and although he preached the gospel, and such excellent doctrines, yet how blind it was to most of them! But he assured them that they must be brought into a state, in which they could have nothing to lay hold of at all, to do them any good, in the great business of their souls' salvation. He told them that they must be still and submissive; that they must be nothing; that they must experience a time, when, in self-abasement, they would be settled and confirmed in the belief that they could do nothing at all, but merely to wait for that power by which, said he, I have done those miracles you have seen me do. Without this, you can do nothing at all—you must possess the same light and the same power, before you can do any work which will be acceptable in the sight of your heavenly Father.

Here we find, that these disciples, when left alone, so understood the force of the direction of their master, that they condescended to tarry at Jerusalem and wait, having no possible knowledge of what to do in the great work. "Tarry at Jerusalem till ye receive power from on high" —tarry till you feel that power which will bring about a new birth. You are not to see it with your external eyes, any more than you see the wind; but you are to receive the impression of its power. "And you will receive power, when the Holy Ghost is come upon you." Remember it, I say it in the presence of the Searcher of all hearts, none can be qualified to preach the gospel till they have experienced the descendings of the Holy Ghost upon them. And every individual who attempts to preach without it, is an imposter and an idolater; and we are not to pay attention to these: for every thoughtful mind that asks for instruction and applies to the heavenly Father, he is willing to give it to them.

"Fear not, little flock." And who are these? Every one that places his trust and confidence in the Almighty arm. These make up this little flock. They may be few, or they may be thousands, or tens of thousands; yet, compared with God, they will still be but a little flock, as well as we can comprehend and consider.

I saw the opening of this subject before me, and was induced to believe that it was right for me to stand up, in the light of what I saw, although it was but little; and to communicate as might be opened to my mind; that we might be brought into a situation to be profited by thus assembling together at this season, in the full belief that Almighty goodness would be ready to help us to improve. And I believe, that he will not suffer this opportunity to pass away without our improvement, if we will turn inward to God, to the witness for God in our own

hearts—turn inward to that which will give a knowledge of the divine mind concerning us.

But to return to the subject, of having no knowledge of the state of the kingdom till we are born again. The professors of Christianity have various ideas concerning it, and always will have, till they come to the one thing needful. And nothing can do it, but what Jesus recommended to his disciples—to tarry in debasement till you feel the risings of the divine power in your minds. It is an old saying, that seeing is believing, but feeling hath no fellow. We see the truth of this from the testimony of Jesus to his disciples, when we come into a state of submission, and when our trust is in God and no where else. And it is a solemn truth, that a soul fixed on God for support and countenance, while passing through this probationary state, is happy beyond all description. And there is no other way, that we can become happy, only to submit to wait and know the Lord moving upon us by his own power and spirit; which is the same thing that is comprehended in the name of Jesus, and under the expressions, the Holy Ghost, the spirit of God, the spirit of truth, the life of God in the soul, which is the light; and the light is life. And as we gather inward to this, and wait for it till we feel its power rise in our hearts, then it will have the same effect upon every one of us, that it did upon the disciples on the day of pentecost. Not, perhaps, exactly in the same manner as with them, by being gathered together, but in our ordinary concerns and affairs, none of which should prevent us from a surrender of ourselves to the divine will. And through the operation of his grace, we should come to experience the truth of the apostle's testimony: "As many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Here, now, he graciously condescends to manifest himself to us. I speak

what I know, and have heard with my spiritual ears, and my hands have handled of the spirit of life. There is no place, no condition too obscure to receive him; so that I have often found his presence at the plough tail, or when sitting upon the plough beam. And so we might, in all the various operations of life, commune with him through the medium of his light; the medium of his holy spirit, the spirit of truth, which Jesus told his disciples they must wait for. But man must not have any will of his own—but we are to wait till his light rises and makes itself manifest in us; and then we can bear testimony. “Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.” And every man that neglects to wait for this, is an impostor.

I don’t feel that I have much to communicate, but on this wise to gather our minds home to the witness for God in the heart; and if we wait for it, we shall receive it and profit; by which our spiritual eyes will be opened to see the kingdom, and the faithful will be able to testify of the blessing. “Fear not little flock; for it is your heavenly Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom”—

[Here, the speaker, who was understood to be labouring under great pain from bodily infirmity, was compelled to cease speaking; but after leaving his place for a few minutes, he resumed as follows.]

The birth spoken of by Jesus to Nicodemus, was a birth produced by the spirit of God in the soul, not created but begotten; for the word *beget* cannot be applied to any thing else, according to the use of language, and the nature of things, and therefore there must be a union between the two. The soul is never qualified or prepared

to receive God in the way by which he may beget a right desire in it, a right knowledge, a right belief, till the soul comes into a condition to be willing to be led by God, that is, by his spirit; for God is a spirit: and to be led by nothing else, is the business of the soul's salvation. Therefore, when the soul becomes wholly united with God in the work, there is like a junction—the soul stands open, and he begets all these amiable desires, and it comes into a condition which is consistent with Paul's language: "As many as are led by the spirit of God are the sons of God." They are led in all things by the spirit of God. God being a spirit, he does not unite with any thing but spirit, but by and with spirit. His power is such that he can create matter, and can form of that matter, the animal bodies which we see in the world—the animal bodies of men and the rest of the creation. But the term beget has no relation to creating—the term begetting requires two. Now, for the want of this understanding, the professors of Christianity greatly err in many respects.

I want your understandings to be opened; but I cannot do it, the Bible cannot do it, nothing external ever did or can do it. There is nothing but the power of God, operating upon the soul of man, that can do it. For every good disposition and desire is begotten by God in the soul, by a union of the spirit of God with the soul; and here we become partakers of the divine nature. We must be like him in all things, as the Son is like the Father; yet dependent on God for all things, for life and succour; as his own Son tells us, that we must depend on the Father for every thing. He derived every thing from his heavenly Father, and was at all times consistent and obedient to his will, according to his testimony: "I came not into the world to do mine own will, but the will of my heavenly Father."

As much as to say, to his disciples, you must come into the same condition, and be saved of the Lord, and be united with me in the Father. And when that comes to be your experience, it gives you all a capacity to partake of his love, and this will satiate your desire after happiness and God. It is an immortal desire; for there is nothing more clear than the immortality of the soul, when we come to understand it. And the way is plain, my friends, for we all feel a desire that no finite thing can satisfy. Ten thousand worlds like this, could never make us happy,—nothing can satiate the desire of the soul but God himself. The loss of God is what it wants to make up. If the soul has an infinite desire, it must be immortal; for the desire is immortal, and it seeks immortality and eternal life, and nothing but that can satisfy the soul.

Oh! that we might look to ourselves, and examine ourselves rightly, under the influence of the Holy Spirit. For I hope we all believe the apostle's testimony—not by any means because he has said it, but because we feel an evidence of it in ourselves. For there is a portion of the Spirit given to every rational creature under heaven, to profit withal, and it will do the work for us, if we will only unite with it. God will force none into happiness who do not wish it. But it is a true testimony, when the apostle declares on this wise: “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.” And I have no doubt that it is his design to teach all men; but all are not taught by him, because they are not willing to be taught; and because they delight more in the gratification of their own lusts and carnal propensities, than to be led by the Spirit and grace of God. The apostle says, “The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men, teaching us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly,

righteously, and godly, in this present world." See now, my friends! let us look into ourselves. Don't we feel the operation of this grace every day? For if we do right it justifies us, and if wrong it condemns us. This is always the case, and we cannot escape its censure if we do wrong, nor its favour if we do right.

Then what hinders our coming to this grace, and walking under its influence, when we see the blessedness of the effects it would produce? It would unite us altogether under one divine law, which would supersede all the laws of men, and make them unnecessary. How happy we might be! The mind cannot comprehend the happiness that would be experienced by the children of men. And this I believe to have been the design of Almighty Goodness from the creation of the world; and he has furnished us with the means to come to it. Then why shall we stand out? Every one thinks that heaven is a place of joy and happiness, but still they are unwilling to come to it. They want to spend their lives in pride and vanity, and then have a heaven at the end of it. But what folly, my friends, to put off heaven, when we can come into the enjoyment of it so soon! Can we act consistently with reason, without coming into the enjoyment of it immediately? But this cannot be effected any sooner, than the soul is willing to conform wholly to the will of God. And don't we know, now, that our unhappiness is all the effect of this unwillingness? We know what his will is concerning us, every description of us; and we know what hinders us from being thus happy and blessed. It is rejecting the admonitions of divine grace: we are not concerned to improve by the benefits of the Spirit, as was designed by Almighty God—by thus putting off. Not that we mean to continue so; but we foolishly reason and say,

to-morrow we will mend our lives; but to-morrow never comes to those who thus procrastinate.

I feel an earnest desire, my friends, thus to call on us at this time; and when I behold and feel the gracious dealings of a merciful God, how it animates my mind with a desire, not only on behalf of myself, but of all my fellow creatures. I feel my heart enlarged over the whole universe, and it makes every fellow creature near and dear to me. Oh, then it is that my soul craves, and its secret prayers ascend to Almighty God, that he would open the eyes of the people, and impress them with a sense of their duty, and of his paternal love towards them; that so they may be induced to turn about and seek him with full purpose of heart; according to the promise, that “they who seek, shall find; and unto them that knock, it shall be opened.” It is a great truth and promise, that will be verified in every honest heart; and we should but little need communications of this kind, if there was a willingness on our part; for we should join heart and hand in the work of salvation—we should in earnest apply to the way and work.

There is another thing that is clear to every one: that every act has its reward. And we feel it to be so when we are brought into a willingness to enter into covenant with God, and determine to do nothing but what is right. See what a blessed step it is. I know what it is; for it has been my determination to do nothing but what is right. And although we poor; finite creatures, may inadvertently make a little slip, he who watches over us with the angel of his presence, if he sees no other determination but to do right, he will forgive us immediately. And here our happinesses will flow as a river, and nothing will impede it, while this is our resolution and way of working. I feel a great desire to impress these things

upon your minds, that you may come into covenant with the God of your lives, that you will be nothing but what he calls on you to be. Our duty to God and our fellow creatures comprehends all instruction. And what is this duty? Nothing but obedience to his manifested will. And as we are thus concerned to do our duty to him, we shall know how to do it to our fellow creatures, in such a manner as to bring peace continually, and it will flow as a river; and if we would seek peace and pursue it, we must seek it in the right way, through the medium of God: and we must not seek it any other way. Therefore I desire not to express many words, or to weary this assembly, but in this way to endeavour to inspire your hearts with gratitude to your great benefactor, the Lord our God; and likewise to inspire your hearts with a concern and engagement, to persevere in the way of your duty, so that peace may be your enjoyment; according to the testimony of Jesus to his disciples, "My peace I give unto you. In the world ye shall have tribulation;" but in this obedience to the will of your heavenly Father you shall always enjoy peace.

[Here the speaker again sat down about five minutes.]

And when we come to this principle, this gift of grace, this light, there is no necessity for us to be careful about what we will believe and what we won't believe; because nothing can give us a true belief but this light. It will give every one of the children of men a belief sufficient to induce them to enter on the work of salvation aright. For as this is the medium, and the only one, by which God continues with his rational creatures, there is no other way by which he gives them an evidence of what is right and what is wrong. For he has set good and

evil before us all; and left it for us to choose. “Choose you this day whom ye will serve.” Here as you come to this, you need not trouble yourselves, or recommend to your friends what they must believe, that they must believe this or that—it is all nonsense; because a man cannot believe just what he wants to believe—he cannot believe any thing but what the divine light gives him an evidence of, and this he must believe, and he cannot resist it. Here then we discover, that belief is no virtue, and unbelief no crime; because, why? it is an involuntary thing to man. But when the soul is willing to be instructed by the grace of God, it will be instructed, and when it is instructed, it will have an evidence of the truth, and it cannot resist it—it is bound and forced to believe it; not from any compulsory measure, but from the clear force of the thing, because it is self evident.

And when we have a self evident certainty of any thing, though we had no belief about it before, this will be a saving knowledge. Hence we shall be clear of a great deal of trouble, and warring, and quarrelling about beliefs; because true belief, and saving belief, comes through but one medium, and that is the grace of God, the Spirit of truth, the Holy Ghost, and it may be called by whatever name man may please to call it, if we only keep to the thing itself, that is, God in man, the divine essence itself working in the soul. Because, why? Man is but an effect of God, and every effect must rest upon its cause. If God withdraws himself, we sink into the same situation as before we were created. We have an evidence that God is in us, and that he ever keeps in us, to preserve us in the same condition in which he first arranged us; and if we are obedient to him he will keep us in this state, and give us an opportunity of acting with consistency, so that we may give up our account with joy, and not

with grief. Then what a pity that men should spend their time about beliefs, about what they have no business with. For nothing can give a man a true belief, but clear evidence from the grace of God, from the light of his Spirit—nothing else can give us an evidence; for all must recur to it, agreeably to the evidence of Jesus to his disciples, and of the enlightened in all ages. George Fox's labour consisted principally in rallying the people to the light within. And did they come to it, and walk by it, and obey it, all would be right, and there would be no occasion to talk to them about beliefs. For though they might differ in some abstract notions, yet in substance they would be right, and they would all come in at the same door, under the great shepherd, God; and he would be their preserver.

Oh! my soul craves that this may become our happy experience; but it never will, till we turn inward to this grace of God in the heart; till we turn our whole attention to it. For a soul fixed on God its maker for protection and countenance, is happy beyond all finite comprehension.

[Here the speaker again sat down, but rose immediately, and added,]

I feel that an acknowledgment is due to this large assembly; and I do not feel willing to let the opportunity pass away, without an expression of my feelings, in being with you and beholding your patience and orderly deportment. And is it possible, that by our own exertions, we could bring ourselves into this quiet? No: by no ability of our own could we effect it. Then have we not reason to attribute to Almighty God this quietude and stillness? which I consider a very great mercy.

And it inspires my heart with gratitude, and with pleasure towards you, my friends: and in that love which reaches over sea and land, I bid you all, affectionately,
FAREWELL.

EXTRACTS.

“His darkness, in reflecting upon our *heaven within us*, denying us to have a due regard to things above on Christ’s right hand, is as thick as *Egypt’s*; for if *God’s presence makes the heaven*, as we have been always taught, and all have believed and confest, then, since God vouchsafes to *temple and tabernacle in man*, it follows that *his heaven is there also.*”

W. Penn’s Works, vol. 2. p. 94.

“The chains which the angels who kept not their *first estate*, are reserved in, are the same under which men, who kept not their first estate, are also reserved under darkness unto the judgment of the great day, and that is the darkness itself, into which they are both gone forth from the light, which was that habitation they both left, in which they were created to stand, as ’tis said, *The wicked are captivated in the cords of their own sins, and snared in the works of their own hands, viz. in the deceitful counsels of their own hearts, in their own corruptions, under the bondage of which the whole creation groans, and travails in pain together to be delivered; out of which bonds, and chains, and fetters, snares and sore captivity, there is no deliverance for men, who are all to come to judgment, but in Christ who opens the prison doors, by that spirit by which he went and preached to the spirits which were in prison in the dungeon of Egyptian darkness of old in the days of Noah; wherein they remain reserved unto wrath and judgment, which from the Lord must first come upon*

them, as assuredly as ever they sinned, and as unavoidable as travail on a woman with child which she cannot possibly escape; and the place of their confinement is wherever the said rebellious spirits are; a place not of an *outward, local* consideration; for although every spirit is in *loco definitive*, and determined to his *hic & nunc* (excepting God only, who cannot be so) yet a spirit cannot be said to be *in loco circumscriptive*.

And as for the great day, and the *judgment* thereof, it is the light of the Lord (for the *light he called day*, and the *darkness he called night*) and the judgment that the said light layeth to the line, and to the plummet, in every creature that hates and rebels against the light, which ministers condemnation on the transgressor, and reveals from God nothing but vengeance, tribulation, wrath and anguish, perplexity and disappointment, wo, cursing and vexation of spirit, on every evil spirit, and on every soul of man that is found in evil doing; the eternal judgment of which day of the Lord, is over all the oaks of *Bashan*, and cedars of *Lebanon*, and pleasant pictures, and fenced towers, and high walls, and all man's glory and pomp, which hell now opens her mouth wide to receive, and over every one, and every thing that is high and lifted up; and there can be no declining the judgment of it.

Samuel Fisher's Works, pp. 854, 855.

“And whereas you seem to refer *all to the trial of the scripture*, both station, doctrine, and practice; surely if ye had done so in truth, ye would have more patiently heard their testimony according to the scriptures. Every man pretendeth scripture, but none truly honour it, but they who are guided by that Spirit which it testifieth of. And they who are not guided by that Spirit, walk not according to the scriptures, but according to reasonings

of the fleshy part, which windeth itself into the letter of the scriptures, that by some conformity thereto, it may avoid the dint of the Spirit. And this is the way of antichrist's prevailing, by getting the form, crying up that, winding his own fleshy spirit into that, and sheltering itself under that. Thus the Jews cried up the temple of the Lord, the sabbath, the law of Moses, and writings of the prophets; and under this cover, with great zeal persecuted Christ; he was looked upon as a blasphemer, as one against God's temple, his sabbath, his ordinances, &c. And since the days of Christ, the antichristian spirit speaks great words of Christ; his death, resurrection, ascension, intercession, &c. and of church order, and discipline, that under this cover it may fight against the Comforter, the Spirit of truth; who alone can lead into truth, and which is the proper way of God's ministration since Christ's ascension. And this hath been the way of opposing truth ever since, and still is: and here is the antichrist, he that holds these in the wrong part, and by these fights against the Spirit."

"But that the scripture is the rule of trial under the gospel, I read not in scripture; but that the things of the Spirit are to be known in and by the Spirit, 1 *Cor.* ii. 12. The apostle John, speaking of antichrists, seducers, and erring spirits, which were to be tried, doth not bid them try them by the words which he wrote, or by the other apostles' words, or by the prophets' words; but by the anointing; which keeping close to, they need fear no seducers, 1 *John* ii. 26, 27. The word which was in the beginning being received, abode in, and kept close to, tries all words and spirits. That which begets to God is the Spirit; the great gift (which is given to him who is begotten) is the Spirit; and this (being given) is to become the fountain of life to the believer, *John* vii. 38.

And in this spring of life he is to live, and receive milk and knowledge; and here he is to walk, and here he is to try all other waters, even by this water. And this is more to a believer, and more enableth him to try, than all the words of truth that ever were written; though he that hath this cannot despise or undervalue any thing that the Spirit ever wrought: but yet the Spirit itself is more to him, and more certain than any words concerning the Spirit. Men may make false glosses, and mud, and make void the scriptures, by their reasonings, and interpretations, and traditional apprehensions; but this water ever runs fresh and clear, and no foul spirit can defile it. Moses gave the law, which directed to, and ended in, Christ: Christ in the flesh finished the work which the Father gave him to do, and directed to the Comforter to be the leader into all truth; yea the spring of life to the believer; and here the believer is safe: but the antichristian spirit ravaging from this, cries up the letter in the stead of this, and doth not see how the letter points to and centres in this. *God hath made us able ministers of the New Testament (saith the apostle;) not of the letter, but of the Spirit, 2 Cor. iii. 6.* He overlooked the letter: that was not the thing he was chiefly to minister, but the Spirit, the power, to turn men from darkness to light, that they might feel him that is true, and have the life eternal abiding in the heart: but now, in the antichristian darkness, the Spirit being lost which is the gospel-administration, they seemingly advance and cry up the letter, putting it into the place of the Spirit. *Yet in truth it is not the scripture neither, in its naked simplicity, which is thus cried up, but man's wise reasonings about it.* The fleshly will, the fleshly understanding, the fleshly strength getting a seat there, having formed a building out of it, and reared strong holds in that part which can be

wise and live without the Spirit; now its life, its interest, lies in the scripture thus believed, thus understood, thus practised; thus therefore it cries it up, not as it came at first out of the hands of the Spirit, nor as the truth of it is now seen in the simplicity and nakedness of the Spirit, but as the wisdom from below hath formed meanings and apprehensions concerning it. And here every sort of men are wise in their own eyes, and strong and prudent in their own conceivings and reasonings, but know not the bringing to nought of that understanding which precedeth the opening of the eye of the babe, which hath that sight of the things of God given it which is out of the reach of all the wise and strong ones.

It is true, under the law they were to try by the law and testimony, *Isa.* viii. 10, but yet not in an uncertain way, according to their own guessings, imaginations, and reasonings, but according to a certain interpretation and knowledge thereof; and in cases of difficulty the judge was to have recourse to the priest, *Deut.* xvii. 8, &c. And the priests, in cases of doubt, had an ordinary way of inquiring by Urim, *Numb.* xxvii., besides the way of inquiring by prophets, which was very common with them also, *1 Sam.* ix. 9.—xxviii. 6. But now the Jews having forfeited these, and filling their minds with a gathered knowledge from the law and prophets, trying Christ and his truths by this, judged amiss both of him and them. Now the law was a shadow of good things to come; not a shadow of another outward law or rule, but a shadow of the inward rule, of the law of the new covenant written in the heart, of the Spirit put within, *Heb.* viii., and by this law is the true believer fully as able to try, as they were by the former; but without this, a Christian's trial of things is not so certain as theirs was under the law."—*Pennington's Works*, vol. 1, quarto, pp. 304, 305, 306.

THE QUAKER.

SERMON BY ELIAS HICKS, AT ARCH STREET MEETING, PHILADELPHIA, NOV. 12, 1826.

IMMEDIATELY, almost, on taking my seat in this assembly, and on observing the quiet and general solemnity that covered it, my mind was impressed with this query: what heart so hard, in looking over this large assembly, as not to be affected with compassion and sympathy towards them? As their situation seemed to exclaim in expressive language, "Who shall show us any good?" And I believed there was not a small number, and I hoped it was generally so, who were making the inquiry, show us the way to Zion; or, in more simple language, the way to perfect peace.

This seemed to induce me to remark to you, my friends and brethren, of every description—I call you friends, both brethren and sisters, for I feel you in that love that makes you thus near—that the way is not without you. No longer look for the way without you, no longer let your inquiries be unto man; for I am bound to tell you, that the way is in you, at home in your own hearts individually. It is the way that the blessed Jesus pointed out to his disciples, the only way, the eternal and enduring way. And as we are favoured to read it in the scriptures of

truth, we count it a blessing to us ; for every individual, and every enlightened mind who reads it has understood it in himself, and this is a second warrant of it. You remember it, my friends, no doubt, many of you—and when I make use of the term friends, don't suppose that I am addressing myself to a particular society ; by no means, for as the gospel is founded in universal love, so is my love established upon this ground of universal love to my fellow creatures, the world over. I say, the way is in you, and not without you ; because the kingdom of God does not stand in meat, drink, outward ordinances and ceremonies, but in peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. And therefore, if you would walk on in the way to Zion, you must find it in your own selves.

We may recollect and consider how it was described by our great and blessed pattern, when he was trying to draw the minds of his disciples from every thing external, from every thing which he had done or could do in his outward manifestation. For he had previously told them, that he should soon leave them, and he certified to them the way it was to be effected ; and when it drew towards the last season, he said to them, “ Because I have told you these things, sorrow hath filled your heart. Nevertheless, I tell you the truth : it is expedient for you that I go away : for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart, I will send him unto you.” Jesus Christ had been an outward, external comforter, according to that dispensation, which was an outward, shadowy dispensation, comprehended in an outward heaven, or land of rest, or of peace, an outward Zion ; and the possession and enjoyment of its blessings, were the highest aspiration of the minds of the Israelites, according to their own requisition. And there-

fore, when he healed their sicknesses, and when he cured their various diseases, it was to put them in possession of those excellent external enjoyments and blessings of a gracious Providence, under that dispensation; and it was intended as a figure, to lead them into that which is internal and everlasting.

Now, our inquiry is, what is this Comforter, who is he, and where is he? Jesus acted in the perfect wisdom of his heavenly Father; and in his perfect goodness, he did not leave them to guess, or examine, or search for themselves at all. But he called their attention out of all searches, works, and exercises whatever, into a state of resignation to the will of God. For we must observe, my friends, that all the misery and iniquity, attending the children of men, that ever were, have been, and will be, have arisen from man's will, from man's willing for himself in direct opposition to God his creator. For we find that in the beginning, man came pure and clean out of the hands of his Creator—he was innocent, but at the same time, endowed with propensities and desires suited to the great end of his creation, that he might be brought up to glorify God and enjoy him. But this he could not do without knowledge, and therefore, there was a propensity fixed in him to desire it, for without this desire he could never seek it, and without seeking he would never find it. But in order that he might know his standing and situation, as determined in the wisdom of God, he was let know, that he was not to seek it in his own ability, and in his own time—by any way, or any means of his own devising; although he had great liberty in the exercise of those propensities as a free agent. For he possessed propensities, desires, and affections, which were placed in him by the hand of his Creator, (for he could give himself

none,) for the purpose of effecting the great end for which he was created.

Here his desire after knowledge led him astray, for want of a steady obedience to the divine command. But had he turned his mind and attention upon himself, so as to know his real condition, he would have been led to see, that nothing which he could do would satisfy the desire after knowledge—that nothing could satisfy it, but that which is immortal, and comes from that source: and as he kept inward, in himself, the Lord preserved him in a state of innocency and love; his mind was opened so that he could learn true knowledge, that knowledge that would always have led him into happiness and joy in himself. But in his impatience, according to the history, he attempted to derive it in direct opposition to the will of his Creator, as I could manifest to you by telling you what it was. But you remember the history no doubt, my friends, how it was, and that he went out of obedience by attempting to decide for himself, and to know good from evil, contrary to the will of God.

Now this is given under the similitude of a tree—that he should not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Now, I apprehend that your common understanding, will teach you to believe, that this was a similitude, that there was never such an outward tree upon the earth, that man could take hold of with his external hands, as an animal; but it was his immortal spirit that could aspire to it, to enter in and do something which he was tempted to do, to gratify himself, at the same time, knowing that he had been commanded different from it. Here we see is a decision in his own will, to gratify his desire, contrary to that way which the Almighty had pointed out. Here was the beginning of a will in a man, contrary

to the will of God; and herein his fall consisted—herein he broke his union with his heavenly Father—and so, immediately when he did it, what was the consequence? His temptation was, that his eyes should be opened, and that he should become as God. And every temptation arises from our propensities and desires; it is something that urges us on for advancement in regard to ourselves, yet knowing it to be contrary to the command of God. Here it was that their eyes were opened, and they saw that they were naked. Yes, my friends, and have you not all experienced it as they did? Did you ever go counter to the manifested will of God, without feeling yourselves naked before his all-seeing eye? With all your ingenuity, could you get any covering from his piercing eye? The nakedness spoken of was a nakedness of soul, but not of body; for no doubt, Almighty goodness completed man, and did not leave him half made, and without covering as to the natural parts; but just as suited in his wisdom to give him. Here now he tried to hide—and what did he do? The inspired penman carries on the similitude of sewing fig-leaves together, which appears from the account, how it was intended, and as the wise in heart have understood it. And how often have I heard it when a child, by my father and others of sensibility, when a man would attempt to cover his offences, they would call it sewing fig-leaves together; but it would never do what they intended by it, as we should see, if we did but consult ourselves. For, indeed, where does right reason begin? The first step of wisdom is, for a man to know himself; it is by this, that he is brought up to the First Cause. For every man and woman, when they examine their own condition, their life, their being, and every thing which appertains to them, their views are en-

larged, and they are led on to God himself, the great, eternal, self-existing, First Cause; and they are filled with amazement, that he should ever have created such a being. We thus become convinced that we cannot make ourselves. No, nor all the mortals that ever lived cannot effect it. Here it is that we are instructed, by coming inward, where God has placed a witness for himself; for he has placed a witness for himself in every soul, which will bear a true record for God in him, if he abide in it.

So that here now, we may all learn by right attention, for we have all willed, and been brought to exercise a kind of self-will, by disobedience; and the object of all the dispensations of God to the children of men, has been to reduce this will in man; as his only redemption and salvation depends on and consists in it, be their situation never so various: and if we, through suffering, are brought to return to a state of filial obedience to our heavenly Father, here we experience salvation, for in his will consists all our salvation. And when this is the case, he will clothe us with coats of skin; which being the strongest covering that the body can have, was used as a similitude of forgiving us our transgressions, when we repent and are sorry for what we have done. That the way, my friends, is in us, as Jesus declares. For when he gave his disciples his last command, upon which all their happiness and blessing depended, it was in these words, "Tarry at Jerusalem till ye shall receive power from on high." And what is Jerusalem? Was it to these disciples only that he spoke? Certainly not, any more than to us who read the history, for our salvation rests upon nothing without ourselves.

Here his command to them was, to rest out of every

thing that they had ever known or done; and it applies as fully to us as it did to them, "Tarry at Jerusalem, till the Holy Ghost shall come upon you;" and then, and not till then, was any man or woman capable of bearing witness; because there was no other medium to know him through, but through God's anointing, or God's wisdom and power. When they should receive power, then they should be able to bear witness in Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost parts of the earth.

O my dear friends, how simple the way! how simple and blessed the way of our salvation! it is worthy of a gracious, wise, and benevolent Creator. It is so easy and plain, that the way-faring man cannot err in it. It is the most simple of all ways; there is no mystery contained in it, in the least degree, for it is all founded in self-evident truths. Though, alas for the people! they profess a great deal about the scriptures, but where is the man or the woman that believes them, if we judge by this rule: "By their fruits ye shall know them." I say, where is the man that believes these writings? There are very few, judging them this way.

But Jesus did not leave his disciples here, he told them what this Comforter was, and where he would be found, to manifest to them that which concerned their salvation. For every belief that has an effect upon our salvation, is a belief that we cannot refrain from, a belief that is compulsory on every soul; for it is founded in self-evident certainty to that soul. "And when he is come, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you; and he shall lead and guide you into all truth." And to assure them that they should not look back unto carnal commandments, or to any thing which he had said to them before, but

keep close to this inward divine power, this spirit of truth, he says, "He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." Will the inquirer, then, go to man to know where it is? Shall we go to men or books to know what it is? If we go to books to be taught, we must come first to this witness in ourselves; for nothing can certify us of any thing relating to salvation, but what this inward spirit or comforter first dictates. Here you see the reason why the scriptures, instead of directing to themselves, direct to this divine power. "For what is to be known of God is manifested in man:" and how blessed are they who come to this unerring guide, and remain in its teachings; for its tendency is to do what Jesus said it should do, "reprove the world of sin." And I appeal to this large assembly, whether they do not know, that they have experienced the truth of this verified in themselves? Let me appeal to the wickedest of all men, and they must acknowledge, that this inward light, this inward God, this inward Christ, has reproved them for sin; and they have found this truth to be immutable, and that, let them try to turn their back upon it as often as they would, they have known it to carry a kind of evidence that they could not escape. As is described by the two witnesses which were slain and lay dead in the streets of Sodom and Egypt for a time; it is declared that they would rise again, and that with terror. And is this not the experience of every sinner under heaven? I conceive it is. They may get asleep for a season, and Divine Goodness may suffer it to be so, they may get into a state of carnal security; yet this light, like the two witnesses, will bring them under reproof for their sins, and they cannot disbelieve it. It is this only, my friends, that can produce our salvation—it is the predicator of all our condemnation. Now is not

this a plain way? Is it not consistent with perfect wisdom, with divine mercy and goodness, that he has so acted upon us and worked with us, as to leave us without excuse? And how would it comport with an all-wise Providence not thus to act, that his creatures might acknowledge to his mercy? I know what I say from blessed experience, for I have been a sinner and an opposer to God, and acted contrary to what I knew was his will concerning me, which brought condemnation upon me in the midst of my wicked career. And if I had been cut off, it would have been just in God, and I should still acknowledge his mercy and sovereignty in the midst of all the torments that my sins could bring upon me. For he has done every thing that he could, consistently with his nature; therefore, he shall receive glory from all of us. And even the sinner must confess, when under condemnation, that he is a gracious and merciful God.

Oh! how I have adored his mercy; and how powerfully has my heart been inspired with gratitude to him for his continued loving kindness! And still I was led on to sin and repent, sin and repent, till by my sufferings I learned obedience, like my blessed example. He learned obedience by the things which he suffered: for he was tempted and tried as we are, and had the same exercise and warfare as we have, against temptations which rose out of his necessary propensities and desires. So that God will be glorified in us and by us, let us do as we will. That in the opening of this view, how my soul craves it, and how strong is my solicitude to invite you, and to do all that I can to bring you home to this point—to get you to rally to this blessed standard, that you have departed from, the standard of the King of Heaven, the light of God in the soul. For God is light, and nothing else

can reveal God but his own light. No reading, no book, no external communication can ever give us a true belief in God—it is himself only that can reveal that he is God, and that he is the author of our existence. And when we come to this, then we can read over the experiences of good and wise men, which they have been brought to the attainment of through this medium, before any writings were known on the earth; such as Abraham, Isaac, Noah, and Enoch. They were not tempted to look to external communications. Before books were, they looked to the divine light manifested in every soul. It opened in the soul that covenant that God made with man in the beginning. For he made a covenant of life with his creature man, in the beginning. And what was it? It was, that man should obey him in all things—it was a covenant that man must accede to when he looked into himself; for every thing demonstrated to the creature that he should always be dependent upon God, the source of the knowledge of all good and evil, of all light and life in man.* For there is no other medium by which we can attain to any true knowledge, or any thing which shall nourish the soul up to eternal life, but this divine spirit which was breathed into man by God, and which

* It is proper to observe here, that the words, “the knowledge of,” in the preceding sentence, have been supplied by the reporter, their omission by the speaker being evidently a *lapsus linguæ*, a thing by no means uncommon in rapid speaking. On the subject being subsequently mentioned to E. H. by some of his friends who had observed the expression, “the source of all good and evil,” he had no recollection of having so expressed himself; and readily concurred, that the idea which he must have intended to convey was, that God was the source of the knowledge of all good and evil; and that the omission of the word *knowledge*, was no doubt, a slip of the tongue. That this was the case, must be evident to every impartial reader acquainted with his views; and is sufficiently apparent, both from the context and from his other discourses. (See “The Quaker,” No. 2, p. 39, No. 3, p. 67.)

is the soul's existence. But it is not the animal that can know it; for the animal life is the breath of this world, but the breath of the soul is the life of God. "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men, and that was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." What consolation the true believer has, when he reads this testimony, and feels and knows it to be what it is! He knows that he has this divine light and life communicated to him, and that nothing can extinguish it but turning away from it, and not receiving it as his rule and guide, by which he turns from God, and the saving knowledge of God.

If I should live as old as Methuselah, and feel the same concern and desire for my own salvation, and the salvation of my fellow creatures, I should never have any other doctrine to preach, but to call to, and rally your attention to this eternal standard of light and life; that you might be willing to turn to it, and gather to it. I know what hinders you, but you must give away all these things. It is pride, vanity, and a desire to please ourselves, that keeps us in separation from God; for "the Lord's arm is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear; but our iniquities have separated between us and our God, and our sins have hid his face from us, that he will not hear." Therefore, I have not come here, nor felt any thing to attempt it in the least degree, to gather you from any belief, or the profession of a belief; for belief is not a voluntary act of the creature, it is something that comes from the Creator, and we are compelled to believe till we have evidence to the contrary: and we have never a right to believe till we have evidence. But my mind is engaged to turn you unto righteousness, to turn you to that which is perfect in right-

eousness, and which is sufficient to enable all to walk in the path of righteousness. For “they that do righteousness are righteous, even as God is righteous.” It is “they that do righteousness.” The apostle had allusion to that perfect righteousness which is the immediate saviour in the soul, “Christ within, the hope of glory;” but it was not that outward Jesus Christ that was the hope of glory. But being made of a woman, made under the outward law, he was the Jewish Messiah, to redeem them that had been brought into the Jewish dispensation. But instead of receiving him, such was their unbelief, that he suffered death at their hands. They had so turned away from the truth, as not to believe in their Messiah when he came.

And here now we see the reason why he was limited and not permitted to go to any except the Jews; because no others had that covenant dispensed to them—no other people were prepared to receive such a covenant: for we cannot suppose that God had neglected all the rest of his rational creatures and children, and appointed no covenant for their safe going. For in every age of the world, since the fall of man, he has raised up prophets and wise men, and enlightened their understandings that they might be leaders, as Moses was to Israel; and these have opened to them precepts and doctrines which have opened the way for their improvement in righteousness, if they would submit thereto, agreeably to the divine will. Even some of the ancient philosophers, how just were their ideas of this! But see, the Israelites, in their fallen state, were proud—they had let in an idea that God’s mercy was limited to them as his people, and that all the rest of the nations were Gentiles or heathens; and when they departed from God, what a state of darkness they fell into!

When we read of the state of Tyre, in the Bible, and of what is related of King Cyrus, see what excellent things! It speaks of the dispensation of the Almighty, and visitation of light to them; and if they had not been exalted in their minds, they might have continued to be a city. We see what Cyrus had arrived to, for the scriptures testify of him that he was the Lord's anointed, his shepherd. But they became exalted; and so it was with Israel, they imagined that they were the only people, and that wisdom would die with them. And this has been the fate of every people under heaven. And it is the fate of poor Christendom: they are apt to think that God despises all the rest of the world, and they want to compel all others to come into their views.

Here then we see the ground of all the persecutions in Christendom, which have been the most cruel of any under heaven. And this will be the case with traditional professors. Traditional professors of religion will always be a persecuting people; because they think it right to persecute all those who will not come to their standard. Here is the ground, it is respecting opinions and religious notions. And I want that all, of every class, should witness a coming to the doctrine of Jesus Christ, a coming to the witness, the Comforter which he told them the Father would send—a coming out of every thing selfish or creaturely, into a state in which we should see that it was impossible to do any thing of ourselves. Here we should cast our care on God Almighty, who is an invisible God, entirely secret to all the external senses of man; for no man hath ever seen God with his external eyes, nor ever can. And there is no other way in which they can be united, but as they are concerned to gather home to this standard. For what did it do in the primitive days?

Under their various prejudices, they could not come to any great perfection ; yet they came so far, that it brought them to be of one heart and one mind, as to the essentials, that is, a belief in, and an abiding under the teachings of the Comforter, the light within, or spirit of truth—it brought them together. And here the prayer of Jesus Christ was in a good degree answered, when he prayed his heavenly Father to make his disciples one, as he and the Father were one. “I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one—that they may be one as we are one.” Then it has done its office. Here it leads us up and delivers up all unto God, and he becomes all in all.

So that here, my friends, we see the one thing needful ; and there is nothing else to be come at, that can unite the children of men, but this light and life in the soul. It is truly God in man ; for as he fills all things, he cannot be located in any thing which is capable of being located ; because to suppose that all the fulness of God was in Christ, is to take him out of every other part of the world. But as certainly as he was in Jesus Christ, so certainly he is in all the sons of God. And, “as many as are led by the Spirit of God, are the sons of God.” Here now we see, that God is every where, that he fills the immensity of space. Our comprehensions and apprehensions cannot rise so high, but there will still be opened to us a possibility for the exertion of his infinite power. For though in six days time he might have created this terraqueous globe, and finished the work as to the creation of it, what reason have we to suppose that he is not constantly creating new worlds, and inhabitants, and that he will continue to do so to all the endless ages of eternity ? For there is no end to space ; there will always be

room for him to employ his infinite power, and he never employs it but for some good cause. For power has no right in itself; power is subservient to justice and truth. Power gives no right to man; nothing but justice must rule; it is the first principle in every creature. The prophet alludes to it in what God requires of man,—“He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?”

This is sufficient for all the children of men, if they would only come into the possession of it; and they never can come into the possession of it, till their whole will is slain and done away; till they have passed under the two edged sword and all self-will is cut off from the soul, and the soul is left in a state of suspense, waiting on God to feel the rising of his power, to give it life. Here it returns to the childlike state. “Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.” And again, “Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.” Now how plain it is, that we should return to our innocent state as children. But even those who depart from this child’s state of innocency, and run on till they are old; even these, through the adorable mercy of God, may be brought by the things which they suffer, to wait upon God; and if they repent of their sins, they can come back into the child’s state. This is a state in which they will see that they know nothing as they ought to know, and they will submit themselves as children just born, to the operation of God’s power; and they will set out anew, under the guidance of the Prince of Peace—this Comforter, this “Christ within, the hope of glory.” Here they will build on a sure foundation, which

Christ laid for his people, for all his disciples, which is the revelation of the Father in the soul. This is the rock, this is the foundation:—"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

So that I say, my friends, I would that I could make you feel what I say. Oh! how I should rejoice. I feel in the earnestness of my soul, a solicitude, that the power of love that now sustains me, and excites me to plead with you, may fill every mortal. I have no regard to persons or professions; for when we come into the truth, it will banish from the earth all sectarianism: and when we come back into the state which we ought to be in, to become the children of God—we shall all be brethren and sisters of one family. Our Father will bless us, sustain us, and direct us. Then there will be no sectarianism, no discipline of men—we shall need it not; for we shall suffer God to be the rule of our life, which will supersede all the laws of men. But while men and women will counteract one another, in order to keep up social communion, it is necessary, in a certain degree. Hence I honour discipline and order; for God is a God of discipline and order. And the design of the discipline of this people that I am united with, is a discipline as regards their moral conduct. "By their fruits ye shall know them," and not by their profession of Christianity. When this comes to be the case, when their fruits testify that they are of God, these are they who make the true Quakers—these love one another with an unfeigned love: and love is of God—it is an all-powerful love. For God is love, and they that dwell in God dwell in love.

What must our fruits be then? They must show that we love all our fellow creatures—that we are cautious about condemning or exclaiming against one another; it

is inconsistent for those who are placed on an equal foundation. Shall I judge a brother because he does not believe as I believe? I know from my own experience, that he must believe the truth when it comes upon him. But as he cannot give himself this belief, I am willing to let him enjoy his opinion. And what a blessed bond it is when we come to a right knowledge of our duty to God and to one another! And from the want of this, all the persecutions in the world have arisen. It first began in the apostolic church, by men turning away from the true witness, to man. Hence they said, "I am of Paul, and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ." But these were all wrong, for they were all looking outwardly; and Christ told them, that it was expedient for them that he should go away. "Wherefore, henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth, know we him no more." Because he had turned the attention of the disciples home to the life and power that acted in him, and was the governing principle in his soul while here on earth, as the sent of God to that people. So here we come to the one thing which is unchangeable—as Mary did in the figure. And Oh! how I have admired this, and may we all come to Mary's state. "Martha, Martha, thou art troubled about many things:" and how many there are troubled about religious matters, instead of sitting down at the feet of their comforter, as Mary sat down at the feet of her comforter, from a sense of her own imbecility and ignorance; from a knowledge of her inability to serve him at all, till he had commanded her what she should do. But busy Martha tried to force her to comply with her wishes. Here we see what inconsistency; and yet, how Martha loved Jesus. And there are

many now who love him, but are not sensible how it would spread if they would yield up to its influence.

“Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things; but one thing is needful,” my friends, and that is, never to act a single act except under his divine influence; and then there would be no condemning and persecuting among men. I say, this is such a beautiful representation, and appears to apply so beautifully to the dear sisters, and the young sisters, that I want they should consider this. And if Mary’s way was confirmed to be the right one, how it agrees with all that I have communicated—a complete surrender of our will to God, manifested by his light in our own hearts; for that is our comforter, if we believe what Christ has told us, and if we don’t believe him to be our only one, we testify against Christ and call him a liar. But we cannot stand when this witness arises: and however we may oppose it and set up some other rule; though we may slay it by looking outward; though it may for a time lie slain in the streets of Sodom and Egypt, that is, in the heart, still it *will* rise with terror. I say, dear young women, how acceptable it is to give up in our youthful days. I have been young like yourselves; but, through adorable goodness, God began with me, I believe, before I was eight years old. He gave me an evidence of this when I was a child. For I was often doing many things which no man knew of, yet his all-seeing eye saw me naked, and many times made me wet my pillow with my tears. So that I must forever glorify God for his condescending goodness, in visiting me in my rebellion; and, through his adorable mercy, he kept following of me, and made me feel the effect of my transgression. And through his adorable goodness he brought me under a sense that I could do nothing of myself. And when standing on the floor to

dance, he brought me to give all up and surrender to him—he excited a prayer in my soul, that if he would be with me and strengthen me, I would be his servant, and never do so more. And blessed be his name, he answered my prayer fully. My dear young friends, O that you may be brought to this state! what peace you would have, and which would go with you through every season of life, and land you at last in peace and rest; it is that which the world cannot give nor take away. Whenever I have deviated from this way, sorrow has attended my path, and here I have seen my weakness; and this has led me to be more deeply engaged in watchfulness. So the Lord deals with his children. Dear young friends, be persuaded to rally to this blessed standard, the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, this blessed light, the spirit of truth, and we may always be in a state of safety. It is a vain thing to rest in profession and belief—for what will they do for us? But if we come to this principle, it will show us with indubitable certainty the way in which we should walk.

Here every one that will come to this, will come to answer the end of their creation—and what is that? We admit that the chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy him. And when we come to this, every act will have a tendency to glorify God in us and by us; and as this is the case, we shall enjoy his peaceful, blessed, consolating and comforting presence. And nothing can make us afraid, when we come to that perfect love which casteth out all fear—for there is no fear in love. We shall not be alarmed at every wind of doctrine; because his power will be over all, hence we shall not be terrified with amazement nor fear. We shall not set about to help our God, for he don't want our help, only when he calls on us to do his work.

I have often thought, when I have seen the exertions of the children of men and professors of religion to do something for their God, of that good old man, Gideon's father, Joash. When Gideon had destroyed their images, they came to the old man to give up his son, that they might persecute him, and, likely, slay him. But how consistently did he reason with them: if Baal be God, let him reason for himself—if he be God, he wants not man's help! Now only look at it and learn wisdom, because we are told by an eminent apostle, that, let things go as they will, we are not to be frightened and alarmed: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God." And this is my faith and belief that nothing can shake. And if we have this confident faith in God, why he makes all our enemies to be in peace with us; and all that our enemies can do, does not alter this peace. Though they may be inimical to us, yet we can be friends to them, and do them every good; even to bow ourselves down and kiss the bottom of their feet, if it would be the means of helping them. There is nothing too despicable for us to do, to help our enemies. And this is the state of the true Christian, the real child of God—they are partakers of his nature—they live in his life and love.

O my beloved friends, how I crave that this may be my lot, and your lot! I am willing to unite with you in an ardent travail of soul, to sink out of ourselves and every thing appertaining to us, and to come down into that state recommended to the disciples—to keep out of all contrivance and improper imaginations and thoughts, for we sin in thought. Therefore, the most happy state that we can enjoy, is a state without desire or thought; for then we are the Lord's, we are in his hands, and here we

are in a state of safety—we have no excitement to do any thing, but to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, which the righteous have experienced in every age of the world. Therefore let us all stand still; and if we have power to pray to him at all, let it be that he may keep us in this state of resignation, till he shall come and enable us to glorify his great name above all, who is God blessed, for ever.

EXTRACTS.

“There was a time before the law, (for the law was given by Moses:) what saved then? Was it any thing but the saving grace, the saving light, the saving spirit, the holy anointing? Could any be saved but thereby?

“What saved under the law? Did the shadows then save, or the substance of life veiled under them? Did not the spirit then work inwardly, redeem inwardly, save inwardly? Did not the word or commandment nigh in the mouth and heart, (to which Moses by God’s direction had turned their minds,) enlighten and save inwardly?

“And any of the Gentiles, as the Word or Spirit of life did work in them, did it not circumcise inwardly, and save them also? So that though they had not the law or ministration of Moses outward, yet they had the inward writing from God on their hearts, and showed the work and efficacy of it there, and shall at last be justified by, and according to, the everlasting gospel, which justifieth all whatsoever, so far as in any measure they receive and are subject to the light and law of God’s pure spirit, which the carnal mind cannot receive nor be subject to.”

Pennington’s Works, quarto, vol. 2. p. 184.

“On the other hand, they [Friends] equally dislike an

independency in society, an unaccountableness in *practice and conversation* to the terms of their own communion, and to those that are the members of it. They distinguish between *imposing* any practice that immediately regards *faith or worship*, (*which is never to be done, nor suffered, or submitted unto,*) and requiring Christian compliance with those methods that only respect church business in its more civil part and concern, and that regard the discreet and orderly maintenance of the character of the society, as a *sober and religious community.*”

Wm. Penn, Preface to George Fox's Journal.

“The great work of the minister of Christ is to keep the conscience open to Christ, and to preserve men from receiving any truths of Christ as from them further than the Spirit opens; or to imitate any of their practices further than the Spirit leads, guides, and persuades them. For persons are exceeding prone to receive things as truths from those whom they have an high opinion of, and to imitate their practices, and so hurt their own growth, and endanger their souls. For if I receive a truth before the Lord by his Spirit make it manifest to me, I lose my guide, and follow but the counsel of the flesh, which is exceeding greedy of receiving truths, and running into religious practices, without the Spirit. Therefore the main thing in religion is to keep the conscience pure to the Lord, to know the guide, to follow the guide, to receive from him the light whereby I am to walk; and not to take things for truths because others see them to be truths; but to wait till the Spirit make them manifest to me; nor to run into worships, duties, performances, or practices, because others are led thither; but to wait till the Spirit lead me thither.”

“The apostle warns believers, to take heed of drawing one another on too fast, or of judging one another in such things as some of them might have light in, others not. He that eateth, not to judge him that did not eat; and he that did not eat, not to judge him that did eat. Yea, in matters of worship, he that observed a day, and kept a sabbath, not to judge him that observed not a day, or kept not a sabbath; for the Jews which were truly converted, were yet hard to be drawn off from the observation of their sabbath, and could hardly bear with the believing Gentiles who were never taught to keep their sabbath with them, but were taught to esteem every day, and sanctify it to the Lord, *Rom. xiv. 5.* And those who esteem every day, and dedicate it to the Lord, (ceasing from sin, and resting to him: for under the gospel we are not to set up a new type, but to enter by faith into the true rest, which is the substance of what the other signified,) could hardly bear with them who observed a day. Even in the apostles’ days, Christians were too apt to strive after a wrong unity and uniformity in outward practices and observations, and to judge one another unrighteously in these things. And mark; it is not the different practice from one another that breaks the peace and unity, but the judging of one another because of different practices. He that keeps not a day, may unite in the same Spirit, in the same life, in the same love with him that keeps a day; and he who keeps a day, may unite in heart and soul with the same Spirit and life in him who keeps not a day; but he that judgeth the other because of either of these, errs from the Spirit, from the love, from the life, and so breaks the bond of unity. And he that draws another to any practice, before the life in his own particular lead him; doth, as much as in him lies, destroy the soul of that per-

son, *ver.* 15. This was the apostles' rule, for every one to perform singly to the Lord what he did, and not for one to meddle with the light or conscience of another (undervaluing his brother, or judging him because his light and practices differed from his, *chap.* xiv. 10.) but every one to keep close to their own measure of light, even to that proportion of faith and knowledge, which God of his mercy hath bestowed on them. And here is the true unity in the Spirit, in the inward life, and not in an outward uniformity. That was not necessary in the apostles' days, nor is it necessary now; and that eye which so dotes upon it, overlooks the one thing which is necessary. Men keeping close to God, the Lord will lead them on fast enough, and give them light fast enough; for he taketh care of such, and knoweth what light, and what practices are most proper for them;) but for men to walk on faster than the Lord holds forth his light to them, this overturns them, raising up a wrong thing in them, and the true birth hereby comes to suffer, to shrink, and be driven back. And Oh! how sweet and pleasant is it to the truly spiritual eye, to see several sorts of believers, several forms of Christians in the schools of Christ, every one learning their own lesson, performing their own peculiar service, and knowing, owning, and loving one another in their several places, and different performances to their Master, to whom they are to give an account, and not to quarrel with one another about their different practices! *Rom.* xiv. 4. For this is the true ground of love and unity, not that such a man walks and does just as I do, but because I feel the same Spirit and life in him, and in that he walks in his rank, in his own order, in his proper way and place of subjection to that."

Pennington's Works, quarto, vol. 1, pp. 319, 320, 321.

THE QUAKER.

SERMON BY ELIAS HICKS, DELIVERED IN WILMINGTON, DEL.
SUNDAY MORNING, DECEMBER 3, 1826.

WHILE sitting in this meeting, my mind has been led to take a retrospective view of the several steps of reformation among the children of men, which have been produced by their merciful Creator. And previous to the opening of this subject, I have been induced to make a few observations, that may tend to our better understanding these steps of reform: they are similies pointing to the subject.

Mankind have found it useful to themselves to domesticate certain portions of the animal creation, in order to be served by them, to be benefited by them, and to make them useful. Now as every animated creature on earth must have a will to direct his actions, and to carry into action, and into effect, what he wills: so it is with these creatures; they have a will, but still they may become perfectly domesticated, so that their will is in complete subjection to the will of their owners. The creature must become passive, so as not to have a will to resist the owner's will, otherwise he cannot be very useful: because no two creatures can be truly useful and beneficial to one another, with adverse wills.

Now if the owner of the creature is upright, the reduction of the will of the animal may become a blessing to the animal, because it is in the power of the superior being to bestow greater benefits on the inferior, than it has at its own command. And so with mankind, although they have agreed as social beings, and actually fixed on what shall be considered rights and privileges; yet, as social beings, they have condescended and consented to place themselves in different situations. Some find it their interest to stand in the situation of servants—they find that they can enjoy the blessings of time better, than by conducting business for themselves. Hence they agree to serve another as master, that is, to do his business, to do his work, and to effect the ends intended by the master in carrying on his business. Now this servant, to be a good one, and to act consistently with the covenant between them, must give up his will, because it is a just right of his employer to have every thing done according to his own pleasure. And even if he should direct him to do that which is contrary to his own interest, and the servant should see better, yet it is the duty of the servant to be passive to the will of his master.

So likewise we see in relation to father and son. According to general custom, the law of nations and societies, the son, during a certain portion of his life, is considered in his minority, and in this state and condition it is most conducive to his good, and the honour of the parent, that he should use no will independent of the parent's will; for if he uses and exerts it, it will lead to disturbance in the family. But, knowing the right of the father to control, where the son is under a right direction in his own mind, he sees the propriety of submitting, and yields to his father's will; and therefore serves his father

more than he could by any other acts independent of the father.

Now I apprehend that these are what may be called self-evident truths; and they instruct us very much in the great business of our lives, in passing through this probationary state. For every rational being who rightly considers himself, and enters into an inquiry with himself, must easily and readily determine that he is dependent on another; and on a little more observation and experience, he will discover that his happiness depends on his being passive to that superior Being, in whom is comprehended all wisdom, all knowledge, mercy, love, and other perfections.

Now we shall by this means, by a short train of reflections, be brought to discover how men on earth have become miserable creatures, more or less so, every where in the world. It has arisen in every individual, from the creature separating himself from obedience to his Creator, by which a will has immediately taken place in him, different from that of his Creator. The first temptation is recorded in the Bible, wherein are likewise recorded those several steps of reform, exhibited in the history of at least a portion of the children of men. But it will not be necessary for me to make many remarks upon the early part of this history, during the days of the patriarchs, for this relates only to individual reform, but to come to the first step or introduction of reform in society—in a collected society of people.

We read that “death reigned from Adam to Moses.” For the children of men, taking them together, had advanced in a dereliction from the will of their Creator, and had been going on further and further from him, by which they had got into a state of almost universal death

and darkness, as regarded their best interest, and as regarded their Creator. The first step, beginning with the reformation in that people, was by and through an individual, to wit, Moses. We read how he was brought up, as the son of Pharaoh's daughter, and of course was brought into Pharaoh's court, by which means he was led into all the wisdom and science of the Egyptians, who were one of the most powerful and ruling nations at that day, and the king of Egypt was a powerful potentate. In all the nations of the earth, attempts have been made at reform, but they have not been upon the right ground—they were not from the right source. For while men have a will of their own, and unite in society according to their own will, however they may think themselves right in all points, when they set up for themselves an association, a government, it must be according to man's will, and they will be tempted to force man into man's views.

Now this is no actual reform, but sometimes it is a going back, going farther off. Because there can be no right reformation, but under the influence of the Supreme Being—that Being to whom all nations owe obedience: and their duty and their happiness depend wholly on being passive to his will. Here we see then, how the miseries of mankind first began. It is given to us by Moses, in express terms, that it was by disobedience to him whose right it has been to rule and reign in the hearts of the children of men, from the beginning to the end of time, and in all nations. According to the history of our first parents, God gave them a command, that they should not eat "of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." And it was not only his right to do so, but he could not consistently with his being do otherwise. As

a being perfect in wisdom he could not do otherwise, because he knew that the creature could not know good and evil of himself; but as he was made by Almighty God, so he must seek to him for power to enable him to answer the end of his creation. Therefore, he began early, to let him know what to do and what to leave undone. You have read the account, my friends, and here we see, that by one act of this individual he destroyed his happiness; for immediately on committing the act, he felt himself to be a loser by it. And hence we learn the wisdom of the Creator, the perfection of Him who has so ordered in all things of his creation, and especially as it regards his rational creature man, that every act shall have its consequent reward. Now this is consummate wisdom, because the creature learns by the result, whether his actions are right or wrong. For if he acts right, he will increase in knowledge, and will rise one step higher, out of an innocent state into a virtuous one, as it was designed man should in the beginning. But if on the contrary, he goes one step on the negative side, he loses a degree of happiness which he before enjoyed, in a state of mere innocency.

Now as these things, unsought for, are presented to my mind, I open them to you, my friends; and, I trust under the influence of that love which desires the welfare of all the creation. And I hope that we may seriously reflect upon the subject, for I trust that we shall be led to see in what reformation consists, and in what our eternal happiness consists likewise—and that all the miseries of man arise from one source, and all his happiness from one source. And this one source, from which has been introduced all the misery of the world of mankind, is, a separating from the Almighty, by disobeying

his requirings, and yielding to a will in themselves, independent of, and opposite to, the will of their Creator.

Now let us pause for a moment, and see what an unrighteous and wicked act it was in our first parent—there never was a greater evil done. And we see now, that we are his successors, and that we have every one done the same thing; and not only once as Adam did, but we have done it many thousand times over. Here we see how iniquity has increased, how much worse we are now than our first parents were. For we don't find that they ever transgressed but the one time, because the result was sudden—they had their reward immediately. It has been supposed that it was envy that led to their temptation, but the desire after knowledge was the thing that tempted them, by presuming to know good and evil without the divine light that had been given to instruct them, and to keep them from going counter to the divine command. They were pushed on to decide for themselves, from an apprehension, that by so doing, by exercising their own abilities, they would become as gods, knowing good and evil, without the aid of the divine mind, and counter to the divine command; but their reward followed the act. I have often said, in relation to what has been called an evil now, that I have admired, that a man would ever be drunk more than once, for as he has his reward immediately, one would suppose that he would never do the like again.

But, I apprehend, the act of Adam was not of that kind which arises from the propensities of the body. It was a desire after knowledge, which desire was no doubt impressed upon his mind by the Creator, for without it he would never improve in knowledge, in the right way. So that every propensity of the human mind is a gift of

God and intended for a benefit to the creature, that he may answer the end of his creation.

Here we don't find that Adam ever transgressed but once—we have no reason to suppose, from the history, that he did. I consider this view of great moment, for this reason, because people are so weak as to imagine—(and where do they get the idea from, but from the same source as Adam, by seeking to gain knowledge through an improper medium?)—they have started the notion that we are to stand accountable for Adam's sin, and that we are losers by it. But now, if we reflect rationally, I think we must be gainers by it; for if we act as rational creatures, we gain something by seeing a man drunk; for if we have never seen a man drunk before, is it not an example, a warning for us, to avoid such an act ourselves? Here we see now, what the apostle says, and it is true, that “the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God;” because, if we reasoned as we ought, this act of Adam would be a warning to all his offspring, and would certainly be a benefit to us, if we acted rightly. This is my view, and I give it to you to examine.

But to return to the great subject, the beginning of reform. Moses was brought up in Pharaoh's court, and taught the science and art of war, because it is by the sword and war, that men go about reforming nations; but all this stands in the wisdom of the world—in the will of the creature, and not in the will of the Creator. The record affords us an instance or two of the Almighty commanding war: and if the Creator saw cause to command it, they think this is a justification to them in the case, and therefore they will follow it to bring about some desirable object. But where men are not governed by the wisdom of the world, they will pursue it no further

than the will of the Almighty shows it to be right; and there are very few such instances ever known in history. Here now, Moses, no doubt, as he was among the Israelites, had found out that they were his brethren, and as his mother, probably, was not unmindful of him, and had many times given him a sense of whom he was, and where he sprung from. And having learned the sciences of the Egyptians, and to do every thing that could be done in man's wisdom, he seems to have been led to think it justifiable, even to fight to do good. And he must have had a presentiment before his mind, that he might be a deliverer to his brethren, to release them from their bondage. And we find this account, that he went out to visit his brethren, "and looked on their burdens; and he spied an Egyptian smiting a Hebrew, one of his brethren:" and according to the manner of all those men, who mean to bring about a great object by war, by force and compulsion, he was naturally led to be afraid to do it in the sight of another. But if it had been a righteous act, and a good act, he would not have been afraid. "And he looked this way, and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he slew the Egyptian," and delivered his brother. But Pharaoh hearing of this, would have slain Moses, and "Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh and dwelt in the land of Midian."

Now all the children of men, who have been engaged in outward warfare, have had feelings like these; for when they have gone to fight they have always been afraid. The warrior is in some sort always a coward: fear has always terror in it, and that terror makes him act as he does—he tries to do away his enemy lest he should kill him. Moses was driven out into exile, by his own act, for every act has its consequent reward. Here he was

humbled, and made willing to become a mere servant instead of a leader; for he kept the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, who went under the name of priest of Midian, and he served him for a considerable time, till he was called to return into Egypt to deliver his brethren. Here, now, we see the great change in the creature; when he goes at the command of the Almighty to do an act, what an unwillingness he always feels to do it. When Moses was called to go down into Egypt, he saw that of his own sufficiency he could do nothing—he refused, and was unwilling to go. Now I want that people should well consider this matter, because I believe that every messenger and minister, when called to do the work of God is unwilling—they feel under a cross, to give up to it, and they can hardly do it till they see as much as Moses did. They want to see some miracle before they can surrender to the service, and be willing to derive all from him, to be entirely dependent on his will, and know nothing about what they may have to say or do. They must go on blindfolded, only when the Lord is pleased to interfere and open a way for them. Here we see the way that all the true messengers on earth have had to enter on the work. They must have been made willing to submit entirely, till their wills are slain and subjected; because no creature can be useful in the Lord's service while he has a will of his own, independent of that of the Almighty. So long as this is the case he cannot be useful; because nothing can carry on God's work but what is in submission to the will of God. Hence, it cannot be done by the will of the creature in a state of independence, or by any power of his own. For the creature must be rendered, by proper submission, a suitable object for being acted upon, which he cannot be before he gives up his will and

surrenders it. And till this is the case, they can never be sent on the Lord's business. It is certainly so, my friends. I conceive it to be a little, in recollection, like a self-evident truth; for every thing which relates to our true interest on earth, must arise from that which is self-evident. For belief is not a voluntary act of the mind, but it is derived from evidence that we cannot resist. It must be so powerful as to be as forcible as a self-evident truth.

When Moses was reduced to this state, we see how he went on. When thus properly regulated, every step that he took he waited to know the will of God—his own will was completely subjected, and his way was opened by divine wisdom and power. But as the people were dark, blind, and sensual, they could not, in the state they were in, be instructed by the spirit of God upon their spirits—they were too sensual for such a step of reform. That was reserved for the introduction of the gospel, a higher state, when the people were better prepared and more fit to receive it. Moses was sent down into Egypt, and he effected the object for which he was sent, and we trace him on, till he comes near the borders of the promised land. But we have all read the history, and we know that it is wonderful indeed: for outward miracles were wrought, in open view, to the external senses of the Israelites, and they were not prepared for a higher dispensation. This was the lowest of all, it was nothing but a figure. Now you know, if a skilful mechanic is about to erect a fabric, to shield himself from the storm and tempest, if he be ingenious, he will make at first a draft or pattern on paper, or some other way, by which he can find out the dimensions and construction of it, which will be most likely to effect the end which he intends to accomplish. But this is a mere shadow or pattern—he must have substantial

things to effect the work. Just so Almighty Wisdom acts, in establishing a house of refuge for the children of men, from the storms and tempests that await them; but this is inwardly and spiritually so.

Well, when they came upon the borders of the promised land, their trials became more close than before. They discovered that the nations, which they were about to dispossess, were mighty in strength, as to the outward; for they had not been brought to that peaceful state that Moses was in; hence they were terrible in the view of the Israelites. And we see how they grumbled and murmured against Moses, and against God. Now this they could not have done, had they not a will of their own; and when they came to the borders of the promised land, and were called on to go in and possess it, there were none who obeyed. And, as is the case in outward warfare, they sent out spies in fear and terror; though, when they returned, they made a good report as to the excellency of the land, and they brought clusters of grapes to show how fruitful it was; and yet, after all, when they reflected upon the mighty power of the nations, and that their walls were very high, there were ten of them whose hearts failed them; they turned about and brought up an evil report, which discouraged the hearts of the Israelites.

Now what learning here is. And is it not so at the present day? Do they not tell us that it is impossible to overcome all the inhabitants, that it is impossible to be freed from sin on this side the grave. Now, what a discouraging report this is, and how it leads us away from a proper exercise, and turns us back from placing our confidence in him, who hath all power in heaven and in earth; and whose design is, in every step of reformation

which he is working, to work a complete reformation from sin in us, while in this state of probation. And we must be delivered from all our sins while in this state of probation, or we never shall be. Here, now, is a doctrine which has a tendency to do a great deal of harm, pointed out by this shadow of the Israelites; and we see the consequence, it hardened the people, and they rose up against Moses and God, and rebelled against the divine commands. And what was the result? They were turned back into the wilderness, to wear off that generation, that not one of that day might enter the promised land.

Now, can't we apply this to the present day—to those who are making a great profession of religion? Certainly we can, if we rightly consider it. The old nature in man, is that which keeps men under the power of sin. And these will have to travel in a state of darkness and wilderness in their minds, as it regards God and the right way of salvation; and they can never be brought out of this situation, till that old deception is slain in them; till the light of truth in their own minds enables them to see their error, and to give up their own wills, so as to become passive in the divine hands. Then it will be like a new creation brought forth in them. It was only the old who had been inhabitants of Egypt, and that had prevented them in this way, that were not permitted to enter the promised land. They were afraid that their children would become a prey to their enemies. But we read that the promise was to them, that they should inherit the land. And what does this mean, my friends? That none but those who experience a new birth—none but those who have their own wills slain and crucified, and have a newness of heart, can ever enter into the kingdom of heaven. Before this, none can

come to know God, and not knowing him as they ought, they never can become subject to the will of God, in this state and condition. So that it is a beautiful thing, or it seems to me so, that the outward Israelites fell short of their outward heaven, as the consequence of their transgression and rebellion against God, in their own will. And so it is with the children of men now, who are professing to be Christians; and yet how adverse they are in their conduct in relation to it, too generally speaking. Therefore, till we come to know a child born in us, an innocent child that has not rebelled, we never can become entirely subject to the Father. For, as I observed, a son while in his minority must be subject to his father; and so this birth, begotten in the soul, must become subject to the Father in all things—it must have no will of its own—the will of the Father is its will. And we see, now, how this was verified in the person of Jesus Christ his son: for he was in all things obedient to his Father, and derived every thing from the Father, even his existence; because there never was but one God, one Creator of the world, and of the children of men.

So that we may learn as we go along, and see that the shadow is an excellent thing, it answers the same end as a pattern drawn by a mechanic. But when he has looked at it till the work is all well done, then the pattern or shadow is thrown away—it is of no service. But if he be called on to make another building, for a different person, that person or the mechanic must make a new draft. Here it shows, that the law written in the hearts of the children of men is diverse in every heart; for as there is a diversity of opinion about building houses, so it is with the propensities of mankind: one has a propensity this way, and another that way. Now, the law of God is the light and life of God in the soul; for the law is

life. And here we see that the Almighty, being every where present, makes a law suited to the state and condition of the soul of each individual. Therefore, your law is not my law; for the law written on my soul regards no person but myself, it is exactly suited to me, and I need not be concerned about what law another has. And this is clearly opened to my mind, that every one has a law exactly fitted to his condition. So that all the servants of God are brought into a oneness—they all act uprightly and are passive to the will of God, and to the leader in them, which is the life of God.

Here, now, we see how redemption is effected completely, and when we go back, we see what wisdom there was in the covenant made with Israel. Moses had no part in it, he was passive to the Almighty. It is proved, however, that when he was commanded to speak to the rock, instead of speaking to it, he struck it. Here he acted contrary to the divine command. Now this was a little offence, yet it was so great that he could not go into the promised land, notwithstanding it was the only act of the kind he committed after he was called to go to the promised land. Now what instruction there is in this. Moses was now prepared to be more watchful and attentive—this act made him very cautious; and after this it was that he was commanded to renew the law that had been given to Israel when he was called up into Mount Sinai. There a pattern was given him; there he was instructed, up in this Mount. It was the mount of vision, the mount of inspiration, where the Almighty conveyed to Moses a clear view of heavenly things, and gave him a law and commandment, and opened them to his mind. And, it is said, that the Almighty wrote them himself upon tables of stone. But these were broken, and Moses was commanded to write or renew

them again. Here, now, this contrivance, this design was completely suited for the people in their darkened state. The statutes, with regard to the offering of sacrifices, were all commanded immediately of God. For neither the Israelites nor Moses had a right to put a hand to the work, only as they were directed by the Almighty. Oh, the beauty of the thing—the beauty of this figure, this shadow! These shadows were not only suited to the substantial reality, but in their outward nature they also applied to the animal man; and their religious rites were in the capacity of man to perform. For what they were to receive from the fulfilment of their law was outward, therefore they had the power to accomplish it. The only difficulty was to submit their will to the divine will, and those who submitted fulfilled it to a hair's breadth; and they were accepted in it, because God required no more of them.

The Israelites had all a portion of inward light and grace; they had a sufficiency of it to bring them to the ability to perform these outward acts. And here now, if they had all stood alike in the will of God and complied, the whole will of the creature would have been subdued—all would have been servants of God, and all would have joined together, to act the part which God called them to act; so that they would have been prepared for a higher dispensation, when they had got possession of the promised land, and when they had driven out their enemies, that the Lord commanded them to drive out, lest they should be hurt by them, they having forfeited their right. When God made the covenant with Abraham, he let him know that it would be a good while before it would all be accomplished. The reason was, that the Amorites had not filled up their cup; they were not

so wicked as to deserve extirpation from the earth. As it was, no doubt, a great blessing for them to be cut off, when they had arrived at such a state that they would grow worse and worse. But infinite mercy could not do this until four hundred years should first pass away, and their cup be full to the brim. Then it was, that he would give possession of this land.

But, alas! how the Israelites deviated and turned back to the worship of idols, which had a tendency to prolong the time. For, according to rational consideration, they might have been prepared to receive the Messiah long before, if they had been faithful. For all that was wanted to introduce this dispensation, this greater flow of light and knowledge, was, a preparation of the hearts of the children of men to receive it. And this time did not come till he came of whom Moses had prophesied, the prophet whom he declared the Lord their God would raise up from among their brethren, like unto him, to whom they should hearken. And the Almighty declared, agreeably to this declaration of Moses, that he would raise up a prophet like unto Moses. "I will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him." And how it was fulfilled in the blessed Jesus. He derived every thing from his heavenly Father—he never spoke a word, nor did an act without him. And, as Moses received every thing from the Almighty, so he received every thing, and ability and command how to do it. This was the case through the whole of his mission, as we clearly see by the record, when we rightly understand it. I mention these things to show us that the way to heaven is a straight, though a narrow way, and that it is easy to every soul that is willing to turn back to a passive state, according to the com-

mands of God, which is the only right state and condition. For no rational creature can be in a right state and condition, till he is in a passive state, till he has no will independent of that of his Creator.

Well, now I am willing to leave the subject of the old law, because I consider that it has passed away, and that we have nothing to do only to look on it as a shadow. It is true, we may see a great deal in it, but it will not help us nor give us any power in the great work of salvation; for the power is in God—it is the manifestation of his spirit, which is, properly considered, the gospel, and it is preached in every creature; it is the power of God unto salvation. So that when Jesus came, he abolished the law, and directed the minds of the Israelites to this power. And he came in the fulness of time, when the varied circumstances and conditions of the people required the abolition of their law, as by disobedience its design was perverted, and it was become injurious to them; and he had a great opportunity, no doubt, to learn and see how the Israelites had failed and turned back. For he had read the law and understood it, because he was faithful to the manifestation of light; and it was dispensed to him in proportion to his necessity to understand the law. For he had not more given him than would enable him to fulfil it, the same as the other Israelites; for if he had more, he could not be an example to them. But being prepared, as all the Israelites were, with a sufficiency of light, he was in a state to fulfil the covenant, all being in the power of man if they were willing to do it. So there was nothing to hinder the Israelites from coming up to it the same as Jesus did. Moses came up to it, except in one point, as I have before said. The prophets were brought up to it, for they did not take upon themselves to prophesy; we see that it was very reluctantly that they entered on

the work. But when they were brought on to fulfil it, it subdued their will, and, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, they prophesied, and were instructors to Israel. So it was with Jesus, although we find by history that he never exerted his will in opposition to his heavenly Father's, yet he had the same desires and propensities in him as others; for we read that he was tempted in all points as we are, which would be impossible, if he had not the same nature, as to man's part, as we have. Here we learn a great and deep lesson for our encouragement. By faithfulness he fulfilled the law of carnal commandments, and thus justified his heavenly Father for giving that dispensation—that covenant and law; and condemned the Israelites for not fulfilling them. His righteousness was a condemnation of their wickedness.

So that, I say, my views have been to lead us to the foundation stone, upon which we may all build—a point to which we may all gather—a source from whence we may know every thing which will produce good to us; that is, to see and know that our will must be entirely reduced, and that God's will must predominate in every thing. We must become as passive as Jesus Christ, our pattern. He was always passive to the divine mind—to his heavenly Father's will—he was without any contrary will. "I came not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." We find that he was sent under this restriction as Adam was, and therefore he is called the second Adam; for he was under the same restrictions, and in the same condition that our first parents were in; and in the same condition as every innocent infant is. And he was faithful in all his house as a son, as Moses was faithful in all his house as a servant, except in the one instance which I have mentioned.

Now by this we can learn: it is a caution to all who

believe the account. And I want us to gather inward, my dear brethren and sisters—for I look upon you as such; I have no respect to persons, or people, or sects. The gospel is preached in all your minds, and in the minds of all the rational creatures under heaven; and it is not by man, for what can man do? Can man preach the gospel? No, not in the right sense of the word. All he can do is to preach and direct to the gospel. Gospel power is the source from which all power must come: it is God in man. That God who fills all the immensity of space, and is every where present. He is in every thing that he has created: because, why? Nothing that he has created can subsist without his power; therefore every effect must rest upon its cause. He is in every plant, every tree, and every animated creature; but in a special manner, he manifests his power in the hearts of his rational children, because he has made them governors of this lower creation, and has fitted them to govern this creation. Now as we submit to his power, and wait for his light and life in the soul, all the other creation remains with us a blessing to us, and all unite to praise him, even the least animal on earth. And yet see what a state and condition men have fallen into. They even oppress their own fellow creature, and take his rights from him—they destroy his free agency, which the Almighty never did. Here they usurp a power above God Almighty, and bring their fellow creature under bondage by man's power. They take away that in which all his blessings consist; for without the exercise of this free agency, it were better that he had never been born; if there be not a way of escape from those dreadful consequences which result from this situation. But we know that however cruel masters may be to those they oppress, there is a part which is im-

mortal—they cannot hurt the soul, only by cruelty they may degrade the mind.

Here, then, we must be brought back again, and come into the innocent state of a child. This is agreeable to the doctrine of Jesus. “And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them and blessed them,” and said, “Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.” Because we must come back to this passive point, this child-like state; for we have run astray in devious paths which our own wills have invented. But we must come back and settle down in a state of passivity to the divine will—in a state of innocency; and when we have made acknowledgment of all our sins—when we have suffered just repentance for our offences, and the displeasure which we have incurred, we shall see and experience the goodness and mercy of a gracious God. He that repents, though guilty of the greatest sins, they are forgiven him; because the Almighty never asks pay, but only that we should give up our will. And there is nothing but a surrender of our own will, that can make atonement for our sins. But as soon as our own will is slain, and we become passive under the divine light and grace, we do nothing but the will of God. Therefore, all our transgressions being brought to lie before us, we see the dreadfulfulness of sin, and we try to avoid all the wicked things that we have been doing through our past life. Here we are brought into the situation and state of a child—it is a new form and state, from which we can rise into a state of virtue—a state in which we can answer the great end of our creation, to glorify God and enjoy him.

Now don't think, my friends, that you can ever get to heaven in any other way; don't suffer such thoughts, but resist them. We must turn our back upon them, and

come home to the light of God in us; for it is the same spirit and life that was in Jesus Christ, the Son of God. We need not say that it is his spirit, but only that it is the same spirit, a portion of which was in him; because as reasonable beings we must always take things rationally. When Jesus was externally on earth, the light within him was all comprehended in that tabernacle which was seen moving about: now what became of the rest of the world, if all was in the man Jesus? And if so, we must have all our help from that which was in him. But we all have the same light dispensed to us from the same source, from him that was in Jesus, and whoever was and will be the great I AM, the Alpha and Omega. He it is that dispenses all good, to all his rational creatures. But as Jesus lived under the influence of this light and life, he has set forth such an example of obedience and submission, and laid out such doctrines, that we see that to conform to the rudiments of the old law would not do for us now. Even if we should go back to the ten commandments and fulfil them, what good would it do? This new law supersedes them all; they sink into nothingness the moment the soul is brought under the divine law, or light of the gospel in itself; which only and alone can enable it to come up in the doctrines of Jesus Christ.

He has shown this in his sermon on the Mount: when he called up the rudiments or precepts of the law, he showed forth their imbecility and weakness. "Ye have heard that it hath been said, by them of old time, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." But what said Jesus? "Resist not evil," but do good for evil. Now this was not a part of the law dispensation. But here we see that he was doing away the law of carnal commandments; for he alluded to that righteousness that was complete

in all its parts, a righteousness that caused him to feel forgiveness even of the wickedness and infidelity of the Jews, his own people, when they had rejected, and were about to crucify him. It was in consequence of his faithfulness to the will of his heavenly Father, that he was brought to this disposition of mind—but it was a trial to him, and it has been a trial to all the martyrs. It is a trial to give up the natural life. Yet we see, my friends, what an example he is to us, and how much he shows us in his short prayer, what we all have to do. And however hard we may feel it to give up our natural life, I apprehend, it is often much harder to give up our spiritual life, and to part with our sins in which we have delighted, and with our vanities, and all wrong things in the world. But here now, not only the whole will, mind, and life of the creature, and all that has been generated by transgression in the creature—not only all these must be given up, but likewise our natural lives, if they come into competition with our testimony for God our creator. We must give up all; for we are to obey God in all things, as our greatest benefit and happiness consist in it, and it will terminate as our greatest glory and joy.

Was it not so with the blessed Jesus? Yes, it was. He saw, and anticipated, and knew what the nature of his sufferings would be. He saw that the trial was very great; hence he was led to pray to his heavenly Father, not rising up in his own will to oppose him, but only appealing to his mercy. We may remember how he called on him, if possible, to let this cup pass from him, and we see the result of this request—“not my will but thine be done.” And so it must be with us, if we go on rightly, in every thing which is a trial to us, in every thing we are called on to surrender, whether our outward life, or our mental life, that is, our own wills and desires. And

how trying it will be to us, especially to give up the life of the body. But we may venture as far as he did, to pray to the Father, if possible, to let this cup pass from us, "yet not my will but thine be done."

This is the one thing, and the only thing needful to pave the pathway to heaven, for it is open to the children of men every where. So that when his disciples requested him to learn them to pray, as John taught his disciples, see what a short prayer he gave them, and what rational wisdom there is to be seen in it! Because every rational creature, when he has a right view of God, feels that he is ever present, and that he knows all his wants, and he can spread them before him. "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him." Therefore it is not the praying of men externally, but inwardly that is wanting. He recommended them not to be like the hypocrites who make long prayers that they may be seen of men; but "after this manner pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name." O, my friends, when we come to feel it, we shall feel it to be hallowed above all, and we can say: "Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." And we can say, "Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, world without end. Amen."

Now this would be found to be sufficient for us at all times and seasons, while under a lively sense of the omnipotency, omnipresence, and omniscience of God—and seeing he knows all things; hence the prayers of the righteous would be very short. For what have we to do when we minutely turn our eyes unto God? Why, it is with every believer, every redeemed soul, as the apostle expresses it—he will bring us into such a blessed state as is comprehended in the words he makes use of—"Re-

joyce evermore. Pray without ceasing; because the soul leans on the Almighty, therefore it is praying, wherever it is, all the time during life, after it is properly redeemed and brought under the influence of his grace; and thus it depends on God the creator for support. Now what a blessed state, to be thus fixed on God—a state in which it can pray all the time, because it is given up and depends on the Creator, and therefore it all the time aspires to him, knowing that there is no preservation any where else. Here it is, that in every thing we enjoy, the heart is thankful, we can “pray without ceasing,” and “in every thing give thanks.”

But we can't do this when we love the world, and get a great deal more of it than is necessary for us—it is only when we get that which is truly comfortable and rejoicing to the soul, that we can be truly thankful. So the children of men, in their religious performances, would they enter into a right sense of their own condition, and accept the offered mercies of a gracious God, they would find that they should want no day appointed as a day of thanksgiving. For what kind of thanksgiving is that which is appointed by men? A feigned one, a forced one is ten thousand fold worse than nothing; because the soul cannot be thankful to God, but when it is redeemed by him, and becomes passive under his power, and it is not for a moment or a day. But professing Christians appoint one day in the year, to give thanks to the Almighty! What inconsistent absurdity! I don't like to speak harshly of these things, lest it should be thought I mean particular individuals; but I do not mean individuals or societies, but I am aiming at the *wrong thing*.

Now what is a fast? It is nothing at all, as it is instituted by man. A right fast is a continual one, an everlasting one. And what is a sabbath? It is nothing but

an everlasting sabbath. No other has any use in it as it respects Christians; because the real sabbath is an eternal rest to the soul, where we can cease from our own works. Then it is that we can enter on a sabbath, when we cease from our own willing and running—then it is that we can rest in the will of the Creator, which was his design respecting man in the beginning, and will be throughout all ages of the world.

Here, now, we see how far Christians are from that point which is the true introduction of the gospel dispensation. They condemn themselves continually by rising up and witnessing against themselves. For, how is the true or first introduction of it? According to history we read, that it was proclaimed by a multitude of the heavenly hosts, praising God, and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.” Now where is there a Christian society, and, I was almost ready to say, where is there a Christian individual, that comes up to this introduction! And what shall we think of it, if we go counter to the whole of it! “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to men.” Here it was held out by these heralds, that if we would come into the gospel power and attend to it, this would bring us to the doctrine and example of Jesus Christ; and it is these that come to him—those who are obedient to the manifestation of the eternal spirit; for it is through this only that the gospel is preached to every creature under heaven.

These heralds proclaimed, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to men.” This is coming into his example, doctrines, and precepts, indeed! and not merely recapitulating them—though they are so clear and plain, that they are a witness for that which is far above what man can attain to, by any other means

than by the evidence of the divine light, in the secret of our own souls. Because it is the gospel only that can bring us to confide and trust in Almighty power, and it will save us from all our schemes of safety, and all reliance on our own power to save our natural lives; and when men come home to this, they will be more likely to be saved as to their outward lives, than those who act contrary to it. And what cause have we for gratitude in this respect, when we look upon our own country, and the blessings and favours which we enjoy, and the opportunity we have of thinking for ourselves, which in most nations abroad they have not! I want us to improve these blessings. And it is not only the dearly beloved young people that may be benefited; but as surely as a sinner an hundred years old is a sinner, he may become a child of God even at a hundred years old, if he is but willing to attend to the will of God.

It is what I feel called to, and it has been the chief of my mission for many years, to gather home the people to the everlasting standard, which has never failed any of the children of men, but which has in all ages effected their complete deliverance, if they have attended to it. Here we should remember many texts of scripture—at times they would come pleasantly before us; and we shall come to experience as some of the prophets did—“We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in.” Oh, that we may all come into this city! And all might come into it if they would surrender their wills to the operation of God. But it is as Jesus said; seeing the people were searching and wandering abroad, he told them, “the kingdom of God is within you.”

Well, now, if it is in us, is it not our duty and interest

to submit to this kingdom. And how does this power work and act? See how simple it is, and what simple similies he brings forward to illustrate it: "The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." Now the rational mind, if rightly exercised, how quick it can apply this simile, from its own experience, for it has certainly felt this kingdom of God; the manifestation of its power is what every one has felt; and I may appeal to the wickedest of men and women for it, and they must all acknowledge, that they have been reprov'd for sin. And this is what Jesus declared to his disciples would be an evidence of the coming of that power, which is the gospel, and which would save all if they would submit to it and obey it. "And when he is come, he shall reprove the world of sin." And is there any here present, who have not been reprov'd for sin? I want to recommend you to what you can understand, for all can know the truth of these things. Now have not people a knowledge that this reproof is not of man, but that it is the operation of something in themselves, that reprov'es them, and that, so long as they have continued in evil, they have never been able to get rid of it, but are obliged to believe in its operation? See how this leaven works and operates in the soul and reprov'es the sinner for his sin, and as he is attentive and gives way to it, ceases from evil, and repents of what he has done, he feels consolation, a degree of new life and comfort: and so as he goes on, the light will open many of the sins which have been long lying silent or hid under the rubbish of the soul; for this divine light searcheth all things. For, as the apostle declares, "the spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." Here it works like leaven in the passive soul; for the meal is passive to the leaven.

But meal has no power of being otherwise, some will say, if they want to go on in sin; and that, therefore, it is not a correct view. But it is a correct view, my friends; for though the meal has no power of opposition, yet we have clear evidence from it of what condition the creature, who has the power of opposition, must come to. He must become passive to the will of God, as passive as the meal is to the leaven. And it requires no more than as I have observed, in relation to the animal creature and his owner, the servant and his master, the son and his father. Here we learn that all consolation and benefit must be derived from the obedience of the one that is dependent on another, to the will of that other. And so it is in relation to our salvation; it can only be attained by submission to the power of the kingdom of God, that power by which he rules in heaven and in earth, and which is manifested in every creature, showing them their transgressions: for the call has gone forth to the ends of the earth, all have heard, but all have not obeyed; and it is only those who believe and obey, that are saved of the Lord. Because he has made us so that we can make our own election; and none are the elect of God but those who make him their refuge, their only safety and comfort in all things. And nothing can enable us to make this election, but this re-prover in the soul—by attending to it.

Some will say that God has elected a certain portion of mankind; but this will not do, because he operates alike on every mind, to bring them from a state of sin, by repentance. He is a re-prover of sin in the hearts of all, and as there is a willingness to submit to his will, and to elect God for their portion—to choose the Lord for their portion, and the God of Jacob for the lot of their inheritance; here, if they elect him, he never drives off a faithful and obedient soul. The reason why some are not saved, is not

because they *were* not elected, but because they *would not* be elected; according to the saying of Jesus: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye *would not*." He does not say that they *could not*; and they knew better, they knew that they had a full offer of salvation by accumulated calls—he had done every thing that a gracious and Almighty God could do, consistent with his nature. But they had rebelled against him, they had opposed him; and so it is now, my friends. All the miseries, wars, oppressions, and other dreadful sins, confusions, and turmoils of professed Christians, arise out of the will—an indulgence of the will of the creature. And there is no way to get clear of it, till we surrender up to the divine will, and become passive as meal to the leaven, and then we shall be leavened, body, soul, and spirit. Because it is the soul that is the director of the man, and if he directs in his own will, it is all wrong. But it is the soul only that is accountable to God; the body is not accountable to God: for we know that the body is passive to the mind, as meal is to the leaven. Every turn of the eye is agreeable to the will of the mind, and every little act of the whole body is in obedience to the will of the mind; so that if the soul is passive to the Lord Almighty, the animal body will comply with it, and enable us to do a great deal outwardly, by which we may become subservient to the good one of another. But when the soul is not under the influence of this spirit, the mind may recommend to kill, and make war, and the body will do it readily, but still we see that the body is not accountable unto God. Hence we may see, by a little reflection, what a blessed people we might be, if all our

bodies were under the influence of the grace of God, through the mind's being obedient to the witness for God, while placed in these tabernacles of clay.

So that I can again repeat it, and I want you to remember it—that my aim is to rally you to this grace of God, this kingdom of heaven, this light and life that was in Jesus Christ, a manifestation of which is given to every one that comes into the world—to every rational creature under heaven. And there is nothing else that ever could or ever will save the soul.

[Here the speaker sat down, but soon rose and added,]

Before we can learn the meaning of the scriptures, which are in many respects very profitable to instruct the mind, we must follow the example set us by Jesus Christ—we must deny ourselves, take up our cross daily and follow him. Some think that this alluded to the cross upon which he died, and which was invented by the Jews; but had it any allusion to it? The cross of Christ is the same in every rational creature—it is the law of God in the soul. It was this that was the cross of Christ, and it is this only which will enable us to walk along in his path, and not to gratify ourselves in any thing that is not according to the will of our heavenly Father. Those that are reduced and brought under the dominion of this cross in the soul, can receive no delight from the glory, or from the kingdoms of the world, or set their hearts upon them, or upon any thing that is mortal, and could enjoy nothing from it if they had them all in their possession. So that, for the want of understanding the right cross, some professors have made the form of a cross, such as the wicked Jews invented, that they might gratify their wicked hearts, by causing those they put to

death. ^{vs} most pain they could while dying. Is this the cross we are to take up? What a wretched notion. The true cross is that law or light, life, and spirit in the soul which reproveth for sin, and will cross every evil intention of the creature, and reprove it, and would call them out of it. Oh! that we might understand these things! But let me tell you, my friends, as long as the professors of Christianity take the scriptures for their rule of faith and practice, they never can know what the true cross is, nor experience salvation by it; except it be from a consideration of the ignorance they are under, the Lord should wink at it. For when they are sincere, the sincerity of the heart will plead for them. But when they come into the true Christian state, they will see that it is impossible for any written book to be the rule of faith and practice, for the letter killeth, and never yet made one true Christian. Don't you suppose now that Jesus Christ, that was the greatest teacher that ever was on earth, could have written better scripture than all that was ever written, or can be written? He lived nearer the fountain than any ever did; but he wrote nothing—and why? Because he saw how the people hurt themselves by what is written. His design was to bring them home to that which is the condemnation of the world; and that which is the condemnation of the world is the justifier of those who do rightly, and there is nothing else which can do it, because it is a portion of God in man, a portion of his divine life. For it is recorded that when he made man and fashioned him, he “breathed into him the breath of life, and he became a living soul.” Do you suppose what is meant is the life of these bodies of clay—that he breathed in the life of these bodies of clay? The life of the animal is the air of this world. As soon as a child is born into the world, he has animal life, and never can be any thing more than an ani-

mal, by all the breath and air of this world. *But* the breath of life that God breathes into us, is the same that was in Jesus Christ, agreeable to the testimony of the apostle. “In him was life, and the life was the light of men, and the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not.” It was the darkness of the children of men, who were dead under the letter, that prevented them from comprehending the light: for the letter killeth. Because, by making it the rule, it draws off the attention from that which is the true light, and which, he says, “lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” Now I want us to come to this light, for we all feel its operation, as sure as we have an existence; for nothing but this light can reprove us for sin. And it is this that reproves us for righteousness—it leads us to examine into our condition, and if we have no other righteousness, but that which is a formal one, a professional one, it will judge it down; for it “reproves the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.” It reproves all the judgment of the children of men, in prescribing for themselves religious duties, and which consist generally in some form, and not in power.

We see the Roman Catholic, who is brought up from his cradle not to eat meat, for the course of forty days during lent—if he be thus brought up from his cradle, and has been initiated into this incorrect belief, he considers it to be as much the will of God that he should refrain from eating meat in lent, as to refrain from robbing on the highway. And although this eating may be a mere indifferent thing, yet the Roman Catholic believes in his conscience, that it is the will of God, he considers it a right thing; and, therefore, if he goes counter to it, he will be convicted by this very light, this light of God in the soul. Still, God does not mean to convict him for

eating meat in Lent, but for his evil disposition, in going counter to what he believes is the will of God. So the same light which condemns him for murder or stealing, prevents him from doing that which he considers contrary to the will of the heavenly Father.

Here, then, we may trace all these doctrines, which have become so confirmed in them, to their taking on trust what has been taught them by others, and not coming to know for themselves. Because, when we come to consider, we must see and feel, that if any truth has been revealed to another, we should have the same evidence, before we can know it to be a truth; and we shall see what it is that must give us this evidence, and that it can be nothing but this light in our souls. And were the Roman Catholic to gather to this, it would teach him not to take things on trust, but to think for himself, under the influence of this light; for we must receive every thing through that medium. For as there is nothing to which God speaks but the soul of man, so there is nothing which is a recipient for the power of God, but the immortal soul. And when we come to put all our dependence on this power, we shall learn to do the will of the Father, and we shall know that he will not save us in our wickedness, but will condemn us for it. We have a sense of it in ourselves, for this light in the soul is that only which justifies us, and it justifies those only that are righteous. The prophet has expressed it in a clear manner: "Behold all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine. The soul that sinneth, it shall die." But "the son shall not bear the iniquities of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquities of the son, but the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him." Now see how rational this is—it speaks to

us as rational beings; and we must receive every thing rationally—it would be inconsistent with the nature of things for us to do otherwise. And why should God have given us this noble gift of reason, if it is not to be a guide to us in the way of salvation? But we know that reason of itself is a mere dormant principle in man. As regards the objects of sight in natural things, it cannot work without the sun's light. As the sun gives us a view of earthly things, it prepares materials for reason to act upon. But if the light of the sun were taken from us, reason would do us no good, we should sink into death. So in regard to the soul's salvation; as it regards the things of God, reason knows them not, but as they are revealed to it by the light of God; and so, as "the things of man knoweth no man, save the spirit of man which is in him, even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the spirit of God." When the spirit of God reveals heavenly things to us, it reveals them to the rational soul—this furnishes the soul with materials to act on, to divide, subdivide, and complex. Here, without we are led by the light of the sun, which operates upon our senses, we cannot have the knowledge of outward things brought to us, and so without the divine light, which is the sun of the soul, we cannot know the things of God; as by the senses of the animal body, we can know nothing but that which is mortal.

Now, by a consideration of these things we may all be led into just views, if we keep near the gift of God, for that only can teach us true wisdom. The wisdom of this world relates to nothing but the things of the world, and it cannot reach the things of God at all, and can be no benefit in the way of salvation—not in the least degree. For the wisest men, in the wisdom of the world, are sometimes at the greatest distance from God—they may

spend all their time and they cannot help themselves by it one jot toward heaven. So that a great deal of learning is rather a hindrance than a help; and yet it may be good, if man will keep it within proper bounds, as it relates to these animal bodies. But, alas! what are these bodies worth, when we consider that to-morrow we may lie in the cold grave? Shall we set our hearts on human science, and those things which relate to the body, and the riches of the world, when we may so soon die? Can we do so and act like rational beings? No, we should act like fools—the wisdom which is of God is foolishness with such men. Let us then seek to gather to that foundation which is elect and precious, and which has been laid by the Almighty himself. It is the foundation to which Jesus directed. “Blessed art thou Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, thou art Peter,” a mere man, and nothing of this sense hath revealed it unto thee, and “upon this rock I will build my church.” Now some say that Peter was the rock; but it is no such thing, for he was a mere man. And it was nothing but the power of God in him, that revealed this thing to him; and nothing but the same thing that revealed it to Peter can reveal it to us, that is, the revelation of the heavenly Father. And upon this revelation God will build his church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And every enlightened soul knows this to be a solemn truth.

THE QUAKER.

SERMON BY ELIAS HICKS, DELIVERED IN WILMINGTON, DEL.
SUNDAY AFTERNOON, DECEMBER 3, 1826.

IN the first ages of the world the sons of men and women multiplied in the earth; and they have generally been divided into two classes, designated in this way, the children of God, and the children of men. We find it recorded, that in a very early period, there was this distinction—there were these two classes thus distinguished. And, I suppose, the distinction was founded on circumstances, relative to the conduct of these classes. The one class was led and guided by the spirit of God, the other by the spirit of man, the mere rational spirit of man, unaided by the spirit of God. We find these distinctions manifested in the history of the children of Seth and of Cain: and that history likewise informs us how it was that both classes, finally, by amalgamation, became very wretched and wicked.

Now, my friends, as reasonable beings, we are sensible that like causes produce like effects. “And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.” For they had given way to look without, and to be induced

away from the counsel and leading of God, to judge for themselves in relation to this connexion; so that thus, by this amalgamation, they lost hold of their true leader—that preserving principle and power, which only could keep man in his place as a child of God. Because all the children of God are obedient to him, and are taught of him, as the prophet assures us. But the children of men being governed by their own spirit, and determined by it, are taught of another, and not of God. Now the children of God taking this latitude and liberty, became involved with the children of men; and they finally became so wicked that their hearts were full of evil, and that continually. And here we see they had the reward of their doings, which was a flood, to destroy them all. Now, if we take it literally as it is recorded, we see it was an external work, causing the destruction of all the children of men, saving Noah and his family; and even by admitting this view of it to be just, we may learn by it in this age and generation. For although the Almighty in his course of providence, may never see meet to destroy the nations of the earth by a deluge, or flood; yet they will bring upon themselves that, which, in respect to their eternal state, will produce the same effect, or that which is worse. So that it is of infinite importance to this generation, at this day, a little to reflect upon these things, and look at the consequences that happened to those children of God. It has great teaching in it; and it shows us, that if the children of God had dwelt alone, agreeably to the prophecy or declaration of Balaam, respecting the Israelites, all might have been safe and secure, instead of forsaking God and being scattered abroad, and they might have received blessings instead of cursing. He says, “They shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations.”

Now is it not very obvious, rational, and consistent with common sense, that it was such only who could be preserved? And we see, that through all ages, this has been the testimony of all the servants of God. Moses admonished them upon the subject, when he saw their familiarity with other nations—he knew that they would adopt their idols and their evil customs, and be lost among the nations, as we see that the children of Seth were, among the children of Cain. So that we see, in the course of the history, very clearly, what we are to do and to look for, and attend to, in order to escape such harms. For if we go on to the time of Jesus, when he was haled before Pilate, and Pilate asked him if he was a king, and so on; we see that there was no getting him to take any part in the kingdoms of this world. He made this answer: “My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.”

Now when we take into view the birth, life, works, doctrines, example, and death of Jesus Christ, in that outward manifestation, what a view it presents to our minds, of the necessity of standing separate from the kingdoms of the world, set up in the spirit of man—by the wisdom and rational power of the spirit of man. For the children of God, in all ages, could not be his children, unless they were led by the spirit of God; for under the Jewish dispensation, all the leaders of Israel were appointed by God, and continued to be led by his spirit, while they kept in the right line. Here we see their destination clearly, and also the safety of those who have been faithful to the leading and guiding of the spirit of God, and the preservation that they have experienced. Now, bringing it down to the gospel dispensation, that

dispensation in which the kingdoms of this world have nothing to do—in which they have no power, nor authority—they have no power to dictate—it is beyond their reach and conception. For these are all founded in human policy, and principally for self-interest, or the immediate preservation of their animal bodies; for, with all their power, and all they can do, they can't reach beyond this. Therefore they stand upon a worldly foundation, they are founded on external evidence, that can be produced by the mere spirit of man.

Here, now, we see with clearness, that every one under the Christian name, and who is professing to be a disciple of Jesus Christ, must stand alone from all the kingdoms of the world, as his kingdom is not of the world; otherwise they cannot be his disciples, or subjects: and they will in no respect bear his banner, or manifest that they are on his side, but will generally manifest that they are directly opposite to what he requires. This, I conceive, in a general way, will apply to all the professors of Christianity. But, my dear friends, you profess with me, I hope, that we are not to seek to save our lives by resorting to force, or to that which is compulsory; because our profession is above that of all the professors of Christianity. Because, we presume to say, that we are led and guided by the unerring spirit of God, and this spirit will lead into the gospel of Jesus Christ, into the true nature of it, and into the true salvation of it. And thus, I apprehend, the prophecy or declaration of Balaam will apply in a particular manner, as much to us as to Israel—"The people shall dwell alone and shall not be reckoned among the nations."

Now I feel willing to speak to my dear friends in membership with me, and to show them that they are not so consistent with their profession, as other Christian

professors; and it grieves me in consideration of it. I believe, we are effectually called out of the governments of the world by this light, that we are as certainly called to come out, and not be numbered among the nations, as ever the Lord's children were; and our preservation depends as much upon it. We are not to take any office by which we may be numbered among the nations. We can be their friends and assistants, and we can do them ten times more good, by standing entirely alone and not taking an office, by which we can be put down upon the catalogue, as members of their government. Because by this, we amalgamate, in a certain degree, with them; and we know how these governments are conducted, that it is upon selfish grounds, and we know what confusions there are in the political world, and thus we are apt to become a party one side or the other; and, by this means, we shut up the way of doing that good, which we might otherwise do. For the Lord's servants are called to proclaim good will every where; but here they lose that privilege which they might have otherwise towards those who are professing the same faith, but on different grounds.

I want us to refer back to first principles. For I believe it is a truth, that those who do not refer to first principles will soon go to decay. What was the first principle of the Lord's people in an early day? It was the principle of light and life, an unerring principle that would always guide in the path of safety; and if faithful to it, they increased in confidence in that principle, and were willing to put their trust in the everlasting Jehovah, in such a manner, that not all the powers of the earth, if they should rise up against them, could create the least terror, though they should stand in direct opposition to them. And we find, according to the record, that the

Israelites while they were faithful and glorified God, when their enemies made incursions in their borders, though a little number, they were enabled to overcome thousands and tens of thousands; and sometimes without a stroke of the sword: and thus might we glorify God in this day and generation, by putting our trust and confidence in him. Here he will so act, that it will appear clear to every beholder, that the Lord has interfered for us; here we can glorify him, and he is glorified in the eyes of the beholder. How marvellous it was in the primitive day, and how marvellous it was in the day of our more immediate predecessors, that without taking up weapons, or opposing the governments of the world, how they have by patient suffering overcome the powers of the world, and brought all the kingdoms of the world into some degree of subjection to them. That is, their love towards their fellow creatures, though enemies, which enabled them to pray for them, has actually had a tendency to overcome those enemies, and has brought them into a situation, in which they are willing to do them good.

Oh then, that there may be a recurring to first principles! I have, I trust, been led to see these things, in that light that does not deceive me, and will not deceive any one living. Hence I say, that it is perfectly inconsistent with our profession, to take the least part or lot in the governments of the world, so as to be numbered with the nations among whom we live. For we see, and they acknowledge, that their governments are set up in the science of men, for the safety and protection of their persons. And I acknowledge and believe, that with the general body of the people such governments are necessary. For should a band of robbers rise up in any part of the globe, could they keep together, or could they do any thing profitable to themselves, unless they were united by

some rules and regulations? I merely mention this, to show the necessity of all human beings, being governed according to their state and condition. It is the highest they can attain to, till they attend to the gift of God in the heart, and rest in that which will bring them into the gospel state. That I say, I never could see my way clear to apply for, nor dare I take any place or office, that I might in any manner, be numbered with the nations. And had this society stood thus alone, I believe they would have been ten times more advantage to this country, than they now are. And I believe that those who have gone on in this way, have met with great loss themselves, and it has been hurtful to the people, because they have not been consistent in the profession they have made with us. Now let this be a caution, my dear friends, for what a great and deep obligation it teaches to parents, and to the guardians of the young people; for I believe that much of the iniquity and evil doing, is chargeable to parents and guardians; and this in a great measure, for want of getting home to the truth in ourselves. And I will apply it again to us, who assume so high a standing. Do we keep close to that principle which we consider an unerring one? If we did, parents and guardians would be enabled to discharge their trust with fidelity, and their children would be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and would be rightly subjected to bear the cross. Here preservation would be experienced, and the children would grow up like olive plants around our tables; they would improve by our experience, and advance the reformation beyond what we can do. There is great room for reformation: and did we attend to our children rightly, and direct them to this witness, they would not only profit by our experience, but through the operation of this light, they would advance the testimony

beyond what any of us have done. But for want of this care, instead of leading them on in the right way, we have been turning them to books, and to look to the works and beliefs of men. And therefore, it is, that they have gone off by seeking places in the governments of the world—places in governments set up in the wisdom of men.

I do not conceive this a reflection upon these governments, or the people in them, because I know these governments, when they are wisely set up, are useful. And I am often thankful to the Lord, that I am permitted to live under a government so good of its kind. I know it is an obligation upon me, to be subject to it, and passive to all its requireing, either actively or passively; and always as far as I can do it actively, I delight to honour the government. But at the same time, I dare not be active in that which is inconsistent with the liberty of serving God, my creator. I believe it right in all these things, *first to obey God*, and then man, let the penalty be what it may, even to the taking of my life. For the nature of a penalty is such, that it fulfils the law as fully as if I complied with the government and laws; so that they can have no cause to complain.

My dear friends, remember these things; look about at your dear children, your offspring! Have you brought them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, as becometh the saints and children of God; thus seeking for them, assiduously and seriously, an inheritance in the kingdom of heaven? If so, what happiness you would enjoy in your families; what peace; and what love! Understand what I say—dear children; for there is a reciprocal obligation between parents and children, guardians and wards. “Children, obey your parents in the Lord.” That is, in every thing which is consistent, that they may require at your hands. But if they require

any thing which will lead you from your duty to your Creator, you are not called on to obey them; but you will be qualified to render a proper excuse. And were children faithfully to attend to this gift of grace in the soul, it would overcome the hardest hearted parents; and thus the children would be, as it were, saviours of their parents. I mention these things, as they, unsought for and unexpectedly arise, and I trust, from the feeling of that love which is unbounded, which reaches over land and sea. And as I think a word to the wise is sufficient, I will not dwell long upon this subject. I am willing to turn again back to the whole of this assembly.

We all profess the same thing, to be Christians and disciples of Jesus Christ. Now think of this, and consider your standing—compare it with what the divine light in you, and the record of the scriptures calls us to—the doctrines, the precepts, the example of the blessed Jesus, and of all the holy men previous and since that time, and see their walk and submission to their heavenly Father. When we look to faithful Abraham, what was it that exalted him, but his perseverance and obedience to the divine requiring? He was called to come out from among his kindred and acquaintance, and to be a stranger in a strange land. The divine prescience saw, that if he remained with them, it would be almost impossible, that he should have fortitude to withstand their idolatry; and therefore, he called him out to travel away from them, that he might in all things be weaned from his own will, and from the world and its allurements—that he might so live under the cross as to be willing to go hither and thither, wheresoever the Lord commanded him. And how faithful he was, and what an honour to be called the friend of God; so much so, that the Lord said, “ Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do? seeing that

Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation; and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I know Abraham, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord.”

Now I want these things to sink deep into the heart of every age, sex, and condition. Be willing to investigate for yourselves; don't mind what I say, or what any one else may say, but bring things home to the truth in your own bosoms; turn them over and over, and see if there is not something in them worthy of preservation—and if there is not, leave them. I say, I want you to investigate for yourselves; for we have that liberty, in this land of liberty. We have a right to think for ourselves, about what we know to be the truth in ourselves, and nothing but the truth. And this is the only way for us to move on safely through our pilgrimage and probation on earth. And, I trust, you all feel that it is love that induces me to speak; and therefore I speak plainly. I think I know my own heart, and that nothing but love has induced me to speak as I have spoken. My motive is the good of those present, and I hope it may be for their present and everlasting good.

May these things sink deep into your minds, and may we consider how inconsistent it is, for those in the profession of love, and of being the followers of the Prince of Peace, to take up the sword or use any coercion whatever; seeing his doctrines, precepts, and example, give the lie to it all. The only reason why we do not see it, is, that we are not willing to come under the operation of this precious gift, which is so necessary to give us confidence in God; and seeing that we do not come to be enough sensible of his power, the recommendation of the prophet seems too much for us, where he calls on us to

“put our trust in the Lord for ever and ever.” And it is all for the want of this faith and confidence to believe—it is because we have gone back, and fell short of coming under the cross, and to know our spirits reduced, and the power of love to spring up in our souls, superior to all.

Oh! then, that we may become willing to turn inward to what the light makes manifest. For, “whatsoever things are reproveable, are made manifest by the light. for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.” Whatsoever is wrong is reprov'd by this light, and all things that are reproveable we know, for they are made manifest by the light; clearly so. And it is reasonable to conclude that without light, nothing can be made manifest. But when we come into the light of the Lord, all things will be made manifest, when the mind is willing, and the heart is disposed to receive God in the way of his coming. I feel earnest in my desires for us, that we may this evening lay these things properly to heart. I hope you will take these things home, my friends, and not be hasty in deciding, but turn them over in your minds, and if you can find any thing in them, well, and if not leave them. I have such an earnest desire for you, that I cannot but press these things, believing that every soul should enter into a close investigation and search, try, and prove all things; for it is our right and our duty to do it. “Try all things, prove all things. Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove yourselves: know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?” Now, don't let your attention be turned outward from the expression of these words, for very probably, the translators have not given it right to us. Because the outward Christ never could be, or can be in us. No doubt it was meant that the light or spirit of life in the soul, is in every one of us, which is the anointing of the Lord, and that, if we are not disobedient, we shall profit by it; but it is not the outward Christ. Christ means the anointing of the Lord, as Jesus was called Christ, because he was anointed of the Lord, and the anointing is the divine power; it is the divine light and leader, that directs all men in the way that he walked in. The psalmist gives the reason why Jesus was the

anointed—"Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." Here we see, then, why he was called Jesus Christ; and here we learn what that inward Christ is, that Paul alluded to when he said, "Try yourselves, prove your own selves, know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" We see the willingness we must be brought to, in the example of Jesus Christ. The man Jesus being made willing by the divine anointing upon him, was willing to comply with every requisition of his heavenly Father. So we, by the same anointing, which is "Christ within, the hope of glory," may be enabled to rise superior to every thing which is external, to rise above every temptation, and overcome death, hell, and the grave. O, my dear friends! may we more and more individually, sink down into our own hearts, into a state of deep humiliation. For it is the humble that he will teach of his ways, and guide in the path of judgment. Humility is before honour, but "pride goeth before destruction; and a haughty spirit before a fall." A state of humility is the best state that we can be in; and we shall be humble when we turn inward to the light, and suffer it to show us what we are. And as we sink down into a state of self-abasement, in the same proportion the Lord will be exalted in our view; and here we can come to see him as he is. We can behold his beauty, excellency, and loving kindness, insomuch that it raises him in our minds, superior to all other beloveds, and leads us on till this love for him is above all other love; for we can keep the first and great commandment—"And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." This is the first commandment, and the second is like, namely, this, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." On these, Jesus told his disciples, "hang all the law and the prophets." And it is in this way, that we are enabled to fill up our place in the creation, to glorify God and enjoy him. And as we each, in our several allotments, turn inward to this teacher; we who make this high profession,—we should be as a city set on a hill, standing

alone; we should not amalgamate with those in the kingdoms of the world. And by attending to this precious leader, likewise, instead of their leading us off from the right way to them, they would come over to us, who, standing like a city on a hill, would not be easily hid; and seeing our good works, they would be running to the standard which is set up for the nations. Oh! let us be persuaded, then, to centre home to the gift of God in our own hearts; for, if we knew this gift of God, it would have the same blessed effect, that Jesus told the woman of Samaria at the well—"Thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." He was to that people the only object they were to look to for instruction; they were only to look outwardly to that person, whom God had appointed to be their teacher. But we, now, have not that outward object, but the divine power which enabled him to do all his miracles is the light of God dwelling in us, and he is manifesting his light and grace in our hearts: and if we would centre into this, we should be brought to drink of that river, "the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God."

My heart seems filled with thankfulness and gratitude to the Author of all mercies, who has been pleased to be near us, and to bring us under such a solemn and tender calm. Oh! may it induce us all, (and particularly the dearly beloved youth, for, I trust, they have all felt the sweetness of this solemnity,) to often retire and wait upon the Lord, as way opens for it. It is the way for us to learn of him, and become acquainted with him; for he is rich in mercy and loving kindness, and he is watching over us, and the angel of his presence is ever near to us. I know what I say, from experience in early life. And, Oh! may we wait often in secret upon the Lord Almighty, that we may feel the solemnizing influence of his blessed presence; for in his presence is life, and riches, and blessings for evermore.

THE QUAKER.

SERMON BY ELIAS HICKS, DELIVERED AT MIDDLETOWN, DELAWARE COUNTY, PENN, DEC. 6, 1826.

I think it is written, “the world by wisdom knew not God;” and it is the same case now, my friends, the world by its own wisdom knows not God, and never can find him out by any wisdom which is derived only from the rational powers of men and creatures. For the true knowledge of God was never given to any of the children of men, but as it is revealed in them. What is to be known of God is manifested in man, and not without him. An eminent apostle has declared that “the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God.” Now what is this world? Why, it is the whole bulk of the rational creation that makes the world; and all this knows not God by its own wisdom.

Now there are many short portions recorded in what we call the Scriptures of Truth, and they contain great and excellent truths. But from what source have they been derived? Not any of them from the wisdom of this world; but they are excellent, rational truths concerning God, and his will respecting us. Christian professors generally agree that these truths, contained in the Scriptures, were given by holy men, inspired by the

Holy Ghost. Well, here now is a proof, when we reflect upon the conduct of the professors of Christianity in general, that they do not believe the Scriptures of Truth, but very few of them, if any. For can we suppose that these people, if they believed the scriptures, that I have mentioned, to be truths, would think that the natural science of the sons of men, derived from their rational power and spirit, could give them the knowledge of God? Do they any of them, can we suppose, believe these truths—that all this collection of wisdom that ever was created by the sciences and arts alone, independent of God—that all this is foolishness as it relates to the things of God, when they make it so necessary and so essential, as to suppose that no man can be a minister of God, a messenger of the Almighty to the children of men, till he is well versed in human science—when at the same time, if the apostle speaks true, all these human sciences are mere nonsense? They have no part nor lot in finding out the will and mind of God, which we cannot know till we know him; and we shall know him, I believe, my friends, if we are brought down to wait in the spirit of our minds to be taught of God; and we shall find that all the wisdom of the world, all the wisdom of the children of men, who have been instructed through the medium of human science—we shall find that all this wisdom is foolishness; not only as relates to spiritual things, but in natural things, which seem to come within the comprehension of man, through the medium of his five senses. For without these five senses the man would have no seeing, feeling, hearing, tasting, nor smelling, and reason would be a dormant principle—he could not exercise it; and yet we find that through these several senses, the animal body, by the aid of the rational soul of man, cannot come to know God nor the things of God:

and may I not say, that it cannot know correctly, or savingly, the things of a man. For it cannot be supposed, that Almighty goodness ever intended that man should experience so much misery, disappointment, and woe, as is generally the case with the children of men the world over, while under the influence of worldly wisdom. For even in our common temporal concerns, how few there are who know how to conduct themselves aright, so as to experience safety in what they do. Now this is the reason why so many disappointments happen to the children of men; and we all might learn in some degree, if we would turn to the Scriptures of Truth and the source from which they came. For nothing can give us a right knowledge of them, but that divine revelation by which they are given; and every one who comes short of this, knows not what the scriptures say truly, as they manifest by their fruits.

The apostle has presented a case in temporal things, and I consider that it comprehends enough for all rational creatures, so far as external evidence can teach; because the testimony is in such a way, that all who believe it rightly, will have need to turn in, to that which induced him to express it, which was the operation of divine truth upon his own mind. It was not a creature of his own imagination, because it was directly against the conduct of man, in his worldly wisdom. It is very simple, (as all the things of God are simple and plain,) and it is the foundation of all righteousness and godliness. He says some men will say, "we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell and get gain." Now you know how common this is, and it is the wisdom of the world which has thus usurped the authority of God, and it arises from human science and wisdom, all of which are foolishness with God. But what says the

apostle, under a better influence than man's reason? "For that ye ought to say, if the Lord will we shall live and do this or that." Now here we learn what the scriptures mean, that every thing done in a moral sense, ought to be done in the will of God and under the influence of his light. For we find from abundant experience, that man knows but little or nothing; though a rational creature can see with his eyes, the things of nature on this earth, and his reason is capable of occupying the soul, upon those things which his senses bring to him; and here, through this medium, he adjusts matters in relation to his earthly concerns, yet I apprehend that some, undertaking business under the influence of their own senses, have often found themselves at a loss, to feel an evidence sufficient to lead them beyond doubting. Now these, though many of them will hardly admit that any need wait to see what God will say to them, yet when thinking and advising what is best for their temporal good, how often are they brought into a situation of doubting, in which they have no perfect clearness, unless they centre into quietness, and feel after a satisfactory evidence. And here when they give up their own wisdom and feel after an evidence in themselves, of how they ought to act, I consider this like asking God, and these I apprehend do not often get disappointed. But those who go on under the influence and force of human wisdom, as the covetous man who forms a desire to be rich, which is an unhallowed desire, will press on, though they feel something in the mind to discourage it. Here we may date all the disappointments, miseries, and distresses, that fall upon human beings. For I am confirmed in the belief, without doubting, that were God's rational children more concerned to attend as the apostle advises, and submit all to the direction of God—to the witness or light within

us, in preference to that which we can learn from external science, or which mortals can devise for us—I say did all attend to the secret impressions of truth upon their own minds, there would never be an insolvent debtor upon the face of the earth; and more especially in the society of Quakers, who profess to be led and guided by the unerring Spirit of truth. And yet how has this profession been reproached when they have gone into that which has led to disappointments, and which has landed them and their neighbours in serious misery. Now don't these things teach us the foolishness of this world's wisdom and the truth of the apostle's assertion? And it makes out that the wisdom of God is foolishness with men, in their earthly wisdom.

Now as my mind has been opened in a view of these things since sitting in this meeting, I have been induced to communicate what might present upon the subject, for our consideration. I don't pretend to be a judge of my fellow creatures, but a counsellor and an encourager, according to the ability which I have received; and I dare not get into the judgment-seat—It would be like taking possession of the seat of God—It would be sacrilege. For we find that he who had the best right that ever any man on earth had, refused this. It was proposed that he should decide between two concerning a dispute of property. And what was his answer? “Who hath made me judge among you?” And his reason to Pilate was, “My kingdom is not of this world.” He came to be a leader and a teacher, the top stone of all the prophets, yet a prophet in the fullest sense of the word, who received all from his heavenly Father. Well now, is not this what every rational creature is bound to do, when he comes to know his dependent state as he ought? He is to be subject in filial obedience to the Almighty, to his heavenly

Father—who is the father of every spiritually begotten son or child of God. And is it not necessary that every one should come to the same humiliation that he experienced? For we read that “in his humiliation his judgment was taken away,” so as to have no judgment of his own, till he should receive all from his heavenly Father. In this, and all the other of his works, he is, by the apostle Peter, said to be our example, and that we are to follow his steps: and as in his humiliation, his judgment was taken away, this must be the experience of his disciples; of every one that is born of God, and that becomes the child of God. Because why? Even in previous times, long ago, the Lord’s servants were clearly so taught. The prophet says, “The Lord’s children shall all be taught of the Lord, and in righteousness shall they be established; and great is the peace of those children.”

Now do you believe the scriptures, my friends; do you understand them? If so, certainly you are, generally, with myself, too criminal; too much criminality will attend us, because we are so far short of complying with their teachings. Let us pause a little; let it come home to every breast, for there is the place to learn. But here now we see the professors of Christianity erecting schools, academies, colleges, and what not; not to teach men science as relates to temporal things, which may be allowable in some degree; and yet it has a tendency to take away the mind from its right director, as held forth by the apostle, that even in our temporal concerns, we ought never to come to a resolution or settlement of judgment, till we say, if the Lord permit we will do thus and so; because we are his creatures, and we ought to leave all to him, as in him is all wisdom and knowledge comprehended—and it can be derived from no other source, but from this source, of the knowledge of good and evil.

For if he knows all that is good, consequently he knows all that is evil, and can lead his children in that way, which he designed they should walk in, in the creation. Now what absurdity it is to think, that, among rational beings; those who have a chance of reading the scriptures, and every other nation who have never seen the scriptures, are, with respect to the means of salvation, different. Because the Almighty has furnished means whereby all may know his will, and be led on in his wisdom, and be enabled to answer the great end of their creation; for he cannot respect persons—no, verily! I say how astonishing it is, that men should fall into such darkness; and it proves that the wisdom of the world is foolishness, when we see places prepared, to teach men to be ministers of the gospel of Jesus Christ, which they never can be till the Holy Ghost is showered down upon them. He therefore made it an *ultimatum* with his disciples to wait in deep humiliation of soul, till all creaturely things were swallowed up in oblivion in their minds. For till the vessel is empty, it is not fit to entertain the Holy Ghost, the light, life, and spirit of God Almighty. It must first be emptied of all combustible matter, before man can be brought into a state to be taught true knowledge. So we must all do, my friends—we must follow the example of our great pattern. Our humiliation must be such, that we know all our judgment taken away, that all may come from God, the Holy One, the Eternal, Unchangeable, self-existent Jehovah, one God over all, blessed for ever!

Here, I conclude you will be almost ready to join with me in this position, that the wisdom of this world is foolishness; and that in no manner can there be a greater manifestation of it, than in endeavouring by human science to find out the true knowledge of God, and his will

concerning us. For those holy men, who, we acknowledge, wrote the scriptures of truth, did it under the inspiring influence of God. Now these men, who go to schools to learn to give the meaning of these scriptures, take the very worst means that they could take, for it leads them further and further from a knowledge of them; because in proportion as they set up their human wisdom and science, they go away from the guidance of God, for they must look for some other leader than an inward one; an instructor that is within; and it is by this only that they can be rightly understood. It is now generally considered that the translators were not inspired men, how then could they give the true meaning of those scriptures, which were written, and never could be written through any other means, than by the aid of divine revelation? And nothing else is a recipient for divine revelation, but the rational souls of the children of men. Now don't we see how these translators destroy each other's work, and continue to worry one another, in respect to what was written, and about what language they are to give it in, to us who know not the languages? Now under this view of things, should we put any confidence in the writings of these men, who deny revelation, wholly so, except as it is said to be written? By which they criminate the Almighty and cast an indignity upon him—declaring that he is a partial God; that he is so inconsiderate and cruel, respecting his rational creatures, that he does not yet reveal his will to them; but that all the revelation he affords was collected and given to view, several hundred years ago; and that now we being in the dark, are to receive all instruction in heavenly things from without! And these worldly wise men tell us, that the truth of these writings is not to be known without the aid of human science; thus, by their own concession,

manifesting that they are under the influence of worldly wisdom. But we never can know God through that medium. I want us, my friends, to be wise for ourselves; for I consider that we are all equally accountable to God the creator of all things—the sustainer, preserver, and keeper of all that he has created. So that we may build on no other foundation than that which he has laid. And what is this foundation which he has laid in his infinite wisdom and goodness? It is his manifested will to every individual of his rational creation. This is the foundation which every rational man and woman ought to build on, and no other—with regard to effecting the end of our creation, here on earth, which is to glorify God, and to enjoy him when we have done with time here.

And another thing will show the wisdom of the world to be foolishness. The translators were men who lived but a little while, and they were, certainly, if they denied the revelation of God, aliens and strangers to God. They had not the means, nor did they adopt the means offered them, by which they might understand these doctrines and truths, but as they understood them in their earthly wisdom; and they went on to make a tower, whose top should reach to heaven, in the same spirit as the sons of Noah, when they set about building a tower whose top should reach to heaven. And the very means which they took to prevent it, were the ground of their scattering. And so we see it is now, that the very means which men take, are the means of scattering and dividing Christendom into hundreds and thousands of different sects, which consequently produces quarrelling and wrangling; and all the wars and bloodshed in Christendom arise from this source. But had men kept and lived

in that which Jesus told them they should look for, no apostacy could have entered.

Shall we then go back to that state, into which they fell? For we may read the account, how the apostacy entered. The disciples and followers of Jesus in the second age, began disputing about men and things—one crying, “I am of Paul;” and others, “I of Apollos; I of Cephas; and I of Christ.” What did the apostle say concerning these? “Are ye not carnal?” Surely they were, my friends. And how were they led to cry so, my friends? Why one had experienced, likely, more of the gospel, from the preaching of Paul, than from that of any other apostle, and another had a greater esteem for Peter than for Paul, whom perhaps he had not heard. Hence they set them up against one another, from which proceeded disputing, contending, and worrying one another, and that with violence; as it is in the present day, so far forth as the civil order of the community will permit. What cause then have we to cease from man whose breath is in his nostrils, and to turn in to the light of God in our own hearts; for here, as the apostle assures us, we need not say, “who shall ascend into heaven? that is, to bring Christ down from above: or, who shall descend into the deep? that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead. The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith which we preach.”

Here we see, from this testimony, which is concurrent with what I have mentioned, that the light and life which was in Christ Jesus, is, as the apostle declared, in every man that cometh into the world. And every one must attend to it before he can believe in God, or be converted to the gospel state. They are not to look any where for it but in their own hearts. This accords with the testimony of Jeremiah, when he declared that the Lord would make

a new covenant with the Jewish people; not according to the covenant which he made with their fathers, when he took them by the hand to bring them out of Egypt, which covenant they brake. "But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, I will write it in their hearts; I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord: for they shall know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them."

Here we see the way whereby men should come to know God, by his immediate presence in their souls; the law of life in ourselves, and individually so. Here now was a medium set forth by the prophet, which shows clearly, to every considerate mind, that God is present with us in our hearts, and that in every heart and soul according to its necessity. But what is written in my heart would not do for any other individual, because as our master propensities are very diverse, so my law is in accordance with my peculiar circumstances. Here the law in my heart, would resist every propensity, notwithstanding my strong desires, and would correct all my faults, and teach me to give up all to the will of the heavenly Father concerning me. It might not answer another mind, as the individual might not be guilty of any of my sins; but it is written in every heart, according to the necessity of that heart; for God is one, and his law one, and he brings all to one point, as accountable beings to him. Here would be harmony—all would be one in him and in his son.

Now I have a little showed you, by outward things, the fruits as it were, of the wisdom of men—for by our fruits we are to be known. I will now, as it rises in my mind, show a little in what the wisdom of God consists.

In their outward views, the children of men when they set up leaders, choose the wise, the learned, the scientific, and these are to be their teachers. But we see that this is not the wisdom of God at all, if we attend to the scriptures—it is a plain contradiction to right views. Whom did he call for his messengers to Israel? He called Moses, an exile, one who had no power or capacity of himself to do what he wanted him to do. He was led away, through fear, from Pharaoh's court, and from among his brethren—him he exalted. His prophets were men from the lowest classes of the people; they were husbandmen and the like. And when we come down to the introduction of the gospel dispensation; from whence did he call his son, the great Prophet which he declared he would raise up from among his brethren, and that he would put words in his mouth, and that he should speak what he commanded him? What was his rise? It was from the lowest state among his people—the most despised. “He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: he was despised and we esteemed him not.” He came forth, born of a virgin—a virgin in low estate, poor as to the outward, and without esteem among her neighbours and friends. This is proved by the instance of her being turned out of the inn, where there was no room for her, because of her little reputation. She was turned out into a stable at a time of great extremity; as is shown to us by the history. We see then from what a low estate he sprang; for there is scarce any woman, but that the people would, at such a time as this, give shelter to for the night, instead of treating her with such cruelty; yet some of those who are thus treated with the greatest neglect, are the most pious and righteous, and so it was probably with Mary; she was no doubt pious and righteous, so that the Scribes and Phari-

sees despised her and her household. So that I consider the only way to be instructed by this, is, that it shows to us that deep humiliation that all his children and servants must come to experience, before they can be qualified to do his great work. They must come down into this state of obscurity, into a state of humiliation—into a state of reduction of self, and self love; all self must be brought down into subjection; self abasement must spread over every thing in them—they must feel themselves as poor nothing creatures, knowing nothing, and comprehending nothing of themselves. Because the soul is not till this time emptied of its combustible matter, of pride, and other selfish propensities of man, in his probationary state. All must be brought into due subjection—they must be brought down to bow at the feet of Jehovah; for then; and not till then, are they prepared to receive the wisdom of God, and to be instructed by it. For we see in the example of his dear Son, that he was content with this low estate, and that he prized it as his greatest ornament and jewel; because as he went on in the line of self denial under the cross, he preached his own cross to the people—“If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.” Now what was it that constituted his cross? Nothing but the law of his God, the law of the new covenant, written in his soul, in his immortal spirit, by the finger of God his Father. This was his cross—this it was that he was willing to submit to, under every temptation: and he kept to this cross to the utmost, for he was tempted in all points as we are, and he had the same desires and propensities that we have, yet he stood firm, because he was instructed and led to see himself a poor creature. He had no merit of his own—he was a poor helpless male infant, whose life was dependant, under God, on

the nursing of his mother. We see him walking up and down, after he had grown to man's estate, and from what he expressed at a certain time, we see how he was despised and neglected of this world. He said, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the son of man hath not where to lay his head." Can we wonder then, that the wise of this world should have despised him—could they do otherwise? And is it not as much so now, as ever it was? And have not the wise of this world made void the law of God, and been governed by traditions instead of the revelation of God, who is ever present, a help in every needful time? For we may know more by this gift within us, than we could have from all the books and men on the face of the earth; for in this little gift, which has been compared to a mustard seed, is the fulness of God. Jesus, in his description, calls it the Kingdom of God. He says, "the Kingdom of God cometh not with observation, neither shall they say, lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the Kingdom of God is within you." No man by outward observation can comprehend it, or have any knowledge of it. It cannot be seen by our outward senses; and for this reason, because it is in us, and it can never be known except in us. For although in the ignorance of the Israelites, when they were so dark and sensual, he gave them an outward covenant and heaven: as they were outward and carnal, he stooped down to outward miracles; but these have no part or lot in the gospel dispensation, because they are addressed to the external senses, as all outward miracles must be, or they are not miracles at all, as to the outward. Here now we see, that in every respect, the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God, and the wisdom of God is foolishness with men. How foolish it appeared to think that he would send forth one who should rule the nations, and that he would raise him

up from the most inferior of his creatures! and yet how clear it is—what deep wisdom strikes the mind, when we reflect upon it. The less the thing, the greater the exaltation, and its consequences. And what a beautiful simile did Jesus make use of, to bring us home, to reflect as rational creatures; when he says, “To what shall I liken the Kingdom of God? It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.” Again, he compares it to a mustard seed—thus showing that the least thing may grow up and become mighty. So it is with this seed of the kingdom, this grace of God, this light and life of God in the children of men; for nothing else can quicken the soul of man but the light of God, their creator. There must be a portion of this to animate the soul, before it can know any thing of God.

Here then we see the necessity of coming to this point, that the man who will become subject to the will of God, must become passive to the leaven of the kingdom, otherwise it will not work and bring about the change necessary to be effected. He chose the meal because it was a passive thing, and has no power to resist—hence it is passive to any power which is capable of acting upon it. So it must be with the soul of man, it must become passive as meal. Meal is so by nature, but man is by nature directly opposite: they feel an opposition to rise up; and a disposition to oppose God their creator, with that very power which he confers upon them. Because he has made them free agents, that so, they might become accountable, when they will not obey his will and become passive under his power. So that when we feel any thing that would exalt us above another, let us look at the example of Jesus Christ, and consider of what low degree he was as to this world, because we must be brought into

a willingness to serve even those of the very lowest degree.

See how it was with Jesus, he found more openness among the publicans and sinners, than among the high professing Scribes and Pharisees. See the case of Zaccheus. What did he say when Jesus came to his house after he had addressed him: "Come down, Zaccheus?" Now what a beautiful moral there is in this. He was of low stature, and so he climbed up into a tree, just as men and women go to schools of science to learn, to climb up to see God, their Saviour. "Come down, Zaccheus"—and just so it must be now in the world—we must come down to the witness for God, we must come down to the light, we must come down to the grace and manifestation of that spirit, that the apostle tells us is given to every man and woman. And what was Jesus' language to Zaccheus? "This day is salvation come to this house." "Behold, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him four-fold." We see here his righteousness—there is no religion but in righteousness, in uprightness of heart. And can a man be upright in heart, and act any thing in opposition to God's will, without being careful to know the will of God concerning it? If he does, it must be an unjust act. Now when we look in this way, how humble it makes us, and how it keeps us all together in unity and harmony, each esteeming other better than himself. But the wisdom of the world acts diametrically contrary. When a man gets to be a priest, he commands the esteem of his brethren; he don't keep down in that humiliated state, that state in which the judgment is taken away. Because why? As dependent creatures, we have no right to fill the judgment-seat. Jesus said, that he had no right to sit in the seat of judgment; for his

Father had not called him to it. So that it is only in this state of humiliation that social beings can have harmony—it is only as they keep under the influence of that power that regulated the life of our great pattern, and which rendered him so merciful and so courteous, and made him willing to lay down his life, rather than break his testimony for the Almighty—that his example might be complete in all things, to the reducing of man under the will of God. Although he felt and anticipated with great keenness the sufferings which he should undergo, when under the control of that cruel power which the Jewish nation and the Roman governors possessed—he felt a foretaste of it, which led him thus to prostrate himself before his heavenly Father, till great drops of sweat fell from him like drops of blood : beseeching him, if possible, to let the cup pass from him.

Now how much we can learn here, my friends ; what an example it is, to show us that it is only in the will of God that our eternal life can be saved, and we united with God our creator. These bodily lives, when they come in competition with our spiritual lives, how low they are, and we feel with him voluntarily to cry out under the torture we may suffer—we can cry out, “not my will but thine be done.” Here now is summed up the whole life of Jesus ; who being in a state of continual and filial obedience to his Father’s will, fulfilled the declaration of Moses, “The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee, a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me, unto him ye shall hearken.” And how was Moses appointed as a God unto Israel, agreeably to their own choice ! The Israelites were to receive all from his mouth, as he was commanded of God. Moses had all from the immediate inspiration of God, as he handed it out. And to make the Israelites believe that he had it from God, it

was confirmed by miracles and supernatural displays of power. But we should be falling away from the gospel dispensation, if we should ask for outward miracles—it would turn us back to that outward dispensation, by which we should get the yoke of bondage upon us again. Jesus, when on the cross, in order to teach us, and show us, that we are to do nothing of ourselves—that we are not to put any confidence in ourselves, and though we are deserted, if we have come to know God, and his excellency, and goodness, though for a time he may see meet to desert us, and feed us as with the bread of affliction—when the true believer is brought to this condition, in this feeling, he may cry out as Jesus did on the cross, at the same time showing his submission and dependence—he may cry out under this sense, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!” Here he has shown us that none of us in these days of trial, should ever give back one jot or tittle. “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!” Now some may say, why was this necessary? In order that he might be a complete example to us, and to all to whom the history of his life might come—that all believers might be induced to “press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God,” without any discouragement. And here now, the worldly wise do not understand spiritual things. For some of the worldly wise accuse me of defaming the character of the mother of Jesus, when all my concern is to exalt her and her dear Son; but it is because they do not understand. They think that all must be of high degree; but he condescended to be of no reputation; and in this I feel that I must imitate him—it is in this that all my confidence rests; and I had just as leave be called a fool, as any thing else. I know what man can do is nothing to me, for all my happiness and joy depend on my own obedience to my

manifested duty. "Obey my voice and thy soul shall live." This is my motto, and this I want should be the motto of all my brethren and sisters present, and the world over; and I pray that they may be brought to it. I know the blessedness of it; I am not preaching to you cunningly devised fables; but what my eyes have seen, my ears heard, and my hands handled, of the good word of life; in which I feel that peace and consolation which the world never gave, and which all its frowns and accusations can never disturb. And it is for your sakes that I am willing to become a fool among you; that I am willing to be any thing that my master is disposed to make of me, if it may help my brother—if it be the office of stooping down, and putting my hands under your feet: for none of you are too mean or contemptible in my view.

Here it is, that we see the true condition and glory of our great pattern. See how he washed the disciples' feet—he humbled himself to every mean office, to bring them down to that humiliation that we must all experience, before we can experience a being rightly exalted. For "humility goeth before honour, but a haughty look before a fall."—And as we come to this we can love one another; for nothing can enable us to love our neighbour as ourselves, till we love God above all: and when we come to this, we shall love every creature, not only our neighbours as ourselves, but every creature of God. We shall feel as though the trees of the field were at peace with us—such would be the solemnity and quiet of soul, my friends.

But words would fail me to speak sufficiently of these things, and what might be said upon the subject.

Let us now recollect that the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God. Now what vast toil and labour there is to give children human science, when the money thus expended might be better thrown into the sea; it might be a better use for it. I only speak in this way, to show the harm that it is doing. We know that there are an abundance of poor around us, and if we give our children so much learning, we rob the poor of all their part of our bounties; and thus we become hard hearted. And what would we do with so much learning? Why we

would make some priests, and some lawyers; but had we not better throw all our money away, than to lay it out to make priests and lawyers? For if all were true Christians, there would be no more need of lawyers than of the most insignificant thing in the world. Because, we have a great lawgiver in every soul, and law enough to keep us in harmony with our fellow creatures, if we would but attend to it. And we should never be willing to coerce a man to pay a debt due to us, if we were in the true Christian state that Jesus was in; and often by this means, they would be brought to a willingness to give us our due.

I have heard some express the idea, that scientific men are enabled to know the will of God better than ignorant ones. Are they able to know it better than Jesus Christ? For he was ignorant of these human sciences of men. Here this proves the foolishness of the wisdom of man, that knows not God. So, likewise—although there may not be many present who are concerned in these things, in sending their sons to learn to preach the gospel—what an insult it is, to the Holy One!—what an absurdity! Now I speak of things, and not of persons; for I have great charity for all my fellow creatures; and I mourn over them who are giving way to these things, for I know why it is so. They are under the power of tradition and education—their fathers did so, and they think they must do so too. This was the complaint of Jesus to the Scribes and Pharisees, those who pretended to be rulers and guides in Israel.—As your fathers did, so do you: “You make void the law of God by your traditions.” O tradition! tradition! Traditional Christians will always be persecuting Christians and individuals: and how can it be otherwise, when they have a creed formed to which others must all bow? They will make him long enough if he be too short; and if he be too long, they will clip him and make him short enough, the moment he enters into these creeds. But the soul of man is accountable to God, and to him only—and how these things have stopped the reformation in all ages! As soon as the primitive disciples turned away from the true source of instruction, the spirit of truth in their own souls, they set up another rule, and began to

make creeds and confessions of faith; and every one who would not bow to their creed, was to be banished or destroyed. Here they not only limited the Holy One, but they persecuted all who were not agreed with them in opinion.

Oh! that these things might sink deep into our minds. For, who gives man opinions? Who can give a right belief? None but the Almighty. Belief is not a voluntary act—and all beliefs that are worth any thing, must be something more than a voluntary act of a man's mind; for when he has sufficient evidence of any thing, he is obliged to believe it. For what is it, that is necessary to beget a belief? It must be nothing less than an evidence from this comforter within, which Jesus declared the Father would send in his name, and who should reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. And have we not all been reproved by this reprovener? Surely we have. I dare appeal to the wickedest persons that I have ever seen in the world, that they have an evidence in themselves, and they can never get over the belief, that this reprovener speaks the truth, and nothing else. But they may reason themselves into a belief very different from this—they may go on as Saul did, before he was Paul. He could not believe in Christianity—he had seen Jesus and his disciples, and heard their doctrines; but he was a persecutor, under the influence of worldly wisdom. He was the only one of the apostles who had much human science; he was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, and instructed according to the law of his fathers. He had his creed, which was the old law, and that he built upon; though afterwards, when he came to be turned about, he found that he did not understand the scriptures. And the worldly wise cannot understand them, till they come to the divine light in their own souls, for, till then, we may read them, and think we may be suffered to persecute all those that do not come into such a way as we have decided to be the right one. But the Lord was gracious to Saul, and regarded the sincerity of his heart. And as Saul did the thing ignorantly, he was constrained to yield, when Almighty Goodness condescended to arrest him in the way. And how did he arrest him? It seemed as if he

caused a great light to shine around them, so far exceeding the brightness of the sun, that it stopped them on their way. In this situation, all their missions and designs seemed forgotten, in this moment. And in this stillness, Saul heard a voice saying unto him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" And he said, "who art thou Lord?" And the Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest, it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." Some have been often reproved, but have rejected this Divine Reprover. This voice was inwardly heard, for he was in a certain place, and those that were with him heard it not: and we are all met with in this way, through adorable mercy, at times; and the sincere in heart will be regarded, though they may go very far out of the way, and get their judgment defiled, by hearing men say what they do.

The Romanist believes, from the tradition of his fathers, that it is wrong to eat meat in the time which they call Lent. Now what should this Romanist do? Should he eat meat in Lent contrary to his belief, since his judgment is deluded by tradition and education? No, he can't do it, till the light opens and shows him the fallacy of his opinions; because his conscience would reprove and convict him for it. Not for eating meat in Lent, but for being led through temptation, to do contrary to what he thought to be the will of God, in order to gratify his own passions. Therefore, the reprover condemns him, and teaches him to cast down every crown—all that would lead him to gratify his pride, inconsistent with truth. So it may be with every profession—even among the Quakers. They may get so fixed in their judgments as to be deceived, and brought into a situation, through education and tradition, so as to go back to the letter which killeth, and so as to become as much established in their view, as the Romanist is, that it is not right to believe this or that, or to do this or that. And it would be a sin against God, if they acted thus, before their judgment had come to be informed right by the Spirit of truth; for nothing else can bring them off from their views, but that Spirit that makes them feel conviction for going counter to what they have set their judgments

down in, by reading the letter, which none are to depend on; for the letter, if depended on, will kill the soul—it becomes an evil to it. As the letter, however good it is, is nothing but an effect, it is not the cause. I mention these things, to caution my friends, that we must come into that which will “let brotherly love continue. Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil: cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another, with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another.”

See what excellent exhortations we get from the scriptures; and still, how few there are who believe them, or act according to them. Here, for want of this, they are accusers of their brethren, murmurers and complainers; but when they become true disciples of Jesus Christ, they cannot murmur nor complain.

I don't want to be tedious to you, my friends, but my soul is engaged, and my bowels yearn, in feelings of compassion for your everlasting good. And now to conclude, in the language of the apostle; and to take my leave of you, if I feel easy when I sit down; “May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all. Amen.” And I have no doubt this will be the case, if we are faithful and attentive, to the operation of the light of God in our own souls; “for by grace we are saved.”

[Here the speaker sat down, but soon rose and added,]

There is a great deal comprehended in these last expressions of the apostle, who desired that there might be communion of the brethren with the Holy Ghost. Now truly, my brethren, there is no communion but in the Spirit. There never was any communion in the letter or in books, because, by them, we can never be made to see alike; and there never was and never can be, true communion under the letter. The law dispensation, or law given by Moses, was perfect in itself; because it was all that it was designed to be by the Almighty. It was one law to all the Israelites, and therefore they are spoken to as an individual. They all had the same law, and were all under the same circumstances. They were all the offspring of Abraham, and were all going to inherit an outward good land, a specific spot, and therefore the law

could be the same to every one. And as they were faithful to the Almighty, they held peaceful communion, and were in love with one another—their law could be known and comprehended. But our law and communion stands in something else—it is not in any thing visible or outward; but it is a spiritual peace in the Holy Ghost. “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.” It is in this Spirit, that Christians have sweet communion; but if they go out of this into the letter, their communion is broken immediately.

[Here the speaker sat down again, and after a short, but very solemn pause, rose and said,]

I have but few expressions more to make, before I close this opportunity; but I would remind us, in what thankfulness of heart, I feel the solemnity that is spread over this assembly. I feel to commend you, my brethren and sisters, of every description, for your quiet and solemn deportment—your civil and solemn deportment. And I trust you are made to feel, that there is something precious in solemnity and retirement; that now, when you are not hearing man at all, you feel something to cover the mind! Now, where does this blessing come from? Can man command it? No, surely. I therefore recommend you to retirement; and when you feel not at ease, and know not how to get rest, wait on God; let us retire in secret, or in our own families; and as we endeavour to come down into a state of solemnity and retirement, the Lord will be ready to unite with us, and will not only comfort *our* hearts, but the hearts of our children, even the young children. I know what I say. The Lord will, through the parents, solemnize the young children, and they will set down under his power; and thus may we bring them up in the “fear, and in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” Oh! the sweetness of solemnity, and the profit of retirement! Oh! that we may often be willing to wait in secret, solemn silence, upon God, divested of all our own willing and running—that he may be our teacher at all times. For it is an eternal truth, that “the children of the Lord are taught of the Lord; and in righteousness are they established; and great is the peace of those children.”

THE QUAKER.

SERMON BY ELIAS HICKS, DELIVERED AT FRANKFORD, DECEMBER 15, 1826.

MANKIND are naturally, or necessarily led to aspire after exaltation—to aspire to rise out of the state in which they were placed in the creation, which was not a state of virtue, nor could it be considered a state of happiness, consistent with the nature of their existence. For they were not made to rest in that state, but by acts and doings to glorify their Creator. Hence, as man brings no knowledge into the world with him, he is, when turned out of the hands of his Creator, seemingly no more than a machine, that a wise man may invent and make for his own use and service. And in order that the maker may be glorified, this machine must act according to the design of the maker. Now, if we were to suppose for a moment that man had a capacity to animate this machine, and to give it active power, and life, and place it in a state of probation, with liberty to do his service, or to do it not, here we should see what the creature man is. For man has the liberty of choice, whether he will obey God his maker, or whether he will act in his own will and disobey him: for facts prove, that though man derives his existence from

God, together with all his powers and capacities, yet we see that God has, in his wisdom, thus constituted him. All the power he has comes from his Maker, and all the right knowledge that he has must come from his Creator; for no where else can he find it. But he has endued him with power and capacities to act and to do; and it appears to be consistent with the infinite wisdom of a great Creator, to give him liberty and power to act, through the medium of that power which he has communicated to him, that he may make use of it, to do his Maker's will, or not to do it. Here the creature man is placed in a condition to rise out of an innocent state into a virtuous one, a heavenly one, a glorious one, through the only right medium, that just medium that Almighty goodness has fixed for him. And he has fixed it in immutable justice; for justice is the foundation and first attribute of the Almighty. For without justice, strict justice, there can be no virtue, no good.

Here now, man is endued with a gift, a gift in himself, a gift given to him to occupy, by which he will, through the leading of the spirit of God, through the medium of this gift, if rightly attended to, be brought to see his dependent state. Therefore, the first step of exaltation is to consider his dependent state; and the first act which he is to do in conformity with his state is, to consider that he was created by God, and that all his powers and faculties come from him; and that to deviate from his law is an unjust act, an act of the greatest injustice that a man can possibly be guilty of. And yet he has the power given him to do so—he has liberty to employ the power of his Maker, to resist his Maker. Now don't be alarmed at this, my friends; for if we reflect rightly, we shall see that perfect wisdom could never have placed his creatures in a better state than this. This state of pro-

bation is the only one in which we could be helped to rise from an innocent state into a glorified one. I mention this, that none of us may give way so far to folly, as to complain or murmur against a gracious God, that he has left us to be proved as we are. For if we judged rightly we should see, that it was so with his son, and that we are under the influence of his light, or the influence of that life that he breathed into his creature man, and which was the finishing work of creation to him. For when man was first made, it was out of the dust of the earth, out of the same materials that other animals are formed of; and when complete in form, he was animated with the breath and air of this world; and we all know that animal life is nothing but the breath of this world. I mention these things, to show what is meant by the Almighty breathing into man the breath of life. It can mean no other thing than this, that it was a portion of the divinity itself that he breathed into the immortal souls of the children of men. For he has made the immortal soul a fit receptacle, or recipient for his life, and it is capable of experiencing a growth in knowledge, by and through him, by the inspiration or revelation of his spirit. And nothing else is a recipient for this spirit of God, but the immortal souls of the children of men—these are fitted for that purpose, and endued in such a manner, and with such capacities, that if they attend to this light and life, it may become their sole director in every thing. For although it is the mind of man that directs the body in its course, yet the soul is placed in these bodies, or earthen tabernacles, as an agent under God, to dress and keep the garden—to dress all the propensities and keep them within proper bounds; for these are all the trees of the garden that we read of. “And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, of every tree of the garden thou mayst

freely eat, except one." And that one, though good in itself, yet the Almighty saw fit to deny man the privilege of using it in his own will; which I consider comprehends, nothing more than man's assuming to himself to know good and evil. Because, the moment he assumes this power, he commits an act of very great injustice; for he does it for the sake of being independent—it is nothing but a desire after independence, in the use of a propensity that leads to that which is good, when kept in its proper place, and under the direction of the Holy Spirit; and in this he might enjoy true liberty, only by asking for it in the right way.

Here now, as we are concerned to look into ourselves, and see and know the gift of God in us, and the design of it, it will teach us our true state; for the first step to wisdom is, to know ourselves. It is through this medium that we are led on to know the God that made us; and although we may see much to aspire to, yet we should not endeavour to be exalted through an improper medium; for God has wisely given to man leave to counteract his laws, by turning away from his commandments, which comprehends every thing they attempt to do independently of the will of God. But we must remain eternally passive to the will of God, if we would be happy, or just; because we owe all to him, and he has so ordered it, that all our happiness depends on our obedience to him.

Hence the reason why he has placed in us a propensity continually to desire happiness, and at the same time shown us that the world and all its enjoyments can never satiate this desire. There is nothing but God Almighty's presence in us that can make us happy. There is nothing but our will being his will, that can satiate this desire of the soul. Here we see how we have gone astray, when we have turned aside from the divine commands, which

would lead to a guardianship over ourselves; which would regulate and keep in order all the propensities that God Almighty has stamped upon our nature, for a glorious purpose, and which are all good. For God declared that all was "very good." Well, now, man had at that instant all those propensities and desires which would actuate and excite him to action; and without which, he could not make a move, either on the right hand or on the left. Here now, man, by turning from the divine commands, sets about exalting himself, by looking round him, to bring into subjection his fellow, and thus he exerts the power of God to the injury of his fellow by that very power that God has abilitated him with, and which power he has liberty to employ according to his own election. Here we see then, where all the war, oppression, and misery of the children of men have their source; they rise from this cause. And there is no section of the children of men, who are not guilty of this great injustice; for they are not only seeking exaltation by outwardly oppressing each other, for exaltation and dominion; but likewise in relation to opinions, they would bring their fellow creatures under their tenets and control, so far, that we should be made to bow to their opinions, in relation to that which belongs only between ourselves and our God. Here they usurp the throne of Almighty God—here they take upon themselves to be oppressors, and to destroy that liberty which Almighty Goodness has dispensed to every rational creature—that free-agent principle of liberty, which allows us to act for ourselves, in those things which relate to God and our salvation, and every thing else of a spiritual nature: and likewise even in temporal things to usurp authority over one another, inconsistent with the line of perfect justice. But even when men assume the seat of God in the heart, and go on to as-

sociate into communities, and to agree and make covenant with each other, in order to regulate these bodies of clay, which are empowered to do great harm to each other externally, perfect wisdom leaves these social beings to enter into covenant with each other, and to be bound by certain ties by which they are preserved from harming one another. Thus it is that they establish certain laws and rules, and in this moral sense there is a consistency in the conduct of these people. But if they would have right regulations and right laws they must still look to heaven—they must turn inward to this inspiring spirit of God, which only can give to man right knowledge respecting the regulating of things in a moral nature, as social beings. So that we now see, and you will unite with me in these views, what we have to do in order to be reconciled with one another; for we can never be reconciled with one another, by all our own efforts, till we get back again to the place in which Almighty power fixed us, in the beginning; which is a state of innocency, a state standing out of all contradiction and confusion. Now this I trust we shall all believe, that through the adorable mercy of a gracious God, although we have all sinned and come short of his glory, yet he is graciously waiting on us from youth to old age to gather us back to the right place. See how Jesus portrays this truth, when he took a little child in his arms and blessed it, and told the people around him, that unless they were converted and became as little children they should not enter into heaven.

Now what was the state of that little child? It was in the same state and condition as when it came out of the hands of its Maker—it had neither a capacity to sin nor to do good. And this is the situation in which all men are placed in the creation, for God is an unchangeable God, and he cannot be a respecter of persons; nor can

he do that which is not just, nor counteract the most perfect equity and justice. Therefore he could never make us accountable when we come into the world; for if he loves impartiality, he could never lay upon us to answer for the sins of our forefathers.

Now when the mind is led in this way to reflect upon our condition, we are brought into a certain degree of knowledge of the supreme good, and under this influence, the influence of his holy light, we can counteract, or give our testimony against these dark doctrines of original sin, and so on. For it is as clear as day, to every enlightened mind, that it would be impossible for Almighty God ever to charge an infant, or a man when grown up, for the defilements of another; whether it be our present parent, or our first parent, it makes no difference.

What wonderful mercy! My soul has often been melted into contrition when I have looked back and witnessed his unbounded mercy in calling me out of sin, in opening a way, and bringing me back to that innocent state in which I was created; and that he is now standing by me and helping me to set off again! Here now, we learn a great deal by this, because as we have seen, we are not only melted and softened by it, but our hearts are enlarged in love to God our creator, so that we are continually inspired with love and gratitude to him, from day to day. For as we may here see, we are setting out anew, like one taken out of the burning, for you know a burnt child dreads the fire. And I apprehend there is a great deal of knowledge which cannot be known, before we feel the effects, like that of a burnt child. Here he becomes more watchful; here he keeps an eye single to that which he knows will preserve him out of all evil, if he is only faithful to his leader. But then he who has not experienced the effects of the fire and the burning cannot have a sense of what he

would feel; and so it is with us till after receiving the reward of our doings. For infinite wisdom has so ordered that every act of a man's life shall have its consequent reward immediately following—if a virtuous act, he shall have comfort and joy; and if an evil act, it shall be conviction and distress.

Oh! what love and what thankfulness it excites in the humble soul; and how I have been instructed when I have been driving my horse or my team, and how I have seen my own inconsistency. For man, we see, has power to bring down and domesticate animals, and make them passive to the will of their owners. I say, when I have been driving an animal, which was rightly broken and passive to every motion of my will, that by a touch of the finger upon the lines which could be scarcely observed, and if the bits had been in my own mouth I could have scarcely had sense enough to feel it, yet it has directed my creature to turn to the right or the left! Oh! how it has humbled me, often times, to see how much fuller these creatures effect the end of their creation than men do! Here as we get them thus regulated, how watchful they are to mind their guide, so that when they come to a slough, by a little touch they are ready to turn and go by it, and miss it, and finally they become so inured to it by habit, as to know where the difficulty is, and by and by they will turn without the care of their driver. See what a watchful state! And I have often thought, if the children of men were as passive and as attentive as these beasts, what blessings they might enjoy. By this close attention to their driver or owner, they will go through a long journey; and when I have travelled over the same journey, I have sometimes found that they knew it better than myself, and I have been under the necessity of leaving it to my creature, to direct me in the way, and they

never failed of taking the right road where there was a separation. Can we suppose then, that the Lord takes more care for these creatures, than for man? Is it not more likely, that if we were tractable as they are, and if we were willing to be brought into that passive state, that he would bless us in proportion to the knowledge received? Then every thing in us and about us, ought to bow to the supreme power, and be always passive to the divine will. Here he has given us liberty to go counter to his will, by which we have the liberty of electing for ourselves, and herein we learn, in what our true liberty consists and where our true happiness rests. And when we have elected the wrong way, and gone counter to the mind and good pleasure of our heavenly Father, it has brought torment, and we could not help it. Yet we had our choice and have received our reward; but when we have turned according to the leading of his grace and good spirit in us, what pleasure we have felt in it, what comfort and consolation! Here we learn to choose the path of true liberty, which is marked out in true and immutable justice. Here now, by attending to the one thing needful, as I have observed in regard to my creature, we become so inured to the right way, as to shun all the points, shoals, and rocks that may be in our way, and thus it will become natural and easy for us to go in the right way, and to avoid every thing that would have a tendency to interrupt us in our course. And I believe a creature may become so hardened in sin, as not to know how to get out of that state. And so when the creature keeps faithful to God, and is led by his spirit, he becomes fixed in this liberty, and the enjoyment of the divine presence overwhelms all other considerations, till he becomes established, and is brought up into a state similar to that comprehended in the saying of the apostle to his brethren, in which he can "rejoice

ever more; pray without ceasing; and in all things give thanks.”

Now when the creature becomes swallowed up in the divine will, and the continual exercise of love and charity, he seeks not dominion, but is continually in a state of rejoicing from a sense of the mercy and goodness of God in his deliverance, and thus he is in a state of continual prayer, for the aspirations of his soul are continually ascending to God, without intermission, for every thing that is good and for all his enjoyments; and thus is kept up a steady state of thanksgiving and glory to God.

Oh! that you might not only hear me but feel me, and enter deeply into this consideration. Then instead of sorrow among us, we should have joy and gladness—verily so! I desire, therefore, in as few words as I can conveniently, to open to you the feelings of my spirit at this season, that you may be encouraged to gather inward, and to centre in that renovating power, that if we are yet sinners, will bring us into a child-like state, a state of innocency, in which we should see our way to be wrong. And the moment we fall down at his feet, he is ready to grant us repentance and remission of sins, and to place us in that state in which we shall be cleansed by his life in us. For it is only the life and blood of God that ever changed a soul from sin; for there is no other blood but the life of God that can wash the soul from sin, and this hath no materiality in it. So we must all progress in the way of righteousness, and if we are yet prodigals, remember, young and old, and particularly the dear youth, what wonderful compassion is pointed out to us in the parable of Jesus concerning the prodigal son. See how clearly it justifies what I have declared among you. “He had received his portion from his father.”—Now Jesus in that day saw fit to speak through the medium of the natural

senses, in order to convey spiritual instruction; and therefore an outward father was used to represent our Heavenly Father, who has given all a portion of his treasure according to their several abilities. To one he has given five talents, to another two, and to another one, according to what he requires of us, and according to our several abilities to perform or improve. Here, the prodigal son left his father's house and gratified himself among harlots, that is, in the enjoyment of this world—these are the harlots among whom he spent all this heavenly portion. Well now, living in a far country and having spent all that he had, he suffered true want and had no way to get along. He went and joined himself to a householder, to feed swine.—Now this has struck my mind sometimes in this way; that it was like those now-a-days who have no way to get along, and yet think they must pursue some way to get a support, and so they go and join themselves to the people to be hireling ministers to feed the great antichristian spirit—to feed those whom they are living on, with husks, which can never satiate the soul at all. I say that no one has ever felt the soul satiated through that medium, and swallowed up in divine love, so as to feel no longer a want of peace and joy; and it never can be the case through this medium, for husks can never satisfy hunger.

Here he was disappointed, and he now took up another resolution; he was persuaded that all that men could do for him was of no avail, let them be never so great or so good. He determined and made up a resolution—I will return and go to my father; “and say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.” Here he was brought to humble

himself for the injustice of his conduct, and for his great impropriety.

Now, see the mercy of God! Look at it, dear young children, for no doubt many are led in the same way, and are loving many things, many harlots: and may you, therefore, remember and observe these things. See the condescending goodness and love of our heavenly Father—he beholds us a great way off. So, as soon as we have put on a resolution to make acknowledgments, and to be faithful to him, we see that while yet a great way off, while covered with our sins, he is willing to meet us, to fall upon our necks, and to kiss us. See then the mercy of a gracious God. Does he ask pay for our transgressions? Here now is another sad notion, that Almighty God who is possessed of perfect purity and perfect love, cannot forgive our sins unless we pay some ransom! What a wretched idea! All Jesus' parables go to counteract this opinion; and to show that it is only of his mercy that we are saved, and not by the payment of a ransom. He saved us “by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit,” in us; and so far from asking any thing, we see how it was with the son which was lost and was found. “The son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight. But the father said to his servants, bring forth the best robe and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring here the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat and be merry.” Here the father rejoiced with exceeding great joy, for his son which had been lost was found. Now, I see nothing to counteract this parable; although some will say, that the Almighty cannot forgive our sins unless some one comes and pays the debt for us. Now, what is the debt? It is all our own—we can add nothing to the Almighty—he has no charge against us that

we can fill up. For he is complete in himself, in love and righteousness, and we can add nothing to him; and all our wickedness can take nothing from him. The death that we sustain is in ourselves, and the death that our first parents suffered was a death in themselves; and yet it is said, that by this act of transgression they slew the lamb—"the lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Now what is this lamb? If we believe the record, it is nothing but the life and spirit of God in the soul—the immortal life of God in our souls—the innocent life of God. But now, man by transgression, and resisting this innocent lamb in the soul, did not kill or crucify it, because it is out of the power of all men and nations to touch it. The reason why it was considered as dead in him was, that the soul being dead by transgressions, had lost the life of the lamb, because the soul had departed from it and left it. And yet it was the same principle that it ever was, and it can never change. It is speaking by way of allegory, in order to reach our senses. So that all the death and darkness is in the creature; and when we return back again like the prodigal to our Father's house, the lamb revives in us and is raised again—as it were, it rises again from the dead in us. Not that it had been literally dead at all, or that it could be possibly so, but only it was dead to us; for we would not hear him or suffer him to live in us. But in the adorable mercy of God he renews the way for us, by which we may be renewed, and experience the truth of the apostle's testimony: "He that is in Christ is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." For he that is in Christ has this lamb living in him—this lamb slain from the foundation of the world, which means nothing but the light and spirit of God in man; for there never was, and never can be any other Saviour to the children

of men, by which they can be preserved, or when fallen, by which they can be raised up into the image of God again. And if I know any thing of the work of redemption and salvation, I can set my seal to this, in the presence of my heavenly Father; for I know of nothing that ever did me any good but this living, sensible knowledge of divine love operating in my soul, this lamb-like spirit, which comprehends God Almighty, for he is love, and nothing but love; and there is no other redeeming power, for nothing but love can create, or save, or redeem. Because love is stronger than death; but jealousy in men and women, is more cruel than the grave, or death itself—that jealousy which leads them to complain of their brethren, and which leads to uproar, and destroys the harmony and peace of society. These have their source in nothing but envy and jealousy, which are as cruel as the grave.

Oh! how my soul craves it, that we may enter into a state of examination, and be careful to see that our sins are all taken away through the blood of the Lamb. It is a time when storms are arising, and it is now time to enter into a close investigation in our own hearts, as has been recommended this morning,* and that we gather inward, and strive to get into a state of silence, a state in which we shall be willing to wait in quiet, and mind our business individually. This is our work, we are not to answer for the Lord's servants, we are only to answer for ourselves; for no man can save his brother, or give to God a ransom for his soul.

Now think of these things, my friends, and let them sink deep, and then those who would set up their judgment will perceive their own error, and feel as they ought for man's iniquity: for God is a merciful God, he does not force any, he cannot force any creature into happiness;

* Alluding to a preceding communication.

it would destroy his nature to attempt it, and therefore he does not attempt it. He leads us in love, and sends forth his call, by his life and his spirit, into all the world. All are called, but all are not saved, because they are not all attentive to his call. For he is preaching his gospel in every creature under heaven, as the apostle declares, it is preached in every rational creature; and in a certain sense we may say it is preached in the lower creation, for they are instructed by their Creator to walk in the path of safety for themselves. And how wonderfully he has directed the birds to fly from one limb to another, and to effect that which will make them happy. And who is it that guides them? God Almighty by the sense that he has given them—and his mercy is every where; for not a blade of grass could grow, were he not the preserver of it. He fills all things, and is every where present; for in him we live, move, and have our being, and this is evident to all the nations of the earth, more or less. May we then gather to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to save us; for it is by grace only that we are saved, or, are to be saved. And if this be true, then surely we need not look any where else. For what is the grace of God? The apostle tells us what it is. “The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.” Now this must comprehend all mankind, who have a thousand different notions about outward exercises in religious matters, in which there is no religion at all. There is no religion in any thing but in this divine grace—in being taught by it, and coming under its leadings—there is none acceptable to God but this, and there never was any thing that could have a tendency to save the soul but this grace of God that bringeth salvation, and which hath appeared unto all men. And every man has a knowledge of it; because every one must acknowledge that he

has transgressed, and without he had this grace, he could not know it, for nothing else could ever reprove man but this grace, which means nothing but what Jesus recommended his disciples to wait for. “Tarry at Jerusalem till ye shall receive power from on high”—till the comforter shall come unto you. And what was this comforter? It was the spirit of truth, the light and life of God in the soul.—It is the same that would have been the preserver of our first parents, and which was their comforter as long as they remained obedient. There never was any other comforter, and there never will be—it is that principle which is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; and he abideth in us. Jesus told his disciples that it would not be out of them, “For he dwelleth with you and shall be in you.”

Shall we then look any where else under the gospel dispensation? If we do, we are taking a step which divine wisdom does not direct, and it is a selfish step. No, verily, there never was any other saviour than God manifesting himself in man; for “No man knoweth the things of God but the spirit of God.” Now if we believe the apostle, we must consider this a truth. Here now this grace hath appeared unto all, manifesting itself unto all by its reproofs: for Jesus says, “When he is come, he will reprove the world of sin.”—Now what is meant by the world? It is all the rational children of men, every rational soul. “He will reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.” So now, we that believe in this grace, are instructed by it; for the apostle does not say that it teaches all that it comes to teach. “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the

glorious appearing of the great God and our saviour Jesus Christ.”

Now where is he, and what is Jesus Christ? I have said that he is the comforter, the light of the souls of the children of men, which is the only true life, the life that was breathed into our first parents, and which made them alive unto God. And that life in them, preserved them while they acted in obedience to it. And surely it was a saviour unto them, and unto all the children of men who have lived under its influence. Now the children of men have given it different names—sometimes it is called Christ, sometimes light, and sometimes the Great Spirit, but it is all one and the same thing, it never alters; for it is a portion of the immortal God, a portion of his divine nature; for by and through this we become partakers of the divine nature, and are swallowed up in the divinity of our Heavenly Father, and all things being brought into order, we are now sons. “For as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” “The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs: heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.” Here all these children can say, I and the Father are one; because our will is so absorbed up into the will of our Heavenly Father that we are all one in him and one with him; for we are desirous in every effort that we can make use of, to promote his glory, in obedience to the manifestation of his will and the working of his holy power in our own souls.

Oh! that we might be encouraged to gather to this standard—don't mind the name, mind the nature, mind the effect; this is enough for us to do. Don't dispute about names, for if we do, we are dark and blind.

What is the gospel? It is the power of God unto salvation. It is that power in us that reproves us for sin;

and every one that has obeyed it, has known salvation by it—I presume to say this without fear. And how it would unite us and build us up in that holy faith which works by love and purifies the heart. Now faith that does not work by love does more hurt than good; for faith without good works is dead, and belief without good works is good for nothing. It is no matter what we profess to believe, if we are not clothed with good works, consistent with that lamb-like nature, that gift and life within us, that, by transgression, we have as it were slain. But as I have observed, it has never been slain.—It is dead to us, that is we are dead to its excellency, and will not suffer this man to reign over us; and it is said that we have slain the lamb because we have rejected him, and he is, as it were, dumb; but he is not hurt, he is unchangeable and cannot be wounded. All the harm lies with us; and as we gather to this light in the soul, it teaches us what is good and what is evil.

It sets good and evil, life and death before us, and leaves it to us to elect. Now here is election. But that God has predestinated any individual to salvation is what I don't believe.—I verily deny it as a great affront and indignity upon the divine character. We must be willing in the first place; because he has made us and given us a free will to make choice as to good and evil. And we must make use of this power to elect God for our portion, for if we do not elect him he will not elect us. No, my friends. For although his fore-knowledge may be such, that he may see at least as far as is necessary for him to see before hand what his children may do: shall we then say that, when they have done what he intended they should do, they are his elect? Then all his fore-knowledge must depend on this, that the creature has done this without any constraint on his part. For the Al-

mighty never did, nor can force man into happiness—it must be free or it is no happiness at all. Therefore under the leading of his holy spirit we are led to know him who is worthy to be elected above all; and here it is that we elect him, and here is our liberty. Now I am confirmed in the opinion that we have power to choose what will be ultimately the greatest good, and if we submit to the Lord, he will always determine the will, and bring it into subjection to the greatest good.

I want all the stumbling blocks taken away from the people as it was prophesied. “Take up the stumbling block out of the way of my people.” And you remember there are many clear predictions and declarations in regard to them.

And one of the prophets inquiring what man should do to gain acceptance with God Almighty, recounts all the offerings and sacrifices that the children of men have ever used; such as thousands of rams, and tens of thousands of rivers of oil; but I need not go on to recount them—he comes to the conclusion, to show us what can give us acceptance at that fountain. “He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?”

Now this is religion enough for me. It completes the work of our salvation—to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God, so as to live under his will and direction, humbled under a sense of our dependence upon him.

I feel willing now to leave you for the present, after recommending you to that grace of God which bringeth salvation. “And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you

up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.”

[Here the speaker sat down for a moment.]

I am willing to make an observation or two before we part; for I am desirous that this opportunity may be blessed to us. And the way for it to be the case is, to treasure it up and not to be hasty in deciding—let us judge nothing before the time; and as we are concerned to attend to this strictly, new things will open upon our minds, that perhaps, we never thought of before, and thus the light will gradually spread.

This is my sincere desire concerning us all, that we unite in this work of labour and travail.

EXTRACTS.

“They who preach and pray in the *Spirit*, and *Power*, and *Light*, and *Wisdom of God*, do pray in the *Name of Jesus*; for *Jesus is but a Name* which was given unto that which *was before that Name was*, which the angel called a *Holy thing*.”—“So that this *One Holy Thing*, in process of time, according to the knowledge of his works and operations, in and by many, hath several, many, and various names given unto it.”

Wm. Bayly, p. 157, 158.

“Therefore stumble not, nor dispute not about names, or words, or letters, which were given (through the various operations) to the one, holy, undefiled, unchangeable thing, as it was witnessed, understood, and enjoyed by those men which were made holy through the *Divine workings*, teachings, instructions, counsels, and guidances of it.”

Ibid, page 164.

SERMON BY WILLET HICKS,

Immediately following the preceding.

Times and seasons are not at our command, and therefore, it is proper to endeavour rightly to occupy the present. A subject has been brought to my remembrance, which has so much instruction in it, that I feel it to be right for me to bring it before the view of this assembly. It is the memorable circumstance in relation to Peter, and Cornelius the “centurion, of the band called the Italian band,” who was an officer under the Roman government. There is very deep instruction in the whole account—and very deep doctrine; for it goes in a wonderful degree to show the universality of the love of God towards all his creatures. It seems to go completely to relieve them from any thing that may appear to favour what has been mentioned, and what some have foolishly supposed; that particular nations and individuals are predestined to eternal happiness or misery; for there is nothing like election or reprobation in it.

This man, though a heathen, or Gentile, as related to the Jewish law and order, we find, was “a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always.” He seemed to have been so completely under the dominion of love, that he was saluted by an angel of God; and with a salutation, that probably we who make a profession of Christianity, would rejoice to have addressed to us, by the angel of God. “He saw, in a vision evidently, about the ninth hour of the day, an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius, thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God.” There this man had a memorial before the throne of Al-

mighty God for his sincerity and integrity, both unto God and unto man.

Now, what deep instruction; for every good thing must be bottomed on sincerity. And this was the view of Cornelius according to the light, information, and knowledge received; and here he was instructed further what he should do, and so will every son and daughter of Adam on this terraqueous globe—if they will look to God, desiring to do the thing that is right, they will be instructed further and further; till they come completely into the possession and under the dominion of the blessed spirit. Here now, when Peter was brought before him, he was commanded what to do. And we find that before Peter was qualified rightly to go and instruct him, he had himself to receive further testimony. Notwithstanding he had been so long a professor of that religion, which we would suppose might have set him free, from the traditions and notions which some have of their superiority, and which was the case with the Jewish nation.

When “Peter went up upon the house top to pray, he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready he fell into a trance, and saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth; wherein were all manner of four footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, rise, Peter, kill and eat. But Peter said, not so, Lord, for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean. And the voice spake unto him again the second time, what God hath cleansed call not thou common.” Here he was instructed, but not in the outward profession. This language was repeated perhaps three times, “and the vessel was received up again into heaven.”

Now, when Peter came to the house of Cornelius, and when Cornelius had recited to him what had taken place, and that a number were assembled to hear the things that should be commanded of God; what did Peter have to say to him? His mouth was opened, and as Peter spake to these Gentiles, "the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost." Now, these appeared to be somewhat like those of the predestinarian order—they seemed to suppose that salvation was to the Jews only, and that the heathen were to be cast out. But when Peter came to be instructed by the vision—"What God hath cleansed call thou not unclean;" here he came to see spiritually. And as he spake, the Holy Ghost descended upon them. This was a memorable occasion, for his mind being loosed from all the shackles of tradition in which it had been fettered, was enlarged in wisdom through the vision of God, and he cried out, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons."

Here then is the great doctrine, that in every people, nation, tongue and kindred, those who fear the Lord and work righteousness, will be accepted of him. This was the enlarged view which was given by the vision of eternal light, and it was thus manifested, that he is no respecter of persons or nations, but that all those who fear him and work righteousness will be accepted.

Here now, all limited views seem to be abolished, and there is no distinction. Then how can people believe that God is a respecter of persons, and that he has furnished us with means that he withholds from other nations; and that he withholds from them the essentials of salvation,

and a knowledge of him? It cannot be done according to the light, or to the scriptures, or to this vision of Peter's.

And I believe with the scripture doctrine, that the light, the true light lighteth every man that cometh into the world; and I have no hesitation in believing, for the scriptures will bear me out in it, that the grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared unto all, and that the gospel has been preached to every creature under heaven. For John the divine expressed, that he saw an angel flying through the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to every nation on earth—to every tongue, kindred and people. Here we see then, that the Lord hath charge of the whole human family, and that he sends forth his angel, which is the Divine Spirit, to teach all nations, tongues, kindreds, and people. And every son and daughter of Adam, were they attentive to this light, were their ears open to hear this preaching of the gospel, would hear a greater preacher than Paul or Apollos, even the divine power and grace of God; and as Paul expresses it, there is no other word. “Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.” And this is given unto all men to lead them unto glory, which it would certainly do if they would take the advice given unto them—it would enlighten their understandings in things appertaining to heaven and godliness. “For there is a spirit in man; and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.”

Now, this doctrine that people talk so much about, if they understood as they ought, would lead to no contention; and it would seem as if the most superficial observer could scarcely believe it.

The inspiration of the Almighty is given unto men to enlighten them in the things appertaining to God, and it is

and it is the bright and morning star, that will lead every one that will follow it and not grieve it, as certainly to the city of God, as ever the star led the wise men of the east to Bethlehem of Judea, where the babe was. But they must dwell with it and be moved by its leading and guiding; for it is a reprovcr which reproves every man that thinks an evil thought, that speaks an evil word, or commits an evil action. It seems to be gentle in its monitions, but by attending to its voice, it seems to be like a double word, not only to reprove for evil, but it is the holy comforter, which it was declared should lead and guide us into all truth; and all we want is to be thus led and guided. For the want of this, all our evil and all our wickedness come, however various and different the circumstances. Some may lay it to the love of money, and some to the love of pleasure. There are a thousand reasons why religion does not profit more than it does, but they are all effects and not causes. The whole is a departure from the guidance and influence of the Holy Ghost; for all who have kept under this as the blessed Jesus recommended them to, have been led into all truth, and out of all evil; and they have walked safely and gloriously under his government, he being their king and captain.

Now what is to be done? The great thing is to discover the cause, that we may find out a cure—and there is no cure but by coming back to this divine principle; and every one that recommends a substitute may be considered in the nature of a quack, under the denomination of that evil that the Lord has spoken of by his prophet. “For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.” It is not only an evil then to forsake God, but to endeavour to get a substitute is another evil. And I believe

there are many cistern makers in the world; for I believe that every one who comes short of a dependence on the spirit of God, is a cistern maker; that is, if they are making creeds, or putting their confidence in any thing but the power of God. Such cistern makers are only diverting the people, and taking them away from the eternal fountain and spring of life.

Now we hear a great deal of talk about religion, but where are the fruits? "By their fruits ye shall know them." And Paul says: "The fruit of the spirit is love." And where is love? It is joy. Where is joy? It is peace. Where is peace? Long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. Where are all these? Do not some say: "Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou?" Now this is not meekness, it is not charity, it is not righteousness. But there is a cluster of fruits of the spirit, and all that bring forth these fruits, show that they abide in the vine, "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine."

Here we see there is nothing to differ about among the people; for every man that brings forth this cluster of fruits proves to us that the tree is good, let it grow among the people called Quakers, or Romanists, or Turks, or Jews, or Gentiles; for they who fear God and work righteousness are accepted of him. And all who are under the influence of that spirit which bringeth forth such clusters of precious fruit, we are taught to believe are good trees, growing from the fountain of life—they are the trees of God. For, "do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit." So that we see, the fruit must partake of the nature of the tree.

Well, then, what are the fruits of the flesh? The fruits of the flesh are these; anger, jealousy;—and this, Eze-

kiel said he saw in a vision of light; the seat of the image of jealousy, in the temple of God, and it was close to the tabernacle. The other fruits of the flesh are envy, detraction, backbiting, reviling, fighting and stealing; and those under the power of the flesh, are murderers, slanderers, fornicators and idolaters. These compose the cluster of evil fruits. "Ye shall know them by their fruits:" even the high in profession, like the Pharisees; for if their fruit is bad the tree must be bad. Therefore my soul is drawn with a degree of love; and I am led to express clearly and fully my views, with a desire that you may all of you, my friends, be profited thereby. For you are all my brethren and sisters by creation, and I crave it of the God of love that we may be by adoption his spiritual children; and the only way for this, is to come down under the dominion of his spirit and the guidance of the Holy Ghost; that we may all be the children of one Father, and praise him in unity and harmony; as you are equally candidates with myself for a glorious immortality with the saints in light. And that this may be our happy case, let us not grieve the Holy Spirit by which we are sealed unto the day of redemption. For this it is, that is to enlighten, reprove and comfort; and this it is that must sanctify all that are sanctified, and by its redeeming love all must be baptized; for baptism is essential to salvation.

But all the waters on this terraqueous globe would not wash one soul white, or purify it from the stains of leprosy—it must be by a baptism of the Holy Ghost. See what wonderful power is given to this principle—it is to be our comforter, our glory. It not only baptizes those who come under its influence; but it will make a saint out of a sinner, which is something greater than any outward miracle ever wrought; for it is beyond the power of all men, and

there is no power but that of Almighty God that can make a saint out of a sinner.

This power worked wonderfully upon Paul; and it was not partial to Paul; for all, who give up as Paul did, will be led from being persecutors. He was full of religious zeal, when he was called Saul, and he had that kind of religion that may be now seen in the world. He got authority from the chief priests to go to Damascus and to take men and women and imprison them. Here his religion was worse than none; for a religion that will destroy man and take his liberty is worse than no religion at all; because it produces distress among the people. But when Paul came under the right influence, when his heart was changed by a baptism of the Holy Ghost, and when he came into a state not to grieve the Holy Spirit as he afterwards recommended to us, (for he knew what he said,) Paul was never a persecutor any more. Nor can any man or woman under the government and power of the Holy Ghost, ever be a persecutor. Persecutors are always under the dominion of the flesh, or they could not have a disposition to persecute those who are under the influence of the spirit, or those who may differ in opinion from themselves.

Paul was changed from a sinner and a persecutor into a saint, by the redeeming power of the Holy Ghost, with which he was baptized. Here he produced meekness, charity, and all the cluster of virtues, by which he says we are to judge; for he was the apostle of Jesus Christ. But what were the fruits of Saul? They go to prove that the tree was bad, for its fruits were bad, all was bad. But be encouraged, dear people; for although we may fall short of what we ought to be, some in a greater, and some in a less degree, still these is nothing that the soul should be satisfied with, but coming home to the Fa-

ther like the prodigal son. Don't live upon husks and outsides, but come home to the kernel.

Now in the parable of the virgins, their lamps all seemed to look well enough outside; but the foolish having neglected to provide oil, were finally shut out—so those who have not the life of God in them must be shut out. Now all the world almost, seem to be calling the people to something which is not the spirit of God but the letter. Now if Paul is to be believed, he says, “The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.” And I want that all who hear me speak should be made alive, and therefore I recommend them to the spirit. I don't want you to be killed, and therefore I do not recommend to the letter: for the spirit giveth life, but the letter does not and cannot. There is nothing that can give life but God, and therefore he is the source and fountain of all life and all good: and to him may we say, “thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,” and thus may we render thanksgiving and praise for all his mercies past. And may this language possess every soul, as sincerely as ever it did the soul of David. “Create in me a new heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me.” We want this more than we want a head full of notions; for when the head is filled too full we are apt to get top heavy. And where does religion bring forth fruit? The head does not bring forth fruit; it must be from the heart, it must be the fruit of the spirit. Therefore our prayer should be: “Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.” This is what is wanted, a right spirit to make us humble; and how amiable does the humble soul appear, how comfortable he is in himself; and if he be in a right spirit, how comfortable he is in his family, and how gentle and mild to his servants. But for the want of

it, how many are self-tormented, and surrounded with misery; and if any thing happens to turn up, they get angry. Now no christian ought to get angry, any more than he should steal. If a man is honest he don't steal at all: and so the true christian, who is under the dominion of the spirit, is changed, is a new creature, and not subject to such folly. This is the ground work—this heart work. “Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me: and take not thy Holy Spirit from me.”

And I believe it is the case with some individuals in this house at the present time, that they are like the prodigal in some sort, and feel a disposition to return to their Father; and if they will only determine to leave their husks, and say that they will not live on swine's food, that they wont live on outsides, they may soon come to the kernel. And as Paul says, all else are “as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.” “Though I have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.” And what gives this? It is that holy unction, that redeeming spirit without which all would be “as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.” But with it we have every thing; for “charity suffereth long and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself; is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, is not easily provoked; thinketh no evil:” and consequently speaketh none, and it endureth for ever.

It comes before me now to mention the encouragement that may be derived, from many passages of the scriptures of truth; for I do believe that many have been

benefited in recurring to them; though I am not one who would recommend any particular thing, but as it may come to him—but the mind is at times drawn through the medium and aid of the letter more directly to the spirit, by the immediate inspiration of which, the scriptures were written and must be understood, when rightly understood.

Now we read of two that “went up into the temple to pray, the one a Pharisee, and the other a Publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself: God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this Publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the Publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.”

Here this state of the publican is the state for us all to come to, we have nothing to boast of, we can none of us say, I have done this and that good act. But we should be brought to ascribe to God thanksgiving and praise for all. Now, this was the prodigal state; and these are brought into a state and condition, that they can say with Paul, “who shall deliver me?” And God hears our prayers, like those of the Centurion. “Thy prayers and thine alms have come up for a memorial before God.” There are some who make very little profession, who are more like Cornelius than those who make a high profession, because they are sincere in their hearts—they have a memorial before God, and they will be instructed further in relation to the things of the kingdom of God, by the angel of love. Oh! may they be encouraged then to rejoice and

give thanks. And may those who feel a concern, remember, that the blessed Master says, that the poor Publican went down to his house justified, rather than the Pharisee.

Therefore, the way to be exalted, by the Lord of hosts, is to be humbled before him. The way to be filled is, first to be emptied of self, that we may be filled with his love. For if we are full of self, there is no room for the spirit to dwell; and there are some so full, that there seems to be no room for any thing more.

May the dear females remember, how that precious woman, Mary, sat down in quietude at her Master's feet and washed them with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. She wanted to be near him, to be sitting at the feet of the blessed Jesus. And we may sit and be taught here, as certainly as she was taught outwardly, or as we could be, were he here and we sitting at his feet. Then don't let us be so much like Martha, striving to do something in our own will and wisdom; but let us come down under the dominion of him who is able to instruct us how to do. And here we read another important thing also, that when David and all Israel were carrying up the ark of God, Uzza put forth his hand unbidden to hold it, and he was struck dead. Now, how careful ought all to be, who put forth their hand in the Lord's work. They should be sure that they are commanded of him, and instructed by him; for if any should take it in hand to do the Lord's work for money—to do the Lord's work in their own will and wisdom, they are not preachers of the Spirit, but of the letter; and what must be the consequence?

All that would be preachers of the gospel must be made so, as the fishers of Galilee were made so. They were not men of science, but poor fishermen, and they were

made eminent ministers. This is a strong proof that it does not require men wise in the sciences of the world.

Paul was a learned man, and here we see and understand that God is not a respecter of persons, whether white or black, rich or poor, learned or otherwise; for preaching does not depend on words, but on the demonstration of the gospel. The rich and poor are equally children of the Lord, and all the Lord's children are taught of the Lord.

Now the females may read, that the first woman preacher was the woman of Samaria at Jacob's well. We read that Jesus entered into conversation with this woman; and I am convinced we may find deep instruction in it, when we see how things were opened to that woman. And as it appeared to come before me, I thought proper to mention it. When he desired her to call her husband, she ran to the city and told them to come and see a man that had told her all that she had ever done. Here she began as all christian ministers must ever do—their business is to call people to come to God, to come to Christ. They came, and they said unto the woman, now we believe, not because of thy saying, for we have heard him ourselves. Therefore those who are employed in preaching the gospel in simplicity, will not set people to work in any particular manner and form, but they will recommend them to come to one who will lead and guide them into all truth. They must come as the blessed Master says—they must come to the comforter; and this is the highest thing I can crave for us, that we may have a continual abiding in and under the guidance and sweet influence of this heavenly power. And I crave it for every individual in this house—and they are nearly all strangers to me—and if I should never see you again, I crave this blessing for you. And I say as Paul said, “Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, by

which you are sealed unto the day of redemption." And we read, that "as unto a light that shineth in a dark place," we shall do well, that we take heed to the law of the Lord, for it is written upon the tables of our hearts, by the finger of God, and there we must read it. And I believe, that if we would individually attend to this important gift which the Lord hath given us, we should escape a great many difficulties, and be enabled to walk uprightly in all our dealings, before God and man. And although every man and woman may have a law which is sufficient for the day, still to-morrow they may look again, and they will see that they are called farther; for there is a progression in it. So that what we may suppose we see clearly to be right, but have never felt to be so by the law written upon the heart, may prove to be absolutely sinful and against the light and knowledge of the law of God. I merely mention these things to show, that we have our lessons day by day, and that we must not think to run faster than we get them learned. And if we will wait upon God, he will enable us to rise: for "they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings, as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint." Thus we should rise from mundane things, to those which are celestial; and we have the promise that all those who are faithful shall be blessed. Therefore we can say in truth; wait upon him, my soul, from whom comes all my well-spring. I can say to you, wait upon God, from whence comes all your comfort, consolation, and strength. Don't be divided, but draw near unto him with thy whole heart; and then you can say, "My beloved is mine, and I am his."

THE QUAKER.

SERMON BY ELIAS HICKS, DELIVERED AT BYBERRY, PHILADELPHIA COUNTY, DECEMBER 16, 1826.

DESPISE not the day of small things. This is an ancient exhortation, and it contains a great deal more of deep instruction in it than people are in general aware of. For in addition thereto we may learn, that he and she who are not faithful in a little, will never be made rulers over more.

The Lord Almighty begins with us as a judicious parent does with his children. The parent does not require of them great things at first, but little things, things that they know of, and that they understand; or otherwise his counsel would be of no avail. And, my friends, little things have the greatest force—that is, little requisitions and little testimonies have the greatest force to destroy the will of man and the pride of his heart; for men and women, as well as children, are proud and aspiring, and are concerned more to seek the praise of man than of God. Hence they are governed generally by tradition and custom, in their fallen state. And so almost every thing that is done in this state and condition is in early

life founded in tradition and custom, without looking into the reality, ground, and reason of it.

I think I know a little of this by experience, that little requisitions to give up something which we are in the practice or possession of, have the greatest mortification in them to the will of man, because they have a tendency to mortify the pride of his heart. Now we will begin in little things, to examine this proposition, and we will first inquire, what is the business and duty of all mankind, both male and female? The end of our creation is to glorify God and enjoy him; and if we glorify him it must be by our works and by our obedience. And he is so graciously condescending to the children of men, that he invites them, and reproveth them according to the necessity of their several cases; and woos them, to try to bring them out of their vanities. So that it becomes requisite for us to attend to these things where he begins; for he will begin in little things. He will not require of his rational children great things at first; but he at first moves upon their minds in order to bring them from under the power of tradition and custom, in things which are wrong. I speak from my own experience; and it may not be amiss to relate a little of it. When I was young and of a tender age, I felt that I had a capacity for reasoning, and by reasoning, of balancing principles so as to look at them and see what was rational and what was not rational; and I soon became convinced that many things that were right in the sight of man, were wrong in the sight of God, and contrary to the divine mind; and that they were a reproach to rational men and women. And it was through the force of this intellect that I was preserved from running out into superfluities of apparel, as an abundance of my fellow creatures did—and which let them down in my view, below some of the inferior or-

ders of the animal creation. I saw, in that light which I trust does not deceive me, that it was founded in tradition and custom, and that those who gave way to it had probably never sought for the source from whence it came, but gave themselves up to the praise of men. This kept me where I was, to be brought up in the customs of the farmers, who were moral and rational men. I kept along some time, till by and by, through the interposition of divine light and love, I was brought into a consideration of these things, in that light which every man should consider them in—and I saw that all these vain things have their foundation in custom and tradition, and that they belong to the mystery of iniquity. For, my friends, we must not only come to know the mystery of godliness, but if we ever get right and become proficient, we must perfectly understand the mystery of iniquity also; both are necessary for us to understand. And there is no other way to know and understand them, but by keeping implicitly under the direction of the spirit, for no other power can give a decision in these things; for man knows not what is good and evil by any power of his own, and especially as relates to divine things.

Here then was my beginning in religion. I had, in my way of bringing up, a button and loop upon my hat; and I had first to give up these two things: because it appeared in my mind with all the evidence that there need to be, that they had their origin in tradition. And it is always working secretly underneath; for we all have the serpent in us, that deceived our first parents, and the serpent is always a creeping creature. It was said, “upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life.” This is the serpent’s meat, and this was his sentence. It is the serpentine disposition in man that leads him under the control of these traditions, which are

founded in iniquity. Now some of us have seen the serpent; and it is said: "The serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made," therefore it is the mind of these creatures to go creeping in the grass. I have seen their cunning—and there is no creature on earth that can act so cunningly—I have seen them stretched in the grass, perfectly still, except the motion of their tail. This attracts the attention of a bird which derives its meat from flies and insects, in search of which it is drawn nearer and nearer, till finally it comes within the jaws of this devouring creature; and when he has laid hold of it, there can be no escape. So it is with this serpentine nature which is twining in the creature man, whom God created to govern the lower creation—and he must partake of all their natures, otherwise he cannot sympathise with them, nor do justice to them. But by having a sense of all their natures, and by attending to the dividing principle of reason, he can view their circumstances; and here he is taught to deal towards all the animal creation in justice and mercy.

Well, as I observed, to abandon these little things was the first requisition; and I could get no farther, I had nothing more to do till there was a compliance. I saw that there must be a sacrifice of these, for they were founded in iniquity, they were based in folly and custom. So as I was riding on the road and contemplating upon the requisition, and that it would tend to bring upon me the world's broad laugh, and the pointing of the finger of scorn, and that I was going to be one, like a fool, to show myself religious, and that this would be but a trifle to turn away from; here I found that I was doing violence to the conviction in my mind, in not giving up to make this little sacrifice. For those who are not faithful in a little need not expect to be made rulers over more. Here they will stop,

because they are not faithful to the manifestation of light in their souls. Now mind this, my friends, and I have often been let down into deep humility and sympathy, on account of the dear youth. For I believe they deprive themselves of much knowledge and joy, by withstanding this divine law, which is calling them to come out of the vanities of the world; and I am well assured that all the dear children would come out of these vanities, if they attended rightly. And as I did, they would take up the cross and despise the shame; they would not regard the world's broad laugh, nor the pointing of the finger of scorn. And by attending to the pointing of truth, a little reflection and reason would dictate to them, that to support the dignity of rational creatures, they must cast off all these feathers, and know a stripping of their superfluities and vanities.

Well the next thing that was brought upon me, (and some may think it a very little thing,) was the chewing of tobacco—as at that day it was customary for youth to chew tobacco; and I had been brought into the practice for custom sake.

Now mind these things, my friends, and look for the ground of them. Well, I went on with it, although it was a hard task to love it, or to make it comfortable; but custom and tradition soon enabled me to come into the use of it. But in this time I was visited with infirmity of body in a severe manner, so that I had time to reflect; and I saw that it was founded in tradition and custom as to the general. There is no doubt, however, that this may be a useful plant under the direction of divine light, and in particular situations of men under certain infirmities. But I discovered that this formed but a very little of the ground of its use. Well I was brought on to give this up. And what great cause I have had to be

thankful to God, for it was like recommending the bondage of our fellow creatures, by this poor foolish custom. I saw that it was grounded in the mystery of iniquity, which works like the serpent; and by the reasonings of the flesh it goes on from generation to generation. And were the expense calculated, figures would scarcely count the result, without considering the other harm which it may do to the children of men. And when we consider that a considerable part of it is the result of the most cruel oppression, we must see that it is founded in the deepest root of iniquity and injustice!

Now these seem like little things; but they are things that we are required to be faithful in, and despise not the day of small things; by which, we shall be enabled to rise a little higher, so as to come up and see the dreadful force of custom and tradition. Not only in those little things that hurt us as individuals, but in those things which are cruel among men, and by which they oppress one another. And by this cruelty and injustice when making a high profession, we become too much in the situation of the high professors formerly, who paid "tithes of mint, anise, and cummin, and omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith," when these they ought to have done. And it is easy to see, that it is as much so now as at any other day of the world. And yet what great professions of religion there are in Christendom; and still what great and innumerable sources of iniquity we discover. Not merely in the oppression which I have last mentioned, but in the pride of our own hearts, by which we are endeavouring to be exalted through the cruel oppression of our fellow creatures. Our poor fellow creatures are held in the most cruel bondage all their lives, while some are feasting on the result of their labours, and becoming enriched from them, even by

the sweat and blood of their fellow creatures against their will. And they are forced to it by their cruel masters.

Now let us seek for the root of all this. Had man been rational in all his actions, it never could have been the case. For when we consider that Almighty goodness has dispensed to every one a measure of his grace and of his Holy Spirit, whereby we are to profit, how astonishing it appears that a fellow creature could ever put his hand out to bring into bondage another fellow creature! But it is all founded in iniquity, tradition, and custom.

Look at this deeply, my dear friends, for we are deeply in debt. And when I look round sometimes, I feel as if it were almost impossible for the people of this land to clear themselves of this iniquity. It has been of so long continuance, and they have brought themselves so deeply in debt, that it seems as if they could never make reconciliation for their injustice; and especially so, as it regards the professing people called Quakers. How could they ever have consented to hold a slave, to buy or sell one, or to live by a neighbour who had one, without bearing testimony against him? Could they ever do it without relinquishing their principle? While the light of truth in the heart was their guide as well as their profession, they never could: for every one must acknowledge that this oppression is founded in iniquity, ungodliness and sin. And we must be astonished how a person, professing what we as a society profess, could for one moment lay his power upon a fellow creature, and by dint of the sword, keep him under his power, and drive him to his work without giving him a reward. You must know that the sword has operated, or there never would have been a slave; it was by the power of the sword that they were brought under, and into this oppression; and so it is the dread of the sword that keeps them there. For were a

slave to believe for a moment, that the sword would not be exercised upon him, he would be no longer a slave—he could not be one. Here then, we see the force of tradition and custom, as Jesus declared concerning the Scribes and Pharisees—“Thus have ye made the commandments of God of none effect by your traditions.”

Now what could operate upon those, who have seemed to be somewhat willing minded, and who are professing as we do, to lead them to hold a fellow creature for a moment in slavery? It is the dreadful consequence of tradition, by which the commandments of God are made of none effect. I count that the whole source; and you must agree with me, if you reflect rationally. So that as we go along you will believe with me, that it is as necessary to understand and be well grounded in the mystery of iniquity, as in the mystery of righteousness or godliness. And if we are faithful to the manifestation of light, and we have but one talent of it, it will lead us to understand the mystery of iniquity, and the work necessary for reformation.

Now pause, dear friends and people. What is our condition? Are we strengthening the hands of the oppressor? If so, we are guilty; for the partakers of that which has been procured by robbery and stealing, are considered as bad as the principal actors. Now this is a small matter, when compared with taking away the free agency of our fellows, which is every thing to them,—it is the source of all their joy and pleasure. They are thus reduced to miserable, abject animals, without any privilege to think or act for themselves. How the robber and the thief sink on a comparison with the oppressor! For the thief goes slyly, and gets a little from his fellow creature, but does not hurt his person, and perhaps gets

but a portion of what the other enjoys; and sometimes the other is as well without it as with it.

And how is it with the robber? He does not want to do an act of violence, if he can get his prey; and when the property is given up, he leaves the owner to get more, or to enjoy what he may have left. But let us look on the other side at the injustice and cruelty which is manifested towards our fellow creatures, when we destroy the liberty of those to whom God has given a choice. Here we see that a creature rises up before God Almighty, and presumes to take away the free agency of a fellow creature, and to bring him into a state of slavery and oppression, and to destroy his will. And if he should exert it a little, what comes next? The sword or the lash! How many there are, who, for speaking their own will a little, have fallen dead before their masters.

I want us to go into an examination for ourselves, that we may see what wonderful power tradition has, among those, even, who have seen this oppression to be superfluous. Yet being long in the practice of seeing it, and having grown up from the cradle in the midst of it, they fall into and become amalgamated with those who are guilty of it. And so it is they continue using the produce of their poor miserable fellow creatures, who are dying daily. For their suffering is like a slow torment to bring them to their end, like that which cruel tyrants of the earth have sometimes devised, to cause their victims to be a great while under torture, instead of taking their life suddenly.

It is a being faithful in little things, minding and not despising the day of small things, that is to effect our deliverance; for if we attend to small things, greater ones will rise up, which we shall view with abhorrence. But having been reconciled to them by tradition and edu-

cation, many go on in the use of those articles which are the fruits of slavery and oppression. But it is no matter whether it come from the master, the purchaser, or the slave; for if it pass through one, or fifty hands, as it was at first torn away from him by violence, cruelty, and injustice, every one of the partners is guilty of the same thing as much as the beginners. He has united with them, and they are all one; they must account for their guilt, for the whole iniquity lies fully on every one that combines in it. For if one hundred assassins unite to slay a man, fully intending to do it, according to the law of nations all would be guilty alike, for all united in the thing.

What I have to preach of the gospel, is justice; it is not opinion, it is not error; but it is faith that works by love to the purifying of the heart: for without justice and love nothing can give true faith to the rational creature; for we never can have true faith till we are just and merciful. For until we do true justice to our fellow creatures, we can never have a saving faith in God, I conceive; that is, one which will lead to mercy, because justice is the foundation of every virtue. If a man be unjust, "though he bestow all his goods to feed the poor, and though he give his body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth him nothing."—If he be unjust, all his professions will be of no avail. And he must be merciful as well as just; he must possess this most excellent virtue, charity; and he never can have that virtue till he is just, because justice is the foundation of every virtue. To suppose that virtue is not founded on perfect justice is mere vanity; and that charity which is not founded in justice is worse than nothing—because the creature thus sanctifies himself in iniquity, and thinks to uphold justice by giving, while he is yet an unjust creature. Look to it, my friends, dig deep; for we are in the presence of the All-seeing eye, that

God who is just and merciful. I hope we all believe this, and if so, we must feel that he cannot by any means justify injustice, in the least degree; for there is nothing but justice that can recommend us in the divine sight.

We see it was the case in former times, when one of the Prophets was led to call in question, or to call up all the sacrifices of mankind in their order, as they had generally been offered to satisfy Almighty God. He showed that they were all ineffectual, and that we can never gain admission into his favour till we come to the one point mentioned—but I need not go on to recount at large, only to mention the conclusion, where he sums up the whole duty of man. “He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?” Here is the thing, my friends; this is what we must all do, if we would be accepted in the sight of a gracious and glorious God. For here it is, that the light of truth begins with us,—here our Almighty Saviour, Preserver, and Creator begins with us—to have us do, as we would have others do to us.

But now, does justice reign in our land? Do we find it so? Have we confidence in one another, that we would not defraud and wrong one another? You know, my friends, that it is not so; but it is so contrary that there is scarcely a man in the state that we would place much confidence in; and yet many of these are called honourable men, notwithstanding they would deceive and disappoint us, and lead us into ruin. So that I want us to dig deep and lay the foundation sure, upon the rock of ages, against which the gates of hell never did and never can prevail.

And what is this rock? It is the revelation of the divine will in the souls of the children of men—this is the rock upon which we must build, if we would build right-

ly For often in temporal concerns, when men suppose that they have reason sufficient for their purpose, how much more preservation would they experience, if they were willing hearted and passive under the dominion and reproofs of the revelation of divine light in their own souls. Does not our Heavenly Father know that we stand in need of all these blessings? If he is every where present and an observer of all our works and ways, he is certainly just and equal in all his ways, and is continually present to preserve us from evil and lead us unto righteousness. And can we suppose that even in our moral conduct, the Creator and Supporter of these poor bodies of clay, would stand by and see us come to conclusions so erroneous, when we are all in his presence, and he sees how it would turn out? For men in their own wills, as the apostle speaks of it, will say, "We will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain." The apostle considers this an absurdity. "For that ye ought to say, if the Lord will, we shall live, and do this or that." And as this is our concern, we shall let reason and truth be always predominant in our minds; and as this light is opened to us, it will appear rational; for right reason and divine light are never separated, and never can be. Here men would not fall into these sorrows of adversity—here would be a preservation from losses and crosses.

And it seems as if there might be enough to teach us, when we have acted according to our own rational powers: and when we are so continually led into disappointments, it would seem as if we might be instructed by the things that we suffer, enough to bring us to the divine teacher—that God who is ever present, and who comprehends all knowledge that is necessary for the children of men; and who can point out a way for us, in which we may pros-

per in all our concerns; for he thus becomes glorified in us. And as we attend to this intimation of light and grace in our souls, we go on in the path of safety; and we can never fall into disappointments, while we are under his influence; and thus having learned that our own understandings have so often defeated our intentions, here God would be glorified in us.

And if we would ever be made to prosper in the things which we undertake, we must go according to the monitions of light in our own souls; for in no other way can God be glorified or exalted in us. We can add no glory to him, but he is glorified in us, when his instruction leads us to prosperity and happiness. And here we have to magnify his power, to return thanks, and give glory unto him. These people, wherever they are, how they are blessed, and answer the great end of their creation, in glorifying and enjoying of him. Then, my friends, may we let these things sink deep into our minds. Let them be written, as it were, upon the tablets of our hearts, that we may look upon them at another day. And may they be as bread cast upon the waters; and may they return after many days to our comfort, enjoyment, and the satisfying of our souls with bread that will nourish them. And what would be the effect of this, my dearly beloved fellow creatures? It is plain. And I would not preach any thing which the people could not understand; for no man can believe that which he cannot understand, nor would a belief do him any good unless it be received through the spirit of God. Under this we should all be of one mind and one heart: harmony would prevail among brethren, and the language would rise in our souls, if not to speak much, yet to say,—come brother, come sister, “let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach

us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths." Consider it, my friends;—see the joy, consolation, and blessedness that would be our portion if we would all come to the Lord. For his love is established in perfect justice and mercy; and here we should have faith in him, that faith which works by love to the purifying of the heart, from all the mountains of opposition that stand in the way. And it is so plain that, "the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." For can we suppose that the Almighty would make it a dark secret way, unto us his rational creatures—that he would make it difficult for us to do that which he intended man should do when he created him?

Would not this be casting a deep indignity upon the divine character? He certainly has, not only wisdom but power, to make the way easy, and I have no doubt that a gracious God, an infinite Jehovah has done every thing that could be done to make the way plain; that the creature might be benefited, and himself glorified in the creature. And the reason why people think it difficult is, that they don't keep the right way, they don't take the right pointer—they ought to keep the right light, and not to judge with their own will, by any reason they may have without the appearing of the cloud and the moving of the fire before them, the same as it has been recommended to them.

And what was that cloud and what was the fire? It was a manifestation of the divine record, of the divine will, which is the only way for the people to move in. And have we not that which is superior to "a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night?" We all have a light within to point the way to us; and if we would but keep to it, it would show us the way to go on, till we gain an inheritance in the promised land. And how it

creates love in social, rational beings towards one another —when we see our neighbour going along with us, and when we observe his walk and conduct towards us, that it is founded in justice. And how we love that man! What confidence we can place in him—we can feel, that in the best sense of the word, he is our brother. But when we have a neighbour that is not upright, let him do all the kindness that he can, yet that love passes away when he manifests that he has not come into a right situation, and under the guidance of that pure principle, so as never to deceive us.

We see then the blessedness of justice, and of just men. But let us suppose for a moment, in order to point out the injustice that has been practised in our favoured land, that the thousands and tens of thousands of poor oppressed creatures, to whom we have done all the injustice that mankind can possibly devise, had been killed in their own country, on their own shore: would it not have been better than to suffer them to come under bondage, and to have such thralldom and misery entailed upon their offspring from generation to generation? Look at it, my friends! It is impossible for words to point out the horrible cruelty of slavery; and yet how much boasting and rejoicing, how much liberty, licentiousness, and pleasure result from oppressing the creatures of God, by the drunkard, the glutton, and what not. And now let us suppose that Divine Justice finding our cup of iniquity full, should withdraw his power from us, and set at liberty all these poor oppressed creatures, so that they should immediately turn upon us, and we could find no way to stand, for ourselves; and should they overcome us, could we say that it was cruel? Now could we see this, we should then be under a sense of that cruelty that we are guilty of every day. For it is according to the true sense of every

rational creature, that the receiver is as bad as the thief or robber. This now is something that human nature acknowledges to, very generally; therefore I feel my mind very deeply impressed with the weight of this subject, although I have none to accuse. What I say is given to me while standing, and I give it as the counsel of God through a poor instrument—and this is my whole design; this is my whole aim.

I am removed from my habitation, not because it is an unpleasant one—not because I do not inherit every good that earth can give me; but I have done it from a sense of duty, and of love to God and my fellow creatures. I feel fixed in my determination to deliver the whole counsel, as it arises in my mind—therefore I will speak, and you shall hear and judge. And, dearly beloved, be willing to enter into your own hearts, into your own tabernacles; and there wait for the manifestations of truth, and the operations of its power, both young and old.

Dear children, as the folly of dress and address are founded in custom and tradition, which stand in the mystery of iniquity; therefore you must come out of it,—so that in eating, drinking, or putting on of apparel, you may do it to the glory of God; and this you never can do, without seeking him.

Now without multiplying words, I feel willing to turn towards a close; for I love to be short, and a word to the wise may be sufficient. I have only this recommendation to press upon us, and I am willing to be one with you. “And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified,” and bring us into the enjoyment of that joy, which is full of glory, for there is no joy like the joy of God’s salvation.

EXTRACTS.

“But then the enemy, to make me uneasy again, objected, *But how could that drawing be of the Lord, which drew me to disobey my father.*

I considered thereupon the extent of *paternal power*; which I found was not wholly *arbitrary* and *unlimited*: but had bounds set unto it. So that as in *civil matters*, it was restrained to *things lawful*: so in *spiritual* and *religious cases*, it had not a *compulsory power* over CONSCIENCE; which ought to be *subject* to the *Heavenly Father*. And therefore, though *obedience to parents* be enjoined to *children*; ye it is with this limitation, (IN THE LORD:) *Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.*” 1 Pet. 6, 1.

Life of Thomas Ellwood, p. 50.

“Neither nature nor education can give a man the sense of the Holy Ghost, nor, of consequence, interpret its expressions with certainty. It is therefore truly asserted, not only by the *Quakers*, but also by abundance of distinguished writers of various professions, ancient and modern, that the internal illumination of God’s holy spirit is absolutely necessary to every man, in order to his right understanding of the scriptures. Let me advance a few out of many more now before me.”

“The Holy Scriptures opened by the Holy Spirit, show Christ unto us; the Holy Spirit is therefore the opener of the Scriptures.” *Theophylact* in Joan. 10.

“What men set forth from human sense, may be perceived by the wit of man, but what is set forth by the inspiration of the divine spirit, requires an interpreter inspired with the like spirit.” *Erasmus, Parap. in 2 Pe-*

ter i. 20, 21. And *Coll. in Ixthuophagia prope Finem*, he says, "They expound the sacred writings from the pulpit, which no man can either *rightly understand* or *profitably teach* without the inspiration of the Holy Spirit."

"The Scriptures are not to be understood, but *by the same spirit* by which they were written." *Luther Oper. Tom. 2, P. 309.*

"The Spirit of God, from whom the doctrine of the Gospel proceeds, is *the only true interpreter* to open it to us." *Calvin's Com. in 1 Cor. ii. 14.*

"The Apostle teacheth, *1 Cor. 2*, that the Scripture cannot be apprehended and understood but by the Holy Spirit." *Zanchius, De Sacra Scriptura, Tom. viii. p. 430.*

"The things of the spirit of God, are understood and perceived by the powerful inspiration of the Holy Spirit alone." *Beza, Anotat. in 1 Cor. ii. 14.*

"As the Scriptures were written by the spirit of God, so must they be expounded by the same. For, without that spirit, we have neither ears to hear, nor eyes to see. It is that spirit that openeth, and no man shutteth, the same shutteth, and no man openeth." *Bishop Jewel's Defence of the Apology, P. 72.*

"The outward reading of the word, without the inward working of his spirit, *is nothing*. The precise Pharisees, the learned Scribes, read the scriptures over and over again; they not only read them in books, but wore them on their garments; they were not only taught but were able to teach others. But because *this Heavenly Teacher had not instructed them*, their understanding was darkened; their knowledge was but vanity." *Archbishop Sandy's Sermons, printed 1616, p. 48.*

Phipps on the Original and Present State of Man, pp. 131—2—3.

