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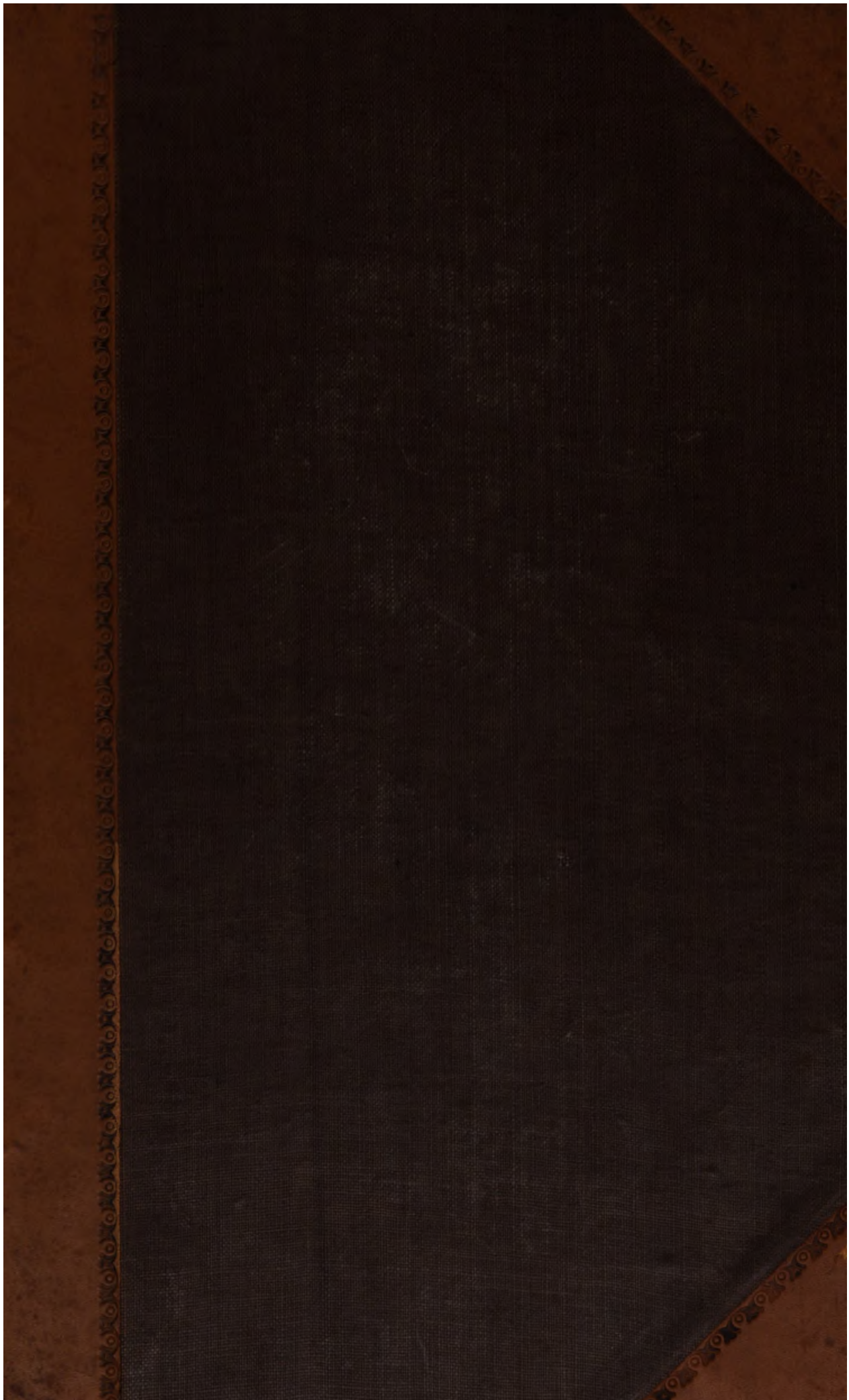
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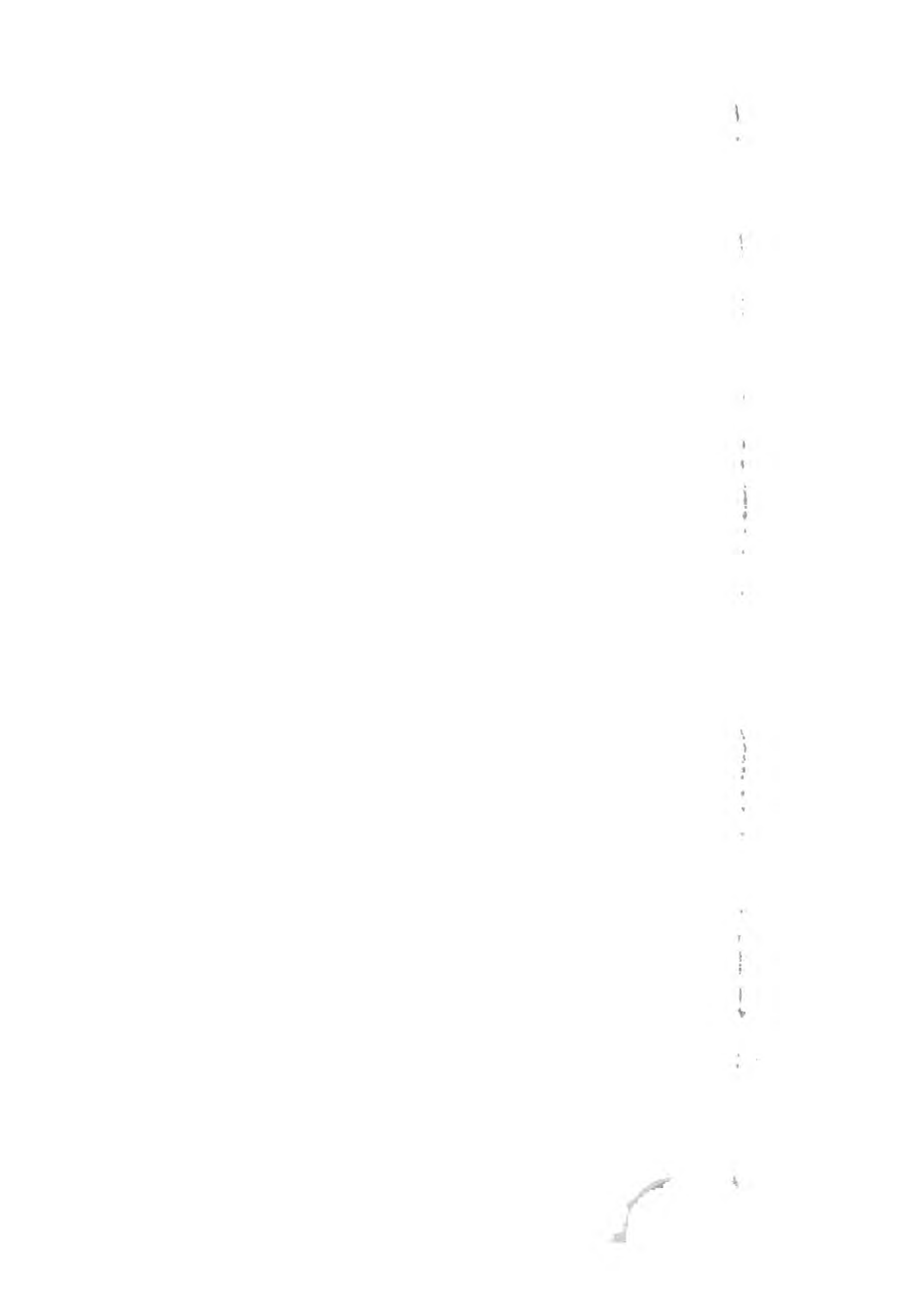
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A
PORTRAITURE
OF
QUAKERISM,

TAKEN FROM
A VIEW OF THE
MORAL EDUCATION, DISCIPLINE, PECULIAR
CUSTOMS, RELIGIOUS PRINCIPLES,
POLITICAL AND CIVIL ŒCONOMY,
AND CHARACTER,
OF THE
SOCIETY OF FRIENDS.

BY
THOMAS CLARKSON, M.A.
AUTHOR OF SEVERAL ESSAYS ON THE SUBJECT OF
THE SLAVE-TRADE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

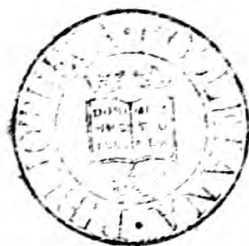
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INTRODUCTION.

Motives for the undertaking—Origin of the name of Quakers—George Fox the founder of the Society—Short history of his life.

FROM the year 1787, when I began to devote my labours to the abolition of the Slave-trade, I was thrown frequently into the company of the people called Quakers. These people had been then long unanimous upon this subject. Indeed, they had placed it among the articles of their religious discipline. Their houses were of course open to me in all parts of the kingdom. Hence I came to a knowledge of their living manners, which no other person, who was not a Quaker, could have easily obtained.

As soon as I became possessed of this knowledge, or at least of so much of it as to feel that it was considerable, I conceived a desire of writing their moral history. I

believed that I should be able to exhibit to the rest of the world many excellent customs, of which they were ignorant, but which it might be useful to them to know. I believed, too, that I should be affording to the Quakers themselves some lessons of utility, by letting them see, as it were in a glass, the reflection of their own images. I felt also a great desire, amidst these considerations, to do them justice; for ignorance and prejudice had invented many expressions concerning them, to the detriment of their character, which their conduct never gave me reason to suppose, during all my intercourse with them, to be true.

Nor was I without the belief that such a history might afford entertainment to many. The Quakers, as every-body knows, differ, more than even many foreigners do, from their own countrymen. They adopt a singular mode of language. Their domestic customs are peculiar. They have renounced religious ceremonies, which all other Christians, in some form or other, have retained.

They

They are distinguished from all the other islanders by their dress. These differences are great and striking; and I thought, therefore, that they, who were curious in the development of character, might be gratified in knowing the principles, which produced such numerous exceptions from the general practices of the world.

But though I had conceived from the operation of these sentiments upon my mind, as long ago as I have stated, a strong desire to write the moral history of the Quakers, yet my incessant occupations on the subject of the Slave-trade, and indisposition of body afterward, in consequence of the great mental exertions necessary in such a cause, prevented me from attempting to execute my design. At length these causes of prevention ceased. But when, after this, the subject recurred, I did not seem to have the industry and perseverance, though I had still the inclination left, for the undertaking. Time, however, continued to steal on, till at length I began to be apprehensive, but

more particularly within the last two years, that, if I were to delay my work much longer, I might not live to begin it at all. This consideration operated upon me. But I was forcibly struck by another; namely, that, if I were not to put my hand to the task, the Quakers would probably continue to be as little known to their fellow-citizens as they are at present. For I did not see who was to give a full and satisfactory account of them. It is true, indeed, that there are works, written by Quakers, from which a certain portion of their history, and an abstract of their religious principles, might be collected; but none from whence their living manners could be taken. It is true, also, that others, of other religious denominations, have written concerning them; but of those authors, who have mentioned them in the course of their respective writings, not one, to my knowledge, has given a correct account of them. It would be tedious to dwell on the errors of Mosheim, or of Formey, or of Hume, or on those to be found

found in many of the modern periodical publications*. It seemed, therefore, from the circumstance of my familiar intercourse with the Quakers, that it devolved upon me particularly to write their history. And I was the more confirmed in my opinion, because, in looking forward, I was not able to foresee the time when any other cause would, equally with that of the Slave-trade, bring any other person, who was not of the Society, into such habits of friendship with them, as that he should obtain an equal degree of knowledge concerning them with myself. By this new consideration I was more than ordinarily stimulated; and I began my work.

It is not improbable that some readers may imagine, from the account already given, that this work will be a partial one;

* I must except Dr. Toulmin's candid Revision of Neal's History of the Puritans. One or two publications have appeared since, written in a liberal spirit; but they are confined principally to the religious principles of the Quakers.

or that it will lean, more than it ought to do, in favour of the Quakers. I do not pretend to say, that I shall be utterly able to divest myself of all undue influence, which their attention towards me may have produced ; or that I shall be utterly unbiassed when I consider them as fellow-labourers in the work of the abolition of the Slave-trade ; for, if others had put their shoulders to the wheel equally with them on the occasion, one of the greatest causes of human misery and moral evil, that was ever known in the world, had been long ago annihilated. Nor can I conceal that I have a regard for men, of whom it is a just feature in their character, that, whenever they can be brought to argue upon political subjects, they reason upon principle and not upon consequences ; for if this mode of reasoning had been adopted by others, but particularly by men in exalted stations, policy had given way to moral justice, and there had been but little public wickedness in the world. But though I am confessedly
partial

partial to the Quakers on account of their hospitality to me, and on account of the good traits in their moral character, I am not so much so as to be blind to their imperfections. Quakerism is of itself a pure system; and, if followed closely, will lead towards purity and perfection: but I know well that all, who profess it, are not Quakers. The deviation, therefore, of their practice from their profession, and their frailties and imperfections, I shall uniformly lay open to them wherever I believe them to exist. And this I shall do, not because I wish to avoid the charge of partiality, but from a belief that it is my duty to do it.

The Society of which I am to speak, are called Quakers* by the world, but are known to each other by the name of Friends, —a beautiful appellation, and characteristic of the relation which man, under the Chris-

* Justice Bennet, of Derby, gave the Society the name of Quakers in the year 1650, because the founder of it admonished him, and those present with him, to *tremble* at the word of the Lord.

tian dispensation, ought uniformly to bear to man.

The founder of the Society was George Fox. He was born of "honest and sufficient parents," at Drayton in Leicestershire, in the year 1624. He was put out when young, according to his own account, to a man who was "a shoemaker by trade, and who dealt in wool, and followed grazing, and sold cattle." But it appears from William Penn, who became a member of the Society, and was acquainted with him, that he principally followed the country part of his master's business. He took a great delight in sheep; "an employment," says Penn, "that very well suited his mind in some respects, both for its innocency and its solitude, and was a just figure of his after-ministry and service."

In his youth he manifested a seriousness of spirit not usual in persons of his age. This seriousness grew upon him, and as it increased he encouraged it; so that in the year 1643, or in the twentieth year of his age,

age, he conceived himself, in consequence of the awful impressions he had received, to be called upon to separate himself from the world, and to devote himself to religion. Before this time the Church of England, as a protestant church, had been established; and many who were not satisfied with the settlement of it, had formed themselves into different religious sects. There was a great number of persons also in the kingdom, who, approving neither of the religion of the establishment nor of that of the different denominations alluded to, withdrew from the communion of every visible church. These were ready to follow any teacher, who might inculcate doctrines that coincided with their own apprehensions. Thus far a way lay open among many for a cordial reception of George Fox. But of those, who had formed different visible churches of their own, it may be observed, that, though they were prejudiced, the Reformation had not taken place so long but that they were still alive to religious advancement. Nor had it
taken

taken place so long but that thousands were still very ignorant, and stood in need of light and information on that subject.

It does not appear, however, that George Fox, for the first three years from the time he conceived it to be his duty to withdraw from the world, did any thing as a public minister of the Gospel. He travelled, from the year 1643 to 1646, through the counties of Warwick, Leicester, Northampton, and Bedford, and as far as London. In this interval he appears to have given himself up to solemn impressions, and to have endeavoured to find out as many serious people as he could, with a view of conversing with them on the subject of religion.

In 1647 he extended his travels to Derbyshire, and from thence into Lancashire, but returned to his native county. He met with many friendly people in the course of this journey, and had many and serious conversations with them; but he never joined in profession with any. At Duckenfield, however, and at Manchester, he went among

those whom he termed "the Professors of Religion," and, according to his own expression, "he staid awhile, and declared Truth among them." Of these some were convinced, but others were enraged, being startled at his doctrine of Perfection. At Broughton, in Leicestershire, we find him attending a meeting of the Baptists, at which many of other denominations were present. Here he spoke publicly, and convinced many. After this he went back to the county of Nottingham: and here, a report having gone abroad that he was an extraordinary young man, many, both priests and people, came far and near to see him.

In 1648 he confined his movements to a few counties. In this year we find him becoming a public character. In Nottinghamshire he delivered himself in public at three different meetings, consisting either of priests and professors, as he calls them, or of professors and people. In Warwickshire he met with a great company of professors, who were praying, and expounding the
Scriptures,

Scriptures, in the fields. Here he discoursed largely, and the hearers fell into contention, and so parted. In Leicestershire he attended another meeting, consisting of Church-people, Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists, where he spoke publicly again. This meeting was held in a church. The persons present discoursed and reasoned. Questions were propounded, and answers followed. An answer given by George Fox, in which he stated that the Church was the pillar and ground of Truth, and that it did not consist of a mixed multitude, or of an old house made up of lime, stones, and wood, but of living stones, living members, and a spiritual household, of which Christ was the head, set them all on fire. The clergyman left the pulpit, the people their pews, and the meeting separated. George Fox, however, went afterwards to an inn, where he argued with priests and professors of all sorts. Departing from thence, he took up his abode for some time in the vale of Beavor, where he preached Repentance, and convinced many.

He

He then returned into Nottinghamshire, and passed from thence into Derbyshire, in both of which counties his doctrines spread. And after this, warning justices of the peace as he travelled along, to do justice, and notoriously wicked men to amend their lives, he came into the vale of Beevor again. In this vale it was that he received, according to his own account, his commission from Divine Authority, by means of impressions on his mind; in consequence of which he conceived it to be discovered to him, among other things, that he was to "turn the people from darkness to the light." By this time he had converted many hundreds to his opinions, and "divers meetings of Friends," to use his own expressions, "had been then gathered."

The year 1649 was ushered in by new labours. He was employed occasionally in writing to judges and justices to do justice, and in warning persons to fulfil the duties of their respective stations in life.

This year was the first of all his years of suffering.

suffering. For it happened on a Sunday morning, that, coming in sight of the town of Nottingham, and seeing the great church, he felt an impression on his mind to go there. On hearing a part of the sermon, he was so struck with what he supposed to be the erroneous doctrine it contained, that he could not help publicly contradicting it. For this interruption of the service he was seized, and afterwards confined in prison. At Mansfield, again, as he was declaring his own religious opinions in the church, the people fell upon him, and beat and bruised him, and put him afterwards in the stocks. At Market-Bosworth he was stoned, and driven out of the place. At Chesterfield he addressed both the clergyman and the people; but they carried him before the mayor, who detained him till late at night, at which unseasonable time the officers and watchmen put him out of the town.

I would here observe, before I proceed to the occurrences of another year, that there is reason to believe that George Fox disap-
proved

proved of his own conduct in having interrupted the service of the church at Nottingham, which I have stated to have been the first occasion of his imprisonment. For if he believed any one of his actions, with which the world had been offended, to have been right, he repeated it, as circumstances called it forth, though he was sure of suffering for it either from the magistrates or the people. He, however, never repeated this, but always afterwards, when any occasion of religious controversy occurred in any of the churches where his travels lay, uniformly suspended his observations till the service was over*.

George

* It is but justice to George Fox to observe, that it was not unusual for serious persons of different denominations in these times, when they had any thing of religious weight upon their minds, to unburthen themselves in the places of worship before the priest and people. It was a notion, countenanced by high authority, and received by many, that ministers, ordained only by man, had not an exclusive right of speaking in the church, but that all, who were properly gifted, might prophesy one by one. Conformably with this idea, those of the laity,
who

George Fox spent almost the whole of the next year, that is, of the year 1650, in confinement in Derby prison.

In 1651, when he was set at liberty, he seems not to have been in the least disheartened by the treatment he had received there, or at the different places before mentioned ; but to have resumed his travels, and to have held religious meetings as he went along. He had even the boldness to go into Litchfield, because he imagined it to be his duty, and, with his shoes off, to pronounce with an audible voice in the streets, and this on the market-day, a woe against that city. He continued also to visit the churches, as he journeyed, in the time of divine service, and to address the priests and the people publicly, as he saw occasion ; but not, as I observed before, till he believed the service to be over. It does not appear, however, who rose up to speak on such occasions, generally postponed their remarks till the service was over, though there were individuals of different descriptions, who were not able to contain themselves till that time.

that

that he suffered any interruption upon these occasions in the course of the present year, except at York-Minster ; where, as he was beginning to preach, after the sermon, he was hurried out of it, and thrown down the steps by the congregation, which was then breaking up. It appears that he had been generally well received in the county of York, and that he had convinced many.

In the year 1652, after having passed through the shires of Nottingham and Lincoln, he came again into Yorkshire. Here, in the course of his journey, he ascended Pendle-Hill: at the top of this, he apprehended it was opened to him whither he was to direct his future steps, and that he saw a great host of people, who were to be converted by him in the course of his ministry. From this time we may consider him as having received his commission full and complete in his own mind. For in the vale of Beavor he conceived himself to have been informed of the various doctrines which it became his duty to teach; and, on

this occasion, to have had an insight of the places where he was to spread them.

To go over his life, even in the concise way in which I have hitherto attempted it, would be to swell this Introduction into a volume. I shall therefore, from this great period of his ministry, make only the following simple statement concerning it :

He continued his labours as a minister of the Gospel, and even preached within two days of his death.

During this time he settled meetings in most parts of the kingdom, and gave to these the foundation of that beautiful system of discipline, which I shall explain in this volume, and which exists among the Quakers at the present day.

He travelled over England, Scotland, and Wales. He was in Ireland. He visited the British West-Indies, and America. He extended his travels to Holland, and part of Germany.

He wrote in this interval several religious books ; and addressed letters to kings, princes, magistrates,

magistrates, and people, as he felt impressions on his mind, which convinced him that it became his duty to do it.

He experienced also, during this interval, great bodily sufferings. He was long and repeatedly confined in different gaols of the kingdom. The state of the gaols in these times is not easily to be conceived. That of Doomsdale, at Launceston in Cornwall, has never been exceeded for filth and pestilential noisomeness; nor those of Lancaster and Scarborough Castles for exposure to the inclemency of the elements. In the two latter he was scarcely ever dry for two years; for the rain used to beat into them, and to run down upon the floor. This exposure to the severity of the weather occasioned his body and limbs to be benumbed, and to swell to a painful size; and laid the foundation, by injuring his health, for future occasional sufferings during the remainder of his life.

With respect to the religious doctrines which George Fox inculcated during his
b 2 ministry,

ministry, it is not necessary to speak of them here, as they will be detailed in their proper places. I must observe, however, that he laid a stress upon many things, which the world considered to be of little moment, but which his followers thought to be entirely worthy of his spiritual calling. He forbade all the modes and gestures, which are used as tokens of obeisance, or flattery, or honour, among men. He insisted on the necessity of plain speech or language. He declaimed against all sorts of music. He protested against the exhibitions of the theatre, and many of the accustomed diversions of the times. The early Quakers, who followed him in all these points, were considered by some as turning the world upside down: but they contended, in reply, that they were only restoring it to its pure and primitive state; and that they had more weighty arguments for acting up to their principles in these respects than others had for condemning them for so doing.

But whatever were the doctrines, whether
civil,

civil, or moral, or religious, which George Fox promulgated, he believed that he had a Divine Commission for teaching them ; and that he was to be the Restorer of Christianity ; that is, that he was to bring people from Jewish ceremonies and Pagan fables, with which it had been intermixed, and also from worldly customs, to a religion, which was to consist of spiritual feeling. I know not how the world will receive the idea that he conceived himself to have had a revelation for these purposes. But nothing is more usual than for pious people, who have succeeded in any ordinary work of goodness, to say that “ they were providentially led to it ;” and this expression is usually considered among Christians to be accurate. But I cannot always find the difference between a man being providentially led into a course of virtuous and successful actions, and his having an internal revelation for it*.

* Except in cases, where he may be supposed to be acted upon by the providential instrumentality of others.

For if we admit that men may be providentially led upon such occasions, they may be led by the impressions upon their minds. But will not these internal impressions be as the dictates of an internal voice to those who follow them? But if pious men would believe themselves to have been thus providentially led, or acted upon, in any ordinary case of virtue, if it had been crowned with success, George Fox would have had equal reason to believe, from the success that attended his own particular undertaking, that he had been called upon to engage in it. For at a very early age he had confuted many of the professors of religion in public disputations. He had converted magistrates, priests, and people. Of the clergymen of those times some had left valuable livings, and followed him. In his thirtieth year he had seen no fewer than sixty persons spreading, as ministers, his own doctrines. These, and other circumstances which might be related, would doubtless operate powerfully upon him, to
make

make him believe that he was a chosen vessel. Now, if to these considerations it be added, that George Fox was not engaged in any particular or partial cause of benevolence, or mercy, or justice, but wholly and exclusively in a religious and spiritual work, and that it was the first of all his religious doctrines, that the Spirit of God, where men were obedient to it, guided them in their spiritual concerns, he must have believed himself, on the consideration of his unparalleled success, to have been providentially led, or to have had an internal or spiritual commission for the cause which he had undertaken.

But this belief was not confined to himself. His followers also believed in his commission. They had seen, like himself, the extraordinary success of his ministry. They acknowledged the same internal admonitions or revelations of the same Spirit in spiritual concerns. They had been witnesses of his innocent and blameless life. There were individuals in the kingdom, who had publicly

publicly professed sights and prophecies concerning him. At an early age he had been reported, in some parts of the country, as a youth who had 'a discerning spirit.' It had gone abroad that he had healed many persons, who had been sick of various diseases. Some of his prophecies had come true in the life-time of those, who had heard them delivered. His followers, too, had seen many, who had come purposely to molest and apprehend him, depart quietly, as if their anger and their power had been providentially broken. They had seen others, who had been his chief persecutors, either falling into misfortunes, or dying a miserable or an untimely death. They had seen him frequently cast into prison, but always getting out again by means of his innocence. From these causes the belief was universal among them, that his commission was of Divine authority; and they looked upon him, therefore, in no other light than that of a Teacher, who had been sent to them from Heaven.

George Fox was in figure above the ordinary

dinary size. He is described by William Penn as a "lusty person." He was graceful in his countenance. His eye was particularly piercing, so that some of those, who were disputing with him, were unable to bear it. He was in short manly, dignified, and commanding, in his aspect and appearance.

In his manner of living he was temperate. He ate sparingly. He avoided, except medicinally, all strong drink.

Notwithstanding the great exercise he was accustomed to take, he allowed himself but little sleep.

In his outward demeanour he was modest and without affectation. He possessed a certain gravity of manners, but he was nevertheless affable and courteous, and civil beyond the usual forms of breeding.

In his disposition he was meek, and tender, and compassionate. He was kind to the poor, without any exception; and, in his own Society, laid the foundation of that attention towards them, which the world
remarks

remarks as an honour to the Quaker-character at the present day. But the poor were not the only persons, for whom he manifested an affectionate concern. He felt and sympathized wherever humanity could be interested. He wrote to the judges on the subject of capital punishments, warning them not to take away the lives of persons for theft. On the coast of Cornwall he was deeply distressed at finding the inhabitants more intent upon plundering the wrecks of vessels that were driven upon their shores, than upon saving the poor and miserable mariners who were clinging to them; and he bore his public testimony against this practice, by sending letters to all the clergymen and magistrates in the parishes bordering upon the sea, and reproving them for their unchristian conduct. In the West-Indies also he exhorted those, who attended his meetings, to be merciful to their slaves, and to give them their freedom in due time. He considered the latter as belonging to their
their

their families, and that religious instruction was due to these, as the branches of them, for whom one day or other they would be required to give a solemn account. Happy had it been if these Christian exhortations had been attended to, or if those families only, whom he thus seriously addressed, had continued to be true Quakers: for they would have set an example, which would have proved to the rest of the islanders, and the world at large, that the impolicy is not less than the wickedness of oppression. Thus was George Fox, probably, the first person, who publicly declared against this species of slavery. Nothing, in short, that could be deplored by humanity, seems to have escaped his eye. And his benevolence, when excited, appears to have suffered no interruption in its progress by the obstacles, which bigotry would have thrown in the way of many, on account of the difference of a person's country, or of his colour, or of his sect.

He

He was patient under his own sufferings. To those, who smote his right cheek, he offered his left; and, in the true spirit of Christianity, he indulged no rancour against the worst of his oppressors. He made use occasionally of a rough expression towards them: but he would never have hurt any of them, if he had had them in his power.

He possessed the most undaunted courage; for he was afraid of no earthly power. He was never deterred from going to meetings for worship, though he knew the officers would be there, who were to seize his person. In his personal conversations with Oliver Cromwell, or in his letters to him as Protector, or in his letters to the Parliament, or to king Charles the Second, or to any other personage, he discovered his usual boldness of character, and never lost, by means of any degrading flattery, his dignity as a man.

But his perseverance was equal to his
courage;

courage: for he was no sooner out of gaol than he repeated the very acts, believing them to be right, for which he had been confined. When he was forced also out of the meeting-houses by the officers of justice, he preached at the very doors. In short, he was never hindered but by sickness or imprisonment, from persevering in his religious pursuits.

With respect to his word, he was known to have held it so sacred, that the judges frequently dismissed him without bail, on his bare promise that he would be forthcoming on a given day. On these occasions he used always to qualify his promise by the expression "if the Lord permit."

Of the integrity of his own character, as a Christian, he was so scrupulously tenacious, that when he might have been sometimes set at liberty by making trifling acknowledgments, he would make none, lest it should imply a conviction that he had been confined for that which was wrong.

And

And at one time in particular, king Charles the Second was so touched with the hardship of his case, that he offered to discharge him from prison by a pardon. But George Fox declined it, on the idea that, as pardon implied guilt, his innocence would be called in question by his acceptance of it. The king, however, replied, that "he need not scruple being released by a pardon; for many a man, who was as innocent as a child, had had a pardon granted him." But still he chose to decline it. And he lay in gaol, till, upon a trial of the errors in his indictment, he was discharged in an honourable way.

As a minister of the Gospel he was singularly eminent. He had a wonderful gift in expounding the Scriptures. He was particularly impressive in his preaching; but he excelled most in prayer. Here it was that he is described by William Penn as possessing the most awful and reverend frame he ever beheld. "His presence," says the same author, "expressed a religious majesty."

That

That there must have been something more than usually striking either in his manner, or in his language, or in his arguments, or in all of them combined, or that he spoke "in the demonstration of the Spirit and with power," we are warranted in pronouncing, from the general and powerful effects produced. In the year 1648, when he had but once before spoken in public, it was observed of him at Mansfield, at the end of his prayer, "that it was then as in the days of the Apostles, when the house was shaken where they were." In the same manner he appears to have gone on, making a deep impression upon his hearers, whenever he was fully and fairly heard. Many clergymen, as I observed before, in consequence of his powerful preaching, gave up their livings; and constables, who attended the meetings in order to apprehend him, felt themselves disarmed, and went away without attempting to secure his person.

As to his life, it was innocent. It is true,
indeed,

indeed, that there were persons, high in civil offices, who, because he addressed the people in public, considered him as a disturber of the peace. But none of these ever pretended to cast a stain on his moral character. He was considered both by friends and enemies as irreproachable in his life.

Such was the character of the founder of Quakerism. He was born in July 1624, and died on the 13th of November, 1690, in the sixty-seventh year of his age. He had separated himself from the world in order to attend to serious things, as I observed before, at the age of nineteen; so that he had devoted himself to the exercises and services of religion for no less a period than forty-eight years. A few hours before his death, upon some Friends asking him how he found himself, he replied, "Never heed. All is well. The seed or power of God reigns over all, and over death itself. Blessed be the Lord!" This answer was full of courage, and corresponded with that intrepidity,

pidity, which had been conspicuous in him during life. It contained an evidence, as manifested in his own feelings, of the tranquillity and happiness of his mind, and that the power and terrors of death had been vanquished in himself. It showed also the ground of his courage and of his confidence. "He was full of assurance," says William Penn, "that he had triumphed over death, and so much so, even to the last, that death appeared to him hardly worth notice or mention." Thus he departed this life, affording an instance of the truth of those words of the psalmist, "Behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace."

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PREFATORY
ARRANGEMENTS
AND
REMARKS.

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PREFATORY
ARRANGEMENTS
AND
REMARKS.

Quakerism a high profession—Quakers generally allowed to be a moral people—various causes of this morality of character—their moral education, which is one of them, the first subject for consideration—this education universal among them—Its origin—The prohibitions belonging to it chiefly to be considered.

GEORGE FOX never gave, while living, nor left, after his death, any definition of Quakerism. He left, however, his journal behind him; and he left, what is of equal importance, his example. Combining these with the sentiments and practice of the early Quakers, I may state in a few words what Quakerism is, or at least what we may suppose George Fox intended it to be.

Quakerism may be defined to be an attempt, under the divine influence, at practical Christianity, as far as it can be carried. They, who profess it, consider themselves bound to regulate their opinions, words, actions, and even outward demeanour, by Christianity, and by Christianity alone. They consider themselves bound to give up such of the customs or fashions of men, however general or generally approved, as militate, in any manner, against the letter or the spirit of the Gospel. Hence, they mix but little with the world, that they may be less liable to imbibe its spirit. Hence, George Fox made a distinction between the members of his own society and others, by the different appellations of Friends, and People of the world. They consider themselves also under an obligation to follow virtue, not ordinarily, but even unto death. For they profess never to make a sacrifice of conscience; and therefore, if any ordinances of man are enjoined them, which they think to be contrary to the divine will, they believe it right not to submit to them, but rather, after the example of the Apostles and primitive Chris-

tians, to suffer any loss, penalty, or inconvenience, which may result to them for so doing.

This then, in a few words, is a general definition of Quakerism*. It is, as we see, a most strict profession of practical virtue under the direction of Christianity, and such as, when we consider the infirmities of human nature, and the temptations that daily surround it, it must be exceedingly difficult to act up to. But whatever difficulties may have lain in the way ; or however, on account of the necessary weakness of human nature, the best individuals among the Quakers may have fallen below the pattern of excellence which they have copied, nothing is more true, than that the result has been,—that the whole Society, as a body, have obtained from their countrymen the character of a moral people.

If the reader is a lover of virtue, and anxious for the moral improvement of man-

* I wish to be understood, in writing this work, that I can give no account that will be applicable to all under the name of Quakers. My account will comprehend the general practice, or that which ought to be the practice, of those who profess Quakerism,

kind,

kind, he will be desirous of knowing what means the Quakers have used, to preserve, for a hundred and fifty years, this desirable reputation in the world.

If he were to put the question to the Quakers themselves for their opinion upon it, I believe I can anticipate their reply. They would attribute any morality, they might be supposed to have, to the Supreme Being, whose will, having been discovered by means of the Scriptures, and of religious impressions upon the mind when it has been calm and still, and abstracted from the world, they have endeavoured to obey. But there is no doubt that we may add auxiliary causes of this morality, and such as they themselves would allow to have had their share in producing it, under the same influence. The first of these may be called their Moral Education. The second, their Discipline. The third may be said to consist of those domestic or other Customs, which are peculiar to them as a society of Christians. The fourth, of their peculiar Tenets of Religion. In fact, there are many circumstances interwoven into the constitution of this Society, each of which has

has a separate effect, and all of which have a combined tendency, towards the production of moral character.

These auxiliary causes I shall consider and explain in their turn. In the course of this explanation the reader will see, that, if other people were to resort to the same means as the Quakers, they would obtain the same reputation; or, that human nature is not so stubborn but that it will yield to a given force. But as it is usual, in examining the life of an individual, to begin with his youth, or, if it has been eminent, to begin with the education he has received, so I shall fix upon the first of the auxiliary causes I have mentioned, or the Moral Education of the Quakers, as the subject of the first division of my work.

Of this moral education I may observe here, that it is universal among the Society, or that it obtains where the individuals are considered to be true Quakers. It matters not how various the tempers of young persons may be who come under it; they must submit to it. Nor does it signify what may be the disposition, or the whim and caprice of their parents; they must submit to it alike.

The

8 PREFATORY ARRANGEMENTS.

The Quakers believe that they have discovered that system of morality which Christianity prescribes; and therefore that they can give no dispensation to their members, under any circumstances whatever, to deviate from it. The origin of this system, as a standard of education in the Society, is as follows.

When the first Quakers met in union, they consisted of religious or spiritually-minded men. From that time to the present there has always been, as we may imagine, a succession of such in the Society. Many of these, at their great meetings, which have been annual since those days, have delivered their sentiments on various interesting points. These sentiments were regularly printed, in the form of yearly epistles, and distributed among Quaker families. Extracts, in process of time, were made from them, and arranged under different heads, and published in one book under the name of "Advices*." Now these advices comprehend important subjects. They relate to

* The book is entitled, "Extracts from the Minutes made, and from the Advices given, at the Yearly Meeting of the Quakers in London, since its first Institution."

Customs,

Customs, Manners, Fashions, Conversation, Conduct. They contain, of course, recommendations, and suggest prohibitions to the Society, as rules of guidance: and as they came from spiritually-minded men, on solemn occasions, they are supposed to have had a spiritual origin. Hence, Quaker-parents manage their youth according to these recommendations and prohibitions; and hence, this Book of Extracts (for so it is usually called), from which I have obtained a considerable portion of my knowledge on this subject, forms the basis of the moral education of the Society.

Of the contents of this book, I shall notice, while I am treating upon this subject, not those rules which are of a recommendatory, but those which are of a prohibitory nature. Education is regulated either by recommendations, or by prohibitions, or by both conjoined. The former relate to things where there is a wish that youth should conform to them, but where a small deviation from them would not be considered as an act of delinquency publicly reprehensible. The latter, to things where any compliance with them becomes a positive

tive

tive offence. The Quakers, in consequence of the vast power, which they have over their members by means of their discipline, lay a great stress upon the latter. They consider their prohibitions, when duly watched and enforced, as so many barriers against vice, or preservatives of virtue. Hence, they are grand component parts in their moral education; and hence I shall chiefly consider them in the chapters which are now to follow upon this subject.



MORAL EDUCATION

OF THE

QUAKERS.

MORAL EDUCATION

OF THE

QUAKERS.

CHAPTER I.

Moral education of the Quakers—Amusements necessary for youth—Quakers distinguish between the useful and the hurtful—the latter specified, and forbidden.

WHEN the blooming spring sheds abroad its benign influence, man feels it equally with the rest of created nature. The blood circulates more freely, and a new current of life seems to be diffused, in his veins. The aged man is enlivened, and the sick man feels himself refreshed. Good spirits and cheerful countenances succeed. But as the year changes in its seasons, and rolls round to its end, the tide seems to slacken, and the current of feeling to return to its former level.

But

But this is not the case with the young. The whole year to them is a kind of perpetual spring. Their blood runs briskly throughout; their spirits are kept almost constantly alive; and, as the cares of the world occasion no drawback, they feel a perpetual disposition to cheerfulness and to mirth. This disposition seems to be universal in them. It seems, too, to be felt by us all; that is, the spring, enjoyed by youth, seems to operate as spring to maturer age. The sprightly and smiling looks of children, their shrill, lively, and cheerful voices, their varied and exhilarating sports,—all these are interwoven with the other objects of our senses, and have an imperceptible though an undoubted influence in adding to the cheerfulness of our minds. Take away the beautiful choristers of the woods, and those who live in the country would but half enjoy the spring. So, if by means of any unparalleled pestilence the children of a certain growth were to be swept away, and we were to lose this infantile link in the chain of age, they who were left behind would find the creation dull, or experience an interruption in the cheerfulness of their feelings,

ings, till the former were successively restored.

The bodies as well as the minds of children require exercise for their growth; and, as their disposition is thus lively and sportive, such exercises as are amusing are necessary; and such amusements, on account of the length of the spring which they enjoy, must be expected to be long.

The Quakers, though they are esteemed an austere people, are sensible of these wants or necessities of youth. They allow their children most of the sports or exercises of the body, and most of the amusements or exercises of the mind, which other children of the island enjoy: but as children are to become men, and men are to become moral characters, they believe that bounds should be drawn, or that an unlimited permission to follow every recreation would be hurtful.

The Quakers, therefore, have thought it proper to interfere on this subject, and to draw the line between those amusements which they consider to be salutary, and those which they consider to be hurtful. They have accordingly struck out of the general list of these, such, and such only, as,
by

by being likely to endanger their morality, would be likely to interrupt the usefulness and the happiness of their lives. Among the bodily exercises, dancing, and the diversions of the field, have been proscribed. Among the mental, music, novels, the theatre, and all games of chance of every description, have been forbidden. These are the principal prohibitions which the Quakers have made on the subject of their moral education. They were suggested, most of them, by George Fox, but were brought into the discipline, at different times, by his successors.

I shall now consider each of these prohibitions separately ; and I shall give all the reasons, which the Quakers themselves give, why, as a society of Christians, they have thought it right to issue and enforce them.

CHAPTER II.

SECTION I.

Games of chance—Quakers forbid cards, dice, and other similar amusements—also concerns in lotteries—and certain transactions in the stocks—They forbid also all wagers and speculations by a moneyed stake—The peculiar wisdom of the latter prohibition, as collected from the history of some of the amusements of the times.

WHEN we consider the depravity of heart, and the misery and ruin, that are frequently connected with gaming, it would be strange indeed if the Quakers, as highly professing Christians, had not endeavoured to extirpate it from their own body.

No people, in fact, have taken more effectual measures for its suppression. They have proscribed the use of all games of chance, and of all games of skill that are connected with chance in any manner. Hence, cards, dice, horse-racing, cock-fighting, and

all the amusements, which come under this definition, are forbidden.

But as there are certain transactions, independently of these amusements, which are equally connected with hazard, and which individuals might convert into the means of moral depravity and temporal ruin, they have forbidden these also, by including them under the appellation of gaming.

Of this description are concerns in the lottery, from which all Quakers are advised to refrain. These include the purchase of tickets, and all insurance upon the same.

In transactions of this kind there is always a moneyed stake, and the issue is dependent upon chance. There is of course the same fascinating stimulus as in cards or dice, arising from the hope of gain. The mind also must be equally agitated between hope and fear, and the same state of desperation may be produced, with other fatal consequences, in the event of loss.

Buying and selling in the public stocks of the kingdom is a practice, which, under particular circumstances, is discouraged also. Where any of the members of the Society buy into the stocks, under the idea that they are likely

likely to obtain better security, or more permanent advantages,—such a transfer of their properties is allowable. But if any were to make a practice of buying or selling, week after week, upon speculation only,—such a practice would come under the denomination of gaming. In this case, like the preceding, it is evident that money would be the object in view; that the issue would be hazardous; and, if the stake or deposit were of great importance, the tranquillity of the mind might be equally disturbed, and many temporal sufferings might follow.

The Society have thought it right, upon the same principle, to forbid the custom of laying wagers upon any occasion whatever, or of reaping advantage from any doubtful event by a previous agreement upon a moneyed stake. This prohibition, however, is not on record, like the former, but is observed as a traditional law. No Quaker-parent would suffer his child, nor Quaker-schoolmaster the children intrusted to his care, nor any member another, to be concerned in amusements of this kind without a suitable reproof.

By means of these prohibitions, which

are enforced in a great measure by the discipline, the Quakers have put a stop to gaming more effectually than others, but particularly by means of the latter: for history has shown us, that we cannot always place a reliance on a mere prohibition of any particular amusement or employment as a cure for gaming; because any pastime or employment, however innocent in itself, may be made an instrument for its designs. There are few customs, however harmless, which avarice cannot convert into the means of rapine on the one hand, and of distress on the other.

Many of the games which are now in use, with such pernicious effects to individuals, were not formerly the instruments of private ruin. Horse-racing was originally instituted with a view of promoting a better breed of horses for the services of man. Upon this principle it was continued. It afforded no private emolument to any individual. The bystanders were only spectators. They were not interested in the victory. The victor himself was remunerated, not with money, but with crowns and garlands,—the testimonies of public applause.

But

But the spirit of gaming got hold of the custom, and turned it into a private diversion, which was to afford the opportunity of a private prize.

Cock-fighting, as we learn from Ælian, was instituted by the Athenians, immediately after their victory over the Persians, to perpetuate the memory of the event, and to stimulate the courage of the youth of Greece in the defence of their own freedom: and it was continued upon the same principle, or as a public institution for a public good. But the spirit of avarice seized it, as it has done the custom of horse-racing, and continued it for a private gain.

Cards, that is, European cards, were, as all are agreed, of a harmless origin. Charles the Sixth, of France, was particularly afflicted with the hypochondriasis. While in this disordered state, one of his subjects invented them, to give variety of amusement to his mind. From the court they passed into private families: and here the same avaricious spirit fastened upon them, and with its cruel talons clawed them, as it were, to its own purposes, not caring how much these little instruments of cheerfulness in
human

human disease were converted into instruments for the extension of human pain.

In the same manner as the spirit of gaming has seized upon these different institutions and amusements of antiquity, and turned them from their original to new and destructive uses, so there is no certainty that it will not seize upon others, which may have been hitherto innocently resorted to, and prostitute them equally with the former. The mere prohibition of particular amusements, even if it could be enforced, would be no certain cure for the evil. The brain of man is fertile enough, as fast as one custom is prohibited, to fix upon another. And if all the games now in use were forbidden, it would be still fertile enough to invent others for the same purposes. The bird that flies in the air, and the snail that crawls upon the ground, have not escaped the notice of the gamester; but have been made, each of them, subservient to his pursuits. The wisdom, therefore, of the Quakers, in making it to be considered as a law of the Society, that no member is to lay wagers, or reap advantage from any doubtful event by a previous agreement upon a moneyed

moneyed stake, is particularly conspicuous; as, wherever it can be enforced, it must be an effectual cure for gaming. For we have no idea how a man can gratify his desire of gain by means of any of the amusements of chance, if he can make no moneyed arrangements about their issue.

SECTION II.

First argument for the prohibition of cards and similar amusements by the Quakers is, that they are below the dignity of the intellect of man, and of his moral and Christian character—Sentiments of Addison on this subject.

THE reasons, which the Quakers give for the prohibition of cards, and of amusements of a similar nature, to the members of their own Society, are generally such as are given by other Christians; though they make use of one which is peculiar to themselves.

It has been often observed that the word Amusement is proper to characterize the employments of children; but that the word

Utility

Utility is the only proper one to characterize the employments of men.

The first argument of the Society on this subject is of a complexion similar to that of the observation just mentioned. For, when they consider man as a reasonable being, they are of opinion that his occupations should be rational; and when they consider him as making a profession of the Christian religion, they expect that his conduct should be manly, serious, and dignified. But all such amusements as those in question, if resorted to for the filling up of his vacant hours, they conceive to be unworthy of his intellect, and to be below the dignity of his Christian character.

They believe also, when they consider man as a moral being, that it is his duty, as it is unquestionably his interest, to aim at the improvement of his moral character. Now one of the foundations on which this improvement must be raised, is knowledge. Knowledge, however, is only slowly acquired; and human life, or the time for the acquisition of it, is but short. It does not appear, therefore, in the judgment of this Society, that a person can have much time for
amuse-

amusements of this sort, if he is bent upon obtaining that object which will be most conducive to his true happiness, and to the end of his existence here.

Upon this first argument of the Quakers I shall only observe, lest it should be thought singular, that sentiments of a similar import are to be found in authors of a different religious denomination, and of acknowledged judgment and merit. Addison, in one of his excellent chapters on the proper employments of life, has the following observation:—"The next method," says he, "that I would propose to fill up our time, should be useful and innocent diversions. I must confess I think it is below reasonable creatures to be altogether conversant in such diversions as are merely innocent, and have nothing else to recommend them, but that there is no hurt in them. Whether any kind of gaming has even thus much to say for itself, I shall not determine; but I think it is very wonderful to see persons of the best sense passing away a dozen hours together in shuffling and dividing a pack of cards, with no other conversation but what is made up of a few game-phrases, and no other

other ideas but those of red or black spots ranged together in different figures. Would not a man laugh to hear any one of this species complaining that life is short?"

SECTION III.

Cards, on account of the manner in which they are generally used, produce an excitement of the passions—Historical anecdotes of this excitement—This excitement another cause of their prohibition by the Quakers, because it unfits the mind, according to their notions, for the reception of religious impressions.

THE Quakers are not so superstitious as to imagine that there can be any evil in cards, considered abstractedly as cards, or in some of the other amusements that have been mentioned. The red or the black images on their surfaces can neither pollute the fingers nor the minds of those who handle them. They may be moved about, and dealt in various ways, and no objectionable consequences may follow. They may
may

may be used, and this innocently, to construct the similitudes of things. They may be arranged so as to exhibit devices which may be productive of harmless mirth. The evil connected with them will depend solely upon the manner of their use. If they are used for a trial of skill, and for this purpose only, they will be less dangerous than where they are used for a similar trial with a moneyed stake. In the former case, however, they may be made to ruffle the temper; for, in the very midst of victory, the combatant may experience a defeat. In the latter case, the loss of victory will be accompanied by a pecuniary loss; and two causes, instead of one, of the excitement of the passions will operate at once upon the mind.

It seldom happens, and it is much to be lamented, either that children, or that more mature persons, are satisfied with amusements of this kind, so as to use them simply as trials of their skill. A moneyed stake is usually proposed as the object to be obtained. This general attachment of a moneyed victory to cards is frequently productive of evil. It often generates improper feelings. It gives birth to uneasiness
and

and impatience while the contest is in doubt, and not unfrequently to anger and resentment when it is over.

But the passions, which are thus excited among youth, are excited also, but worked up to greater mischief, where grown-up persons follow these amusements imprudently, than where children are concerned. For though avarice, and impatience, and anger, are called forth among children, they subside sooner. A boy, though he loses his all when he loses his stake, suffers nothing from the idea of having impaired the means of his future comfort and independence. His next week's allowance, or the next little gift, will set him right again. But when a grown-up person, who is settled in the world, is led on by these fascinating amusements so as to lose that which would be of importance to his present comfort, but more particularly to the happiness of his future life, the case is materially altered. The same passions, which harass the one, will harass the other; but the effects will be widely different. I have been told that persons have been so agitated before the playing of the card that was to decide their destiny,

destiny, that large drops of sweat have fallen from their faces, though they were under no bodily exertions. Now what must have been the state of their minds when the card in question proved decisive of their loss? Reason must unquestionably have fled: and it must have been succeeded instantly either by fury or despair. It would not have been at all wonderful, if persons in such a state had lost their senses; or if, unable to contain themselves, they had immediately vented their enraged feelings either upon themselves, or upon others who were the authors or the spectators of their loss.

It is not necessary to have recourse to the theory of the human mind, to anticipate the consequences that would be likely to result to grown-up persons from such an extreme excitement of the passions. History has given a melancholy picture of these, as they have been observable among different nations of the world.

The antient Germans, according to Tacitus, played to such desperation, that, when they had lost every thing else, they staked their personal liberty; and, in the event of
bad

bad fortune, became the slaves of the winners.

D'Israeli, in his *Curiosities of Literature*, has given us the following account:—"Dice," says he, "and that little pugnacious animal the cock, are the chief instruments employed by the numerous nations of the East, to agitate their minds and ruin their fortunes; to which the Chinese, who are desperate gamblers, add the use of cards. When all other property is played away, the Asiatic gambler does not scruple to stake his wife or his child on the cast of a die, or on the strength and courage of a martial bird. If still unsuccessful, the last venture is himself.—

"In the island of Ceylon, cock-fighting is carried to a great height. The Sumatrans are addicted to the use of dice. A strong spirit of play characterizes a Malayan. After having resigned every thing to the good fortune of the winner, he is reduced to a horrid state of desperation. He then loosens a certain lock of hair, which indicates war and destruction to all he meets. He intoxicates himself with opium, and, working himself up to a fit of phrensy, he bites and kills

kills every one who comes in his way. But as soon as ever this lock is seen flowing, it is lawful to fire at the person, and to destroy him as soon as possible.—

“ To discharge their gambling debts, the Siamese sell their possessions, their families, and at length themselves. The Chinese play night and day, till they have lost all they are worth, and then they usually go and hang themselves. In the newly-discovered islands of the Pacific Ocean they venture even their hatchets, which they hold as invaluable acquisitions, on running-matches. We saw a man, says Cook in his last Voyage, beating his breast and tearing his hair in the violence of rage, for having lost three hatchets at one of these races, and which he had purchased with nearly half of his property.”

But it is not necessary to go beyond our own country for a confirmation of these evils. Civilized as we are beyond all the people that have been mentioned, and living where the Christian religion is professed, we have the misfortune to see our own countrymen engaging in similar pursuits, and equally to the disturbance of the tranquillity

quillity of their minds, and equally to their own ruin. They cannot, it is true, stake their personal liberty, because they can neither sell themselves, nor be held as slaves. But we see them staking their comfort, and all their prospects in life. We see them driven into a multitude of crimes. We see them suffering in a variety of ways. How often has duelling, with all its horrible effects, been the legitimate offspring of gaming! How many suicides have proceeded from the same source! How many persons in consequence of a violation of the laws, occasioned solely by gaming, have come to an ignominious and untimely end!

Thus it appears that gaming, wherever it has been practised to excess, whether by cards, or by dice, or by other instruments, or whether among nations civilized or barbarous, or whether in antient or modern times, has been accompanied with the most violent excitement of the passions, so as to drive its votaries to desperation, and to ruin their morality and their happiness.

It is upon this excitement of the passions, which must have risen to a furious height, before

before such desperate actions as those which have been specified could have commenced, that the Quakers have founded their second argument for the prohibition of games of chance, or of any amusements or transactions connected with a moneyed stake. It is one of their principal tenets, as will be diffusively shown in a future volume, that the supreme Creator of the universe affords a certain portion of his own spirit, or a certain emanation of the pure principle, to all his rational creatures, for the regulation of their spiritual concerns. They believe, therefore, that stillness, and quietness, both of spirit and of body, are necessary for them, as far as these can be attained. For how can a man, whose earthly passions are uppermost, be in a fit state to receive, or a man of noisy and turbulent habits be in a fit state to attend to, the spiritual admonitions of this pure influence? Hence, one of the first points in the education of this Society is, to attend to the subjugation of the will; to take care that every perverse passion be checked; and that the creature be rendered calm and passive. Hence, the children belonging to it are rebuked for all expressions

anger, as tending to raise those feelings which ought to be suppressed. A raising even of their voice beyond due bounds is discouraged, as leading to the disturbance of their minds. They are taught to rise in the morning in quietness, to go about their ordinary occupations with quietness, and to retire in quietness to their beds. Educated in this manner, we seldom see a noisy or an irascible Quaker. This kind of education is universal among true Quakers. It is adopted at home. It is adopted in their schools. The great and practical philanthropist John Howard, when he was at Ackworth, which is the great public school of the Society, was so struck with the quiet deportment of the children there, that he mentioned it with approbation in his work on Lazarettos, and gave to the public some of its rules as models for imitation in other seminaries.

But if the Quakers believe that this pure principle, if attended to, is an infallible guide to them in their religious or spiritual concerns; if they believe that its influences are best discovered in the quietness and silence of their senses; if, moreover, they educate with a view of producing such a
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calm and tranquil state ; it must be obvious that they can never allow, either to their children or to those of maturer years, the use of any of the games of chance, because these, on account of their peculiar nature, are so productive of sudden fluctuations of hope, and fear, and joy, and disappointment, that they are calculated more than any other to promote a turbulence of the human passions.

SECTION IV.

Another cause of their prohibition is, that, if indulged in, they may produce habits of gaming—these habits alter the moral character—they occasion men to become avaricious ; dishonest ; cruel ; and disturbers of the order of nature—Observations by Hartley, from his Essay on Man.

ANOTHER reason why the Quakers do not allow their members the use of cards and of similar amusements is, that, if indulged in, they may produce habits of gaming ; which, if once formed, generally ruin the moral character.

It is in the nature of cards that chance should have the greatest share in the production of victory ; and there is, as I have observed before, usually a moneyed stake. But where chance is concerned, neither victory nor defeat can be equally distributed among the combatants. If a person wins, he feels himself urged to proceed. The amusement also points out to him the possibility of a sudden acquisition of fortune without the application of industry. If he loses, he does not despair. He still perseveres in the contest ; for the amusement points out to him the possibility of repairing his loss. In short, there is no end of hope upon these occasions. It is always hovering about during the contest. Cards, therefore, and amusements of the same nature, by holding up prospects of pecuniary acquisitions on the one hand, and of repairing losses that may arise on any occasion on the other, have a direct tendency to produce habits of gaming.

Now the Quakers consider these habits as of all others the most pernicious ; for they usually change the disposition of a man, and ruin his moral character.

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From being generous-hearted, they make him avaricious. The covetousness, too, which they introduce as it were into his nature, is of a kind that is more than ordinarily injurious. It brings disease upon the body, as it brings corruption upon the mind. Habitual gamblers regard neither their own health nor their own personal convenience, but will sit up night after night at play, though under bodily indisposition, if they can grasp only the object of their pursuit.

From a just and equitable, they often render him a dishonest person. Professed gamblers, it is well known, lie in wait for the young, the ignorant, and the unwary; and they do not hesitate to adopt fraudulent practices to secure them as their prey. Intoxication has also been frequently resorted to for the same purpose.

From humane and merciful, they change him into hard-hearted and barbarous. Habitual gamblers have no compassion either for men or brutes. The former they can ruin and leave destitute, without the sympathy of a tear. The latter they can oppress to death, calculating the various powers of
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their declining strength, and their capability of enduring pain.

They convert him from an orderly into a disorderly being, and into a disturber of the harmony of the universe. Professed gamblers sacrifice every thing, without distinction, to their wants ; not caring if the order of nature, or if the very ends of creation, be reversed. They turn day into night, and night into day. They force animated nature into situations for which it was never destined. They lay their hands upon things innocent and useful, and make them noxious. They lay hold of things barbarous, and render them still more barbarous by their pollutions.

Hartley, in his *Essay upon Man*, has the following observation upon gaming :

“ The practice of playing at games of chance and skill is one of the principal amusements of life ; and it may be thought hard to condemn it as absolutely unlawful, since there are particular cases of persons, infirm in body and mind, where it seems requisite to draw them out of themselves by a variety of ideas and ends in view, which gently engage the attention. But this reason

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son takes place in very few instances. The general motives to play are avarice, joined with a fraudulent intention explicit or implicit, ostentation of skill, and spleen, through the want of some serious useful occupation. And as this practice arises from such corrupt sources, so it has a tendency to increase them ; and indeed may be considered as an express method of begetting and inculcating self-interest, ill-will, envy, and the like. For, by gaming, a man learns to pursue his own interest solely and explicitly, and to rejoice at the loss of others as his own gain, grieve at their gain as his own loss ; thus entirely reversing the order established by Providence for social creatures."

CHAPTER III.

SECTION I.

Music forbidden—General apology for the Quakers on account of their prohibition of so delightful a science—Music particularly abused at the present day—wherein this abuse consists—present use of it almost inseparable from this abuse.

PLATO, when he formed what he called his pure republic, would not allow music to have any place in it. George Fox, and his followers, were of opinion that it could not be admitted in a system of pure Christianity. The modern Quakers have not differed from their predecessors on this subject; and therefore music is understood to be prohibited throughout the Society at the present day.

It will doubtless appear strange, that there should be found people who object to an art, which is capable of being made productive of so much pleasurable feeling, and which, if it be estimated either by the extent or the rapidity of its progress, is gaining reputation
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in the world. But it may be observed, that “all that glitters is not gold.” So neither is all that pleases the ear perfectly salubrious to the mind. There are few customs, against which some arguments or other may not be advanced; few, in short, which man has not perverted, and where the use has not become in an undue measure connected with the abuse.

Providence gave originally to man a beautiful and a perfect world. He filled it with things necessary, and things delightful: and yet man has often turned these from their true and original design. The very wood on the surface of the earth he has cut down, and the very stone and metal in its bowels he has hewn and cast, and converted into a graven image, and worshipped in the place of his beneficent Creator. The food, which has been given him for his nourishment, he has frequently converted by his intemperance into the means of injuring his health. The wine, that was designed to make his heart glad on reasonable and necessary occasions, he has used often to the stupefaction of his senses and the degradation of his moral character. The very rai-
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ment, which has been afforded him for his body, he has abused also, so that it has frequently become a source for the excitement of his pride.

Just so it has been, and so it is, with music, at the present day.

Music acts upon our senses, and may be made productive of a kind of natural delight. For in the same manner as we receive through the organ of the eye a kind of involuntary pleasure when we look at beautiful arrangements, or combinations, or proportions, in nature, and the pleasure may be said to be natural, so the pleasure is neither less, nor less involuntary, nor less natural, which we receive through the organ of the ear from a combination of sounds, flowing in musical progression.

The latter pleasure, as it seems natural, so, under certain limitations, it seems innocent. The first tendency of music (I mean of instrumental) is to calm and tranquillize the passions. The ideas which it excites are of the pleasant, benevolent, and social kind. It leads occasionally to joy, to grief, to tenderness, to sympathy; but never to malevolence, ingratitude, anger, cruelty, or
revenge;

revenge: for no combination of musical sounds can be invented, by which the latter passions can be excited in the mind without the intervention of the human voice.

But notwithstanding that music may thus be made the means both of innocent and pleasurable feeling, yet it has been the misfortune of man, as in other cases, to abuse it, and never probably more than in the present age. For the use of it, as it is at present taught, is almost inseparable from its abuse. Music has been so generally cultivated, and to such perfection, that it now ceases to delight the ear unless it comes from the fingers of the proficient. But great proficiency cannot be attained in this science without great sacrifices of time. If young females are to be brought up to it rather as to a profession than introduced to it as a source of occasional innocent recreation, or if their education is thought most perfect where their musical attainments are the highest, not only hours, but even years, must be devoted to the pursuit. Such a devotion to this one object must, it is obvious, leave less time than is proper for others that are more important. The know-
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ledge of domestic occupations, and the various sorts of knowledge acquired by reading, must be abridged, in proportion as this science is cultivated to professional precision. And hence, independently of any arguments which the Quakers may advance against it, it must be acknowledged by the sober world to be chargeable with a criminal waste of time. And this waste of time is the more to be deprecated, because it frequently happens that, when young females marry, music is thrown aside, after all the years that have been spent in its acquisition, as an employment either then unnecessary, or as an employment which, amidst the new cares of a family, they have not leisure to follow.

Another serious charge may be advanced against music, as it is practised at the present day. Great proficiency, without which music now ceases to be delightful, cannot, as I have just observed, be made without great application, or the application of some years. Now all this long application is of a sedentary nature. But all occupations of a sedentary nature are injurious to the human constitution, and weaken and disorder it in time. But in proportion as the body
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is thus weakened by the sedentary nature of the employment, it is weakened again by the enervating powers of the art. Thus the nervous system is acted upon by two enemies at once ; and in the course of the long education, necessary for this science, the different disorders of hysteria are produced. Hence the females of the present age, amongst whom this art has been cultivated to excess, are generally found to have a weak and languid constitution, and to be disqualified more than others from becoming healthy wives, or healthy mothers, or the parents of a healthy progeny.

SECTION II.

Instrumental music forbidden—Quakers cannot learn it on the motives of the world—It is not conducive to the improvement of the moral character—affords no solid ground of comfort; nor of true elevation of mind—A sensual gratification—Remarks of Cowper—And, if encouraged, would interfere with the duty, recommended by the Quakers, of frequent religious retirement.

THE reader must always bear it in his mind, if the Quakers should differ from him
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on any particular subject, that they set themselves apart as a Christian community, aiming at Christian perfection ; that it is their wish to educate their children, not as moralists or as philosophers, but as Christians ; and that therefore, in determining the propriety of a practice, they will frequently judge of it by an estimate very different from that of the world.

The members of this Society do not deny that instrumental music is capable of exciting delight. They are not insensible either of its power or of its charms. They throw no imputation on its innocence, when viewed abstractedly by itself. But they do not see any thing in it sufficiently useful to make it an object of education, or so useful as to counterbalance other considerations which make for its disuse.

The Quakers would think it wrong to indulge in their families the usual motives for the acquisition of this science. Self-gratification without any object of usefulness, which is one of them, and reputation in the world, which is the other, are considered as not allowable in the Christian system. Add to which, that where there is a desire for such reputation,
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an emulative disposition is generally cherished, and envy and vain-glory are often excited in the pursuit.

They are of opinion also, that the learning of this art does not tend to promote the most important object of education,—the improvement of the mind. When a person is taught the use of letters, he is put into the way of acquiring natural, historical, religious, and other branches of knowledge, and of course of improving his intellectual and moral character. But music has no pretensions, they conceive, to the production of such an end. Polybius, indeed, relates that he could give no solid reason why one tribe of the Arcadians should have been so civilized, and the other so barbarous, but that the former were fond, and that the latter were ignorant, of music. But the Quakers would argue, that if music had any effect in the civilization, this effect would be seen in the manners, and not in the morals, of mankind. Musical Italians are esteemed a soft and effeminate, but they are generally reputed a depraved, people. Music, in short, though it breathes soft influences, cannot yet breathe morality into the mind. It may
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do to soften savages ; but a Christian community, in the opinion of the Quakers, can admit of no better civilization than that, which the spirit of the Supreme Being, and an observance of the pure precepts of Christianity, can produce.

Music, again, does not appear to the members of this Society to be the foundation of any solid comfort in life. It may give spirits for the moment, as strong liquor does ; but, when the effect of the liquor is over, the spirits flag, and the mind is again torpid. It can give no solid encouragement, nor hope, nor prospects. It can afford no anchorage-ground which shall hold the mind in a storm. The early Christians, imprisoned, beaten, and persecuted even to death, would have had but poor consolation, if they had not had a better friend than music to rely upon in the hour of their distress. And here, I think, the Quakers would particularly condemn music, if they thought it could be resorted to in the hour of affliction, inasmuch as it would then have a tendency to divert the mind from its true and only support.

Music, again, does not appear to them to be productive of elevated thoughts ; that is,
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of such thoughts as raise the mind to sublime and spiritual things, abstracted from the inclinations, the temper, and the prejudices of the world. The most melodious sounds, that human instruments can make, are from the earth, earthy. But nothing can rise higher than its own origin. All true elevation, therefore, can only come, in the opinion of the Quakers, from the divine source.

The Quakers, therefore, seeing no moral utility in music, cannot make it a part of their education. But there are other considerations, of a different nature, which influence them the same way.

Music, in the first place, is esteemed a sensual gratification. Even those, who run after sacred music, never consider themselves as going to a place of devotion, but where, in full concert, they may hear the performances of the master-pieces of the art. This attention to religious compositions for the sake of the music has been noticed by one of our best poets.

——“and ten thousand sit,
 Patiently present at a sacred song,
 Commemoration mad, content to hear,
 O wonderful effect of music's power,
 Messiah's eulogy for Handel's sake!”

COWPER.

But the Quakers believe that all sensual desires should be held in due subordination to the pure principle ; or that sensual pleasures should be discouraged as much as possible, as being opposed to those spiritual feelings, which constitute the only perfect enjoyment of a Christian.

Music, again, if it were encouraged in the Society, would be considered as depriving those of maturer years of hours of comfort, which they now frequently enjoy, in the service of religion. Retirement is considered by the Quakers as a Christian duty. The members, therefore, of this Society are expected to wait in silence, not only in their places of worship, but occasionally in their families, or in their private chambers, in the intervals of their daily occupations, that, in stillness of heart and in freedom from the active contrivance of their own wills, they may acquire both directions and strength for the performance of the duties of life. The Quakers, therefore, are of opinion, that, if instrumental music were admitted as a gratification in leisure-hours, it would take the place of many of these serious retirements, and become very injurious to their interests and their character as Christians.

SECTION III.

Vocal music forbidden—Singing in itself no more immoral than reading—but as vocal music articulates ideas, it may convey poison to the mind—Some ideas in songs contrary to Quaker-notions of morality; as in hunting-songs; or in Bacchanalian; or in martial—Youth make no selection; but learn all that fall in their way.

IT is an observation of Lactantius, that “the pleasures we receive through the organ of the ears may be as injurious as those we receive through the organ of the eyes.” He does not, however, consider the effect of instrumental music as much to be regarded, “because sounds, which proceed from air, are soon gone, and they give birth to no sentiments that can be recorded. Songs, on the other hand, or sounds from the voice, may have an injurious influence on the mind.”

The Quakers, in their view of this subject, make the same distinction as this ancient father of the church. They have a stronger objection, if it be possible, to vocal than to instrumental music. Instrumental music, though it is considered to be productive of sensual delights, is yet supposed as incapable, on account of its inability to articulate,

ticulate, or its inability to express complex ideas, of conveying either unjust or impure sentiments to the mind. Vocal, on the other hand, is capable of conveying to it poison of this sort. For vocal music consists of songs, or of words musically expressed by the human voice. But words are the representatives of ideas, and as far as these ideas are pure or otherwise, so far may vocal music be rendered innocent or immoral.

The mere singing, it must be obvious, can be no more immoral than the reading of the same song. Singing is but another mode of expressing it. The morality of the action will depend upon the words which it may contain. If the words in a song be pure, if the sentiments in it be just, and if it be the tendency of these to awaken generous and virtuous sympathies, the song will operate no otherwise than a lesson of morality. And will a lesson of morality be less serviceable to us because it is dressed up in poetry, and musically expressed by the human voice, than when it is conveyed to us in prose*? But if, on the other hand, the
words

* The Quakers, however, think that, even in this case, the moral lesson may be better conveyed, without the
music

words in any song be in themselves unchaste, if they inculcate false honour, if they lead to false opinions, if they suggest sentiments that have a tendency to produce depraved feelings,—then vocal music, by which these are conveyed in pleasing accents to the ear, becomes a destroyer of morals, and cannot therefore be encouraged by any who consider purity of heart as required by the Christian religion. Now the Quakers are of opinion that the songs of the world contain a great deal of objectionable matter in these respects; and that if they were to be promiscuously taken up by children, who have no power of discriminating between the good and the bad, and who generally lay hold of all that fall in their way, they would form a system of sentimental maxims very injurious in their tendency to their moral character.

If we were to take a collection of songs, as published in books, and were to examine these, we should find that such a system might easily be formed. And if again we

music of the voice, as singing it is apt to produce a volatile and frivolous spirit, which detracts from the serious impression of the sentiment.

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were to examine the sentiments contained in many of these by the known sentiments of the Society on the several subjects of each, we should find that, as a highly-professing body, more objections would arise against vocal music among them than among other people.

Let us, for example, just glance at that class of songs, which in the collection would be called Hunting-songs. In these, men are invited to the pleasures of the chase, as to pleasures of a superior kind. The triumphs over the timid hare are celebrated in these with a kind of enthusiastic joy, and celebrated too as triumphs worthy of the character of men. Glory is even attached to these pursuits. But the Quakers, as it will appear in a future chapter, endeavour to prevent their youth from following any of the diversions of the field. They consider pleasures as placed on a false foundation, and triumphs as unmanly and inglorious, which are founded on circumstances connected with the sufferings of the brute-creation. They cannot, therefore, approve of songs of this order, because they consider them as disseminating sentiments that are both unreasonable and cruel.

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Let us now go to another class, which may be found in the same collection; I mean the Bacchanalian. Men are invited here to sacrifice frequently at the shrine of Bacchus. Joy, good-humour, and fine spirits, are promised to those who pour out their libations in a liberal manner. An excessive use of wine, which injures the constitution and stupefies the faculties, instead of being censured in these songs, is sometimes recommended in them, as giving to nature that occasional stimulus which is deemed necessary for health. Poets, too, in their songs, have considered the day as made only for vulgar souls, but the night for the nobler sort of people, that they may the better pursue the pleasures of the bottle. Others have gone so far in their songs as to promise long life as a consequence of drinking; while others, who confess that human life may be shortened by such means, take care to throw out, that, as a man's life thus becomes proportionably abridged, it is rendered proportionably a merry one. Now the Quakers are so particularly careful with respect to the use of wine and spirituous liquors, that the Society are annually and publicly admonished to beware of excess.

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The Members of it are discouraged from going even to inns, but for the purposes of business and refreshment; and are admonished to take care that they stay there no longer than is necessary for such purposes. The Quakers, therefore, cannot be supposed to approve of any of the songs of this class, as far as they recommend or promote drunkenness. And they cannot but consider them as containing sentiments injurious to the morals of their children.

But let us examine another class of songs, that may be found in the same collection. These may be denominated the Martial. Now what is generally the tenor of these songs? The authors celebrate victories. They endeavour, regardless of the question, whether their own cause be a right or a wrong one, to excite joy at the events. It is their aim frequently to rouse the soul to the performance of martial exploits, as to exploits the fullest of human glory. They frequently threaten enemies with new chastisements and new victories, and breath the spirit of revenge. But the Quakers consider all wars, whether offensive or defensive, as against the spirit of the Christian religion. They cannot contemplate scenes of
victory

victory but with the eye of pity and the tear of compassion for the sufferings of their fellow-creatures, whether countrymen or enemies, and for the devastation of the human race. They allow no glory to attach, nor do they give any thing like an honourable reputation, to the Alexanders, the Cæsars, or to heroes either of antient or modern date. They cannot, therefore, approve of songs of this class, because they conceive them to inculcate sentiments totally contrary to the mild and peaceful spirit of the Christian religion,

If we were to examine the collection further, we might pick out other songs, which might be reckoned of the class of the Impure. Among these would be found ideas so indelicate, that, notwithstanding the gloss which wit and humour had put over them, the chaste ear could not but be offended by their recital. It must be obvious, in this case also, that not only the Quakers, but all persons filling the stations of parents, would be sorry if their children were to come to the knowledge of some of these.

It is unnecessary to proceed further upon this subject. For the reader must be aware
that,

that, while the Quakers hold such sentiments, they can never patronize such songs; and that if they, who are taught or allowed to sing, generally lay hold of all the songs that come into their way, that is, promiscuously and without selection, the Quakers will have a strong ground, as a Christian society, or as a society who hold it necessary to be watchful over their words as well as their actions, for the rejection of vocal music.

SECTION IV.

The preceding are the arguments of the early Quakers—New state of music has produced new ones—Instrumental now censurable for a waste of time—for leading into company—for its connexion with vocal.

THE arguments, which have hitherto appeared against the admission of music into education, are those which were nearly co-æval with the Society itself. The incapability of music to answer moral ends; the sensuality of the gratification; the impediments it might throw in the way of religious

gious retirement; the impurity it might convey to the mind; were in the mouths of the early Quakers. Music at that time was principally in the hands of those who made a livelihood of the art. They, who followed it as an accomplishment or as a recreation, were few, and these followed it with moderation. But since those days its progress has been immense. It has traversed the whole kingdom. It has got into almost all the families of rank and fortune. Many of the middle classes, in imitation of the higher, have received it. And as it has undergone a revolution in the extent, so it has undergone another in the object, of its practice. It is learnt now, not as a source of occasional recreation, but as a complicated science, where perfection is insisted upon to make it worthy of pursuit. In this new state, therefore, of music, new arguments have arisen on the part of the Quakers, which I shall now concisely explain.

The Quakers, in the first place, are of opinion that the learning of music, as it is now learnt, cannot be admitted by them as a Christian society, because, proficiency being now the object of it, as has been before

fore observed, it would keep them longer employed than is consistent with people who are commanded to redeem their time.

They believe also that music, in its present state, has an immediate tendency to lead into the company of the world. In former times, when music was followed with moderation, it was esteemed as a companion or as a friend. It afforded relaxation after fatigue, and amusement in solitary hours. It drew a young person to his home, and hindered him from following many of the idle diversions of the times. But now, or since it has been practised with a new object, it produces a different effect. It leads into company. It leads to trials of skill. It leads to the making up of festive parties. It leads, for its own gratification, to the various places of public resort. Now this tendency of leading into public is considered by the Quakers as a tendency, which threatens the dissolution of their Society. For they have many customs to keep up, which are quite at variance with those of the world. The former appear to be steep and difficult as common paths; those of the world to be smooth and easy. The natural inclination
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of youth, more prone to self-gratification than to self-denial, would prefer to walk in the latter; and the influence of fashion would point to the same choice. The liberty, too, which is allowed in the one case, seems more agreeable than the discipline imposed in the other. Hence it has been found, that, in proportion as young Quakers mix with the world, they generally imbibe its spirit, and weaken themselves as members of their own body.

They have an objection, again, to the learning of instrumental music on account of its almost inseparable connexion with vocal; in consequence of which it leads often to the impurity, which the latter has been shown to be capable of conveying to the mind.

This connexion does not arise so much from the circumstance, that those who learn to play generally learn to sing, as from another consideration. Musical people, who have acquired skill and taste, are desirous of obtaining every new musical publication, as it comes out. This desire is produced where there is an aim at perfection in this science. The professed novel-reader, we
know,

know, waits with impatience for a new novel. The politician discovers anxiety for his morning-paper. Just so it is with the musical amateur with respect to a new tune. Now though many of the new compositions come out for instrumental music only, yet others come out entirely as vocal. These consist of songs sung at our theatres, or at our public gardens, or at our other places of public resort; and are afterwards printed with their music and exposed to sale. The words, therefore, of these songs, as well as the music that is attached to them, fall into the hands of the young amateur. Now as such songs are not always chaste or delicate, and as they frequently contain such sentiments as I have shown the Quakers to disapprove, the young musician, if of this Society, might have his modesty frequently put to the blush, or his delicacy frequently wounded, or his morality often broken in upon, by their perusal. Hence, though instrumental music might have no immoral tendency in itself, the Quakers have rejected it, among other reasons, on account of its almost inseparable connexion with vocal.

SECTION V.

Objection anticipated, that, though the arguments used by the Quakers in the preceding chapters are generally fair and positive, yet an exceptionable one seems to have been introduced, by which it appears to be inculcated, that the use of a thing ought to be abandoned on account of its abuse—Explanation of the distinction made by the Quakers in the use of this argument.

I PURPOSE to stop for a while, and to make a distinction, which may now become necessary, with respect to the use of what may appear to be a Quaker-principle of argument, before I proceed to a new subject.

It may have been observed by some of my readers, that, though the Quakers have adduced arguments which may be considered as fair and positive on the subjects which have come before us, yet they appear to have advanced one, which is no other than that of condemning the use of a thing on account of its abuse. Now this mode of reasoning, it will be said, has been exploded by logicians, and for this, among other reasons ; that, if we were bound to relinquish

customs in consequence of it, we should be obliged to give up many things that are connected with the comforts, and even with the existence of our lives.

To this observation I must reply, that the Quakers never recommend an abstinence from any custom merely because the use of it may lead to its abuse.

Where a custom is simply liable to abuse, they satisfy themselves with recommending moderation in the use of it.

But where the abuse of a custom is either, in the first place, necessarily, or, in the second, very generally connected with the use of it, they commonly consider the omission of it as morally wise and prudent. It is in these two cases only that they apply, or that they lay any stress upon, the species of argument described.

This species of argument, under these two limitations, they believe to be tenable in Christian morals, and they entertain this belief upon the following grounds.

It may be laid down as a position, that the abuse of any custom, which is innocent in itself, is an evil, and that it may become a moral evil. And they conceive it to become
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come a moral evil in the eye of Christianity; when it occasions either the destruction of the health of individuals, or the misapplication of their time, or the excitement of their worst passions, or the loss of their moral character.

If, therefore, the use of any custom be necessarily (which is the first of the two cases) connected with its abuse, and the abuse of it be the moral evil described, the user or practiser cannot but incur a certain degree of guilt. This first case will comprehend all those uses of things which go under the denomination of gaming.

If, again, the use of a custom be either through the influence of fashion, or its own seductive nature, or any other cause, very generally (which is the second case) connected with its abuse, and the abuse be also of the nature supposed, then the user or practiser, if the custom be unnecessary, throws himself wantonly into danger of evil, contrary to the watchfulness which Christianity enjoins in morals; and, if he fall, falls by his own fault. This watchfulness against moral danger the Quakers conceive to be equally incumbent upon Chris-

tians as watchfulness upon persons against the common dangers of life. If two-thirds of all the children, who had ever gone to the edge of a precipice to play, had fallen down and been injured, it would be a necessary prudence in parents to prohibit all such goings in future. So they conceive it to be only a necessary prudence in morals to prohibit customs, where the use of them is very generally connected with a censurable abuse. This case will comprehend music, as practised at the present day; because they believe it to be injurious to health, to occasion a waste of time, to create an emulative disposition, and to give an undue indulgence to sensual feelings.

And as the Quakers conceive this species of argument to be tenable in Christian morals, so they hold it to be absolutely necessary to be adopted in the education of youth. For grown-up persons may have sufficient judgment to distinguish between the use of a thing and its abuse. They may discern the boundaries of each, and enjoy the one while they avoid the other. But youth have no such power of discrimination. Like inexperienced mariners, they know not
where

where to look for the deep and the shallow water ; and, allured by enchanting circumstances, they may, like those who are reported to have been enticed by the voices of the fabulous syrens, easily overlook the danger that too frequently awaits them in their course.



CHAPTER IV.

SECTION I.

The theatre—The theatre as well as music abused—Plays respectable in their origin; but degenerated—Solon, Plato, and the antient moralists, against them—Particularly immoral in England in the time of Charles the Second—Forbidden by George Fox—Sentiments of Archbishop Tillotson—of William Law—English Plays better than formerly; but still objectionable—Prohibition of George Fox continued by the Quakers.

IT is much to be lamented that customs, which originated in respectable motives, and which might have been made productive of innocent pleasure, should have been so perverted in time, that the continuation of them should be considered as a grievance by moral men. As we have seen this to be the case, in some measure, with respect to music, so it is the case with respect to plays.

Dramatic

Dramatic compositions appear to have had no reprehensible origin. It certainly was an object with the authors of some of the earliest plays to combine the entertainment with the moral improvement of the mind. Tragedy was at first simply a monody to Bacchus. But the tragedy of the antients, from which the modern is derived, did not arise in the world till the dialogue and the chorus were introduced. Now the chorus, as every scholar knows, was a moral office. They who filled it were loud in their recommendations of justice and temperance. They inculcated a religious observance of the laws. They implored punishment on the abandoned. They were strenuous in their discouragement of vice, and in their promotion of virtue. This office, therefore, being coæval with tragedy itself, preserves it from the charge of an immoral origin.

Nor was comedy, which took its rise afterwards, the result of corrupt motives. In the most antient comedies we find it to have been the great object of the writers to attack vice. If a chief citizen had acted inconsistently with his character, he was ridiculed

culed upon the stage. His very name was not concealed on the occasion. In the course of time, however, the writers of dramatic pieces were forbidden to use the names of the persons, whom they proposed to censure. But we find them still adhering to the same great object,—the exposure of vice; and they painted the vicious character frequently so well, that the person was soon discovered by the audience, though disguised by a fictitious name. When new restrictions were afterwards imposed upon the writers of such pieces, they produced a new species of comedy. This is that which obtains at the present day. It consisted of an imitation of the manners of common life. The subject, the names, and the characters belonging to it, were now all of them feigned. Writers, however, retained their old object of laughing at folly and of exposing vice.

Thus it appears that the theatre, as far as tragedy was employed, inculcated frequently as good lessons of morality as heathenism could produce; and, as far as comedy was concerned, that it became often the next
remedy,

remedy, after the more grave and moral lectures of the antient philosophers, against the prevailing excesses of the times.

But though the theatre professed to encourage virtue and to censure vice, yet such a combination of injurious effects was interwoven with the representations there, arising either from the influence of fiction upon morals, or from the sight of the degradation of the rational character by buffoonery, or from the tendency of such representations to produce levity and dissipation, or from various other causes, that they, who were the greatest lovers of virtue in those days, and the most solicitous of improving the moral condition of man, began to consider them as productive of much more evil than of good. Solon forewarned Thespis that the effects of such plays as he saw him act would become in time injurious to the morals of mankind; and he forbade him to act again. The Athenians, though such performances were afterwards allowed, would never permit any of their judges to compose a comedy. The Spartans under Lycurgus, who were the most virtuous of all the people of Greece, would not suffer
either

either tragedies or comedies to be acted at all. Plato, as he had banished music, so he banished theatrical exhibitions from his pure republic. Seneca considered that vice made insensible approaches by means of the stage, and that it stole on the people in the disguise of pleasure. The Romans, in their purer times, considered the stage to be so disgraceful, that every Roman was to be degraded who became an actor; and so pernicious to morals, that they put it under the power of a censor to control its efforts.

But the stage in the time of Charles the Second, when the Quakers first appeared in the world, was in a worse state than even in the Grecian or Roman times. If there was ever a period in any country when it was noted as the school of profligate and corrupt morals, it was in this reign. George Fox, therefore, as a Christian reformer, could not be supposed to be behind the heathen philosophers in a case where morality was concerned. Accordingly we find him protesting publicly against all such spectacles. In this protest he was joined by Robert Barclay and William Penn, two of the greatest men of those times, who in their
respective

respective publications attacked them with great spirit. These publications showed the sentiments of the Quakers, as a religious body, upon this subject. It was understood that no Quaker could be present at amusements of this sort. And this idea was confirmed by the sentiments and advices of several of the most religious members, which were delivered on public occasions. By means of these publications and advices the subject was kept alive, till it became at length incorporated into the religious discipline of the Society. The theatre was then specifically forbidden; and an inquiry was annually to be made from thenceforward, whether any of the members of it had been found violating the prohibition.

Since the time of Charles the Second, when George Fox entered his protest against exhibitions of this sort, it must certainly be confessed that an alteration has taken place for the better in the constitution of our plays, and that poison is not diffused into morals by means of them, to an equal extent, as at that period. The mischief has been considerably circumscribed by legal inspection, and, it is to be hoped, by the improved civilization

zation of the times. But it does not appear, by any historical testimony we have, that a change has been made, which is at all proportioned to the quantity of moral light, which has been diffused among us since that reign. Archbishop Tillotson was of opinion "that plays might be so framed, and they might be governed by such rules, as not only to be innocently diverting, but instructive and useful, to put some follies and vices out of countenance, which could not, perhaps, be so decently reprov'd, nor so effectually exposed or corrected any other way." And yet he confesses that "they were so full of profaneness, and that they instilled such bad principles into the mind, in his own day, that they ought not to have been tolerated in any civilized, and much less in a Christian nation." William Law, an eminent divine of the establishment, who lived after Tillotson, declared, in one of his publications on the subject of the stage, that "you could not then see a play in either house but what abounded with thoughts, passages, and language, contrary to the Christian religion." From the time of William Law to the present about forty

years have elapsed, and we do not see, if we consult the controversial writers on the subject who live among us, that the theatre has become much less objectionable since those days. Indeed, if the names only of our modern plays were to be collected and published, they would teach us to augur very unfavourably as to the morality of their contents. The Quakers, therefore, as a religious body, have seen no reason why they should differ in opinion from their ancestors on this subject: and hence the prohibition, which began in former times with respect to the theatre, is continued by them at the present day.

SECTION II.

Theatre forbidden by the Quakers on account of the manner of the drama; first as it personates the characters of others; secondly, as it professes to reform vice.

THE Quakers have many reasons to give, why, as a Society of Christians, they cannot encourage the theatre by being present at
any

any of its exhibitions. I shall not detail all of them for the reader, but shall select such as I think most material to the point.

The first class of arguments comprehends such as relate to what may be called the Manner of the Drama.

They object to the manner of the drama, or to its fictitious nature, in consequence of which men personate characters that are not their own. This personification they hold to be injurious to the man, who is compelled to practise it. Not that he will partake of the bad passions which he personates, but that the trick and trade of representing, what he does not feel, must make him at all times an actor; and his looks, and words, and actions, will be all sophisticated. And this evil will be likely to continue with him in the various changes of his life.

They hold it also to be contrary to the spirit of Christianity. For men, who personate characters in this way, express joy and grief, when in reality there may be none of these feelings in their hearts. They express noble sentiments, when their whole lives may have been remarkable for their
meanness,

meanness, and go often afterwards and wallow in sensual delights. They personate the virtuous character to-day, and perhaps to-morrow that of the rake. And, in the latter case, they utter his profligate sentiments, and speak his profane language. Now Christianity requires simplicity and truth. It allows no man to pretend to be what he is not. And it requires great circumspection of its followers with respect to what they may utter, because it makes every man accountable for his idle words.

The Quakers, therefore, are of opinion that they cannot, as men either professing Christian tenets or Christian love, encourage others to assume false characters, or to personate those which are not their own*.

They object also to the manner of the drama, even where it professes to be a school for morals. For where it teaches morality, it inculcates rather the loose virtue of hea-

* Rousseau condemns the stage upon the same principle. "It is," says he, "the art of dissimulation; of assuming a foreign character, and of appearing differently from what a man really is; of flying into a passion without a cause, and of saying what he does not think as naturally as if he really did: in a word, of forgetting himself, to personate others."

thenism than the strict though mild discipline of the Gospel: and where it attempts to extirpate vice, it does it rather by making it ridiculous, than by making men shun it for the love of virtue. It no where fixes the deep Christian principle, by which men are bound to avoid it as sin, but places the propriety of the dereliction of it rather upon the loss of reputation among the world than upon any sense of religious duty.

SECTION III.

Theatre forbidden on account of the internal contents of the drama; both of those of tragedy and of comedy—These contents hold out false morals and prospects, and weaken the sinews of morality—Observations of Lord Kaimes upon the subject.

THE next class of arguments is taken from the Internal Contents of the Drama.

The Quakers mean that dramatic compositions generally contain false sentiments; that is, such as Christianity would disapprove; that of course they hold out false prospects;

prospects ; that they inculcate false morals ; and that they have a tendency, from these and other of their internal contents, to promote dissipation, and to weaken the sinews of morality in those who see them represented upon the stage.

Tragedy is considered by the Quakers as a part of the drama, where the hero is generally a warrior, and where a portion of human happiness is made to consist of martial glory. Hence it is considered as frequently inculcating proud and lofty sentiments, as cherishing a fierce and romantic spirit, as encouraging rival enmities, as holding of no importance the bond of love and union between man and man. Now as Christianity enjoins humility, peace, quietness, brotherly affection, and charity, which latter is not to be bounded by the limits of any country, the Quakers hold, as a Christian body, that they cannot admit their children to spectacles, which have a tendency to engender a disposition opposite to these.

Comedy is considered as holding out prospects and inculcating morals equally false and hurtful. In such compositions, for example,

ample, a bad impression is not uniformly given of a bad character. Knavery frequently accomplishes its ends without the merited punishment. Indeed treachery and intrigue are often considered but as jocose occurrences. The laws of modern honour are frequently held out to the spectator as laws that are to influence in life. Vulgar expressions, and even swearing, are admitted upon the stage. Neither is chastity nor delicacy always consulted there. Impure allusions are frequently interwoven into the dialogue, so that innocence cannot but often blush. Incidents not very favourable to morals are sometimes introduced. New dissipated characters are produced to view, by the knowledge of which the novice in dissipation is not diverted from his new and baneful career, but finds only his scope of dissipation enlarged, and a wider field to range in. To these hurtful views of things, as arising from the internal structure, are to be added those which arise from the extravagant love-tales, the ridiculous intrigues, and the silly buffoonery, of the compositions of the stage.

Now it is impossible, the Quakers con-
1 tend,

tend, that these ingredients, which are the component parts of comic amusements, should not have an injurious influence upon the mind that is young and tender, and susceptible of impressions. If the blush, which started upon the cheek of a young person on the first hearing of an indecorous or profane sentiment, and continued for some time to be excited at repetitions of the same, should at length be so effectually suppressed, that the impudent language of ribaldry can revive it no more, it is clear that a victory will have been gained over his moral feelings. And if he should remember (and what is to hinder him when the occurrences of the stage are marked with strong action and accompanied with impressive scenery) the language, the sentiments, the incidents, the prospects, which dramatic pieces have brought before him, he may combine these, as they rise to memory, with his own feelings, and incorporate them imperceptibly into the habits and manners of his own life. Thus if vice be not represented as odious, he may lose his love of virtue. If buffoonery should be made to please him, he may lose the dignity of his mind.

mind. Love-tales may produce in him a romantic imagination. Low characters may teach him low cunning. If the laws of honour strike him as the laws of refined life, he may become a fashionable moralist. If modes of dissipation strike him as modes of pleasure in the estimation of the world, he may abandon himself to these and become a rake. Thus may such representations, in a variety of ways, act upon the moral principle, and make an innovation there detrimental to his moral character.

Lord Kaimes, in his *Elements of Criticism*, has the following observations.

“ The licentious court of Charles the Second, among its many disorders, engendered a pest, the virulence of which subsists to this day. The English comedy, copying the manners of the court, became abominably licentious; and continues so with very little softening. It is there an established rule to deck out the chief characters with every vice in fashion, however gross; but as such characters, if viewed in a true light, would be disgusting, care is taken to disguise their deformity under the embellishments of wit, sprightliness, and good-humour,

humour, which in mixed company make a capital figure. It requires not much thought to discover the poisonous influence of such plays. A young man of figure, emancipated at last from the severity and restraint of a college education, repairs to the capital, disposed to every sort of excess. The playhouse becomes his favourite amusement, and he is enchanted with the gaiety and splendour of the chief personages. The disgust, which vice gives him at first, soon wears off, to make way for new notions, more liberal, in his opinion, by which a sovereign contempt of religion, and a declared war upon the chastity of wives, maids, and widows, are converted from being infamous vices to be fashionable virtues. The infection spreads gradually through all ranks, and becomes universal. How gladly would I listen to any one who should undertake to prove that what I have been describing is chimerical! But the dissoluteness of our young men of birth will not suffer me to doubt its reality. Sir Harry Wildair has completed many a rake; and, in the Suspicious Husband, Ranger, the humble imitator of Sir Harry, has

had no slight influence in spreading that character. What woman, tinctured with the playhouse morals, would not be the sprightly, the witty, though dissolute, Lady Townley, rather than the cold, the sober, though virtuous, Lady Grace? How odious ought writers to be, who thus employ the talents they have from their Maker most traitorously against himself, by endeavouring to corrupt and disfigure his creatures! If the comedies of Congreve did not rack him with remorse in his last moments, he must have been lost to all sense of virtue."

SECTION IV.

The theatre forbidden, because injurious to the happiness of man by disqualifying him for the pleasures of religion—This effect arises from its tendency to accustom individuals to light thoughts—to injure their moral feelings—to occasion an extraordinary excitement of the mind—and from the very nature of the enjoyments, which it produces.

As the Quakers consider the theatre to have an injurious effect on the morality of
man,

man, so they consider it to have an injurious effect on his happiness. They believe that amusements of this sort, but particularly the comic, unfit the mind for the practical performance of the Christian duties; and that as the most pure and substantial happiness that man can experience is derived from fulfilling these, so they deprive him of the highest enjoyments of which his nature is capable — that is, of the pleasures of religion.

Were a man asked, on entering the door of the theatre, if he went there to learn the moral duties, he would laugh at the absurdity of the question; and, if he would consent to give a fair and direct answer, he would either reply that he went there for his amusement, or to dissipate gloom, or to be made merry; some one of these expressions would probably characterize his errand there. Now this answer would comprise the effect, which the Quakers attach to the comic performances of the stage. They consider them as drawing the mind from serious reflection, and disposing it to levity. But they believe that a mind, gradually accustomed to light thoughts, and placing its gratifica-

tion

tion in light objects, must be disqualified in time for the gravity of religious exercise, and be thus hindered from partaking the pleasures which such an exercise must produce.

They are of opinion, also, that such exhibitions, having, as was lately mentioned, a tendency to weaken the moral character, must have a similarly injurious effect. For what innovations can be made on the human heart, so as to seduce it from innocence, that will not successively wean it both from the love and the enjoyment of the Christian virtues?

They believe also that dramatic exhibitions have a power of vast excitement of the mind. If they have no such power, they are insipid. If they have, they are injurious. A person is all the evening at a play in an excited state. He comes home and goes to bed with his imagination heated and his passions roused. The next morning he rises: he remembers what he has seen and heard,—the scenery, the language, the sentiments, the action. He continues in the same excited state for the remainder of the day. The extravagant pas-
sions

sions of distracted lovers, the want no addresses of actors, are still fresh upon his mind. Now it is contended by the Quakers, that a person in such an excited state, but particularly if the excitement pleases, must be in a very unfavourable condition for the reception of the pure principle, or for the promotion of the practical duties of religion. It is supposed that if any religious book, or if any parts of the sacred writings, were handed to him in these moments, he would be incapable of enjoying them; and, of course, that religious retirement, which implies an abstraction from the things of the world, would be impracticable at such a season,

They believe also, that the exhibitions of the drama must, from their own nature, without any other consideration, disqualify for the pleasures of religion. It was a frequent saying of George Fox (taken from the apostle Peter), that "they who indulged in such pleasures were dead while they were alive;" that is, they were active in their bodies; they ran about briskly after their business or their pleasures; they showed the life of their bodily powers; but they were extinct as to spiritual feeling. By
this

this he meant, that the pleasures of the theatre, and others of a similar nature, were in direct opposition to the pleasures of religion. The former were from the world, worldly. They were invented according to the disposition and appetites of men. But the latter were from the spirit, spiritual. Hence there was not a greater difference between life and death than between these pleasures. Hence the human mind was made incapable of receiving both at the same time; and hence, the deeper it were to get into the enjoyment of the former, the less qualified it would become of course for the enjoyment of the latter.

SECTION V.

Theatre forbidden, because injurious to the happiness of man by disqualifying him for domestic enjoyments—Quakers value these next to the pleasures of religion—Sentiments of Cowper—Theatre has this tendency, by weaning gradually from a love of home—and has it in a greater degree than any other of the amusements of the world.

THE Quakers, ever since the institution of their Society, have abandoned the diversions

sions of the world. They have obtained their pleasures from other quarters. Some of these they have found in one species of enjoyment, and others in another. But those which they particularly prize, they have found in the enjoyment of domestic happiness. And these pleasures they value next to the pleasures of religion.

“ Domestic Happiness, thou only bliss
 Of paradise that has surviv'd the fall!
 Thou art the nurse of virtue.—In thine arms
 She smiles appearing, as in truth she is,
 Heav'n-born, and destin'd to the skies again.
 Thou art not known where Pleasure is ador'd,—
 That reeling goddess, with a zoneless waist
 And wand'ring eyes, still leaning on the arm
 Of Novelty, her fickle, frail support;
 For thou art meek and constant, hating change,
 And finding, in the calm of truth-tried love,
 Joys that her stormy raptures never yield.
 Forsaking thee, what shipwreck have we made
 Of honour, dignity, and fair renown !”

COWPER.

But if the Quakers have been accustomed to place one of the sources of their pleasures in domestic happiness, they may be supposed to be jealous of every thing that appears to them to be likely to interrupt it.

But they consider dramatic exhibitions as having this tendency. These exhibitions, under the influence of plot, dialogue, dress, music, action, and scenery, particularly fascinate. They excite the person, who has once seen them, to desire them again. But in proportion as this desire is gratified, or in proportion as people leave their homes for the amusements of the stage, they lose their relish and weaken their powers of the enjoyment of domestic society; that is, the Quakers mean to say, that domestic enjoyments and those of the theatre may become in time incompatible in the same persons; and that the theatre ought therefore to be particularly avoided, as an enemy that may steal upon them and rob them of those pleasures, which experience has taught them to value, as I have observed before, next to the pleasures of religion.

They are of opinion, also, that dramatic exhibitions not only tend of themselves to make home less agreeable, but that they excite a craving for stimulants; and, above all, teach a dependence upon external objects for amusement. Hence the attention of people is taken off again to new objects
of

of pleasure, which lie out of their own families and out of the circle of their friends.

It will not occupy much time to show that the Quakers have not been mistaken on this point.

It is not unusual in fashionable circles, where the theatre is regularly brought into the rounds of pleasure, for the father and the mother of a family to go to a play once, or occasionally twice, a week. But it seldom happens that they either go to the same theatre, or that they sit together. Their children are at this time left at home under what is considered to be proper care; but they are probably never seen again by them till the next noon, and perhaps once afterwards in the same day, when it is more than an even chance that they must be left again for the gratification of some new pleasure. Now this separation of fathers from mothers, and of parents from children, does not augur well of domestic enjoyments or of a love of home.

But we will trace the conduct of the parents still further. We will get into their company at their own houses: and here we shall very soon discover, how wearisome they consider every hour that is spent in the bosom

of their families, when deprived of their accustomed amusements; and with what anxiety they count the time till they are restored to their favourite rounds of pleasure.

We shall find no difficulty in judging also, from their conversation, the measure of their thought or their solicitude about their children. A new play is sure to claim the earliest attention or discussion. The capital style, in which an actor performed his part on a certain night, furnishes conversation for an hour. Observations on a new actress perhaps follow. Such subjects appear more interesting to such persons than the innocent conversation or the playful pranks of their children. If the latter are noisy, they are often sent out of the room as troublesome, though the same parents can bear the stunning plaudits or the discordant groans and hissings of the audience at the theatre.

In the mean time their children grow up, and, in their turn, are introduced by their parents to these amusements, as to places proper for the dissipation of vacant hours; till by frequent attendance they themselves lose an affection for home and the domestic duties, and have in time as
little

little regard for their parents, as their parents appear to have had for them. Marrying at length, not for the enjoyment of domestic society, they and their children perpetuate the same rounds of pleasure, and the same sentiments and notions.

To these instances many indeed might be added, by looking into the family-histories of those, who are in the habit of frequenting theatres in search of pleasure, by which it would appear that such amusements are not friendly to the cherishing of the domestic duties and affections, but that, on the other hand, in proportion as they are followed, they tend to sap the enjoyments of domestic life. And here it may be observed that, of all the amusements which go to the making up of the round of pleasures, the theatre has the greatest share in diverting from the pleasures of home: for it particularly attracts and fascinates both from the nature and the diversity of the amusements which it contains. It is also always open, in the season, for resort. So that if private invitations to pleasure should not come in sufficiently numerous, or should be broken off by the indisposition of the parties who give them

them, the theatre is always ready to supply any vacancy that may be occasioned in the round.

SECTION VI.

Quakers conceive that they can sanction no amusements but such as could have originated in Christian minds—Exhibitions of the drama could have had, they believe, no such origin—Early Christians abandoned them on their conversion—Arguments of the latter on this subject, as taken from Tertullian, Minucius Felix, Cyprian, Lactantius, and others.

THE Quakers conceive, as a Christian Society, that they ought to have nothing to do with any amusements but such as Christians could have invented themselves, or such as Christians could have sanctioned by becoming partakers of them. But they believe that dramatic exhibitions are of such a nature, as men of a Christian spirit could never have invented or encouraged; and that, if the world were to begin again, and were to be peopled by pure Christians, these
exhibitions

exhibitions could never be called into existence there.

This inference they judge to be deducible from the nature of a Christian mind. A man, who is in the habit at his leisure hours of looking into the vast and stupendous works of creation, of contemplating the wisdom, goodness, and power of the Creator, of trying to fathom the great and magnificent plans of his providence; who is in the habit of surveying all mankind with the philosophy of revealed religion, of tracing through the same unerring channel the uses and objects of their existence, the design of their different ranks and situations, the nature of their relative duties, and the like, could never, in the opinion of the Quakers, have either any enjoyment, or be concerned in the invention, of dramatic exhibitions. To a mind, in the habit of taking such an elevated flight, it is supposed that every thing on the stage must look little and childish, and out of place. How could a person of such a mind be delighted with the musical note of a fiddler, the attitude of a dancer, the impassioned grimace of an actor? How could the intrigue,

trigue, or the love-sick tale, of the composition please him? Or how could he have imagined that these could be the component parts of a Christian's joys?

But this inference is considered by the Society to be confirmed by the practice of the early Christians. These generally had been pagans. They had of course pagan dispositions. They followed pagan amusements; and, among these, the exhibitions of the stage. But soon after their conversion, that is when they had received new minds, and when they had exercised these on new and sublime subjects, or on subjects similar to those described,—or, in other words, when they had received the regenerated spirit of Christians,—they left the amusements of the stage, notwithstanding that, by this act of singularity in a sensual age, they were likely to bring upon themselves the odium and the reproaches of the world.

But when the early Christians abandoned the theatre, they abandoned it, as the Quakers contend, not because leaving paganism they were to relinquish all customs that were pagan, but because they saw in their
new

new religion, or because they saw in this newness of their minds, reasons which held out such amusements to be inadmissible while they considered themselves in the light of Christians. These reasons are sufficiently displayed by the writers of the second, third, and fourth centuries; and as they are alluded to by the Quakers, though never quoted, I shall give them to the reader. He will judge by these how far the antient coincide with the modern Christians upon this subject; and how far these arguments of antiquity are applicable to modern times.

The early Christians, according to Tertullian, Minucius Felix, Cyprian, Lactantius, and others, believed that the motives for going to these amusements were not of the purest sort. People went to them without any view of the improvement of their minds. "The motive was either to see, or to be seen."

They considered the manner of the drama as objectionable. They believed "that he, who was the author of truth, could never approve of that which was false, and that he, who condemned hypocrisy, could never approve of him who personated the cha-

racters of others ; and that they, therefore, who pretended to be in love, or to be angry, or to grieve, when none of those passions existed in their minds, were guilty of a kind of adultery in the eyes of the supreme Being.”

They considered their contents to be noxious. They looked upon them “ as consistories of immorality. They affirmed that things were spoken there which it did not become Christians to hear ; and that things were shown there which it did not become Christians to see ; and that while these things polluted those from whom they came, they polluted those in time, in whose sight and hearing they were either shown or spoken.”

They believed also that these things “ not only polluted the spectators, but that the representations of certain characters upon the stage pointed out to them the various roads to vice, and inclined them to become the persons whom they had seen represented, or to be actors in reality of what they had seen feigned upon the stage.”

They believed, again, that dramatic exhibitions “ produced a frame of mind contrary to that which should exist in a Christian

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tian breast: that there was nothing to be seen upon the stage that could lead or encourage him to devotion; but, on the other hand, that the noise and fury of the play-house, and the representations there, produced a state of excitement that disturbed the internal man. Whereas the spirit of a Christian ought to be calm, and quiet, and composed, to fit it for the duties of religion."

They believed also, that "such promiscuous assemblages of men and women were unfavourable to virtue, for that the sparks of the passions were there blown into flames."

Tertullian, from whom some of the above opinions are taken, gives an invitation to those, who were fond of public spectacles, in nearly the following terms:

"Are you fond," says he, "of the scenic doctrine, or of theatrical sights and compositions? We have plenty of books for you to read. We can give you works in prose and in verse. We can give you apophthegms and hymns. We cannot, to be sure, give you fictitious plots or fables, but we can give you truths. We cannot give you strophes

or the winding dances of the chorus, but we can give you simplicities, or plain and straight-forward paths. Are you fond of seeing contests for victory? You shall see these also, and such as are not trivial, but important. You may see, in our Christian example, chastity overcoming immodesty. You may see faithfulness giving a death-wound to perfidy. You may see mercy getting the better of cruelty. You may see modesty and delicacy of sentiment overcoming impurity and impudence. These are the contests, in which it becomes us Christians to be concerned, and where we ought to endeavour to receive the prize."



CHAPTER V.

SECTION I.

Dancing—Dancing forbidden—Greeks and Romans differed on this subject—Motive on which the Greeks encouraged dancing—Motive on which the moderns encourage it—Way in which the Quakers view it—Arguments which they use against it.

As the Quakers have thought it right to prohibit music and stage entertainments to the Society, so they have thought it proper to prohibit dancing; none of their children being allowed any instruction in the latter art.

It is remarkable that two of the most civilized nations, as well as two of the wisest men of antiquity, should have differed in their opinions with respect to dancing. The Greek considered it as an useful and an honourable employment; and most of the nations, therefore, under that appellation inserted

serted it into their system of education. The name of dancer was so honourable as to be given to some of their gods. Statues are recorded to have been erected to good dancers. Socrates is said to have admired dancing so much, as to have learnt it in his old age. Dancing, on the other hand, was but little regarded at Rome. It was not admitted even within the pale of accomplishments. It was considered at best but as a sorry and trivial employment. Cicero says, "Nemo ferè saltat sobrius, nisi fortè insanit, neque in solitudine, neque in convivio honesto."—"No man dances, in private, or at any respectable entertainment, except he be drunk or mad."

We collect, at least, from the above statement, that people of old, who were celebrated for their wisdom, came to very different conclusions with respect to the propriety of encouraging this art.

Those nations among the antients, which encouraged dancing, did it upon the principle that it led to an agility of body, and a quickness of motion, that would be useful in military evolutions and exploits. Hence

“ swift

“swift of foot” was considered to be an epithet as honourable as any that could be given to a warrior.

The moderns, on the other hand, encourage dancing, or at least defend it, upon rather different principles. They consider it as producing a handsome carriage of the body, as leading to a graceful and harmonious use of the limbs, and as begetting an erectness of position not more favourable to the look of a person than to his health.

That dancing produces dispositions of this sort cannot be denied, though certainly not to the extent which many have imagined. Painters, who study nature the most, and are the best judges of the appearance of the human frame, are of opinion that modern dancing does not produce natural figures, or at least such as they would choose for their respective compositions. The military exercise has quite as great a share as dancing, in the production of these dispositions. And there are certainly men who were never taught either the military exercise or dancing, whose deportment is harmonious and graceful.

The Quakers think it unnecessary to
8 teach

teach their children dancing, as an accomplishment, because they can walk and carry their persons with sufficient ease and propriety without it.

They think it unnecessary also, because, how consistent soever the practice of it may be with the sprightliness of youth, they could never sanction it in maturer age. They expect of the members of their Society that they should abandon amusements, and substitute useful and dignified pursuits, when they become men. But they cannot consider dancing otherwise than as an employment that is useless, and below the dignity of the Christian character, in persons who have come to years of discretion. To initiate, therefore, a youth of twelve or thirteen years of age into dancing, when he must relinquish it at twenty, would, in their opinion, be a culpable waste of his time.

The Quakers cannot view dancing abstractedly, for no person teaches or practises it abstractedly; but they are obliged to view it in connection with other things. If they view it with its usual accompaniment of music, it would be inconsistent, they think, to encourage it, when they have banished
music

music from their Society. If they view it as connected with an assemblage of persons, they must, they conceive, equally condemn it. And here it is, in fact, that they principally level their arguments against it. They prohibit all members of their Society from being present at balls and assemblies; and they think that if their youth are brought up in ignorance of the art of dancing, this ignorance will operate as one preventive at least against their attending amusements of this nature.

The Quakers are as strict in their inquiry with respect to the attendance of any of their members at balls, as at theatrical amusements. They consider balls and assemblies among the vain amusements of the world. They use arguments against these, nearly similar to those, which have been enumerated on the preceding subjects. They consider them, in the first place, as productive of a kind of frivolous levity, and of thoughtlessness with respect to the important duties of life. They consider them, in the second place, as giving birth to vanity and pride. They consider them, again, as powerful in the excitement of some of the
malevolent

malevolent passions. Hence they believe them to be injurious to the religious interests of a man. For, by depriving him of complacency of mind, and by increasing the growth of his bad feelings, they become impediments in the way of his improvement as a moral being.

SECTION II.

Arguments of the Quakers examined—Three cases made out for the determination of a moral philosopher—Case the first—Case the second—Case the third.

I PURPOSE to look into these arguments of the Society, and to see how far they can be supported. I will suppose, therefore, a few cases to be made up, and to be handed, one by one, to some moral philosopher for his decision. I will suppose this philosopher (that all prejudice of education may be excluded) to have been previously ignorant of the nature of dancing, but to have been made acquainted with it in order that he might be enabled to decide on the point in question.

Suppose,

Suppose, then, it was reported to this philosopher, that on a certain day a number of young persons of both sexes, who had casually met at a friend's house, instead of confining themselves to the room on a summer's afternoon, had walked out upon the green; that a person present had invited them suddenly to dance; that they had danced to the sound of musical vibrations for an hour; and that after this they had returned to the room, or that they had returned home. Would the philosopher be able to say, in this case, that there was any thing in it, that incurred any of the culpable imputations fixed upon dancing by the Quakers?

He could hardly, I think, make it out that there could have been, in any part of the business, any opening for the charges in question. There appear to have been no previous preparations of extravagant dressing; no premeditated design of setting off the person; no previous methods of procuring admiration; no circumstance, in short, by which he could reasonably suppose that either pride or vanity could have been called into existence. The time also would appear to him to have been too short, and the circumstances

cumstances too limited, to have given birth to improper feelings. He would certainly see that a sort of levity would have unavoidably arisen on the occasion, but his impartiality and justice would oblige him to make a distinction between the levity that only exhilarates, and the levity that corrupts the heart. Nor could he conceive that the dancing for an hour only, and this totally unlooked for, could stand much in the way of serious reflection for the future. If he were desired to class this sudden dancing for an hour upon the green with any of the known pleasures of life, he would probably class it with an hour's exercise in the fields, or with an hour's game at play, or with an hour's employment in some innocent recreation.

But suppose, now, that a new case were opened to the philosopher. Suppose it were told him, that the same party had been so delighted with their dance upon the green, that they had resolved to meet once a month for the purpose of dancing, and, that they might not be prevented by bad weather, to meet in a public room ; that they had met according to their resolution ; that they had
danced

danced at their first meeting but for a short time ; but that at their meetings afterwards they had got into the habit of dancing from eight or nine at night till twelve or one in the morning ; that many of them now began to be unduly heated in the course of this long exercise ; that some of them, in consequence of the heat in this crowded room, were now occasionally ready to faint ; that it was now usual for some of them to complain the next morning of colds, others of head-achs, others of relaxed nerves, and almost all of them of a general lassitude or weariness :—What would the philosopher say in the present case ?

The philosopher would now probably think that they acted unreasonably as human beings ; that they turned night into day ; and that, as if the evils of life were not sufficient in number, they converted hours, which might have been spent calmly and comfortably at home, into hours of indisposition and of unpleasant feeling to themselves. But this is not to the point. Would he or would he not say that the arguments of the Quakers applied in the present case ? It certainly does not appear,
from

from any thing that has yet transpired on this subject, that he could, with any shadow of reason, accuse the persons meeting on this occasion of vanity or pride, or that he could see from any of the occurrences that have been mentioned how these evils could be produced. Neither has any thing yet come out, from which he could even imagine the sources of any improper passions. He might think, perhaps, that they might be vexed for having brought fatigue and lassitude upon themselves; but he could see no opening for serious anger to others, or for any of the feelings of malevolence. Neither could he tell what occurrence to fix upon for the production of a frivolous levity. He would almost question, judging only from what has appeared in the last case, whether there might not be upon the whole more pain than pleasure from these meetings; and whether they, who on the day subsequent to these meetings felt themselves indisposed and their whole nervous system unbraced, were not so near the door of repentance, that serious thoughts would be more natural to them than those of a lighter kind.

But

But let us suppose one other case to be opened to the philosopher. Let us suppose it to be now stated to him that those, who frequented these monthly meetings, but particularly the females, had become habituated to talk for a day or two beforehand of nothing but of how they should dress themselves, or of what they should wear on the occasion: that some time had been spent in examining and canvassing the fashions; that the milliner had been called in for this purpose; that the imagination had been racked in the study of the decoration of the person; that both on the morning and the afternoon of the evening, on which they had publicly met to dance, they had been solely employed in preparations for decking themselves out; that they had been nearly two hours under one dresser only, namely, the hair-dresser; that frequently at intervals they had looked at their own persons in the glass; that they had walked up and down parading before it in admiration of their own appearance, and in the critical detection of any little fold in their dress which might appear to be out of place, and in the
adjustment

adjustment of the same :— What would the philosopher say in this new case?

He certainly could not view the case with the same complacent countenance as before. He would feel some symptoms of alarm. He would begin to think that the truth of the Quaker arguments was unfolding itself, and that what appeared to him to be an innocent amusement at the first, might possibly be capable of being carried out of the bounds of innocence by such and similar accompaniments. He could not conceive, if he had any accurate knowledge of the human heart, that such an extraordinary attention to dress and to the decoration of the person, or such a critical examination of these with a view of procuring admiration, could produce any other fruits than conceit and affectation, or vanity and pride. Nor could he conceive that all these preparations, all this previous talk, all this previous consultation about the fashions, added to the employment itself of the decoration of the person, could tend to any thing else than to degrade the mind and to render it light and frivolous. He would be obliged
to

to acknowledge also, that minds, accustomed to take so deep an interest in the fashions and vanities of the world, would not only loathe, but be disqualified for, serious reflection. But if he were to acknowledge that these preparations and accompaniments had, on any one occasion, a natural tendency to produce these effects, he could not but consider these preparations, if made once a month, as likely to become in time systematic nurseries for frivolous and affected characters.

Having traced the subject up to a point, where it appears that some of the Quaker arguments begin to bear, let us take leave of our philosopher; and as we have advanced nearly to the ball-room door, let us enter into the room itself, and see if any circumstances occur there, which shall enable us to form a better judgment upon it.

SECTION III.

Arguments of the Quakers still further examined—Interior of the ball-room displayed—View of the rise of many of the malevolent passions—these rise higher and are more painful than they are generally imagined—hence it is probable that spectators are better pleased than those interested in these dances—Conclusion of the arguments of the Quakers on this subject.

I AM afraid that I shall be thought more cynical than just, more prejudiced than impartial, more given to censure than to praise, if, in temples apparently dedicated to good-humour, cheerfulness, and mirth, I should say that sources were to be found from whence we could trace the rise of immoral passions. But human nature is alike in all places; and if circumstances should arise in the ball-room which touch, as it were, the strings of the passions, they will as naturally throw out their tone there as in other places. Why should envy, jealousy, pride, malice, anger, or revenge, shut themselves out exclusively from these resorts, as if these
were

were more than ordinarily sacred, or more than ordinary repositories of human worth?

In examining the interior of the ball-room, it must be confessed that we shall certainly find circumstances occasionally arising, that give birth to feelings neither of a pleasant nor of a moral nature. It is not unusual, for instance, to discover among the females one that excels in the beauty of her person, and another that excels in the elegance of her dress. The eyes of all are more than proportionally turned upon these for the whole night. This little circumstance soon generates a variety of improper passions. It calls up vanity and conceit in the breasts of these objects of admiration. It raises envy and jealousy, and even anger, in some of the rest. These become envious of the beauty of the former, envious of their taste, envious of their clothing, and, above all, jealous of the admiration bestowed upon them. In this evil state of mind one passion begets another; and instances have occurred, where some of these have felt displeased at the apparent coldness and indifference of their own partners, because they have appeared to turn their eyes more upon

the favourites of the night than upon themselves.

In the same room, when the parties begin to take their places to dance, other little circumstances not unfrequently occur, which give rise to other passions. Many, aiming to be as near to the top of the dance as possible, are disappointed of their places by others who have just stepped into them. Dis-satisfaction, and sometimes murmurs, follow. Each, in his own mind, supposes his claims and pretensions to the higher place to be stronger, on account of his money, his connections, his profession, or his rank. Thus, his own dispositions to pride are only the more nursed and fostered. Malice, too, is often engendered on the occasion: and though the parties would not be allowed by the master of the ceremonies to disturb the tranquillity of the room, animosities have sometimes sprung up between them which have not been healed in a little time. I am aware that in some large towns of the kingdom regulations are made with a view to the prevention of these evils, but it is in some only; and even where they are made, though they prevent outward rude behaviour,

viour, they do not prevent inward dissatisfaction. Moneyed influence still feels itself often debased by a lower place.

If we were to examine the ball-room further, we should find new circumstances arising to call out new and degrading passions. We should find disappointment and discontent often throwing the seeds of irritability on the mind. Men, fond of dancing, frequently find an over-proportion of men, and but few females, in the room. And women, wishing to dance, sometimes find an over-proportion of women, and but few men; so that partners are not to be had for all, and a number of each class must make up their minds to sit quietly, and to lose their diversion for the night. Partners, too, are frequently dissatisfied with each other. One thinks his partner too old; another too plain; another below him. Matched often in this unequal manner, they go down the dance in a sort of dudgeon, having no cordial disposition towards each other, and having persons before their eyes in the same room with whom they could have cordially danced. Nor are instances wanting where the pride of some has fixed upon the mediocrity

diocrity of others, as a reason why they should reluctantly lend them their hands when falling in with them in the dance. The slight is soon perceived, and disgust arises in both parties.

Various other instances might be mentioned where very improper passions are excited. I shall only observe, however, that these passions are generally stronger, and give more uneasiness, and are called up to a greater height, than might generally be imagined from such apparently slight causes. In many instances, indeed, they have led to such serious misunderstandings that they were only terminated by the duel.

From this statement I may remark here, though my observation may not be immediately to the point, that there is not, probably, that portion of entertainment, or that substantial pleasure, which people expected to find at these monthly meetings. The little jealousies arising about precedence, or about the admiration of one more than of another; the falling in occasionally with disagreeable partners; the slights and omissions that are often thought to be purposely made; the head aches, colds, sicknesses, and lassitude afterwards,

afterwards, must all of them operate as so many drawbacks from this pleasure: and it is not unusual to hear persons, fond of such amusements, complaining afterwards that they had not answered. There is therefore, probably, more pleasure in the preparations for such amusements, and in the previous talk about them, than in the amusements themselves.

It is also probable that the greatest pleasure felt in a ball-room is felt by those, who go into it as spectators only. These perceive pleasure from the music, from the beat of the steps in unison with it, but particularly from the idea that all who join in the dance are happy. These considerations produce in the spectator cheerfulness and mirth; and these are continued to him more pure and unalloyed than in the former case, because he can have no drawbacks from the admission into his own breast of any of those uneasy and immoral passions above described.

But to return to the point in question:—
The reader has now had the different cases laid before him, as determined by the moral philosopher.

philosopher. He has been conducted also through the interior of the ball-room. He will have perceived, therefore, that the arguments of the Quakers have gradually unfolded themselves, and that they are more or less conspicuous, or more or less true, as dancing is viewed abstractedly, or in connection with the preparations and accompaniments that may be interwoven with it. If it be viewed in connexion with these preparations and accompaniments, and if these should be found to be so inseparably connected with it that they must invariably go together, (which is supposed to be the case where it is introduced into the ball-room,) he will have no difficulty in pronouncing that in this case it is objectionable as a Christian recreation. For it cannot be doubted that it has an immediate tendency in this case to produce a frivolous levity, to generate vanity and pride, and to call up passions of the malevolent kind. Now in this point of view it is that the Quakers generally consider dancing. They never view it, as I observed before, abstractedly, or solely by itself. They have therefore
forbidden

forbidden it to their Society, believing it to be the duty of a Christian to be serious in his conversation and deportment, to afford an example of humility, and to be watchful and diligent in the subjugation of his evil passions.



CHAPTER VI.

Novels—Novels forbidden—their fictitious nature no argument against them—arguments of the Quakers are, that they produce an affectation of knowledge, a romantic spirit, and a perverted morality; and that by creating an indisposition towards other kinds of reading, they prevent moral improvement and real delight of mind—Hence novel-reading more pernicious than many other amusements.

AMONG the prohibitions which the Quakers have adopted in their moral education, as barriers against vice, or as preservatives of virtue, I shall consider that next, which relates to the perusal of improper books. George Fox seems to have forgotten nothing that was connected with the morals of the Society. He was anxious for the purity of its character. He seemed afraid of every wind that blew, lest it should bring some noxious vapour to defile it. And as those things which were spoken or represented might corrupt the mind, so those which were written and printed might corrupt

rupt it also. He recommended, therefore, that the youth of his newly-formed society should abstain from the reading of romances. William Penn, and others, expressed the same sentiments on this subject. And the same opinion has been held by the Quakers, as a body of Christians, down to the present day. Hence novels, as a particular species of romance, and as that which is considered as of the worst tendency, have been particularly marked for prohibition.

Some Quakers have been inclined to think that novels ought to be rejected on account of the fictitious nature of their contents. But this consideration is by no means generally adopted by the Society as an argument against them. Nor would it be a sound argument, if it were. If novels contain no evil within themselves, or have no evil tendency, the mere circumstance of the subject, names, or characters, being feigned will not stamp them as censurable. Such fiction will not be like the fiction of the drama, where men act and personate characters that are not their own. Different men, in different ages of the world, have had

had recourse to different modes of writing for the promotion of virtue. Some have had recourse to allegories, others to fables. The fables of Æsop, though a fiction from the beginning to the end, have been useful to many. But we have a peculiar instance of the use and innocence of fictitious descriptions in the sacred writings. For the Author of the Christian religion made use of parables on many and weighty occasions. We cannot, therefore, condemn fictitious biography, unless it condemn itself by becoming a destroyer of morals.

The arguments against novels, in which the Quakers agree as a body, are taken from the pernicious influence that they have upon the minds of those, who read them.

The Quakers do not say that all novels have this influence, but that they have it generally. The great demand for novels, in consequence of the taste which the world has shown for this species of writing, has induced persons of all descriptions, and of course many who have been but ill qualified, to write them. Hence, though some novels have appeared of considerable merit, the worthless have been greatly preponderant.

rant. The demand also has occasioned foreign novels, of a complexion by no means suited to the good sense and character of our country, to be translated into our language. Hence a fresh weight has been thrown into the preponderating scale. From these two causes it has happened that the contents of a great majority of our novels have been unfavourable to the improvement of the moral character. Now, when we consider this circumstance, and when we consider likewise that professed novel-readers generally read all the compositions of this sort that come into their way; that they wait for no selection, but that they devour the good, the bad, and the indifferent, alike; we shall see the reasons, which have induced the Quakers to believe that the effect of this species of writing upon the mind has been generally pernicious.

One of the effects, which the members of this Society consider to be produced by novels upon those who read them, is an affectation of knowledge, which leads them to become forward and presumptuous. This effect is highly injurious; for, while it raises them unduly in their own estimation, it

lowers them in that of the world. Nothing can be more disgusting, in the opinion of the Quakers, than to see persons assuming the authoritative appearance of men and women, before their age or their talents can have given them any pretensions to do it.

Another effect is the following:—They conceive that there is among professed novel-readers a peculiar cast of mind. They observe in them a romantic spirit, a sort of wonder-loving imagination, and a disposition towards enthusiastic flights of the fancy, which to sober persons have the appearance of a temporary derangement. As the former effect must become injurious by producing forwardness, so this must become so by producing unsteadiness of character.

A third effect, which they find to be produced among this description of readers, is conspicuous in a perverted morality. Readers of this cast place almost every virtue in feeling, and in the affectation of benevolence. They consider these as the true and only sources of good. They make these equivalent to moral principle. And actions flowing from feeling, though feeling itself is not always well founded, and sometimes

runs

runs into compassion even against justice, they class as moral duties arising from moral principle. They consider also too frequently the laws of religion as barbarous restraints, and which their new notions of civilized refinement may relax at will; and they do not hesitate, in consequence, to give a colour to some fashionable vices, which no Christian painter would admit into any composition which was his own.

To this it may be added, that, believing their own knowledge to be supreme, and their own system of morality to be the only enlightened one, they fall often into scepticism, and pass easily from thence to infidelity. Foreign novels, however, more than our own, have probably contributed to the production of this latter effect.

These, then, are frequently the evils, and those which the Society insist upon, where persons devote their spare time to the reading of novels, but more particularly among females, who, on account of the greater delicacy of their constitutions, are the more susceptible of such impressions. These effects the Quakers consider as highly injurious when they fall upon this sex. For
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an affectation of knowledge, or a forwardness of character, seems to be much more disgusting among women than among men. It may be observed also, that an unsteady or romantic spirit, or a wonder-loving or flighty imagination, can never qualify a woman for domestic duties, or make her a sedate and prudent wife. Nor can a relaxed morality qualify her for the discharge of her duty as a parent in the religious education of her children.

But, independently of these, there is another evil, which the Society attach to novel-reading, of a nature too serious to be omitted in this account. It is, that those who are attached to this species of reading become indisposed towards any other.

This indisposition arises from the peculiar construction of novels. Their structure is similar to that of dramatic compositions. They exhibit characters to view. They have their heroes and heroines in the same manner. They lay open the checkered incidents in the lives of these. They interweave into their histories the powerful passion of love. By animated language, and descriptions which glow with sympathy, they rouse the
sensitivity

sensibility of the reader, and fill his soul with interest in the tale. They fascinate, therefore, in the same manner as plays. They produce also the same kind of mental stimulus*, or the same powerful excitement of the mind. Hence it is that this indisposition is generated. For, if other books contain neither characters nor incidents, nor any of the high seasoning or gross stimulants which belong to novels, they become insipid.

It is difficult to estimate the injury, which is done to persons by this last-mentioned effect of novel-reading upon the mind. For the contents of our best books consist usually of plain and sober narrative. Works of this description give no extravagant repre-

* I have been told by a physician of the first eminence, that music and novels have done more to produce the sickly countenances and nervous habits of our highly-educated females, than any other causes that can be assigned. The excess of stimulus on the mind, from the interesting and melting tales that are peculiar to novels, affects the organs of the body, and relaxes the tone of the nerves, in the same manner as the melting tones of music have been described to act upon the constitution, after the sedentary employment, necessary for skill in that science, has injured it.

sentations of things, because their object is truth. They are found frequently without characters or catastrophes, because these would be often unsuitable to the nature of the subject of which they treat. They contain repellents rather than stimulants, because their design is the promotion of virtue. The novel-reader, therefore, by becoming indisposed towards these, excludes himself from moral improvement, and deprives himself of the most substantial pleasure which reading can produce. In vain do books on the study of nature unfold to him the treasures of the mineral or the vegetable world. He forgoes this addition to his knowledge, and this innocent food for his mind. In vain do books on science lay open to him the constitution and the laws of motion of bodies. This constitution and these laws are still mysteries to him. In vain do books on religion discover to him the true path to happiness. He has still this path to seek. Neither, if he were to dip into works like these, but particularly into those of the latter description, could he enjoy them. This latter consideration makes the reading of novels a more pernicious employment than

than many others. For though there may be amusements, which may sometimes produce injurious effects to those who partake them, yet these may be counteracted by the perusal of works of a moral tendency. The effects, on the other hand, which are produced by the reading of novels, seem to admit of no corrective or cure. For how, for instance, shall a perverted morality, which is considered to be one of them, be rectified, if the book, which is to contain the advice for this purpose, be so uninteresting or insipid, that the persons in question have no disposition to peruse it?

CHAPTER VII.

SECTION I.

Diversions of the field—Diversions of the field forbidden—General thoughtlessness on this subject—Sentiments of Thomson—Sentiments of George Fox—of Edward Burroughs—Similar sentiments of Cowper—Law of the Society on the subject.

THE diversions of the field are usually followed by people, without any consideration whether they are justifiable either in the eye of morality or of reason. Men receive them as the customs of their ancestors, and they are therefore not likely to entertain doubts concerning their propriety. The laws of the country also sanction them; for we find regulations and qualifications on the subject. Those, also, who attend these diversions, are so numerous, and their rank and station and character are often such, that they sanction them again by their example; so that few people think of making any

any inquiry, how far they are allowable as pursuits.

But though this general thoughtlessness prevails upon the subject, and though many have fallen into these diversions, as into the common customs of the world, yet benevolent and religious individuals have not allowed them to pass unnoticed, nor been backward in their censures and reproofs.

It has been matter of astonishment to some, how men, who have the powers of reason, can waste their time in galloping after dogs, in a wild and tumultuous manner, to the detriment often of their neighbours, and to the hazard of their own lives; or how men, who are capable of high intellectual enjoyments, can derive pleasure, so as to join in shouts of triumph, on account of the death of a harmless animal; or how men, who have organic feelings, and who know that other living creatures have the same, can make an amusement of that, which puts brute-animals to pain.

Good poets have spoken the language of enlightened nature upon this subject. Thomson, in his Seasons, introduces the
diversions

diversions of the field in the following manner :

“ Here the rude clamour of the sportsman’s joy,
The gun fast-thund’ring, and the winded horn,
Would tempt the Muse to sing the rural game.”

But further on he observes,

“ These are not subjects for the peaceful Muse,
Nor will she stain with such her spotless song ;
Then most delighted, when she social sees
The whole mix’d animal-creation round
Alive and happy. ’Tis not joy to her
This falsely cheerful barbarous game of death.”

Cowper, in his *Task*, in speaking in praise of the country, takes occasion to express his disapprobation of one of the diversions in question :

“ They love the country, and none else, who seek
For their own sake its silence and its shade,
Delights, which who would leave that has a heart
Susceptible of pity, or a mind
Cultur’d, and capable of sober thought,
For all the savage din of the swift pack
And clamours of the field ? Detested sport !
That owes its pleasure to another’s pain,
That feeds upon the sobs and dying shrieks
Of harmless Nature, dumb, but yet endued
With eloquence, that agonies inspire,
Of silent tears, and heart-distending sighs !

Vain

Vain tears, alas! and sighs that never find
A corresponding tone in jovial souls!"

In these sentiments of the poets, the Quakers, as a religious body, have long joined. George Fox specifically reprobated hunting and hawking, which were the field-diversions of his own time. He had always shown, as I stated in the Introduction, a tender disposition to brute-animals, by reproofing those who had treated them improperly in his presence. He considered these diversions as unworthy of the time and attention of men, who ought to have much higher objects of pursuit. He believed, also, that real Christians could never follow them; for a Christian was a renovated man, and a renovated man could not but know the works of creation better than to subject them to his abuse.

Edward Burroughs, who lived at the same time, and was an able minister of the Society, joined George Fox in his sentiments with respect to the treatment of animals. He considered that man in the fall, or the apostate man, had a vision so indistinct and vitiated, that he could not see the animals of the creation as he ought; but that the
man

man who was restored, or the spiritual Christian, had a new and clear discernment concerning them, which would oblige him to consider and treat them in a proper manner.

This idea of George Fox, and of Edward Burroughs, seems to have been adopted or patronised by the poet Cowper :

“ Thus harmony and family accord
 Were driv'n from Paradise; and in that hour
 The seeds of cruelty, that since have swell'd
 To such gigantic and enormous growth,
 Were sown in human-nature's fruitful soil.
 Hence date the persecution and the pain
 That man inflicts on all inferior kinds,
 Regardless of their plaints. To make him sport,
 To gratify the phrensy of his wrath,
 Or his base gluttony, are causes good
 And just, in his account, why bird and beast
 Should suffer torture”——

Thus the Quakers censured these diversions from the first formation of their Society, and laid down such moral principles, with respect to the treatment of animals, as were subversive of their continuance. These principles continued to actuate all true members who were their successors; and they gave proof by their own conduct that they
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were influenced by them, not only in treating the different animals under their care with tenderness, but in abstaining from all diversions in which their feelings could be hurt. The diversions, however, of the field, notwithstanding that this principle of the treatment of the brute-creation had been long recognised, and that no person of approved character in the Society followed them, began in time to be resorted to occasionally by the young and thoughtless members, either out of curiosity, or with a view of trying them as means of producing pleasure. These deviations, however, from the true spirit of Quakerism, became at length known; and the Society, that no excuse might be left to any for engaging in such pursuits again, came to a resolution in one of their yearly meetings, giving advice upon the subject in the following words :

“ We clearly rank the practice of hunting and shooting for diversion with vain sports; and we believe the awakened mind may see, that even the leisure of those whom Providence hath permitted to have a competence of worldly goods is but ill filled up with these amusements. Therefore, being not only ac-

countable for our substance, but also for our time, let our leisure be employed in serving our neighbour, and not in distressing the creatures of God for our amusement*.”

I shall not take upon me to examine the different reasons, upon which we find the foundation of this law. I shall not inquire how far a man's substance, or rather his talent, is wasted or misapplied, in feeding a number of dogs in a costly manner, while the poor of the neighbourhood may be starving, or how far the galloping after these is, in the eye of Christianity, a misapplication of a person's time. I shall adhere only to that part of the argument, how far a person has a right to make a † pleasure

* Book of Extracts.

† The Quakers, and the poet Cowper likewise, in their laudable zeal for the happiness of the brute-creation, have given an improper description of the nature of the crime of these diversions. They have made it to consist in a man's deriving pleasure from the sufferings of the animals in question; whereas it should have been made to consist in his making a pleasure of a pursuit which puts them to pain. The most abandoned sportsman, it is to be presumed, never hunts them because he enjoys their sufferings. His pleasure arises from considerations of another nature.

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of that which occasions pain and death to the animal-creation; and I shall show in what manner the Quakers argue upon this subject, and how they persuade themselves that they have no right to pursue such diversions, but particularly when they consider themselves as a body of professing Christians.

SECTION II.

Diversions of the field judged, first, by the morality of the Old Testament—Original charter to kill animals—Condition annexed to it—Sentiments of Cowper—Rights and duties springing from this charter—Violation of it the violation of a moral law—Diversions in question not allowable by this standard.

THE Quakers usually try the lawfulness of field-diversions, which include hunting and shooting, by two standards; and, first, by the morality of the Old Testament.

They believe, in common with other Christians, that men have a right to take

away the lives of animals for their food. The great Creator of the universe, to whom every thing that is in it belongs, gave to Noah and his descendants a grant or charter for this purpose. In this charter no exception is made. Hence, wild animals are included in it equally with the tame. And hence, a hare may as well be killed, if people have occasion for food, as a chicken or a lamb.

They believe, also, that when the Creator of the universe gave men dominion over the whole brute-creation, or delivered this creation into their hands, he intended them the right of destroying such animals as circumstances warranted them in supposing would become injurious to themselves. The preservation of themselves, which is the first law of nature, and the preservation of other animals under their care, created this new privilege.

But though men have the power given them over the lives of animals, there is a condition in the same charter, that they shall take them with as little pain as possible to the creatures. If the death of animals is to be made serviceable to men, the least they can do in return is to mitigate their
their

their sufferings while they expire. This obligation the Supreme Being imposed upon those, to whom he originally gave the charter, by the command of not eating their flesh while the life's-blood was in it. The Jews obliged all their converts to religion, even the Proselytes of the Gate, who were not considered to be so religious as the Proselytes of the Covenant, to observe what they called the seventh commandment of Noah, or that "they should not eat the member of any beast that was taken from it while it was alive*." This law, therefore, of blood, whatever other objects it might have in view, enjoined that, while men were engaged in the distressing task of taking away the life of an animal, they should respect its feelings, by abstaining from torture or all unnecessary pain.

* It seems almost impossible that men could be so depraved as to take flesh to eat from a poor animal while alive; and yet, from the law enjoined to Proselytes of the Gate, it is probable that it was the case. Bruce, whose Travels into Abyssinia are gaining ground in credit, asserts that such customs obtained there. And the Harleian Miscellany, vol. vi. p. 126, in which is a modern account of Scotland, written in 1670, states the same practice as having existed in our own island.

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“ On Noah, and in him on all mankind,
 The charter was conferr'd, by which we hold
 The flesh of animals in fee, and claim
 O'er all we feed on pow'r of life and death.
 But read the instrument and mark it well.
 Th' oppression of a tyrannous control
 Can find no warrant there. Feed, then, and yield
 Thanks for thy food. Carnivorous, through sin,
 Feed on the slain, but spare the living brute!”

COWPER.

From this charter, and from the great condition annexed to it, the Quakers are of opinion that rights and duties have sprung up,—rights on behalf of animals, and duties on the part of men,—and that a breach of these duties, however often or however thoughtlessly it may take place, is a breach of a moral law. For this charter did not relate to those animals only which lived in the particular country of the Jews, but those in all countries wherever Jews might dwell. Nor was the observance of it confined to the Jews only, but it was to extend to the Proselytes of the Covenant and of the Gate. Nor was the observance of it confined to these proselytes; but it was to extend to all nations, because all animals of the same species

species are, in all countries, organized alike, and have all similar feelings; and because all animals of every kind are susceptible of pain.

In trying the lawfulness of the diversions of the field, as the Quakers do, by this charter, and by the great condition that is annexed to it, I purpose, in order to save time, to confine myself to hunting; for this will appear to be the most objectionable if examined in this manner.

It must be obvious, then, that hunting, even in the case of hares, is seldom followed for the purposes of food. It is very uncertain, in the first place, whether, in the course of the chase, they can be preserved whole, when they are taken, so as to be fit to be eaten. And, in the second, it may be observed that we may see fifty horsemen after a pack of hounds, no one of whom has any property in the pack, nor of course any right to the prey. These cannot even pretend that their object is food either for themselves or others.

Neither is hunting, where foxes are the object in view, pursued upon the principle of the destruction of noxious animals. For

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it may be observed that rewards are frequently offered to those who will procure them for the chase; that large woods or covers are frequently allotted them, that they may breed, and perpetuate their species for the same purpose; and that a poor man in the neighbourhood of a fox-hunter would be sure to experience his displeasure, if it were known that he had destroyed any of these animals.

With respect to the mode of destroying them in either of these cases, (which is the next consideration) it is not as expeditious as it might be made by other means. It is, on the other hand, peculiarly cruel. A poor animal is followed, not for minutes, but frequently for an hour, and sometimes for hours, in pain and agony. Its sufferings begin with its first fear. Under this fear, perpetually accompanying it, it flies from the noise of horses and of horsemen, and the cries of dogs: it pants for breath, till the panting becomes difficult and painful: it becomes wearied even to misery, yet dares not rest: and, under a complication of these sufferings, it is at length overtaken, and often literally torn to pieces by its pursuers.

Hunting,

Hunting, therefore, does not appear, in the opinion of the Quakers, to be followed for any of those purposes which alone, according to the original charter, give mankind a right over the lives of brutes. It is neither followed for food, nor for prevention of injury to man, or to the creatures belonging to him. Neither is life taken away by means of it as mercifully as it ought to be, according to the meaning of the great condition*. But if hunting be not justifiable, when examined upon these three principles, it can never be justifiable, in the opinion of this Society, when it is followed on the principle of pleasure. All destruction of animal life upon this last principle must come within the charge of wanton cruelty, and be considered as a violation of a moral law.

* The netting of animals for food is perfectly unobjectionable upon these principles.

SECTION III.

Diversions of the field judged, secondly, by the morality of the New Testament—The renovated man, or Christian, has a clearer knowledge of creation and of its uses—he views animals as the creatures of God—hence he finds animals to have rights, independently of any written law—he collects, again, new rights from the benevolence of his new feelings—and new rights, again, from the written word of Revelation.

THE Quakers try the lawfulness of these diversions, again, by the morality of the New Testament. They adopt, in the first place, upon this occasion, the idea of George Fox and of Edward Burroughs, which has been already stated; and they follow it up in the manner which I shall now explain.

They believe that a man under the new Covenant, or one who is really a Christian, is a renovated man. As long as Adam preserved his primæval innocence, or continued in the image of his Maker, his spiritual vision was clear. When he lost this image, it became dim, short, and confused. This is the case, the Society believe, with every apostate

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state or wicked man. He sees through a vitiated medium. He sees, of course, nothing of the harmony of the creation. He has but a confused knowledge of the natures and ends of things. These natures and these ends he never examines as he ought, but, in the confusion of his moral vision, he abuses and perverts them. Hence it generally happens that an apostate man is cruel to his brute. But in proportion as he is restored to the divine image, or becomes as Adam was before he fell, or in proportion as he exchanges earthly for spiritual views, he sees all things through a clearer medium. It is then, the Quakers believe, that the creation is opened to him, and that he finds the Creator has made nothing in vain. It is then that he knows the natures of things, that he estimates their uses and their ends, and that he will never stretch these beyond their proper bounds. Beholding animals in this sublime light, he will appreciate their strength, their capacities, and their feelings; and he will never use them but for the purposes intended by Providence. It is then that the creation will delight him. It is then that he will find a growing love to the

animated objects of it. And this knowledge of their natures, and this love of them, will oblige him to treat them with due tenderness and respect. Hence, all animals will have a security in the breast of every Christian, or renovated man, against oppression or abuse. He will never destroy them wantonly, nor put them to unnecessary pain. Now the Quakers are of opinion that every person, who professes Christianity, ought to view things as the man who is renovated would view them, and that it therefore becomes them in particular, as a body of highly professing Christians, to view them in the same manner. Hence, they uniformly look upon animals not as brute-machines, to be used at discretion, but as the creatures of God, of whose existence the use and intention ought always to be considered, and to whom duties arise out of this spiritual feeling, independently of any written law in the Old Testament, or any grant or charter, by which their happiness might be secured. The Members therefore of this Society, viewing animals in this light, believe that they are bound to treat them accordingly. Hence, the instigation of two horses by whips and
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and spurs, for a trial of speed, in consequence of a moneyed stake, is considered by them to be criminal. The horse was made for the use of man, to carry his body and transport his burthens ; but he was never made to engage in painful conflicts with other horses, on account of the avarice of his owner. Hence, the pitting together of two cocks for a trial of victory is considered as equally criminal. For the cock, whatever may be his destined object among the winged creation, has been long useful to man in awakening him from unseasonable slumber, and in sounding to him the approach of day. But it was never intended that he should be employed to the injury and destruction of himself, or to the injury and destruction of his own species. In the same manner the Quakers condemn the hunting of animals, except on the plea of necessity, or that they cannot be destroyed, if their death be required, in any other way. For, whatever may be their several uses, or the several ends of their existence in creation, they were never created to be so used by man, that they should suffer, and this entirely for his sport. Whoever puts animals

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to cruel and unnatural uses, disturbs, in the opinion of the Quakers, the harmony of creation, and offends God.

They are of opinion, in the second place, that the renovated man must have in his own benevolent spirit such an exalted sense of the benevolent spirit of the Creator, as to believe that he never constituted any part of animated nature, without assigning it its proper share of happiness during the natural time of its existence; or, that it was to have its moment, its hour, its day, or its year of pleasure. And if this be the case, he must believe also, that any interruption of its tranquillity, without the plea of necessity, must be an innovation of its rights as a living being.

They believe also, that the renovated man, who loves all the works of the Creator, will carry every divine law, which has been revealed to him, as far as it is possible to be carried on account of a similarity of natures, through all animated creation, and particularly that law, which forbids him to do to another what he would dislike to be done unto himself. Now this law is founded on the sense of bodily, and on the
sense

sense of mental, feeling. The mental feelings of men and brutes, or the reason of man and the instinct of animals, are different. But their bodily feelings are alike, and they are in their due proportions susceptible of pain. The nature, therefore, of man and of animals is alike in this particular. He can anticipate and know their feelings by his own. He cannot, therefore, subject them to any action unnecessarily, if on account of a similar construction of his own organs such an action would produce pain to himself. His own power of feeling strongly commands sympathy with all that can feel. And that general sympathy, which arises to a man when he sees pain inflicted on the person of any individual of his own species, will arise, in the opinion of the Quakers, to the renovated man, when he sees it inflicted on the body of any brute.

CHAPTER VIII.

Objections started by philosophical moralists to the preceding system of education—"This system a prohibitory one—Prohibitions sometimes the cause of greater evils than they prevent—they may confuse morality, and break the spirit—they render the vicious more vicious—and are not to be relied upon as effectual, because built on a false foundation—Ignorance is no guardian of virtue—Causes, not sub-causes, are to be contended against—No certain security but in knowledge and a love of virtue—Prohibitions, where effectual, produce but a sluggish virtue."

I HAVE now mentioned the principal prohibitions that are to be found in the moral education of the Quakers; and I have annexed to these the various reasons which they themselves give why they were introduced into their Society. I have therefore finished this part of my task, and the reader will expect me to proceed to the next subject. But as I am certain that many objections will be started here, I shall stop for a few minutes to state and to consider them.

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The Quakers differ on the subject of moral education very materially from the world, and indeed from those of the world, who, having had a more than ordinarily liberal education, may be supposed to have, in most cases, a more than ordinarily correct judgment. The Quaker system, as we have seen, consists principally of specific prohibitions. These prohibitions, again, are extended occasionally to things which are not in themselves vicious. They are extended, again, to these, because it is possible that they may be made productive of evil. And they are founded apparently on the principle, that ignorance of such things secures innocence; or that ignorance, in such cases, has the operation of a preventive of vice, or a preservative of virtue.

Philosophical moralists, on the other hand, are friends to occasional indulgencies. They see nothing inherently or necessarily mischievous, either in the theatre, or in the concert-room, or in the ball-room, or in the circulating library, or in many other places of resort. If a young female, say they, situated in a provincial town, were to see a play annually, would it not give her animation,
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and afford a spring to her heart? Or if a youth were to see a play two or three times in the year, might not his parents, if they were to accompany him, make it each time, by their judicious and moral remarks, subservient to the improvement of his morals? Neither do these moralists anticipate any danger by looking to distant prospects, where the things are innocent in themselves. And they are of opinion that all danger may be counteracted effectually, not by prohibitory checks and guards, but by storing the mind with knowledge, and filling it with a love of virtue. The arguments, therefore, which these will advance against the system of the moral education of the Quakers, may be seen in the following words:

“ All prohibitions, they contend, should be avoided, as much as possible, in moral education; for prohibitions may often become the cause of greater immorality than they were intended to prevent. The fable of the hen, whose very prohibition led her chickens to the fatal well, has often been realized in life. There is a certain curiosity in human nature to look into things forbidden. If Quaker-youth should have the
same

same desires in this respect as others, they cannot gratify them but at the expense of their virtue. If they wish for novels, for example, they must get them clandestinely. If to go to the theatre, they must go in secret. But they must do more than this in the latter case; for, as they would be known by their dress, they must change it for that of another person. Hence, they may be made capable of intrigue, hypocrisy, and deceit.

“ Prohibitions, again, they believe, except they be well founded, may confound the notions of children on the subject of morality; for, if they are forbidden to do what they see many worthy and enlightened persons do, they may never know where to fix the boundaries between vice and virtue.

“ Prohibitions, again, they consider, if made without an allowance of exceptions, as having a tendency to break the spirit of youth. Break a horse in the usual way, and teach him to stop with the check of the reins, and you break him and preserve his courage. But put him in a mill to break him, and you break his life and animation.

Prohibi-

Prohibitions, therefore, may hinder elevated feeling, and may lead to poverty and sordidness of spirit.

“Prohibitions, again, they believe, if youth once depart from the right way, render them more vicious characters than common. This arises from the abruptness or suddenness of transition. For, having been shut up within narrow boundaries for a part of their lives, they go greater lengths, when once let loose, than others who have not been equally curbed and confined.

“But while they are of opinion that prohibitions are likely to be thus injurious to Quaker-youth, they are of opinion that they are never to be relied upon as effectual guardians of morality, because they consider them as built upon false principles.

“They are founded, they conceive, on the principle, that ignorance is a security for innocence; or that vice is so attractive, that we cannot resist it, but by being kept out of the way. In the first case, they contend that the position is false; for ignorant persons are of all others the most likely, when they fall into temptations, to be seduced.

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And, in the second, they contend that there is a distrust of Divine Providence in his moral government of the world.

“ They are founded, again, they conceive, on false principles, inasmuch as the Quakers confound causes with sub-causes, or causes with occasions. If a person, for example, were to get over a hedge, and receive a thorn in his hand, and die of the wound, this thorn would be only the occasion, and not the cause, of his death. The bad state, in which his body must have been, to have made this wound fatal, would have been the original cause. In like manner, neither the theatre nor the ball-room are the causes of the bad passions that are to be found there. All these passions must have existed in persons previously to their entrance into these places. Plays, therefore, or novels, or public dances, are only the sub-causes, or the occasions, of calling forth the passions in question. The real cause is in the infected state of the mind, or in the want of knowledge, or in the want of a love of virtue.

“ Prohibitions, therefore, though they may become partial checks to vice, can never, they believe, be relied upon as effectual guardians

guardians of virtue. Bars and bolts seldom prevent thieves from robbing a house. But if armed men should be in it, who would venture to enter in? In the same manner the mind of man should be armed or prepared. It should be so furnished, that men should be able to wander through a vicious world amidst all its foibles and its follies, and pass uncontaminated by them. It should have that tone given to it, which should hinder all circumstances from becoming occasions. But this can never be done by locking up the heart to keep vice out of it, but by filling it with knowledge and with a love of virtue.

“That this is the only method to be relied upon in moral education, they conceive, may be shown by considering upon whom the pernicious effects of the theatre, or of the ball-room, or of the circulating library, principally fall. Do they not fall principally upon those who have never had a dignified education? ‘Empty noddles,’ it is said, ‘are fond of playhouses’; and the converse is true, that persons, whose understandings have been enriched, and whose tastes have been corrected, find all such

recreations tiresome: at least they find so much to disgust them, that what they approve does not make them adequate amends. This is the case, also, with respect to novels. These do harm principally to barren minds. They do harm to those who have no proper employment for their time, or to those who, in the manners, conversation, and conduct of their parents, or of others with whom they associate, have no examples of pure thinking, or of pure living, or of a pure taste. They, on the other hand, who have been taught to love good books, will never run after or be affected by bad ones. And the same mode of reasoning, they conceive, is applicable to other cases. For, if people are taught to love virtue for virtue's sake, and, in like manner, to hate what is unworthy because they have a genuine and living knowledge of its unworthiness, neither the ball nor concert-room, nor the theatre, nor the circulating library, nor the diversions of the field, will have charms enough to seduce them, or to injure the morality of their minds.

“To sum up the whole: The prohibitions of the Quakers, in the first place, may become
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come injurious, in the opinion of these philosophical moralists, by occasioning greater evils than they were intended to prevent. They can never, in the second place, be relied upon as effectual guardians of virtue, because they consider them to be founded on false principles. And if at any time they can believe them to be effectual in the office assigned them, they believe them to be productive only of a cold or a sluggish virtue."



CHAPTER IX.

SECTION I.

Reply of the Quakers to these objections—They say, first, that they are to be guided by revelation in the education of their children—and that the education which they adopt is sanctioned by revelation, and by the practice of the early Christians—They maintain, again, that the objections are not applicable to them; for these presuppose circumstances concerning them which are not true—They allow the system of filling the mind with virtue to be the most desirable—but they maintain that it cannot be acted upon abstractedly—and that, if it could, it would be as dangerous as philosophical moralists make the system of the prohibitions.

TO these objections the Quakers would make the following reply :

They do not look up either to their own imaginations, or to the imaginations of others for any rule in the education of their children. as a Christian Society they conceive themselves bound to be guided by revelation, and by revelation only, while it has

any injunctions to offer which relate to this subject.

In adverting to the Old Testament, they find that no less than nine, out of the ten commandments of Moses, are of a prohibitory nature; and in adverting to the New, that many of the doctrines of Jesus Christ, and the Apostles, are delivered in the form of prohibitions.

They believe that revealed religion prohibits them from following all those pursuits which the objections notice; for though there is no specific prohibition of each, yet there is an implied one in the spirit of Christianity. Thus, for example, violent excitements of the passions on sensual subjects must be unfavourable to religious advancement. Worldly pleasures must hinder those which are spiritual. Impure words, and spectacles, must affect morals. Not only evil is to be avoided, but even the appearance of evil. Whilst, therefore, these sentiments are acknowledged by Christianity, it is to be presumed that the customs, which the objections notice, are to be avoided in Christian education: and as the Quakers consider these to be forbidden to themselves, they feel themselves

selves obliged to forbid them to others. And in these particular prohibitions they consider themselves as sanctioned both by the writings and the practices of the early Christians.

In looking at the objections, which have been made, with a view of replying to them, they would observe, first, that these objections do not seem to apply to them, as a Society, because they presuppose circumstances concerning them which are not true. They presuppose, first, that their moral education is founded on prohibitions solely; whereas they endeavour, both by the communication of positive precepts and by their example, to fill the minds of their children with a love of virtue. They presuppose, again, that they are to mix with the world, and to follow the fashions of the world; in which case a moderate knowledge of the latter, with suitable advice when they are followed, is considered as enabling them to pass through life with less danger than the prohibition of the same; whereas they mix but little with persons of other denominations. They abjure the world, that they may not imbibe its spirit. And here they would observe, that the knowledge which

is recommended to be obtained, by going through perilous customs, is not necessary for them as a Society. For living much at home, and mixing almost solely with one another, they consider their education as sufficient for their wants.

If the Quakers could view the two different systems abstractedly, that of filling the heart with virtue, and that of shutting it out from a knowledge of vice, so that these could be acted upon separately, and so that the first of the two were practicable, and practicable without having to go through scenes that were dangerous to virtue, they would have no hesitation in giving the preference to the former ; because, if men could be taught to love virtue for virtue's sake, all the trouble of prohibitions would be unnecessary.

But the Quakers would conceive that the system of filling the mind with virtue, if acted upon abstractedly or by itself, would be impracticable with respect to youth. To make it practicable, children must be born with the full-grown intellect and experience of men. They must have an innate knowledge of all the tendencies,
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the bearings, the relations, and the effects of virtue and vice. They must be also strong enough to look temptation in the face ; whereas youth have no such knowledge or experience, or strength or power.

They would consider, also, the system of filling the mind with virtue as impossible, if attempted abstractedly or alone, because it is not in human wisdom to devise a method of inspiring it with this essence, without first teaching it to abstain from vice. It is impossible, they would say, for a man to be virtuous, or to be in love with virtue, except he were to lay aside his vicious practices. The first step to virtue, according both to the Heathen and the Christian philosophy, is to abstain from vice. We are to cease to do evil, and to learn to do well. This is the process recommended. Hence, prohibitions are necessary. Hence, sub-causes as well as causes are to be attacked. Hence, abstinence from vice is a Christian, though it may be a sluggish, virtue. Hence, innocence is to be aimed at by an ignorance of vice. And hence, we must prohibit all evil, if we wish for the assistance of the moral Governor of the world.

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But if the system of filling the heart with virtue were even practicable of itself, that is, without the aid of prohibitions, yet, if it be to be followed by allowing young persons to pass through the various amusements of the world which the Society prohibit, and by giving them moral advice at the same time, they would be of opinion that more danger would accrue to their morality, than any which the prohibitions could produce. The prohibitions, as far as they have a tendency to curb the spirit, would not be injurious in the opinion of the Quakers, because it is their plan in education to produce humble, passive, and obedient subjects, and because spirit, or high-mindedness, or high feeling, is no trait in the Christian character. As far as the curiosity, which is natural to man, would instigate him to look into things forbidden, which he could not always do, in the particular situation of the Quakers, without the admission of intrigue, or hypocrisy, or deceit, prohibitions would be to be considered as evils, though they would always be necessary evils. But the Quakers would apprehend that the same number of youth would not be lost by
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passing through the ordeal of prohibitory education, as through the ordeal of the system, which attempts to fill the mind with virtue by inuring it to scenes, which may be dangerous to its morality. For if tastes are to be cultivated, and knowledge to be had, by adopting the amusements which they prohibit, many would be lost, though some might be advanced to virtue. For parents cannot always accompany their children to such places, nor, if they could, can they prevent these from fascinating. If these should fascinate, they will suggest repetitions. But frequent repetitions, where you accustom youth to see, to hear, and to think, what ought never to be seen, heard, or thought of, by Christians, cannot but have the effect of tingeing the character in time. This mode of education would be considered by the Quakers as answering to that of dear-bought experience. A person may come to see the beauty of virtue, when his constitution has been shattered by vice. But many will perish in the midst of so hazardous a trial*.

* Though no attempt is to be made to obtain knowledge, according to the Christian system, through the
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SECTION II.

Quakers contend, by way of further reply to the objections, that their system of education has been practically or experimentally beneficial—Two facts in behalf of this assertion—the first is, that young Quakers get earlier into the wisdom of life than many others—the second, that there are few disorderly persons in the Society—Error corrected, that the Quakers turn persons out of the Society as soon as they begin to be vicious, that it may be rescued from the disgrace of a bad character.

THE answers, which have hitherto been given to the reader, may be considered as the statement of theory against theory. But the Quakers would say further upon this subject, that they have educated upon these principles for a hundred-and-fifty years, and that, where they have been attended to, their effects have been uniformly beneficial. They would be fearful, therefore, of depart-

medium of customs which may be of improper tendency, yet it does not follow that knowledge, properly obtained, is not a powerful guardian of virtue. This important subject may probably be resumed in a future volume.

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ing from a path, which they conceive their own experience, and that of their ancestors, has shown them to be safe, and which, after all their enquiries, they believe to be that which is pointed out to them by the Christian religion. I shall not attempt to follow up this practical argument by any history of the lives of the members of this Society, but shall content myself with one or two simple facts, which appear to me to be materially to the point.

In the first place I may observe, that it is an old saying, that "it is difficult to put old heads on young shoulders." The Quakers, however, do this more effectually than any other people. It has often been observed that a Quaker-boy has an unnatural appearance. This idea has arisen from his dress and his sedateness, which, together, have produced an appearance of age above the youth in his countenance, or the stature of his person. This, however, is confessing, in some degree, in the case before us, that the discretion of age has appeared upon youthful shoulders. It is certainly an undeniable fact, that the youth of this Society,
generally

generally speaking, get earlier into a knowledge of just sentiments, or into a knowledge of human nature, or into a knowledge of the true wisdom of life, than those of the world at large. I have often been surprised to hear young Quakers talk of the folly and vanity of pursuits, in which persons older than themselves were then embarking for the purposes of pleasure, and which the same persons have afterwards found to have been the pursuits only of uneasiness and pain.

Let us stop for a while, just to look at the situation of some of those young persons, who, in consequence of a different education, are introduced to the pleasures of the world, as to those which are to constitute their happiness. We see them running eagerly first after this object, then after that. One man says to himself, "this will constitute my pleasure." He follows it. He finds it vanity and vexation of spirit. He says, again, "I have found myself deceived. I now see my happiness in other pleasures, and not in those where I fancied it." He follows these. He becomes sickened. He finds

finds the result different from his expectations. He pursues pleasure, but pleasure is not gained.

“ They are lost
 In chase of fancied happiness, still woo’d
 And never won. Dream after dream ensues,
 And still they dream that they shall still succeed,
 And still are disappointed.”

COWPER.

Thus, after having wasted a considerable portion of his time, he is driven at last by positive experience into the truth of those maxims, which philosophy and religion have established, and in the pursuit of which alone he now sees that true happiness is to be found. Thus, in consequence of his education, he loses two thirds of his time in tedious and unprofitable, if not in baneful, pursuits. The young Quaker, on the other hand, comes by means of his education to the same maxims of philosophy and religion, as the foundation of his happiness, at a very early period of life, and therefore saves the time, and preserves the constitution, which the other has been wasting for want of this early knowledge. I know of no fact
 more

more striking or more true in the Quaker-history than this; namely, that the youth, who is educated as a Quaker, gets such a knowledge of human nature, and of the paths to wisdom and happiness, at an early age, that, though he is known by his countenance to be but a young mariner, he is enabled to conduct his bark through the dangerous rocks and shoals of life, with greater safety than many others, who have been longer on the ocean of this probationary world.

I may observe, again, as the second fact, that it is not unusual to hear persons say that you seldom see a disorderly member of this Society, or that a Quaker-prostitute or a Quaker criminal is unknown. These declarations, frequently and openly made, show at least that there is an opinion among the world at large that the Quakers are a moral people.

The mention of this last fact leads me to the notice and the correction of an error, which I have found to have been taken up by individuals. It is said by these that the Society is very wary with respect to its disorderly members; for that when any of
them

them behave ill they are expelled it, in order to rescue it from the disgrace of a bad character. Thus, if a woman, belonging to it, were discovered to be a prostitute, or a man, belonging to it, to be taken up for a criminal offence, no disgrace could attach to this, as it would to other communities ; for if in the course of a week, after a discovery had been made of their several offences, any person were to state that two such members had become infamous, it would be retorted upon him that they were not members of the Society.

It will be proper to observe upon the subject of this error, that, if the parties in question were not disowned previously to the discovery of such infamous conduct, the rules of the Society would not admit of expulsion in the hasty manner supposed. But it is more probable that these persons, long before such facts could be known, had been both admonished and disowned, than that the Quakers would have occasion to disown them after the discovery of such infamy. For there is great truth in the old maxim,—“*Nemo repenti fuit turpissimus,*” or “no man was ever all at once a rogue.” So in
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the case of these persons, as of all others, they must have been vicious by degrees: they must have shown symptoms of some deviations from rectitude, before the measure of their iniquity could have been completed. But by the constitution of Quakerism, as will appear soon, no person of the Society can be found erring, even for the first time, without being liable to be privately admonished. These admonitions may be repeated for weeks, or for months, or even for years, before the subjects of them are pronounced so incorrigible as to be disowned. There is great reason therefore to presume, in the case before us, though the offenders in question would have undoubtedly been disowned by the Quakers, after they were known to be such, yet that they had been disowned long before their offences had been made public.

Upon the whole, it may be allowed that young Quakers arrive at the knowledge of just sentiments, or at the true wisdom of life, earlier than those who are inured to the fashions of the world: and it may be allowed, also, that the Quakers, as a body, are a moral people. Now, these effects will generally

nerally be considered as the result of education; and though the prohibitions of the Quakers may not be considered as the only instruments of producing these effects, yet they must be allowed to be component parts of the system, which produces them.



DISCIPLINE

OF THE

QUAKERS.

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CHAPTER I.

SECTION I.

Discipline of two kinds—as it relates to the regulation of the internal affairs of the Society—or to the cognisance of immoral conduct—Difficulty of procuring obedience to moral precepts—this attempted to be obviated by George Fox—outlines of his system for this purpose—additions made to his system since his time—objections to the system considered—this system, or the discipline of the Quakers, as far as this branch of it is concerned, the great foundation-stone on which their moral education is supported.

THE Discipline of the Quakers is divisible into two parts. The first may comprehend the Regulation of the Internal Affairs of the

Society, such as the management of the poor belonging to it; the granting of certificates of removal to its members; the hearing of their appeals upon various occasions; the taking cognisance of their proposals of marriage, and the like. The second may comprehend the notice or observance of the moral conduct of individuals, with a view of preserving the rules, which the Quakers have thought it their duty to make, and the testimonies, which they have thought it their duty to bear, as a Christian people. It is to the latter part of the discipline that I shall principally confine myself in the ensuing part of my work.

Nothing is more true than that, when men err in their moral practice, it is not for want of good precepts, or of wholesome advice. There are few books from which we cannot collect some moral truths; and few men so blind as not to be able to point out to us the boundaries of moral good. The pages of revelation have been long unfolded to our view, and diffusively spread among us. We have had the advantage, too, of having their contents frequently and publicly repeated in our ears. And yet, knowing what is
right,

right, we do not pursue it. We go off, on the contrary, against our better knowledge, into the road to evil. Now, it was the opinion of George Fox, that something might be done to counteract this infirmity of human nature, or to make a man keep up to the precepts which he believed to have been divinely inspired, or, in other words, that a system of discipline might be devised for regulating, exciting, and preserving, the conduct of a Christian.

This system he at length completed, and, as he believed, with the divine aid, and introduced into the Society with the approbation of those, who belonged to it.

The great principle upon which he founded it was, that every Christian was bound to watch over another for his good. This principle included two ideas. First, that vigilance over the moral conduct of individuals was a Christian duty. Secondly, that any interference with persons, who might err, was solely for their good. Their reformation was the only object in view. Hence religious advice was necessary. Hence, it was to be administered with tenderness and patience. Hence, nothing was to be left

undone, while there was a hope that any thing could be done, for their spiritual welfare.

From this view of the subject, he enjoined it to all the members of his newly-formed Society to be watchful over the conduct of one another, and not to hesitate to step in for the recovery of those, whom they might discover to be overtaken with a fault.

He enjoined it to them, again, that they should follow the order recommended by Jesus Christ upon such occasions: "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between him and thee alone. If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that, in the mouth of two or three witnesses, every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen-man or publican*."

For the carrying of this system into execution, in the order thus recommended, he

* Matthew, xviii. 15, 16, 17.

appointed

appointed courts, or meetings, for discipline, as the Quakers call them, with the approbation of the Society, where the case of the disorderly should be considered, if it should be brought to the cognisance of the church; and where a record should be kept of the proceedings of the Society respecting it. In these courts, or meetings, the poor were to have an equal voice with the rich. There was to be no distinction but in favour of religious worth. And here it is to be remarked, that he was so desirous that the most righteous judgment should be pronounced upon any offender, that he abandoned the usual mode of decision, in general so highly valued, by a majority of voices, and recommended the decision to be made according to the apparent will of the virtuous, who might be present. And as expulsion from membership with the church was to be considered as the heaviest punishment which the Quakers, as a religious body, could inflict, he gave the offender an opportunity of appealing to meetings, different from those in which the sentence had been pronounced against him, and where the decisive voices were again to be collected

lected from the preponderant weight of religious character.

He introduced, also, into his system of discipline, privileges in favour of women, which marked his sense of justice, and the strength and liberality of his mind. The men he considered undoubtedly as the heads of the church, and from whom all laws concerning it ought to issue. But he did not deny women on that account any power, which he thought it would be proper for them to hold. He believed them to be capable of great usefulness, and therefore admitted them to the honour of being, in his own Society, of nearly equal importance with the men. In the general duty, imposed upon members, of watching over one another, he laid it upon the women to be particularly careful in observing the morals of those of their own sex. He gave them meetings for discipline of their own, with the power of recording their own transactions, so that women were to act among courts or meetings of women, as men among those of men. There was also to be no office in the Society belonging to the men but he advised there should be a corresponding

sponding one belonging to the women. By this new and impartial step he raised the women of his own community beyond the level of women in others, and laid the foundation of that improved strength of intellect, dignity of mind, capability of business, and habit of humane offices, which are so conspicuous among female Quakers at the present day.

With respect to the numerous offices, belonging to the discipline, he laid it down as a principle, that the persons, who were to fill them, were to have no other emolument or reward, than that, which a faithful discharge of them would bring to their own consciences.

These are the general outlines of the system of discipline, as introduced by George Fox. This system was carried into execution, as he himself had formed it, in his own time. Additions, however, have been made to it since, as it seemed proper, by the Society at large. In the time of George Fox it was laid upon every member, as we have seen, to watch over his neighbour for his spiritual welfare. But, in 1698, the Society
conceiving

conceiving that what was the business of every one might eventually become the business of no one, they appointed officers, whose particular duty it should be to be overseers of the morals of individuals; thus hoping that by the general vigilance enjoined by George Fox, which was still to continue, and by the particular vigilance then appointed, sufficient care would be taken of the morals of the whole body. In the time, again, of George Fox, women had only their monthly and quarterly meetings for discipline, but it has since been determined that they should have their yearly meetings equally with the men. In the time, again, of George Fox, none but the grave members were admitted into the meetings of discipline; but it has since been agreed that young persons should have the privilege of attending them; and this, I believe, upon the notion, that while these meetings would qualify them for transacting the business of the Society, they might operate as schools for virtue.

This system of discipline, as thus introduced by George Fox, and thus enlarged by
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the Society afterwards, has not escaped, notwithstanding the loveliness of its theory, the censure of the world.

It has been considered, in the first place, as a system of espionage, by which one member is made a spy upon, or becomes an informer against, another. But against this charge it would be observed by the Quakers, that vigilance over morals is unquestionably a Christian duty. It would be observed, again, that the vigilance, which is exercised in this case, is not with the intention of mischief, as in the case of spies and informers, but with the intention of good. It is not to obtain money, but to preserve reputation and virtue. It is not to persecute, but to reclaim. It is not to make a man odious, but to make him more respectable. It is never an interference with innocence. The watchfulness begins to be offensive only where delinquency is begun.

The discipline, again, has been considered as too great an infringement of the liberty of those who are brought under it. Against this the Quakers would contend, that all persons, who live in civil society, must give up a portion of their freedom, that more
happiness

happiness and security may be enjoyed. So, when men enter into Christian societies, they must part with a little of their liberty for their moral good.

But whatever may be the light in which persons, not of the Society, may view this institution, those, belonging to it, submit to, and respect it. It is possible there may be some, who may feel it a restraint upon their conduct: and there is no doubt that it is a restraint upon those, who have irregular desires to gratify, or destructive pleasures to pursue. But, generally speaking, the youth of the Society, who receive a consistent education, approve of it. Genuine Quaker-parents, as I have had occasion to observe, insist upon the subjugation of the will. It is their object to make their children lowly, patient, and submissive. They, therefore, who are born in the Society, are born under the system, and are in general educated for it. They, who become converted to the religion of the Society, know beforehand the terms of their admission. And it will appear to all to be at least an equitable institution, because, in the administration of it, there is no exception of persons. The officers themselves,

selves, who are appointed to watch over, fall under the inspection of the discipline. The poor may admonish the rich, and the rich the poor. There is no exception, in short, either for age, or sex, or station.

It is not necessary, at least in the present place, that I should go further, and rake up all the objections that may be urged upon this subject. I shall therefore only observe here, that the discipline of the Quakers, notwithstanding all its supposed imperfections, whatever they may be, is the grand foundation-stone, upon which their moral education is supported. It is a great partition-wall between them and vice. If this part of the fabric were ever allowed to be undermined, the building would fall to pieces; and though the members of this Society might still be known by their apparel and their language, they would no longer be so remarkable, as they are now generally confessed to be, for their moral character.

SECTION II.

Manner of the administration of the discipline of the Quakers—Overseers appointed to every particular meeting—Manner of reclaiming an individual—first, by admonition—this sometimes successful—secondly, by dealing—this sometimes successful—but, if unsuccessful, the offender is disowned—but he may appeal afterwards to two different courts or meetings for redress.

HAVING now given the general outlines of the Discipline of the Society, I shall proceed to explain the particular manner of the Administration of it.

To administer it effectually, all individuals of the Society, as I have just stated, whether men or women, are allowed the power of watching over the conduct of one another for their good, and of interfering, if they should see occasion.

But, besides this general care, two or more persons, of age and experience, and of moral lives and character, and two or more women of a similar description, are directed to be appointed to have the oversight of every congregation

congregation or particular meeting in the kingdom. These persons are called Overseers, because it is their duty to oversee their respective flocks.

If any of the members should violate the prohibitions mentioned in the former part of the work, or should become chargeable with injustice, or drunkenness, or profane swearing, or neglect of public worship, or should act in any way inconsistently with his character as a Christian,—it becomes the particular duty of these overseers, though it is also the duty of the members at large, to visit him in private, to set before him the error and consequences of his conduct, and to endeavour by all the means in their power to reclaim him. This act, on the part of the overseer, is termed by the Society—Admonishing. The circumstances of admonishing, and of being admonished, are known only to the parties, except the case should have become of itself notorious ; for secrecy is held sacred on the part of the persons who admonish. Hence it may happen that several of the Society may admonish the same person, though no one of them knows that any other has been visiting him

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at all. The offender may be thus admonished by overseers, and other individuals, for weeks and months together; for no time is fixed by the Society, and no pains are supposed to be spared, for his reformation. It is expected, however, in all such admonitions, that no austerity of language or manner should be used, but that he should be admonished in tenderness and love.

If an overseer, or any other individual, after having thus laboured to reclaim another for a considerable length of time, finds that he has not succeeded in his work, and feels also that he despairs of succeeding by his own efforts, he opens the matter to some other overseer, or to one or more serious members, and requests their aid. These persons now wait upon the offender together, and unite their efforts in endeavouring to persuade him to amend his life. This act, which now becomes more public by the junction of two or three in the work of his reformation, is still kept a secret from other individuals of the Society, and still retains the name of—Admonishing.

It frequently happens that, during the
different

different admonitions, the offender sees his error, and corrects his conduct. The visitations of course cease, and he goes on in the estimation of his brethren as a regular or unoffending member, no one knowing but the admonishing persons that he has been under the discipline of the Society. I may observe here, that what is done by men to men is done by women to women,—the women admonishing, and trying to reclaim, those of their own sex in the same manner.

Should, however, the overseers, and other persons before mentioned, find, after a proper length of time, that all their united efforts have been ineffectual, and that they have no hope of success with respect to his amendment, they lay the case, if it should be of a serious nature, before a court, which has the name of the Monthly Meeting*. This court, or meeting, makes a minute of the case, and appoints a committee to visit him. The committee, in consequence of their appointment, wait upon

* Certain acts of delinquency are reported to the monthly meeting, as soon as the truth of the facts can be ascertained; such as gross immoralities, public insolvencies, and a violation of the rules of the Society with respect to marriage, payment of tithes, &c.

him. This act is now considered as a public act, or as an act of the church. It is not now termed Admonishing, but changes its name to Dealing*. The offender, too, while the committee are dealing with him, though he may attend the meetings of the Society for worship, does not attend those for their discipline. If the committee, after having dealt with the offender according to their appointment, should be satisfied that he is sensible of his error, they make a report to the monthly court or meeting concerning him. A minute is then drawn up, in which it is stated that he has made satisfaction for the offence. It sometimes happens that he himself sends to the same meeting a written acknowledgment of his error. From this time he attends the meetings for discipline again, and is continued in the Society as if nothing improper had taken place: nor is any one allowed to reproach him for his former faults.

* Women though they may admonish, cannot deal with, women, this being an act of the church, till they have consulted the meetings of the men. Men are generally joined with women in the commission for this purpose.

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Should, however, all endeavours prove ineffectual, and should the committee, after having duly laboured with the offender, consider him at last as incorrigible, they report their proceedings to the monthly meeting. He is then publicly excluded from membership, or, as it is called, Disowned*. This is done by a distinct document, called a Testimony of Disownment, in which the nature of the offence, and the means, that have been used to reclaim him, are described. A wish is also generally expressed in this document, that he may repent, and be taken into membership again. A copy of this minute is always required to be given to him.

If the offender should consider this act of disowning him as an unjust proceeding, he may appeal to a higher tribunal, or to a quarterly court or meeting. This quarterly court or meeting then appoints a committee, of which no one of the monthly meeting that condemned him can be a member, to reconsider his case. Should this com-

* Women cannot disown; the power of disowning, as an act of the church, being vested in the meetings of the men.

mittee report, and the quarterly meeting in consequence decide against him, he may appeal to the yearly. This latter meeting is held in London, and consists of deputies and others from all parts of the kingdom. The yearly meeting then appoints a committee of twelve deputies, taken from twelve quarterly meetings, none of whom can be from the quarterly meeting that passed sentence against him, to examine his case again. If this committee should confirm the former decisions, he may appeal to the yearly meeting at large: beyond this there is no appeal. But if he should even be disowned by the voice of the yearly meeting at large, he may, if he live to give satisfactory proof of his amendment, and sue for re-admission into the Society, be received into membership again; but he can only be received through the medium of the monthly meeting, by which he was first disowned.

SECTION III.

Two charges usually brought against this administration of the discipline—first, that it is managed with an authoritative spirit—secondly, that it is managed partially—These charges considered.

As two charges are usually brought against the administration of that part of the discipline, which has been just explained, I shall consider them in this place.

The first usually is, that, though the Quakers abhor what they call the authority of priestcraft, yet some overseers possess a portion of the spirit of ecclesiastical dominion; that they are austere, authoritative, and overbearing in the course of the exercise of their office; and that, though the institution may be of Christian origin, it is not always conducted by these with a Christian spirit. To this first charge I shall make the following reply:

That there may be individual instances, where this charge is well founded, I am neither disposed nor qualified to deny. Overseers have their different tempers, like
other

other people; and the exercise of dominion has unquestionably a tendency to spoil the heart. So far there is an opening for the admission of this charge. But it must be observed, on the other hand, that the persons to be chosen overseers are to be, by the laws of the Society*, "as upright and unblamable in their conversation as they can be found, in order that the advice, which they shall occasionally administer to other Friends, may be the better received, and carry with it the greater weight and force on the minds of those, whom they shall be concerned to admonish." It must be observed again, that it is expressly enjoined them, that "they are to exercise their functions in a meek, calm, and peaceable spirit, in order that the admonished may see that their interference with their conduct proceeds from a principle of love, and a regard for their good, and preservation in the truth." And it must be observed, again, that any violation of this injunction would render them liable to be admonished by others, and to come under the discipline themselves.

* Book of Extracts.

The second charge is, that the discipline is administered partially; that more favour is shown to the rich than to the poor; and that the latter are sooner disowned than the former for the same faults.

This latter charge has probably arisen from a vulgar notion, that, as the poor are supported by the Society, there is a general wish to get rid of them. But this notion is not true. There is more than ordinary caution in disowning those, who are objects of support. Add to which, that as some of the most orderly members of the body are to be found among the poor, an expulsion of these, in a hasty manner, would be a diminution of the quantum of respectability, or of the quantum of moral character, of the Society at large.

In examining this charge, it must certainly be allowed, that, though the principle of "no respect of persons" is no where carried to a greater length than in the Quaker Society, yet we may reasonably expect to find a drawback from the full operation of it in a variety of causes. We are all of us too apt, in the first place, to look up to the rich, but to look down upon the poor. We are
apt

apt to court the good will of the former, when we seem to care very little even if we offend the latter. The rich themselves, and the middle classes of men, respect the rich more than the poor, and the poor show more respect to the rich than to one another. Hence it is possible that a poor man may find more reluctance in entering the doors of a rich man to admonish him, than one who is rich to enter the doors of the poor for the same purpose. Men, again, though they may be equally good, may not have all the same strength of character. Some overseers may be more timid than others, and this timidity may operate upon them more in the execution of their duty upon one class of individuals than upon another. Hence, a rich man may escape for a longer time without admonition than a poorer member. But when the ice is once broken,—when admonition is once begun,—when respectable persons have been called in by overseers or others,—those causes, which might be preventive of justice, will decrease; and, if the matter should be carried to a monthly or a quarterly meeting, they will wholly vanish. For, in these courts,
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it is a truth, that they, who are the most irreproachable for their lives, and the most likely of course to decide justly on any occasion, are the most attended to, or carry the most weight, when they speak publicly. Now these are to be found principally in the low and middle classes; which, in all societies, contain the greater number of individuals. As to the very rich, they are few indeed, compared with the rest; and these may be subdivided into two classes, for the further elucidation of the point. The first will consist of men, who rigidly follow the rules of the Society, and are as exemplary as the very best of the members. The second will consist of those, who are members according to the letter, but not according to the spirit, and who are content with walking in the shadow that follows the substance of the body. Those of the first class will do justice, and they will have an equal influence with any. Those of the second, whatever may be their riches, or whatever they may say, are seldom, if ever, attended to in the administration of the discipline.

From hence it will appear, that if there be

any partiality in the administration of this institution, it will consist principally in this,—that a rich man may be suffered, in particular cases, to go longer without admonition than a poorer member, but that, after admonition has been begun, justice will be impartially administered; and that the charge of a preference, where disowning is concerned, has no solid foundation for its support.

SECTION IV.

Three great principles discoverable in the discipline, as hitherto explained—these applicable to the discipline of larger societies, or to the criminal codes of states—lamentable that, as Christian principles, they have not been admitted into our own—Quakers, as far as they have had influence in legislation, have adopted them—Exercitions of William Penn—Legislature of Pennsylvania an example to other countries in this particular.

I FIND it almost impossible to proceed to the great courts or meetings of the Society, which I had allotted for my next subject, without

without stopping awhile to make a few observations on the principles of that part of the discipline, which I have now explained.

It may be observed, first, that the great object of this part of the discipline is the reformation of the offending person. Secondly, that the means of effecting this object consist of religious instruction and advice. And, thirdly, that no pains are to be spared, and no time to be limited, for the trial of these means; or, in other words, that nothing is to be left undone, while there is a hope that the offender may be reclaimed. Now these principles the Quakers adopt in the exercise of their discipline, because, as a Christian community, they believe they ought to be guided only by Christian principles, and they know of no other, which the letter or the spirit of Christianity can warrant.

I shall trespass upon the patience of the reader in this place, only till I have made an application of these principles, or till I have shown him how far these might be extended, and extended with advantage to morals, beyond the limits of the Quaker Society,

Society, by being received as the basis, upon which a system of penal laws might be founded among larger societies or states.

It is much to be lamented that nations professing Christianity should have lost sight, in their various acts of legislation, of Christian principles, or that they should not have interwoven some such beautiful principles as those, which we have seen adopted by the Quakers, into the system of their penal laws. But if this negligence or omission would appear worthy of regret, if reported of any Christian nation; it would appear most so if reported of our own, where one would suppose that the advantages of civil and religious liberty, and those of a reformed religion, would have had their influence in the correction of our judgments, and in the benevolent dispositions of our will. And yet nothing is more true than that these good influences have either never been produced, or, if produced, that they have never been attended to upon this subject. There seems to be no provision for religious instruction in our numerous prisons. We seem to make no patient trials of those, who are confined in
them,

them, for their reformation; but, on the other hand, we seem to hurry them off the stage of life, by means of a code which annexes death to two hundred different offences, as if we had allowed our laws to have been written by the bloody pen of the pagan Draco. And it seems remarkable that this system should be persevered in, when we consider that death, as far as the experiment has been made in our own country, has little or no effect as a punishment for crimes. Forgery, and the circulation of forged paper, and the counterfeiting of the money of the realm, are capital offences, and are never pardoned. And yet no offences are more frequently committed than these. And it seems still more remarkable when we consider, in addition to this, that, in consequence of the experiments made in other countries, it seems to be approaching fast to an axiom, that crimes are less frequent in proportion as mercy takes the place of severity, or as there are judicious substitutes for the punishment of death.

I shall not inquire, in this place, how far the right of taking away life on many occasions, which is sanctioned by the law of
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the land, can be supported on the ground of justice, or how far a greater injury is done by it than the injury the criminal has himself done. As Christians, it seems that we should be influenced by Christian principles. Now, nothing can be more true, than that Christianity commands us to be tender-hearted one to another, to have a tender forbearance one with another, and to regard one another as brethren. We are taught also that men, independently of their accountableness to their own governments, are accountable for their actions in a future state, and that punishments are unquestionably to follow. But where are our forbearance and our love,—where is our regard for the temporal and eternal interests of man,—where is our respect for the principles of the Gospel,—if we make the reformation of a criminal a less object than his punishment; or if we consign him to death in the midst of his sins, without having tried all the means in our power for his recovery?

Had the Quakers been the legislators of the world, they had long ago interwoven the principles of their discipline into their penal codes, and death had been long ago abolished

abolished as a punishment for crimes. As far as they have had any power with legislatures, they have procured an attention to these principles. George Fox remonstrated with the judges in his time on the subject of capital punishments. But the Quakers having been few in number, compared with the rest of their countrymen, and having had no seats in the legislature, and no predominant interest with the members of it, they have been unable to effect any change in England on this subject. In Pennsylvania, however, where they were the original colonists, they have had influence with their own government, and they have contributed to set up a model of jurisprudence worthy of the imitation of the world.

William Penn, on his arrival in America, formed a code of laws chiefly on Quaker-principles, in which, however, death was inscribed as a punishment, but it was confined to murder. Queen Anne set this code aside, and substituted the statute and common law of the mother country. It was, however, resumed in time, and acted upon for some years; when it was set aside by the mother country again. From this time it
continued

continued dormant till the separation of America from England. But no sooner had this event taken place, which rendered the American states their own legislators, than the Pennsylvanian Quakers began to aim at obtaining an alteration of the penal laws. In this they were joined by worthy individuals of other denominations. And these, acting in union, procured from the legislature of Pennsylvania, in the year 1786, a reform of the criminal code. This reform, however, was not carried, in the opinion of the Society, to a sufficient length. Accordingly they took the lead again, and exerted themselves afresh upon this subject. Many of them formed themselves into a committee for alleviating the miseries of public prisons. Other persons co-operated with them in this undertaking also. At length, after great perseverance, they prevailed upon the same legislature, in the year 1790, to try an ameliorated system. This trial answered so well, that the same legislature again, in the year 1794, established an act, in which several Quaker-principles were incorporated, and in which only the crime of premeditated murder was punishable with death.

As

As there is now but one capital offence in Pennsylvania, punishments for other offences are made up of fine, and imprisonment, and labour ; and these are awarded separately or conjointly, according to the magnitude of the crime.

When criminals have been convicted, and sent to the great gaol of Philadelphia to undergo their punishment, it is expected of them that they should maintain themselves out of their daily labour ; that they should pay for their board and washing, and also for the use of their different implements of labour ; and that they should defray the expenses of their commitment, and of their prosecutions and their trials. An account, therefore, is regularly kept against them. And if, at the expiration of the term of their punishment, there should be a surplus of money in their favour, arising out of the produce of their work, it is given to them on their discharge.

An agreement is usually made about the price of prison-labour between the inspector of the gaol and the employers of the criminals.

As reformation is now the great object in

Pennsylvania, where offences have been committed, it is of the first importance that the gaoler and the different inspectors should be persons of moral character. Good example, religious advice, and humane treatment, on the part of these, will have a tendency to produce attention, respect, and love on the part of the prisoners, and to influence their moral conduct. Hence it is a rule, never to be departed from, that none are to be chosen as successors to these different officers but such as shall be found on inquiry to have been exemplary in their lives.

As reformation, again, is now the great object, no corporal punishment is allowed in the prison; no keeper can strike a criminal; nor can any criminal be put into irons. All such punishments are considered as doing harm. They tend to extirpate a sense of shame. They tend to degrade a man, and to make him consider himself as degraded in his own eyes: whereas it is the design of this change in the penal system, that he should be constantly looking up to the restoration of his dignity as a man, and to the recovery of his moral character.

As reformation, again, is now the great object, the following system is adopted*: No intercourse is allowed between the males and the females, nor any between the untried and the convicted prisoners. While they are engaged in their labour, they are allowed to talk only upon the subject which immediately relates to their work. All unnecessary conversation is forbidden. Profane swearing is never overlooked. A strict watch is kept that no spirituous liquors may be introduced. Care is taken that all the prisoners have the benefit of religious instruction. The prison is accordingly open at stated times to the pastors of the different religious denominations of the place. And as the mind of man may be worked upon by rewards as well as by punishments, a hope is held out to the prisoners, that the time of their confinement may be shortened by their good behaviour. For the inspec-

* As cleanliness is connected with health, and health with morals, the prisoners are obliged to wash and clean themselves every morning before their work, and to bathe, in the summer season, in a large reservoir of water, which is provided in the court-yard of the prison for this purpose.

tors, if they have reason to believe that a solid reformation has taken place in any individual, have a power of interceding for his enlargement, and the executive government of granting it, if they think it proper. In cases, where the prisoners are refractory, they are usually put into solitary confinement, and deprived of the opportunity of working. During this time the expenses of their board and washing are going on ; so that they are glad to get into employment again, that they may liquidate the debt, which, since the suspension of their labour, has been accruing to the gaol.

In consequence of these regulations, they, who visit the criminals in Philadelphia in the hours of their labour, have more an idea of a large manufactory than of a prison. They see nail-makers, sawyers, carpenters, joiners, weavers, and others, all busily employed. They see regularity and order among these. And as no chains are to be seen in the prison, they seem to forget their situation as criminals, and to look upon them as the free and honest labourers of a community following their respective trades.

In consequence of these regulations, great advantages

advantages have arisen both to the criminals and to the state. The state has experienced a diminution of crimes to the amount of one half since the change of the penal system; and the criminals have been restored, in a great proportion, from the gaol to the community, as reformed persons; for few have been known to stay the whole term of their confinement. But no person could have had any of his time remitted him, except he had been considered, both by the inspectors and the executive government, as deserving it. This circumstance of permission to leave the prison, before the time expressed in the sentence, is of great importance to the prisoners; for it operates as a certificate for them of their amendment to the world at large. Hence, no stigma is attached to them for having been the inhabitants of a prison. It may be observed, also, that some of the most orderly and industrious, and such as have worked at the most profitable trades, have had sums of money to take on their discharge, by which they have been able to maintain themselves honestly, till they could get into employ.

Such is the state, and such the manner of
the

the execution, of the penal laws of Pennsylvania, as founded upon Quaker-principles. So happy have the effects of this new system already been, that it is supposed it will be adopted by the other American states. May the example be universally followed! May it be universally received as a truth, that true policy is inseparable from virtue; that in proportion as principles become lovely on account of their morality, they will become beneficial when acted upon, both to individuals and to states; or that legislators cannot raise a constitution upon so fair and firm a foundation as upon the Gospel of Jesus Christ!



CHAPTER II.

Monthly court or meeting—Constitution of this meeting—Each county is usually divided into parts—In each of these parts or divisions are several meeting-houses, which have their several congregations attached to them—One meeting-house in each division is fixed upon for transacting the business of all the congregations in that division—Deputies appointed from every particular meeting or congregation in each division to the place fixed upon for transacting the business within it—Nature of the business to be transacted—Women become deputies, and transact business equally with the men.

I COME, after this long digression, to the courts of the Quakers. And here I shall immediately premise, that I profess to do little more than to give a general outline of these. I do not intend to explain the proceedings preparatory to the meetings there, or to state exceptions from general rules, or to trouble the memory of the reader with more circumstances than will be sufficient to

to enable him to have a general idea of this part of the discipline of the Society.

The Quakers manage their discipline by means of monthly, quarterly, and yearly courts, to which, however, they themselves uniformly give the name of Meetings,

To explain the nature and business of the monthly or first of these meetings, I shall fix upon some county in my own mind, and describe the business that is usually done in this in the course of the month. For as the business, which is usually transacted in any one county, is done by the Quakers in the same manner and in the same month in another, the reader, by supposing an aggregate of counties, may easily imagine how the whole business of the Society is done for the whole kingdom.

The Quakers usually divide a county into a number of parts, according to the Quaker-population of it*. In each of these divisions there are usually several meeting-houses, and

* This was the antient method, when the Society was numerous in every county of the kingdom; and the principle is still followed according to existing circumstances.

these

these have their several congregations attached to them. One meeting-house, however, in each division is usually fixed upon for transacting the business of all the congregations that are within it, and for the holding of these monthly courts. The different congregations of the Quakers, or the members of the different particular meetings, which are settled in the northern part of the county, are attached of course to the meeting-house which has been fixed upon in the northern division of it, because it gives them the least trouble to repair to it on this occasion. The members of those, again, which are settled in the southern, or central, or other parts of the county, are attached to that which has been fixed upon in the southern, or central, or other divisions of it, for the same reason. The different congregations in the northern division of the county appoint, each of them, a set of deputies once a month, which deputies are of both sexes, to repair to the meeting-house which has been thus assigned them. The different congregations in the southern, central, or other divisions, appoint also, each of them, others, to repair
to

to that which has been assigned them in like manner. These deputies are all of them previously instructed in the matters belonging to the congregations, which they respectively represent.

At length the day arrives for the monthly meeting. The deputies make ready to execute the duties committed to their trust. They repair, each set of them, to their respective places of meeting. Here a number of Quakers, of different ages and of both sexes, from their different divisions, repair also. It is expected that all who can conveniently attend should be present on this occasion.

When they are collected at the meeting-house, which was said to have been fixed upon in each division, a meeting for worship takes place. All persons, both men and women, attend together. But when this meeting is over, they separate into different apartments for the purposes of the discipline; the men, to transact by themselves the business of the men, and of their own district; the women, to transact that which is more limited, namely, such as belongs to their own sex.

In

In the men's meeting, (and it is the same in the women's) the names of the deputies before mentioned are first entered in a book; for until this act takes place the meeting for discipline is not considered to be constituted.

The minutes of the last monthly meeting, are then generally read; by which it is seen if any business of the Society was left unfinished. Should any thing of this sort occur, it becomes the first object to be considered and dispatched*.

The new business, in which the deputies were said to have been previously instructed by the congregations which they represented, comes on. This business may be of various sorts. One part of it uniformly relates to the poor. The wants of these are provided for, and the education of their children taken care of, at this meeting. Presentations of marriages are received; and births, marriages, and funerals are registered. If disorderly members, after long and repeated admonitions, should have given no hopes of amendment, their case is first publicly cogni-

* The London monthly meetings begin differently from those in the country.

sable in this court. Committees are appointed to visit, advise, and try to reclaim them. Persons reclaimed by these visitations are restored to membership, after having been well reported of by the parties deputed to visit them. The fitness of persons applying for membership from other Societies is examined here. Answers, also, are prepared to the queries* at the proper time. Instructions also are given, if necessary, to particular meetings belonging to it, suited to the exigencies of their cases; and certificates are granted to members on various occasions.

In transacting this and other business of the Society, all members present are allowed to speak. The poorest man in the meeting-house, though he may be receiving charitable contributions at the time, is entitled to deliver his sentiments upon any point. He may bring forward new matter. He may approve or object to what others have proposed before him. No person may interrupt him while he speaks. The youth, who are sitting by, are gaining a knowledge of:

* These queries will be explained in the next chapter.

the affairs and discipline of the Society, and are gradually acquiring sentiments and habits that are to mark their character in life. They learn, in the first place, the duty of a benevolent and respectful consideration for the poor. In hearing the different cases argued and discussed, they learn in some measure the rudiments of justice, and imbibe opinions of the necessity of moral conduct. In these courts they learn to reason. They learn also to hear others patiently, and without interruption, and to transact any business, that may come before them in maturer years, with regularity and order.

I cannot omit to mention here the orderly manner, in which the Quakers conduct their business on these occasions. When a subject is brought before them it is canvassed, to the exclusion of all extraneous matter, till some conclusion results. The clerk of the monthly meeting then draws up a minute, containing, as nearly as he can collect, the substance of this conclusion. This minute is then read aloud to the auditory, and either stands, or undergoes an alteration, as appears by the silence or discussion upon it to be the sense of the meeting. When
fully

fully agreed upon, it stands ready to be recorded. When a second subject comes on, it is canvassed, and a minute is made of it, to be recorded in the same manner, before a third is allowed to be introduced. Thus each point is settled, till the whole business of the meeting is concluded.

I may now mention that, in the same manner as the men proceed in their apartment on this occasion, the women proceed in their own apartment or meeting also. There are women-deputies and women-clerks. They enter the names of these deputies, read the minutes of the last monthly meeting, bring forward the new matter, and deliberate and argue on the affairs of their own sex. They record their proceedings equally. The young females, also, are present, and have similar opportunities of gaining knowledge, of improving their judgments, and of acquiring useful and moral habits, as the young men.

It is usual, when the women have finished the business of their own meeting, to send one of their members to the apartment of the men, to know if they have any thing to communicate. This messenger having
returned,

returned, and every thing having been settled and recorded in both meetings, the monthly meeting is over, and men, women, and youth of both sexes, return to their respective homes.

In the same manner as the different congregations or members of the different meetings in any one division of the county meet together, and transact their monthly business, so other different congregations belonging to other divisions of the same county meet at other appointed places, and dispatch their business also. And in the same manner as the business is thus done in one county, it is done in every other county of the kingdom once a month.



CHAPTER III.

Quarterly court or meeting—Constitution of this meeting—One place in each county is now fixed upon for the transaction of business—this place may be different in the different quarters of the year—Deputies from the various monthly meetings are appointed to repair to this place—Nature of the business to be transacted—Certain queries proposed—written answers carried to these by the deputies just mentioned—Queries proposed in the women's meeting also, and answered in the same manner.

THE quarterly meeting of the Society, which comes next in order, is much more numerous attended than the monthly. The monthly, as we have just seen, superintended the concerns of a few congregations or particular meetings, which were contained in a small division of the county. The quarterly meeting, on the other hand, superintends the concerns of all the monthly meetings in the county at large. It takes cognisance of course of the concerns of a greater portion of population, and, as the
name

name implies, for a greater extent of time. The Quaker population of a whole county* is now to assemble in one place. This place, however, is not always the same. It may be different, to accommodate the members in their turn, in the different quarters of the year.

In the same manner as the different congregations in a small division of a county have been shown to have sent deputies to the respective monthly meetings within it, so the different monthly meetings in the same county send, each of them, deputies to the quarterly. Two or more of each sex are generally deputed from each meeting. These deputies are supposed to have understood, at the monthly meeting where they were chosen, all the matters which the discipline required them to know relative to the state and condition of their constituents. Furnished with this knowledge, and instructed moreover by written documents on a variety of subjects, they repair at the

* I still adhere, to give the reader a clearer idea of the discipline, and to prevent confusion, to the division by county, though the district in question may not always comprehend a complete county.

proper time to the place of meeting. All the members, in the district in question, who are expected to go, bend their direction hither. Any person travelling in the county at this time would see an unusual number of Quakers upon the road, directing their journey to the same point. Those, who live furthest from the place where the meeting is held, have often a long journey to perform. They are frequently out two or three whole days, and sometimes longer, upon this occasion. But as this sort of meeting takes place but once in the quarter, the loss of their time, and the fatigue of their journey, and the expenses attending it, are borne cheerfully.

When all of them are assembled, nearly the same custom obtains at the quarterly as has been described at the monthly meeting. A meeting for worship is first held. The men and women, when this is over, separate into their different apartments; after which, the meeting for discipline begins in each.

I shall not detail the different kinds of business, which come on at this meeting. I shall explain the principal subject only.

The

The Society at large have agreed upon a number of questions, or queries as they call them, which they have committed to print, and which they expect to be read and answered in the course of these quarterly meetings. The following is a list of them :

I. Are meetings for worship and discipline kept up, and do Friends attend them duly, and at the time appointed; and do they avoid all unbecoming behaviour therein?

II. Is there among you any growth in the truth; and hath any conviction appeared since last year?

III. Are Friends preserved in love towards each other; if differences arise, is due care taken speedily to end them; and are Friends careful to avoid and discourage tale-bearing and detraction?

IV. Do Friends endeavour, by example and precept, to train up their children, servants, and those under their care, in a religious life and conversation, consistent with our Christian profession, in the frequent reading of the holy Scriptures, and in plainness of speech, behaviour, and apparel?

V. Are Friends just in their dealings, and punctual in fulfilling their engagements; and

are they annually advised carefully to inspect the state of their affairs once in the year?

VI. Are Friends careful to avoid all vain sports and places of diversion, gaming, all unnecessary frequenting of taverns and other public houses, excess in drinking, and other intemperance?

VII. Do Friends bear a faithful and Christian testimony against receiving and paying tithes, priests' demands, and those called church-rates?

VIII. Are Friends faithful in our testimony against bearing arms, and being in any manner concerned in the militia, in privateers, letters of marque, or armed vessels, or dealing in prize-goods?

IX. Are Friends clear of defrauding the King of his customs, duties, and excise, and of using or dealing in goods suspected to be run?

X. Are the necessities of the poor among you properly inspected and relieved; and is good care taken of the education of their offspring?

XI. Have any meetings been settled, discontinued, or united, since last year?

XII. Are there any Friends prisoners for
our

our testimonies ; and if any one hath died a prisoner, or been discharged, since last year, when and how ?

XIII. Is early care taken to admonish such as appear inclinable to marry in a manner contrary to the rules of our Society ; and to deal with such as persist in refusing to take counsel ?

XIV. Have you two or more faithful Friends ; appointed by the monthly meeting, as overseers in each particular meeting ; are the rules respecting removals duly observed ; and is due care taken, when any thing appears amiss, that the rules of our discipline be timely and impartially put in practice ?

XV. Do you keep a record of the prosecutions and sufferings of your members ; is due care taken to register all marriages, births, and burials ; are the titles of your meeting-houses, burial-grounds, &c. duly preserved and recorded ; and are all legacies and donations properly secured, and recorded, and duly applied ?

These are the questions, which the Society expect should be publicly asked and answered in their quarterly courts or meetings. Some of these are to be answered in one quarterly

quarterly meeting, and others* in another ; and all of them in the course of the year.

The clerk of the quarterly meeting, when they come to this part of the business, reads the first of the appointed queries to the members present, and is then silent. Soon after this, a deputy from one of the monthly meetings comes forward, and producing the written documents or answers to the queries, all of which were prepared at the meeting where he was chosen, reads that document, which contains a reply to the first query in behalf of the meeting he represents. A deputy from a second monthly meeting then comes forward, and produces the written documents also, and answers the same query in behalf of his own meeting in the same manner. A deputy from a third, where there are more than two meetings, then produces the documents in his turn, and replies to it also. And this mode is observed, till the deputies from each of

* The Quakers consider the punctual attendance of their religious meetings, the preservation of love among them, and the care of the poor, of such particular importance, that they require the first, third, and tenth to be answered every quarter.

the monthly meetings in the county have answered the first query.

When the first query has been thus fully answered, silence is observed through the whole court. Members present have now an opportunity of making any observations they may think proper. If it should appear by the answers to this first query, that there is a departure from principles on the subject it contains, in any of the monthly meetings which the deputies represent, it is noticed by any one present. The observations, made by one, frequently give rise to observations from another. Advice is sometimes ordered to be given, adapted to the nature of this departure from principles; and this advice is occasionally circulated through the medium of the different monthly meetings to the particular congregation where the deviation has taken place.

When the first query has been thus read by the clerk and answered by the deputies, and when observations have been made upon it and instructions given, as now described, a second query is read audibly; and the same process takes place, and similar observations

observations are sometimes made, and instructions given.

In the same manner a third query is read by the clerk, and answered by all the deputies, and observed upon by the meeting at large; and so on a fourth and a fifth, till all the queries, set apart for the day, are answered.

It may be proper now to observe, that while the men in their own meeting-house are thus transacting the quarterly business for themselves, the women, in a different apartment or meeting-house, are conducting it also for their own sex. They read, answer, and observe upon the queries in the same manner. When they have settled their own business, they send one or two of their members, as they did in the case of the monthly meeting, to the apartment of the men, to know if they have any thing to communicate to them. When the business is finished in both meetings, they break up, and prepare for their respective homes.

CHAPTER IV.

Great yearly court, or meeting—Constitution of this meeting—One place only of meeting fixed upon for the whole kingdom—this the metropolis—Deputies appointed to it from the quarterly meetings—Business transacted at this meeting—Matters decided not by the influence of numbers, but by the weight of religious character—No head or chairman of this meeting—Character of this discipline or government of the Quakers—The laws relating to it better obeyed than those under any other discipline or government—Reasons of this obedience.

IN the order, in which I have hitherto mentioned the meetings for the discipline of the Quakers, we have seen them rising by regular ascent, both in importance and power. We have seen each in due progression comprising the actions of a greater population than the foregoing, and for a greater period of time. I come now to the yearly meeting, which is possessed of a higher and wider jurisdiction than any that have been yet described. This meeting does not take cogni-
sance

sance of the conduct of particular or of monthly meetings, but, at one general view, of the state and conduct of the members of each quarterly meeting, in order to form a judgment of the general state of the Society for the whole kingdom.

We saw, on a former occasion, the Quakers with their several deputies repairing to different places in a county; and we have seen them with their deputies again repairing to one great town in the different counties at large. We are now to see them repairing to the metropolis of the kingdom.

As deputies were chosen by each monthly meeting to represent it in the quarterly meeting, so the quarterly meetings choose deputies to represent them in the yearly meeting. These deputies are commissioned to be the bearers of certain documents to London, which contain answers in writing to a number of the queries mentioned in the last chapter*. These answers are made up from the answers received by the several quarterly meetings from their respective monthly meetings. Besides these, they are to carry with them other documents, among

* Viz.—Numbers i. ii. iii. iv. vii. viii. ix. x. xi. xii.

which

which are accounts of sufferings in consequence of a refusal of military service, and of the payment of the demands of the church.

The deputies, who are now generally four in number for each quarterly meeting, that is, four of each sex, (except for the quarterly meetings of York and London*, the former of which generally sends eight men and the latter twelve, and each of them the like number of females) having received their different documents, set forward on their journey. Besides these, many members of the Society repair to the metropolis. The distance of three or four hundred miles forms no impediment to the journey. A man cannot travel at this time but he sees the Quakers in motion from all parts, shaping their course to London, there to exercise, as will appear shortly, the power of deputies, judges, and legislators in turn, and to investigate and settle the affairs of the Society for the preceding year.

It may not be amiss to mention a circumstance, which has not unfrequently occurred upon these occasions. A Quaker, in low

* The quarterly meeting of London includes Middlesex.

circumstances, but of unblemished life, has been occasionally chosen as one of the deputies to the metropolis even for a county, where the Quaker-population has been considered to be rich. This deputy has scarcely been able, on account of the low state of his finances, to accomplish his journey, and has been known to travel on foot from distant parts. I mention this circumstance to prove that the Society, in its choice of representatives, shows no respect of persons, but that it pays, even in the persons of the poor, the respect that is due to virtue.

The day of the yearly meeting at length arrives. Whole days are now devoted to business, for which various committees are obliged to be appointed. The men, as before, retire to a meeting-house allotted them to settle the business for the men and the Society at large; and the women retire to another, to settle that which belongs to their own sex. There are, nevertheless, at intervals, meetings for worship, at the several meeting-houses in the metropolis.

One great part of the business of the yearly meeting is to know the state of the Society in all its branches of discipline for the preceding year. This is known by

hearing the answers brought to the queries from the several quarterly meetings, which are audibly read by the clerk, or his assistant, and are taken in rotation alphabetically. If any deficiency in the discipline should appear, by means of these documents, in any of the quarterly meetings, remarks follow on the part of the auditory, and written advices are ordered to be sent, if it should appear necessary; which are either of a general nature, or particularly directed to those, where the deficiency has been observed.

Another part of the business of the yearly meeting is to ascertain the amount of the money called "Friends' Sufferings," that is, of the money, or the value of the goods, that have been taken from different members for tithes* and church-dues; for the Society are principled against the maintenance of any religious ministry, and of course cannot conscientiously pay towards the support of the established church. In consequence of their refusal of payment in the

* Distraints or imprisonment for refusing to serve in the militia are included also under the head "Sufferings."

latter case, their goods are seized by a law-process, and sold to the best bidder. They, who have the charge of these executions, behave differently. Some wantonly take such goods as will not sell for a quarter of their value, and others much more than is necessary; and others, again, kindly select those, which in the sale will be attended with the least loss. This amount, arising from this confiscation of their property, is easily ascertained from the written answers of the deputies. The sum for each county is observed and noted down. The different sums are then added together, and the amount for the whole kingdom within the year is discovered.

In speaking of tithes and church-dues, I must correct an error that is prevalent. It is usually understood, when individuals suffer on these accounts, that their losses are made up by the Society at large. Nothing can be more false than this idea. Were their losses made up on such occasions, there would be no suffering. The fact is, that whatever a person loses in this way is his own total loss; nor is it ever refunded, though, in consequence of expensive prosecutions

cutions at law, it has amounted to the whole of the property of those, who have refused the payment of these demands. If a man were to come to poverty on this account, he would undoubtedly be supported, but he would only be supported as belonging to the poor of the Society.

Among the subjects introduced at this meeting may be that of any new regulations for the government of the Society. The Quakers are not so blindly attached to antiquity, as to keep to customs, merely because they are of antient date. But they are ready, on conviction, to change, alter, and improve. Such regulations or alterations may be, and sometimes are, proposed by individuals, except in cases of removals and settlements, when it is expected that they should come through the medium of one of the quarterly meetings*.

There is also a variety of other business

* The usual method, however, is for an individual to propose these to his own monthly meeting, and for this meeting, if they approve of them, to propose them to the quarterly, and then for the quarterly, in case of a similar approbation, to propose them to the yearly meeting.

at the yearly meeting. Reports are received and considered on the subject of Ackworth School, which was mentioned in a former part of this work as a public seminary of the Society.

Letters are also read from the branches of the Society in foreign parts, and answers prepared to them.

Appeals also are heard, in various instances, and determined in this court.

I may mention here two circumstances, that are worthy of notice on these occasions.

It may be observed that whether such business as that, which I have just detailed, or any of any other sort, comes before the yearly meeting at large, it is decided, not by the influence of numbers, but by the weight of religious character. As most subjects afford cause for a difference of opinion, so individuals at this meeting are found taking their different sides of the argument as they believe it right. Those, however, who are in opposition to any measure, if they perceive by the turn the debate takes, either that they are going against the general will, or that they are opposing the sentiments of members of high moral reputation

tation in the Society, give way. And so far do they carry their condescension on these occasions, that if a few antient and respectable individuals seem to be dissatisfied with any measure that may have been proposed, though otherwise respectably supported, the measure is frequently postponed, out of tenderness to the feelings of such members, and from a desire of gaining them in time by forbearance. But in whatever way the question before them is settled, no division is ever called for. No counting of numbers is allowed. No protest is suffered to be entered. In such a case there can be no ostensible leader of any party: no ostensible minority or majority. The Quakers are of opinion that such things, if allowed, would be inconsistent with their profession. They would lead, also, to broils and divisions, and ultimately to the detriment of the Society. Every measure, therefore, is settled by those who are present at this meeting in the way I have mentioned, in brotherly love, and, as the name of the Society signifies, as Friends.

The other remarkable circumstance is,
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that there is no ostensible president, or head*, of this great assembly, nor any ostensible president, or head, of any one of its committees; and yet the business of the Society is conducted in as orderly a manner as it is possible to be among any body of men, where the number is so great, and where every individual has a right to speak.

The state of the Society having by this time been ascertained, both in the meetings of the women and of the men, from the written answers of the different deputies, and from the reports of different committees, and the other business † of the meeting having been nearly finished, a committee, which had been previously chosen, meet to draw up a public letter.

This letter usually comprehends three subjects: first, the State of the Society, in which the sufferings for tithes and other

* Christ is supposed by the Quakers to be the head, under whose guidance all their deliberations ought to take place.

† This may relate to the printing of books, to testimonies concerning deceased ministers, addresses to the King, if thought necessary, and the like.

demands

demands of the church are included. This state, in all its different branches, the committee ascertain by inspecting the answers as brought by the deputies before mentioned.

A second subject, comprehended in the letter, is Advice to the Society for the Regulation of their moral and civil Conduct.— This advice is suggested partly from the same written answers, and partly by the circumstances of the times. Are there, for instance, any vicious customs creeping into the Society, or any new dispositions among its members contrary to their principles? The answers brought by the deputies show it, and advice is contained in the letter adapted to the case. Are the times seasons of difficulty and embarrassment in the commercial world? Is the aspect of the political horizon gloomy, and does it appear big with convulsions? New admonition and advices follow.

A third subject, comprehended in the letter, and which I believe since the year 1787 has frequently formed a standing article in it, is the Slave-Trade. The Quakers consider this trade as so extensively big

with misery to their fellow-creatures, that their members ought to have a deep and awful feeling, and a religious care and concern, about it. These, and occasionally other subjects, having been duly weighed by the committee, they begin to compose the letter.

When the letter is ready, it is brought into the public meeting, and the whole of it, without interruption, is first read audibly. It is then read over again, and canvassed sentence by sentence. Every sentence, nay every word, is liable to alteration; for any one may make his remarks, and nothing can stand but by the sense of the meeting. When finally settled and approved, it is printed, and dispersed among the members throughout the nation. The letter may be considered as informing the Society of certain matters that occurred in the preceding year, and as conveying to them admonitions on various subjects. This letter is emphatically styled "The General Epistle." The yearly meeting, having now lasted about ten days, is dissolved, after a solemn pause, and the different deputies are at liberty to return home.

This

This important institution of the yearly meetings bring with it, on every return, its pains and pleasures. To persons of maturer years, who attend at this time on committee after committee, and have various offices to perform, it is certainly an anniversary of care and anxiety, fatigue and trouble. But it affords them, on the other hand, occasions of innocent delight. Some, educated in the same school, and others, united by the ties of blood and youthful friendship, but separated from one another by following in distant situations the various concerns of life, meet together in the intervals of the disciplinary business, and feel, in the warm recognition of their antient intercourse, a pleasure, which might have been delayed for years but for the intervention of this occasion. To the youth it affords an opportunity, amidst this concourse of members, of seeing those, who are reputed to be of the most exemplary character in the Society, and whom they would not have had the same chance of seeing at any other time. They are introduced, also, at this season to their relations and family-friends. They
visit

visit about, and form new connections in the Society, and are permitted the enjoyment of other reasonable pleasures.

Such is the organization of the discipline or government of the Quakers. Nor may it improperly be called a government, when we consider that, besides all matters relating to the church, it takes cognisance of the actions of Quakers one to another, and of these to their fellow-citizens; and of these, again, to the state; in fact, of all actions of members, if immoral in the eye of the Society, as soon as they are known. It gives out its prohibitions. It marks its crimes. It imposes offices on its subjects. It calls them to disciplinary duties. This government, however, notwithstanding its power, has, as I observed before, no president or head, either permanent or temporary*. There is no first man through the whole Society. Neither has it any badge of office, or mace, or constable's staff, or sword. It may be observed, also, that it has no office of emolument by which its hands can be strength-

* This government or discipline is considered as a theocracy.

ened,

ened, none of its ministers, elders, clerks*, overseers, or deputies, being paid: and yet its administration is firmly conducted, and its laws are better obeyed than laws by persons under any other denomination or government. The constant assemblage of the Quakers at their places of worship, and their unwearied attendance at the monthly and quarterly meetings, which they must often frequent at a great distance, to their own personal inconvenience and to the hindrance of their worldly concerns, must be admitted, in part, as proofs of this last remark. But when we consider them as a distinct people, differing in their manner of speech and in their dress and customs from others, rebelling against fashion and the fashionable world, and likely therefore to become rather the objects of ridicule than of praise; when we consider these things, and their steady and rigid perseverance in the singular rules and customs of the Society, we cannot but regard their obedience to their own discipline, which makes a

* Except the clerk in London, who keeps the general records of the whole Society, and resides on the premises erected for their preservation.

point of the observance of such distinctions, as extraordinary.

This singular obedience, however, to the laws of the Society may be accounted for on three principles. In the first place, in no society is there so much vigilance over the conduct of its members as in that of the Quakers, as the history of their discipline must have already manifested. This vigilance, of course, cannot miss of its effect. But a second cause is the following:—The Quaker-laws and regulations are not made by any one person, nor by any number even of deputies. They are made by themselves, that is, by the Society in yearly meeting assembled. If a bad law, or the repeal of a good one, be proposed, every one present, without distinction, has liberty to speak against the motion. The proposition cannot pass against the sense of the meeting. If persons are not present, it is their own fault. Thus it happens that every law passed at the yearly meeting may be considered, in some measure, as the law of every Quaker's own making, or as the law of his own will: and people are much more likely to follow regulations made by their
own

own consent, than those which are made against it. This, therefore, has unquestionably an operation as a second cause. A third may be traced in the peculiar sentiments, which the Quakers hold as a religious body. They believe that many of their members, when they deliver themselves publicly on any subject at the yearly meeting, are influenced by the dictates of the pure Principle, or by the Spirit of Truth. Hence the laws of the Society, which are the result of such influences, have with them the sanction of spiritual authority. They pay them, therefore, a greater deference on this account than they would to laws, which they conceive to have been the production of the mere imagination or will of man.



CHAPTER V.

*Disowning—Foundation of the right of disowning
—Disowning no slight punishment—wherein the
hardship or suffering consists.*

I SHALL conclude the Discipline of the Society by making a few remarks on the subject of Disowning.

The Quakers conceive they have a right to excommunicate or disown, because persons entering into any society have a right to make their own reasonable rules of membership; and so early as in the year 1663 this practice had been adopted by George Fox, and those who were in religious union with him. They, who are born in the Society, are bound of course to abide by these rules, while they continue to be the rules of the general will, or to leave it. They, who come into it by conviction, are bound to follow them, or not to sue for admission into membership. This right of disowning, which arises from the reasonableness of the thing

thing, the Quakers consider to have been pointed out and established by the Author of the Christian religion, who determined that if a disorderly person, after having received repeated admonitions, should still continue disorderly, he should be considered as an alien by the church*.

The observations, which I shall make on the subject of Disowning, will be wholly confined to it in its operation as a source of suffering to those, who are sentenced to undergo it. People are apt to say, "Where is the hardship of being disowned? A man, though disowned by the Quakers, may still go to their religious meetings; or he may worship, if he choose, with other dissenters, or with those of the church of England; for the doors of all places of worship are open to those who desire to enter them." I shall state, therefore, in what this hardship consists; and I should have done it sooner, but that I could not have made it so well understood, as after an explanation had been given of the discipline of the Quakers, as a distinct subject of my work.

There is no doubt that a person, who is disowned, will be differently affected by dif-

* Matt. xviii. ver. 17.

ferent considerations. Something will depend upon the circumstance, whether he considers himself as disowned for a moral or a political offence; something, again, whether he has been in the habit of attending the meetings for discipline, and what estimation he may put upon these.

But whether he had been regular or not in these attendances, it is certain that he has a power and a consequence, while he remains in his own Society, which he loses when he leaves it, or when he goes into the world at large. The reader will have already observed, that in no society is a man, if I may use the expression, so much of a man as in that which is under our consideration, or in no society is there such an equality of rank and privileges. A Quaker is called, as we have seen, to the exercise of important and honourable functions. He sits in his monthly meeting, as it were in council, with the rest of the members. In point of privilege, he sees all equal, but he sees none superior, to himself. He may give his advice on any question. He may propose new matter. He may argue and reply. In the quarterly meeting he is called to the exercise of the same privileges, but on a larger scale. And at the
yearly

yearly meeting he may, if he please, unite in his own person the offices of counsel, judge, and legislator. But when he leaves the Society, and goes out into the world, he has no such station or power. He sees there every-body equal to himself in privileges, and thousands above him. It is in this loss of his former consequence that he must feel a punishment in having been disowned. For he can never be to his own feelings what he was before. It is almost impossible that he should not feel a diminution of his dignity and importance as a man.

Neither can he restore himself to these privileges by going to a distant part of the kingdom, and residing among Quakers there, on a supposition that his disownment may be concealed. For every member, going to a new abode among other members, must carry with him a certificate of his conduct from the last monthly meeting which he left, or he cannot be received by these as one of the same flock.

But besides losing these privileges, which confer consequence upon him, he loses others of another kind. He cannot marry in the Society. If a poor man, he is no longer exempt from the militia, if drawn, by submitting

mitting to three months imprisonment: nor is he entitled to that comfortable maintenance, in case of necessity, which the Society provide for their own poor.

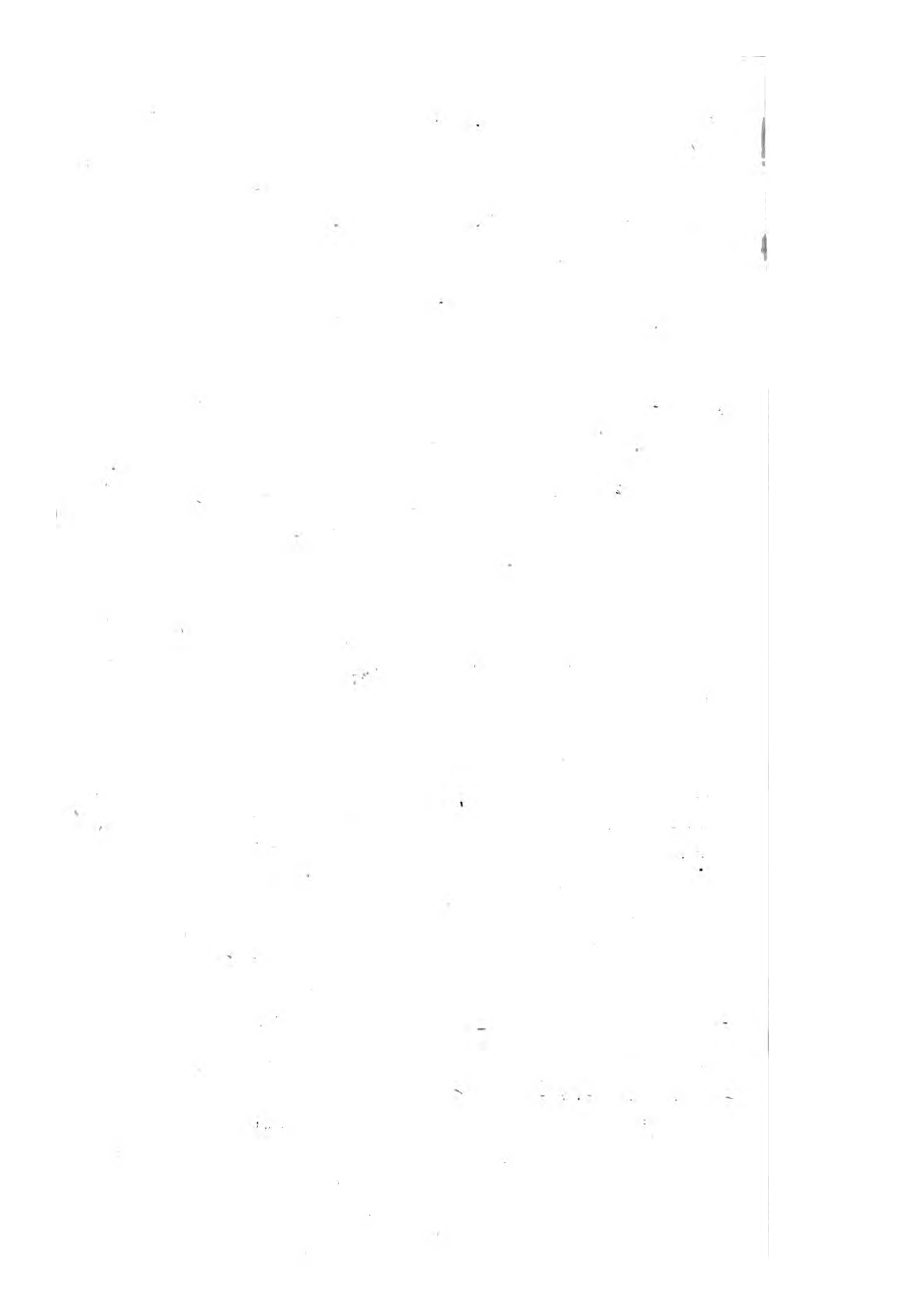
To these considerations it may not, perhaps, be superfluous to add, that if he continues to mix with the members of his own Society, he will occasionally find circumstances arising which will remind him of his former state: and if he transfers his friendship to others, he will feel awkward and uneasy, and out of his element, till he has made his temper, his opinions, and his manners, harmonize with those of his new associates of the world*.

* As Disownment may operate as no slight punishment, the reader ought to recollect, that the offences, for which it may take place, are known beforehand; that pains are taken with the offender; that appeals are allowed him; and that restoration to membership is admissible in the case of repentance. On the other hand, however, it cannot be too seriously insisted upon, that, where religious societies adopt a discipline, they ought to be careful not to swell the number of crimes unnecessarily, but to construe those actions only as such, which the letter and spirit of Christianity strictly warrant, or which Jesus Christ would have pronounced to be offences on the same occasions.

PECULIAR CUSTOMS

OF THE

QUAKERS.



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CHAPTER I.

SECTION I.

Dress—Quakers distinguished by their dress from others—Great extravagance in dress in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries—this extravagance had reached the clergy—but religious individuals kept to their antient dresses—The dress which the men of this description wore in those days—dress of the women of this description also—George Fox and the Quakers, springing out of these, carried their plain habits with them into their new Society.

I HAVE now explained, in a diffusive manner, the Moral Education and the Discipline of the Quakers. I shall proceed to the explanation of such Customs as seem peculiar to them as a Society of Christians.

The Dress of the Quakers is the first custom of this nature that I purpose to notice.

They stand distinguished by means of it from all other religious bodies. The men do not wear lace, frills, ruffles, swords, or any of the ornaments used by the fashionable world. The women wear no lace, flounces, lappets, rings, bracelets, necklaces, ear-rings, nor any thing belonging to this class. Both sexes are also particular in the choice of the colour of their clothes. All gay colours, such as red, blue, green, and yellow, are exploded. Dressing in this manner, a member of this Society is known by his apparel through the whole kingdom. This is not the case with any other individuals of the island, except the clergy; and these, in consequence of the black garments worn by persons on account of the death of their relations, are not always distinguishable from others.

I know of no custom among the Quakers which has more excited the curiosity of others than this of their dress, and none in which they have been more mistaken in their conjectures concerning it

In the early times of the English history,
dress

dress was frequently regulated by the Government*. Persons of a certain rank and fortune were permitted to wear only clothing of a certain kind. But these restrictions and distinctions were gradually broken down; and people, as they were able and willing, launched out into unlimited extravagance in their dress. The fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and down from thence to the time when the Quakers first appeared, were periods particularly noticed for prodigality in the use of apparel. There was nothing too expensive or too preposterous to be worn. Our ancestors, also, to use an antient quotation, "were never constant to one colour or fashion two months to an end." We can have no idea, by surveying the present generation, of the folly in such respects of these early ages. But these follies were not confined to the laity. Affectation of parade and gaudy clothing were admitted among many of the clergy, who incurred the severest invectives of the poets on that account. The Ploughman in Chaucer's Canterbury Tales is full upon this point.

* See Strutt's Antiquities.

He gives us the following description of a priest :

“ That hye on horse wylleth to ride,
 In glytterande gold of great araye,
 Ypainted and portred all in pryde,
 No common knyght may go so gaye ;
 Chaunge of clothyng every daye,
 With golden gyrdels great and small,
 As boystrous as is bere at baye :
 All suche falshed mote nede fall.”

To this he adds, that many of them had more than one or two mitres, embellished with pearls like the head of a queen, and a staff of gold set with jewels, as heavy as lead. He then speaks of their appearing out of doors with broad bucklers and long swords, or with baldrics about their necks, instead of stoles, to which their baselards were attached :

“ Bucklers brode and swearde longe,”—
 “ Baudryke with baselards kene.”

He then accuses them with wearing gay gowns of scarlet and green colours, ornamented with cut-work, and for the long pykes upon their shoes.

But so late as the year 1652 we have the following anecdote of the whimsical dress of a cler-

a clergyman:—John Owen, dean of Christchurch, and vice-chancellor of Oxford, is represented as wearing a lawn band,—as having his hair powdered, and his hat curiously cocked. He is described, also, as wearing Spanish-leather boots with lawn tops, and snake-bone band-strings with large tassels, and a large set of ribbands pointed at his knees with points or tags at the end. And much about the same time, when Charles the Second was at Newmarket, Nathaniel Vincent, doctor of divinity, fellow of Clarehall, and chaplain in ordinary to his majesty, preached before him. But the king was so displeased with the foppery of this preacher's dress, that he commanded the duke of Monmouth, then chancellor of the University, to cause the statutes concerning decency of apparel among the clergy to be put into execution; which was accordingly done.

These instances are sufficient to show that the taste for preposterous and extravagant dress must have operated like a contagion in those times, or the clergy would scarcely have dressed themselves in this ridiculous and censurable manner.

But

But although this extravagance was found among many orders of society at the time of the appearance of George Fox, yet many individuals had set their faces against the fashions of the world. These consisted principally of religious people of different denominations, most of whom were in the middle classes of life. Such persons were found in plain and simple habits, notwithstanding the contagion of the example of their superiors in rank. The men of this description generally wore plain round hats with common crowns. They had discarded the sugar-loaf hat, and the hat turned up with a silver clasp on one side, as well as all ornaments belonging to it, such as pictures, feathers, and bands of various colours. They had adopted a plain suit of clothes. They wore cloaks, when necessary, over these: but both the clothes and the cloaks were of the same colour. The colour of each of them was either drab or gray. Other people, who followed the fashions, wore white, red, green, yellow, violet, scarlet, and other colours, which were expensive, because they were principally dyed in foreign parts. The drab consisted of the white wool undyed; and

and the gray of the white wool mixed with the black, which was undyed also. These colours were then the colours of the clothes, because they were the least expensive, of the peasants of England, as they are now of those of Portugal and Spain. They had discarded, also, all ornaments, such as of lace, or bunches of ribands at the knees; and their buttons were generally of alchymy, as this composition was then termed, or of the same colour as their clothes.

The grave and religious women, also, like the men, had avoided the fashions of their times. These had adopted the cap and the black hood for their head-dress. The black hood had been long the distinguishing mark of a grave matron. All prostitutes, so early as Edward the Third, had been forbidden to wear it. In aftertimes it was celebrated by the poets by the epithet of Venerable, and had been introduced by painters as the representative of Virtue. When fashionable women had discarded it, which was the case in George Fox's time, the more sober, on account of these antient marks of its sanctity, had retained it, and it was then common among men. With respect to the
hair

hair of grave and sober women in those days, it was worn plain, and covered occasionally by a plain hat or bonnet. They had avoided by this choice those preposterous head-dresses and bonnets, which none but those, who have seen paintings of them, could believe ever to have been worn. They admitted none of the large ruffs that were then in use, but chose a plain handkerchief for their necks, differing from those of others, which had rich point and curious lace. They rejected the crimson satin doublet with black velvet skirts, and contented themselves with a plain gown, generally of stuff, and of a drab, or gray, or buff, or buffin colour as it was called, and faced with buckram. These colours, as I observed before, were the colours worn by country-people, and were not expensive – because they were not dyed. To this gown was added a green apron. Green aprons had been long worn in England; yet, at the time I allude to, they were out of fashion, so as to be ridiculed by the gay: but old-fashioned people still retained them. Thus an idea of gravity was connected with them; and therefore religious and steady women adopted them as
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the grave and sober garments of antient times.

It may now be observed, that from these religious persons, habited in this manner in opposition to the fashions of the world, the primitive Quakers generally sprung. George Fox himself wore the plain gray coat that has been noticed, with alchymy buttons, and a plain leathern girdle about his waist. When the Quakers, therefore, first met in religious union, they met in these simple clothes. They made no alteration in their dress on account of their new religion. They prescribed no form or colour as distinguishing marks of their sect ; but they carried with them the plain habits of their ancestors into their new Society, as the habits of the grave and sober people of their own times.

SECTION II.

But though George Fox introduced no new dress into the Society, he was not indifferent on the subject—he recommended simplicity and plainness—and declaimed against the fashions of the times—supported by Barclay and Penn—these explained the objects of dress—The influence of these explanations—Dress, at length, incorporated into the discipline—but no standard fixed either of shape or colour—the objects of dress only recognised, and simplicity recommended—A new æra—great variety allowable by the discipline—Quakers have deviated less from the dress of their ancestors than other people.

THOUGH George Fox never introduced any new or particular garments, when he formed the Society, as models worthy of the imitation of those who joined him, yet, as a religious man, he was not indifferent on the subject of dress. Nor could he, as a reformer, see those extravagant fashions, which I have shown to have existed in his time, without publicly noticing them. We find him accordingly recommending to his followers simplicity and plainness of apparel,
and

and bearing his testimony against the preposterous and fluctuating apparel of the world.

In the various papers, which he wrote or gave forth upon this subject, he laid it down as a position, that all ornaments, superfluities, and unreasonable changes in dress, manifested an earthly or worldly spirit. He laid it down, again, that such things, being adopted principally for the lust of the eye, were productive of vanity and pride; and that, in proportion as men paid attention to these outward decorations and changes, they suffered some loss in the value and dignity of their minds. He considered, also, all such decorations and changes as contrary both to the letter and the spirit of the Scriptures. Isaiah, one of the greatest prophets under the Law, had severely reproved the daughters of Israel on account of their tinkling ornaments, cauls, round tires, chains, bracelets, rings, and ear-rings. St. Paul, also, and St. Peter, had both of them cautioned the women of their own times to adorn themselves in modest apparel, and not with brodered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array. And the former had spoken
to

to both sexes indiscriminately not to conform to the world ; in which latter expression he evidently included all those customs of the world, of whatsoever nature, that were in any manner injurious to the morality of the minds of those, who followed them.

By the publication of these sentiments George Fox showed to the world, that it was his opinion that religion, though it prescribed no particular form of apparel, was not indifferent as to the general subject of dress. These sentiments became the sentiments of his followers : but the Society was coming fast into a new situation. When the members of it first met in union, they consisted of grown-up persons ; of such as had had their minds spiritually exercised, and their judgments convinced in religious matters ; of such, in fact, as had been Quakers in spirit before they had become Quakers by name. All admonitions, therefore, on the subject of dress were unnecessary for such persons. But many of those, who had joined the Society, brought with them children into it, and, from the marriages of others, children were daily springing up.

To

To the latter, in a profligate age, where the fashions were still raging from without, and making an inroad upon the minds and morals of individuals, some cautions were necessary for the preservation of their innocence in such a storm. For these were the reverse of their parents. Young in point of age, they were Quakers by name before they could become Quakers in spirit. Robert Barclay, therefore, and William Penn, kept alive the subject of dress, which George Fox had been the first to notice in the Society. They followed him on his scriptural ground. They repeated the arguments, that extravagant dress manifested an earthly spirit, and that it was productive of vanity and pride. But they strengthened the case by adding arguments of their own. Among these I may notice, that they considered what were the objects of dress. They reduced these to two,—to decency and comfort,—in which latter idea was included protection from the varied inclemencies of the weather. Every thing, therefore, beyond these they considered as superfluous: of course, all ornaments would become censurable, and

all unreasonable changes indefensible, upon such a system.

These discussions, however, on this subject never occasioned the more antient members to make any alteration in their dress ; for they continued, as when they had come into the Society, to be a plain people. But they occasioned parents to be more vigilant over their children in this respect, and they taught the Society to look upon dress as a subject connected with the Christian religion, in any case where it could become injurious to the morality of the mind. In process of time, therefore, as the fashions continued to spread, and as the youth of the Society began to come under their dominion, the Quakers incorporated dress among the other subjects of their discipline. Hence, no member, after this period, could dress himself preposterously, or follow the fleeting fashions of the world, without coming under the authority of friendly and wholesome admonition. Hence, an annual inquiry began to be made, if parents brought up their children to dress consistently with their Christian profession. The Society, however,

however, recommended only simplicity and plainness to be attended to on this occasion. They prescribed no standard, no form, no colour, for the apparel of their members. They acknowledged the two great objects of decency and comfort, and left their members to clothe themselves consistently with these, as it was agreeable to their convenience or their disposition.

A new æra commenced from this period. Persons already in the Society continued of course in their antient dresses. If others had come into it by convincement, who had led gay lives, they laid aside their gaudy garments, and took those that were more plain: and the children of both, from this time, began to be habited from their youth as their parents were.

But though the Quakers had thus brought apparel under the disciplinary cognisance of the Society, yet the dress of individuals was not always alike, nor did it continue always one and the same even with the primitive members of it; nor has it continued one and the same with their descendants. For, decency and comfort having been declared to be the true and only objects of dress, such a latitude

latitude was given as to admit of great variety in apparel. Hence, if we were to see a group of modern Quakers before us, we should probably not find any two of them dressed alike. Health, we all know, may require alterations in dress. Simplicity may suggest others. Convenience, again, may point out others: and yet all these various alterations may be consistent with the objects before specified. And here it may be observed that the Society, during its existence for a century and a half, has without doubt, in some degree, imperceptibly followed the world, though not in its fashions, yet in its improvements of clothing.

It must be obvious, again, that some people are of a grave and that others are of a lively disposition, and that these will probably never dress alike. Other members, again, but particularly the rich, have a larger intercourse than the rest of them, or mix more, with the world. These, again, will probably dress a little differently from others; and yet, regarding the two great objects of dress, their clothing may come within the limits which these allow. Indeed, if there be any, whose apparel would be thought
exception-

exceptionable by the Society, these would be found among the rich. Money, in all societies, generally takes the liberty of introducing exceptions. Nothing, however, is more true than that even among the richest of the Society there is frequently as much plainness and simplicity in their outward dress as among the poor : and, where the exceptions exist, they are seldom carried to an extravagant, and never to a preposterous, extent.

From this account it will be seen, that the ideas of the world are erroneous on the subject of the dress of the Quakers ; for it has always been imagined that, when the early Quakers first met in religious union, they met to deliberate and fix upon some standard, which should operate as a political institution, by which the members should be distinguished by their apparel from the rest of the world. The whole history, however, of the shape and colour of the garments of the Society is as has been related, namely, that the primitive members dressed like the sober, steady, and religious people of the age in which the Society sprung up, and that their descendants have departed less, in a course

of time, than others from the dress of their ancestors. The men's hats are nearly the same now, except that they have stays and loops, and many of their clothes are nearly of the same shape and colour, as in the days of George Fox. The dress of the women, also, is nearly similar. The black hoods indeed have gone, in a certain degree, out of use: but many of such women as are ministers and elders, and indeed many others of age and gravity of manners, still retain them. The green apron, also, has been nearly, if not wholly, laid aside. There was here and there an antient woman who used it within the last ten years; but I am told that the last of these died lately. No other reasons can be given, than those which have been assigned, why Quaker-women should have been found in the use of a colour, that is so unlike any other, which they now use in their dress. Upon the whole, if the females were still to retain the use of the black hood and the green apron, and the men were to discard the stays and loops for their hats, we should find that persons of both sexes in the Society, but particularly such as are antiquated, or as may
be

be deemed old-fashioned in it, would approach very near to the first or primitive members in their appearance, both as to the sort, and to the shape, and to the colour, of their clothes. Thus has George Fox, by means of the advice he gave upon this subject, and the general discipline which he introduced into the Society, kept up, for a hundred and fifty years, against the powerful attacks of the varying fashions of the world, one steady and uniform external appearance among his descendants; an event, which neither the clergy by means of their sermons, nor other writers, whether grave or gay, were able to accomplish during the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries, and which none of their successors have been able to accomplish from that time to the present.

SECTION III.

The world usually make objections to the Quaker-dress—the charge is, that there is a preciseness in it, which is equivalent to the worshipping of forms—The truth of this charge not to be ascertained but by a knowledge of the heart—But outward facts make against it—such as the origin of the Quaker-dress—and the Quaker-doctrine on dress—Doctrine of Christianity on this subject—opinion of the early Christians upon it—reputed advantages of the Quaker-dress.

I SHOULD have been glad to have dismissed the subject of the Quaker-dress in the last section ; but so many objections are usually made against it, that I thought it right to stop for a while in the present place. Indeed, if I were to choose a subject, upon which the world had been more than ordinarily severe on the members of this Society, I should select that of their dress. Almost every-body has something to say upon this point : and as in almost all cases, where arguments are numerous, many of them are generally frivolous, so it has happened in this
also.

also. There is one, however, which it is impossible not to notice upon this subject.

The Quakers, it is confessed by their adversaries, are not chargeable with the same sort of pride and vanity, which attach to the characters of other people, who dress in a gay manner, and who follow the fashions of the world; but it is contended, on the other hand, that they are justly chargeable with a preciseness, that is disgusting, in the little particularities of their clothing. This precise attention to particularities is considered as little better than the worshipping of lifeless forms, and is usually called by the world the Idolatry of the Quaker-dress.

This charge, if it were true, would be serious indeed. It would be serious, because it would take away from the religion of the Society one of its greatest and best characters. For how could any people be spiritually-minded, who were the worshippers of lifeless forms? It would be serious, again, because it would show their religion, like the box of Pandora, to be pregnant with evils within itself. For people, who place religion in particular forms, must unavoidably become superstitious. It would be serious,

rious, again, because, if parents were to carry such notions into their families, they would produce mischief. The young would be dissatisfied, if forced to cultivate particularities, for which they see no just or substantial reason. Dissensions would arise among them. Their morality, too, would be confounded, if they were to see these minutæ idolized at home, but disregarded by persons of known religious character in the world. Add to which, they might adopt erroneous notions of religion; for they might be induced to lay too much stress upon the payment of the anise and cummin, and too little upon the observance of the weightier matters of the law.

As the charge, therefore, is unquestionably a serious one, I shall not allow it to pass without some comments. And in the first place it may be observed, that whether this preciseness, which has been imputed to some Quakers, amounts to an idolizing of forms, can never be positively determined, unless we had the power of looking into the hearts of those, who have incurred the charge. We may form, however, a reasonable conjecture whether it does or not, by
presumptive

presumptive evidence, taken from incontrovertible outward facts.

The first outward fact, that presents itself to us, is the fact of the origin of the Quaker-dress. If the primitive members, when they met in religious union, had met to deliberate and fix upon a form or standard of apparel for the Society, in vain could any person have expected to repel this charge. But no such standard was ever fixed. The dress of the Society has descended from father to son, in the way that has been described. There is reason, therefore, to suppose that the Quakers, as a religious body, have deviated less than others from the primitive habits of their ancestors, rather from a fear of the effects of unreasonable changes of dress upon the mind, than from an attachment to lifeless forms.

The second outward fact, which may be resorted to as furnishing a ground for reasonable conjecture, is the doctrine of the Quakers on this subject. They profess to follow Christianity in all cases, where its doctrines can be clearly ascertained. I shall state, therefore, what Christianity says upon this point. I shall show that what Quaker-
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ism says is in unison with it: and I shall explain more at large the principle, that has given birth to the discipline of the Quakers relative to their dress.

Had Christianity approved of the make or colour of any particular garment, it would have approved of those of its Founder and of his Apostles. We do not, however, know what any of these illustrious personages wore. They were, probably, dressed in the habits of Judæan peasants, and not with any marked difference from those of the same rank in life: and that they were dressed plainly, we have every reason to believe from the censures, which some of them passed on the superfluities of apparel. But Christianity has nowhere recorded these habits as a pattern, nor has it prescribed to any man a form or colour for his clothes.

But Christianity, though it nowhere places religion in particular forms, is yet not indifferent on the general subject of dress. For, in the first place, it discards all ornaments, as appears by the testimonies of St. Paul and St. Peter before quoted; and this it does evidently on the ground of morality,—lest these, by puffing up the creature, should
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be made to give birth to the censurable passions of vanity and lust. In the second place, it forbids all unreasonable changes on the plea of conformity with the fashions of the world: and it sets its face against these, also, upon moral grounds; because the following of the fashions of the world begets a worldly spirit; and because, in proportion as men indulge this spirit, they are found to follow the loose and changeable morality of the world, instead of the strict and steady morality of the Gospel.

That the early Christians understood these to be the doctrines of Christianity on this subject, there can be no doubt. The Presbyters, and the Ascetics, I believe, changed the Pallium for the Toga in the infancy of the Christian world; but all other Christians were left undistinguished by their dress. These were generally clad in the sober manner of their own times. They observed a medium between costliness and sordidness. That they had no particular form for their dress beyond that of other grave people, we learn from Justin Martyr:—"They affected nothing fantastic," says he, "but, living
among

among Greeks and Barbarians, they followed the customs of the country; and in clothes, and in diet, and in all other affairs of outward life, they showed the excellent and admirable constitution of their discipline and conversation." That they discarded superfluities and ornaments, we may collect from various authors of those times. Basil reduced the objects of clothing to two, namely, honesty and necessity, that is, to decency and protection. Tertullian laid it down as a doctrine, that a Christian should not only be chaste, but that he should appear so outwardly. "The garments, which we should wear," says Clemens of Alexandria, "should be modest and frugal, and not wrought of divers colours, but plain." Chrysostom commends Olympias, a lady of birth and fortune, for having in her dress nothing that was wrought or gaudy. Jerome praises Paula, another lady of quality, for the same reason. We find, also, that an unreasonable change of clothing, or a change to please the eye of the world, was held improper. Cyril says, "We should not strive for variety, having clothes for home, and others for ostentation

ostentation abroad." In short, the antient fathers frequently complained of the abuse of apparel in the ways described.

Exactly in the same manner, and in no other, have the Quakers considered the doctrine of Christianity on the subject of dress. They have never adopted any particular model, either in form or colour, for their clothes. They have regarded the two objects of decency and comfort; but they have allowed of various deviations consistently with these. They have, in fact, fluctuated in their dress. The English Quaker wore formerly a round hat: he wears it now with stays and loops. But even this fashion is not universal, and seems rather now on the decline. The American Quaker, on the other hand, has generally kept to the round hat. Black hoods were uniformly worn by the women of this Society; but the use of these is much less than it was, and is still decreasing. Green aprons, also, were worn by the females, but they are now wholly out of use. These changes could not, however, have taken place, had there been any fixed standard for the Quaker-dress.

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But though the Quakers have no particular model for their clothing, yet they are not indifferent to dress, where it may be morally injurious. They have discarded all superfluities and ornaments, because they may be hurtful to the mind. They have set their faces, also, against all unreasonable changes of forms, for the same reason. They have allowed other reasons also to weigh with them in the latter case. They have received from their ancestors a plain suit of apparel, which has in some little degree followed the improvements of the world, and they see no good reason why they should change it; at least, they see in the fashions of the world none but a censurable reason for a change. And here it may be observed, that it is not an attachment to forms, but an unreasonable change and deviation from them, that the Quakers regard. Upon the latter idea it is that their discipline is in a great measure founded; or, in other words, the Quakers, as a religious body, think it right to watch in their youth any unreasonable deviation from the plain apparel of the Society.

This they do, first, because any change
beyond

beyond usefulness must be made upon the plea of conformity to the fashions of the world.

Secondly, because any such deviation in their youth is considered to show, in some measure, a deviation from simplicity of heart. It bespeaks the beginning of an unstable mind. It shows there must have been some improper motive for the change. Hence it argues a weakness in the deviating persons, and points them out as objects to be strengthened by wholesome admonition.

Thirdly, because these changes, made without reasonable motives, would lead, if not watched and checked, to other still greater changes; and because an uninterrupted succession of such changes would bring the minds of their youth under the most imperious of all despotisms, — the despotism of fashion; — in consequence of which they would cleave to the morality of the world instead of the morality of the Gospel.

And fourthly, because, in proportion as young persons deviate from the plainness and simplicity of the apparel as worn by the Society, they approach in appearance to the
world,

world, they mix with it, they imbibe its spirit, and admit its customs, and come into a situation which subjects them to be disowned; and this is so generally true, that of those persons, whom the Society has been obliged to disown, the commencement of a long progress in irregularity may often be traced to a deviation from the simplicity of their dress. And here it may be observed, that an effect has been produced by this care concerning dress, so beneficial to the moral interests of the Society, that they have found in it a new reason for new vigilance on this subject. The effect produced is a general similarity of outward appearance in all the members, though there is a difference both in the form and colour of their clothing: and this general appearance is such, as to make them still known to the world. The dress, therefore, of the Quakers, by distinguishing the members of the Society, and making them known as such to the world, makes the world overseers, as it were, of their moral conduct. And that it operates in this way, or that it becomes a partial check in favour of morality, there can be no question. For a Quaker could not be seen
either

either at public races, or at cock-fightings, or at assemblies, or in public-houses, but the fact would be noticed as singular, and probably soon known among his friends. His clothes would betray him. Neither could he, if at a great distance from home, and if quite out of the eye and observation of persons of the same religious persuasion, do what many others do. For a Quaker knows that many of the customs of the Society are known to the world at large, and that a certain conduct is expected from a person in his habit. The fear, therefore, of being detected, and at any rate of bringing infamy on his cloth, if I may use the expression, would operate so as to keep him out of many of the vicious customs of the world.

From hence it will be obvious, that there cannot be any solid foundation for the charge which has been made against the Quakers on the subject of dress. They are found in their present dress, not on the principle of an attachment to any particular form, or because any one form is more sacred than another, but on the principle that an unreasonable deviation from any
simple

simple and useful clothing is both censurable and hurtful, if made in conformity with the fashions of the world. These two principles, though they may produce, if acted upon, a similar outward appearance in persons, are yet widely distinct, as to their foundation, from one another. The former is the principle of idolatry. The latter is that of religion. If, therefore, there be persons in the Society, who adopt the former, they will come within the reach of the charge described: but the latter only can be adopted by true Quakers.



CHAPTER II.

Quakers are in the use of plain furniture—this usage founded on principles similar to those on dress—this usage general—Quakers have seldom paintings, prints, or portraits, in their houses, as articles of furniture—reasons for their disuse of such articles.

As the members of this Society are found in the use of garments differing from those of others in their shape and fashion, and in the graveness of their colour, and in the general plainness of their appearance, so they are found in the use of plain and frugal furniture in their houses.

The custom of using plain furniture has not arisen from the circumstance, that any particular persons in the Society, estimable for their lives and characters, have set the example in their own families, but from the principles of the Quaker-constitution itself. It has arisen from principles similar to those, which dictated the continuance of the ancient Quaker-dress. The choice of furniture,

ture, like the choice of clothes, is left to be adjudged by the rules of decency and usefulness, but never by the suggestions of show. The adoption of taste instead of utility, in this case, would be considered as a conscious conformity with the fashions of the world. Splendid furniture, also, would be considered as pernicious as splendid clothes. It would be classed with external ornaments, and would be reckoned equally productive of pride with these. The custom, therefore, of plainness in the articles of domestic use is pressed upon all members: and that the subject may not be forgotten, it is incorporated into their religious discipline; in consequence of which it is held forth to their notice, in a public manner, in all the monthly and quarterly meetings of the kingdom, and in all the preparative meetings at least once in a year.

It may be admitted as a truth, that the Society practises, with few exceptions, what is considered to be the proper usage on such occasions. The poor, we know, cannot use any but homely furniture. The middle classes are universally in such habits. As to the rich, there is a difference in the practice

tice of these. Some, and indeed many of them, use as plain and frugal furniture as those in moderate circumstances. Others, again, step beyond the practice of the middle classes, and buy what is more costly, not with a view of show, so much as to accommodate their furniture to the size and goodness of their houses. In the houses of others, again, who have more than ordinary intercourse with the world, we now and then see what is elegant, but seldom what would be considered to be extravagant furniture. We see no chairs with satin bottoms and gilded frames, no magnificent pier-glasses, no superb chandeliers, no curtains with extravagant trimmings: at least, in all my intercourse with the Quakers I have never observed such things. If there are persons in the Society, who use them, they must be few in number; and these must be conscious that, by the introduction of such finery* into their houses, they are going against the advices annually given them in their meetings on this subject, and that they are there-

* Turkey carpets are in use, though generally gaudy, on account of their wearing better than others.

fore violating the written law, as well as departing from the spirit of Quakerism.

But if these or similar principles are adopted by the Society on this subject, it must be obvious, that in walking through the rooms of the Quakers we shall look in vain for some articles, that are classed among the furniture of other people. We shall often be disappointed, for instance, if we expect to find either paintings or prints in frame. I seldom remember to have seen above three or four articles of this description in all my intercourse with the Quakers. Some families had one of these, others a second, and others a third, but none had them all: and in many families neither the one nor the other was to be seen.

One of the prints, to which I allude, contained a representation of the conclusion of the famous Treaty between William Penn and the Indians of America. This transaction, every body knows, afforded, in all its circumstances, a proof to the world of the singular honour and uprightness of those members of the Society, who were concerned in it. The Indians, too, entertained an opinion no less favourable of their character ;
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for they handed down the memory of the event under such impressive* circumstances, that their descendants have a particular love for the character, and a particular reliance on the word, of a Quaker at the present day. The print alluded to was therefore probably hung up as the pleasing record of a transaction so highly honourable to the principles of the Society ; where Knowledge took no advantage of Ignorance, but where she associated herself with Justice, that she might preserve the balance equal. “ This is the only treaty,” says a celebrated writer, “ between the Indians and the Christians, that was never ratified by an oath, and was never broken.”

The second was the print of a Slave-ship, published a few years ago, when the circumstances of the Slave-trade became a subject of national inquiry. In this the oppressed Africans are represented as stowed in different parts, according to the number transported and to the scale of the dimensions of the vessel. This subject could not be in-

* The Indians denominated Penn, Brother Onas, which means in their language a pen, and respect the Quakers as his descendants.

different to those, who had exerted themselves as a body for the annihilation of this inhuman traffic. The print, however, was not hung up by the Quakers either as a monument of what they had done themselves, or as a stimulus to further exertion on the same subject, but, I believe, from the pure motive of exciting benevolence ;—of exciting the attention of those, who should come into their houses, to the case of the injured Africans, and of procuring sympathy in their favour.

The third contained a Plan of the Building of Ackworth School. This was hung up as a descriptive view of a public seminary, instituted and kept up by the subscription and care of the Society at large.

But though all the prints, that have been mentioned, were hung up in frames on the motives severally assigned to them, no others were to be seen as their companions. It is, in short, not the practice* of the Society

* There are still individual exceptions. Some Quakers have come accidentally into possession of paintings and engravings in frame, which, being innocent in their subject and their lesson, they have thought proper to retain.

to decorate their houses in this manner. Prints in frames, if hung up promiscuously in a room, would be considered as ornamental furniture, or as furniture for show. They would therefore come under the denomination of superfluities; and the admission of such, in the way that other people admit them, would be considered as an adoption of the empty customs or fashions of the world.

But though the members of this Society are not in the practice of hanging up prints in frames, yet there are amateurs among them, who have a number and variety of prints in their possession. But these appear chiefly in collections, bound together in books, or preserved in port-folios, and not in frames as ornamental furniture for their rooms. These amateurs, however, are but few in number. The Quakers have in general only a plain and useful education. They are not brought up to admire such things; and they have therefore in general but little taste for the fine and masterly productions of the painter's art.

Neither would a person in going through the houses of the Quakers find any portraits
either

either of themselves, or of any of their families, or ancestors, except, in the latter case, they had been taken before they became Quakers. The first Quakers never had their portraits taken with their own knowledge and consent. Considering themselves as poor and helpless creatures, and as little better than dust and ashes, they had but a mean idea of their own images. They were of opinion, also, that pride and self-conceit would be likely to arise to men from the view and ostentatious parade of their own persons. They considered, also, that it became them, as the founders of the Society, to bear their testimony against the vain and superfluous fashions of the world. They believed, also, if there were those whom they loved, that the best method of showing their regard to these would be, not by having their fleshly images before their eyes, but by preserving their best actions in their thoughts, as worthy of imitation; and that their own memory, in the same manner, should be perpetuated rather in the loving hearts, and kept alive in the edifying conversation, of their descendants, than in the perishing tablets of canvass fixed upon the walls of their
their

their habitations. Hence, no portraits are to be seen of many of those great and eminent men in the Society, who are now mingled with the dust.

These ideas, which thus actuated the first Quakers on this subject, are those of their descendants, as a body, at the present day. There may be here and there an individual who has had a portrait of some of his family taken: but such instances may be considered as rare exceptions from the general rule. In no society is it possible to establish maxims, which shall influence an universal practice.



CHAPTER III.

SECTION I.

Language—Quakers differ in their language from others—the first alteration made by George Fox of Thou for You—this change had been suggested by Erasmus and Luther—Sufferings of the Quakers in consequence of adopting this change—a work published in their defence—this presented to King Charles and others—other works on the subject by Barclay and Penn—in these the word Thou shown to be proper in all languages—You, to be a mark of flattery—the latter idea corroborated by Howell, Maresius, Godeau, Erasmus.

As the Quakers are distinguishable from their fellow-citizens by their dress, as was amply shown in a former chapter, so they are not less distinguishable from them by the peculiarities of their language.

George Fox seemed to look at every custom with the eye of a reformer. The language of the country, as used in his own time,

time, struck him as having many censurable defects. Several of the expressions then in use appeared to him to contain gross flattery, others to be idolatrous, others to be false representatives of the ideas they were intended to convey. Now, he considered that Christianity required truth; and he believed therefore that he and his followers, who professed to be Christians in word and deed, and to follow the Christian pattern in all things, as far as it could be found, were called upon to depart from all the censurable modes of speech, as much as they were from any of the customs of the world, which Christianity had deemed objectionable. And so weightily did these improprieties in his own language lie upon his mind, that he conceived himself to have had an especial commission to correct them.

The first alteration, which he adopted, was in the use of the pronoun Thou. The pronoun You, which grammarians had fixed to be of the plural number, was then occasionally used, but less than it is now, in addressing an individual. George Fox, therefore, adopted Thou in its place on this occasion, leaving the word You to be used
only

only where two or more individuals were addressed.

George Fox, however, was not the first of the religious writers, who had noticed the improper use of the pronoun You. Erasmus employed a treatise in showing the propriety of Thou, when addressed to a single person; and in ridiculing the use of You, on the same occasion. Martin Luther also took great pains to expunge the word You from the station which it occupied, and to put Thou in its place. In his *Ludus* he ridicules the use of the former by the following invented sentence:—"Magister, Vos estis iratus?"—This is as absurd as if he had said in English,—“Gentlemen, art Thou angry?”

But though George Fox was not the first to recommend the substitution of Thou for You, he was the first to reduce this amended use of it to practice. This he did in his own person wherever he went, and in all the works which he published. All his followers did the same. And from his time to the present, the pronoun Thou has come down so prominent in the speech of the Society, that its members are generally known by it at the present day.

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The reader would hardly believe, if historical facts did not prove it, how much noise the introduction, or rather the amended use, of this little particle, as reduced to practice by George Fox, made in the world; and how much ill usage it occasioned the early Quakers. Many magistrates, before whom they were carried in the early times of their institution, occasioned their sufferings to be greater merely on this account. They were often abused and beaten by others, and sometimes put in danger of their lives. It was a common question put to a Quaker in those days, who addressed a great man in this new and simple manner, "Why, you ill-bred clown, do you Thou me?" The rich and mighty of these times thought themselves degraded by this mode of address, as reducing them from a plural magnitude to a singular, or individual, or simple, station in life. "The use of Thou," says George Fox, "was a sore cut to proud flesh, and those who sought self-honour."

George Fox, finding that both he and his followers were thus subject to much persecution on this account, thought it right the
world

world should know, that, in using this little particle, which had given so much offence, the Society was only doing what every grammarian ought to do, if he followed his own rules. Accordingly, a Quaker-work was produced, which was written to show, that in all languages Thou was the proper and usual form of speech to a single person, and You to more than one. This was exemplified by instances taken out of the Scriptures, and out of books of teaching in about thirty languages. Two members, of the names of John Stubbs and Benjamin Furly, took great pains in compiling it: and some additions were made to it by George Fox himself, who was then a prisoner in Lancaster castle.

This work, as soon as it was published, was presented to King Charles the Second, and to his council. Copies of it were also sent to the archbishop of Canterbury, the bishop of London, and to each of the Universities. The king delivered his sentiments upon it so far as to say, that Thou was undoubtedly the proper language of all nations. The archbishop of Canterbury, when he was asked what he thought of it, is described to have

have been so much at a stand that he could not tell what to say. The book was afterwards bought by many. It is said to have spread conviction wherever it went. Hence it had the effect of lessening the prejudices of some; so that the Quakers were never afterwards treated, on this account, in the same rugged manner as they had been before.

But though this book procured the members of the Society an amelioration of treatment on the amended use of the expression Thou, there were individuals in it, who thought they ought to put their defence on a better foundation, by stating all the reasons (for there were many besides those in this book) which had induced them to differ from their fellow-citizens on this subject. This was done both by Robert Barclay and William Penn in works, which defended other principles of the Quakers, and other peculiarities in their language.

One of the arguments, on which the use of the pronoun Thou was defended, was the same as that, on which it had been defended by Stubbs and Furly,—that is, its strict conformity with grammar. The translators

of the Bible had invariably used it. The Liturgy had been compiled on the same principle. All addresses made by English Christians in their private prayers to the Supreme Being were made in the language of Thou, and not of You. And this was done, because the rules of the English grammar warranted the expression, and because any other mode of expression would have been a violation of those rules.

But the great argument, to omit all others, which Penn and Barclay insisted upon for the change of You, was that the pronoun Thou, in addressing an individual, had been antiently in use, but that it had been deserted for You, for no other purpose than that of flattery to men; and that this dereliction of it was growing greater and greater, upon the same principle, in their own times. Hence, as Christians, who were not to puff up the fleshly creature, it became them to return to the antient and grammatical use of the pronoun Thou, and to reject this growing fashion of the world. "The word You," says William Penn, "was first ascribed, in way of flattery, to proud popes and emperors, imitating the Heathens' vain homage
to

to their gods, thereby ascribing a plural honour to a single person ; as if one pope had been made up of many gods, and one emperor of many men ; for which reason You, only to be addressed to many, became first spoken to one. It seemed the word Thou looked like too lean and thin a respect : and therefore some, bigger than they should be, would have a style suitable to their own ambition.”

It will be difficult for those, who now use the word You constantly to a single person, and who in such use of it never attach any idea of flattery to it, to conceive how it ever could have had the origin ascribed to it ; or, what is more extraordinary, how men could believe themselves to be exalted, when others applied to them the word You instead of Thou. But history affords abundant evidence of the fact.

It is well known that Caligula ordered himself to be worshipped as a god. Domitian, after him, gave similar orders with respect to himself. In process of time the very statues of the emperors began to be worshipped. One blasphemous innovation prepared the way for another. The title of

Pontifex Maximus gave way at length for those of Eternity, Divinity, and the like. Coeval with these appellations was the change of the word Thou for You, and upon the same principles. These changes, however, were not so disagreeable, as they might be expected to have been, to the proud Romans; for, while they gratified the pride of their emperors, they made their despotism in their own conceit more tolerable to themselves. That one man should be lord over many thousand Romans, who were the masters of the world, was in itself a degrading thought. But they consoled themselves by the haughty consideration, that they were yielding obedience not to a man, but to an incarnate dæmon, or good genius, or especial envoy from Heaven. They considered, also, the emperor as an office, and as an office including and representing many other offices; and hence, considering him as a man in the plural number, they had less objection to address him in a plural manner.

The Quakers, in behalf of their assertions on this subject, quote the opinions of several learned men, and of those in particular,
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who, from the nature of their respective writings, had occasion to look into the origin and construction of the words and forms of language.

Howell, in his Epistle to the Nobility of England, placed before his French and English Dictionary, takes notice that both in France and in other nations the word Thou was used in speaking to one: but, by succession of time, when the Roman commonwealth grew into an empire, the courtiers began to magnify the emperor, as being furnished with power to confer dignities and offices, using the word You; yea, and deifying him with more remarkable titles; concerning which matter we read in the Epistles of Symmachus to the emperors Theodosius and Valentinian, where he useth these forms of speaking: "Vestra Eternitas, Vestrum Numen, Vestra Serenitas, Vestra Clementia; that is, Your, and not Thy, Eternity, Godhead, Serenity, Clemency. So that the word You in the plural number, together with the other titles and compellations of honour, seem to have had their rise from despotic government, which afterwards, by degrees, came to be derived to private persons. He

says, also, in his History of France, that in ancient times the peasants addressed their kings by the appellation of Thou ; but that pride and flattery first put inferiors upon paying a plural respect to the single person of every superior, and superiors upon receiving it.

John Maresius, of the French Academy, in the Preface to his Clovis, speaks much to the same effect:—"Let none wonder," says he, "that the word Thou is used in this work to princes and princesses, for we use the same to God. And of old the same was used to Alexanders, Cæsars, queens and empresses. The use of the word You, when only one person is spoken to, was only introduced by these base flatteries of men of later ages, to whom it seemed good to use the plural number to one person, that he may imagine himself alone to be equal to many others in dignity and worth ; from whence it came at last to persons of lower quality."

Godeau, in his Preface to the Translation of the New Testament, makes an apology for differing from the customs of the times in the use of Thou, and intimates that You
was.

was substituted for it, as a word of superior respect. "I had rather," says he, "faithfully keep to the express words of Paul, than exactly follow the polished style of our tongue. Therefore I always use that form of calling God in the singular number, not in the plural, and therefore I say rather Thou than You. I confess, indeed, that the civility and custom of this world require him to be honoured after that manner. But it is likewise, on the contrary, true, that the original tongue of the New Testament hath nothing common with such manners and civility; so that not one of these many old versions we have doth observe it. Let not men believe that we give not respect enough to God, in that we call him by the word Thou; which is nevertheless far otherwise. For I seem to myself (may be by the effect of custom) more to honour his Divine Majesty in calling him after this manner, than if I should call him after the manner of men, who are so delicate in their forms of speech."

Erasmus, also, in the Treatise, which he wrote on the Impropriety of substituting You for Thou, when a person addresses an individual,

individual, states that this strange substitution originated wholly in the flattery of men.

SECTION II,

Other alterations in the language of the Quakers— they addressed one another by the title of Friends —and others by the title of Friends or Neighbours, or by their common names—The use of Sir and Madam abolished—also, of Master, or Mister, and of Humble Servant—also, of titles of honour—Reasons of this abolition—Example of Jesus Christ.

ANOTHER alteration, that took place in the language of the Society, was the expunging of all expressions from the vocabulary, which were either superfluous, or of the same flattering tendency as the former.

In addressing one another, either personally or by letter, they made use of the word Friend, to signify the bond of their own union, and the character which man, under the Christian dispensation, was bound to exhibit in his dealings with his fellow-man. They addressed each other, also, and spoke
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of each other, by their real names. If a man's name was John, they called him John; they talked to him as John; and added only his surname to distinguish him from others.

In their intercourse with the world, they adopted the same mode of speech; for they addressed individuals either by their plain names, or they made use of the appellation of Friends or Neighbours.

They rejected the words Sir or Madam, as then in use. This they did, because they considered them, like the word You, as remnants of antient flattery, derived from the papal and antichristian ages; and because these words still continued to be considered as titles of flattery, that puffed up people in their own times. Howell, who was before quoted on the pronoun Thou, is usually quoted by the Quakers on this occasion also. He states in his History, that "Sir and Madam were originally names given to none but the king, his brother, and their wives, both in France and England. Yet now the ploughman in France is called Sir, and his wife Madam; and men of ordinary trades in England Sir, and their wives Dame; which is the legal title of a lady, and is the same

as

as Madam in French. So prevalent have pride and flattery been in all ages, the one to give and the other to receive respect!"

The Quakers banished also the word Master, or Mister as it is now pronounced, from their language, either when they spoke concerning any one, or addressed any one by letter. To have used the word Master to a person, who was no master over them, would have been to have indicated a needless servility, and to have given a false picture of their own situation, as well as of those addressed.

Upon the same or similar principles they hesitated to subscribe themselves as the humble or obedient Servants of any one, as is now usual, at the bottom of their letters. "Horrid apostasy!" says Barclay; "for it is notorious that the use of these compliments implies not any design of service." This expression in particular they reprobated for another reason: it was one of those, which had followed the last deluge of impious services and expressions, which had poured in after the statues of the emperors had been worshipped, after the titles of Eternity and Divinity had been ushered in, and after
Thou

Thou had been exchanged for You ; and it had taken a certain station, and flourished among these. Good Christians, however, had endeavoured to keep themselves clear of such inconsistencies. Casaubon has preserved a letter of Paulinus*, bishop of Nola, in which he rebukes Sulpicius Severus for having subscribed himself " his humble Servant." A part of the letter runs thus :—
" Take heed hereafter, how thou, being from a servant called unto liberty, dost subscribe thyself Servant to one, who is thy brother and fellow-servant: for it is a sinful flattery, not a testament of humility, to pay those honours to a man and to a sinner, which are due to the one Lord, one Master, and one God."

The Quakers also banished from the use

* Paulinus flourished in the year 460. He is reported by Paulus Diaconus to have been an exemplary Christian. Among other acts, he is stated to have expended all his revenues in the redemption of Christian captives; and at last, when he had nothing left in his purse, to have pawned his own person in favour of a widow's son. The Barbarians, says the same author, struck with this act of unparalleled devotion to the cause of the unfortunate, released him, and many prisoners with him, without ransom.

of

of their Society all those modes of expression, which were considered as marks or designations of honour among men. Hence, in addressing any peer of the realm, they never used the common formula of "My Lord;" for though the peer in question might justly be the lord over many possessions, and tenants, and servants, yet he was no lord over their heritages or persons. Neither did they ever use the terms Excellency, or Grace, or Honour, upon similar occasions. They considered that the bestowing of these titles might bring them under the necessity of uttering what might be occasionally false. "For, the persons," says Barclay, "obtaining these titles, either by election or hereditarily, may frequently be found to have nothing really in them deserving them, or answering to them; as some, to whom it is said 'Your Excellency,' may have nothing of excellency in them; and he, who is called Your Grace, may be an enemy to grace; and he, who is called Your Honour, may be base and ignoble." They considered, also, that they might be setting up the creature, by giving him the titles of the Creator, so that he
might

might think more highly of himself than he ought, and more degradingly than he ought of the rest of the human race.

But independently of these moral considerations, they rejected these titles, because they believed that Jesus Christ had set them an example by his own declarations and conduct on a certain occasion. When a person addressed him by the name of Good Master, he was rebuked as having done an improper thing*. "Why," says our Saviour, "callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is God." This censure they believed to have been passed upon him, because Jesus Christ knew that, when the person addressed him by this title, he addressed him not in his divine nature or capacity, but only as a man.

But Jesus Christ not only refused to receive titles of distinction himself, in his human nature, but, on another occasion, exhorted his followers to shun them also. They were not to be like the Scribes and Pharisees, who wished for high and eminent distinctions, that is, to be called Rabbi Rabbi

* Matt. xix. 17.

of men; "but," says he, "be ye not called Rabbi, for one is your master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren*;" and he makes the desire, which he discovered in the Jews, of seeking after worldly instead of heavenly honours, to be one cause of their infidelity towards Christ †; for that such could not believe, as received honour from one another, and sought not the honour, which cometh from God only; that is, that those persons, who courted earthly honours, could not have that humility of mind, that spirit that was to be of no reputation in the world, which was essential to those, who wished to become the followers of Christ.

These considerations, both those of a moral nature, and those of the example of Jesus Christ, weighed so much with the early Quakers, that they made no exceptions even in favour of those of royal dignity, or of the rulers of their own land. George Fox wrote several letters to great men. He wrote twice to the king of Poland, three or four times to Oliver Cromwell, and several times to Charles the Se-

* Matt. xxiii. 8.

† John v. 44.

cond;

cond; but he addressed them in no other manner than by their plain names, or by simple titles expressive of their situations as rulers or as kings*.

These several alterations, which took place in the language of the early Quakers, were adopted by their successors, and are in force in the Society at the present day.

SECTION III.

Other alterations in the language—The names of the days and months altered—Reasons for this change—The word Saint disused—Various new phrases introduced.

ANOTHER alteration, which took place in the language of the Society, was the disuse of the common names of the days of the week, and of those of the months of the year.

* The Quakers never refuse the legal titles in the superscription or direction of their letters. They would direct to the king, as king; to a peer, according to his rank, either as a duke, marquis, earl, viscount, or baron; to a clergyman, not as reverend, but as clerk.

The

The names of the days were considered to be of Heathen origin. Sunday had been so called by the Saxons, because it was the day, on which they sacrificed to the Sun; Monday, on which they sacrificed to the Moon; Tuesday, to the god Tuisco; Wednesday, to the god Woden; Thursday, to the god Thor; and so on. Now, when the Quakers considered that Jehovah had forbidden the Israelites to make mention even of the names of other gods, they thought it inconsistent in Christians to continue to use the names of Heathen idols for the common divisions of their time, so that these names must be almost always in their mouths. They thought, too, that they were paying a homage, in continuing the use of them, that bordered on idolatry. They considered, also, as neither Monday, nor Tuesday, nor any other of these days, were days in which these sacrifices were now offered, they were using words, which conveyed false notions of things. Hence they determined upon the disuse of these words, and to put other names in their stead. The numerical way of naming the days seemed to them to be the most rational, and the most innocent.

They

They called, therefore, Sunday, the First day; Monday, the Second; Tuesday, the Third; and so on to Saturday, which was of course the Seventh. They used no other names but these, either in their conversation or in their letters.

Upon the same principles they altered the names of the months also. Those, such as March and June, which had been so named by the antient Romans, because they were sacred to Mars and Juno, were exploded, because they seemed, in the use of them, to be expressive of a kind of idolatrous homage. Others, again, were exploded, because they were not the representatives of the truth. September, for example, means the Seventh month from the storms*. It took this seventh station in the kalendar of Romulus, and it designated there its own station, as well as the reason of its name. But when it lost its place in the kalendar by the alteration of the Style in England, it lost its meaning†. It became no representative
of

* Septem ab imbris.

† This was in the year 1752. Prior to this time the year began on the 25th of March, and therefore September stood in the English as in the Roman kalendar.

of its station, nor any representative of the truth. For it still continues to signify the Seventh month, whereas it is made to represent, or to stand in the place of, the Ninth. The Quakers, therefore, banished from their language the antient names of the months; and as they thought they could not do better than they had done in the case of the days, they placed numerical in their stead. They called January, the First month; February, the Second; March, the Third; and so on to December, which they called the Twelfth. Thus the Quaker-kalendar was made up by numerical distinctions, which have continued to the present day.

Another alteration, which took place very generally in the language of the Quakers, was the rejection of the word Saint, when they spoke either of the apostles or of the primitive fathers. The papal authority had canonized these. This they considered to be an act of idolatry, and they thought they should be giving a sanction to superstition, if they

The early Quakers, however, as we find by a minute in 1697, had made these alterations; but when the New Style was introduced, they published their reasons for having done so.

continued

continued the use of such a title either in their speech or writings. After this, various other alterations took place, according as individuals among them thought it right to expunge old expressions and to substitute new; and these alterations were adopted by the rest, as they had an opinion of those, who used them, or as they felt the propriety of doing it. Hence, new phrases came into use, different from those, which were used by the world on the same occasions: and these were gradually spread, till they became incorporated into the language of the Society. Of these, the following examples may suffice:

It is not common with the members of this Society to use the words Lucky, or Fortunate, in the way in which many others do. If a Quaker had been out on a journey, and had experienced a number of fine days, he would never say that he had been lucky in his weather. In the same manner, if he had recovered from an indisposition, he would never say, in speaking of the circumstance, that he had Fortunately recovered; but he would say that he had recovered, and that it

was a Favour. Luck, Chance, or Fortune, are not allowed by the Quakers to have any power in the settlement of human affairs.

It is not usual with them to beg ten thousand Pardons, as some of the world do, for any little mistake. A Quaker generally, on such an occasion, asks the person to excuse him.

They never make use of the expression "Christian name." This name is called Christian by the world, because it is the name given to children in baptism, or, in other words, when they are christened, or when they are initiated as Christians. But the Quakers are never baptized. They have no belief that water-baptism can make a Christian, or that it is any true mark of membership with the Christian church. Hence, a man's Christian name is called by them his First name, because it is the first of the two, or of any other number of names, that may belong to him.

In meeting a person, they never say "Good morrow," because all days are equally good. Nor, in parting with a person at night, do they say "Good evening," for a similar reason;

reason; but they make use, in the latter case, of the expression "Farewell."

I might proceed, till I made a little vocabulary of Quaker-expressions; but this is not necessary, and it is not at all consistent with my design. I shall therefore only observe, that it is expected of Quakers that they should use the language of the Society;—that they should substitute Thou for You;—that they should discard all flattering titles and expressions;—and that they should adopt the numerical instead of the Heathen names of the days and months. George Fox gave the example himself in all these instances. Those of the Society, who depart from this usage, are said by the Quakers to depart from "the plain language."

SECTION IV.

Great objections by the world against the preceding alterations by the Quakers—first, against the use of Thou for You—Thou, said to be no longer a mark of flattery—the use of it said to be connected with false grammar—custom said to give it, like a noun of number, a singular as well as plural meaning—Consideration of these objections.

THERE will be no difficulty in imagining, if the Quakers have found fault with the words and expressions adopted by others, and these the great majority of the world, that the world will scrutinize and find fault with those of the Quakers, in return. This, in fact, has turned out to be the case; and I know of no subject, except that of dress, where the world has been more lavish of its censures than in that before us.

When the Quakers first appeared, as a religious community, many objections were thrown out against the peculiarities of their language. These were noticed by Robert Barclay and William Penn. And since that time other objections have been started.

But

But as these have not been published, (for they remain, where they have usually been, in the mouths of living persons,) Quaker-writers have not felt themselves called upon to attempt to answer them. These objections, however, of both descriptions, I shall notice in the present place.

As the change of the pronoun Thou for You was the first article, that I brought forward on the subject of the language of the Society, I shall begin with the objections that are usually started against it.

“Singularity, it is said, should always be avoided, if it can be done with a clear conscience. The members of this Society might have had honest scruples against You for Thou, when You was a mark of flattery. But they can have no reasonable scruples now, and therefore they should cease to be singular. For the word You is clearly no mark of flattery at the present day. However improper it might once have been, it is now an innocent synonym.

“The use, again, of the word Thou for You, as insisted upon by the Quakers, leads them frequently into false grammar. ‘Thee knowest,’ and terms like these, are not unusual in their mouths. Now the Quakers,
though

though they defended the use of Thou for You on the notion, that they ought not to accustom their lips to flattery, defended it also strenuously on the notion, that they were strictly adhering to grammar rules. But all such terms as 'Thee knowest' must recoil upon themselves as incorrect, and as censurable, even upon their own ground."

"The word You, again, may be considered as a singular as well as a plural expression. The world use it in this manner. And who are the makers of language but the world? Words change their meaning, as the leaves their colour in autumn: and custom has always been found powerful enough to give authority for a change."

With respect to these objections, it must be confessed that the word You has certainly so far lost its meaning, as to be no longer a mark of flattery, and therefore the Quakers have lost one of their reasons for its disuse. It must be confessed also, that the members of this Society frequently adopt the ungrammatical expressions, that have been brought against them. But surely all such lose another of their reasons for their disuse of this pronoun. They should either endeavour to speak more correctly, or
give

give up the grammatical part of the defence by Penn and Barclay, and conform to the practice of the world. That You, however, is of the singular number, is not quite so clear. You and Thou have certainly a concurrent jurisdiction, but they have it only by custom through a length of time. For while Thou is used in the singular number in the Bible, and in the Liturgy, and in the prayers of individuals; and while it is the language, as it is, of a great portion of the inhabitants of the northern part of the kingdom, it will be a standing monument against the usurpation and dominion of You.

SECTION V.

Secondly, against the words Friend and Neighbour, as used by the Quakers—Quakers also said to be wrong in their disuse of titles—for the use of these is sanctioned by St. Luke and St. Paul—Answer of Barclay to the latter assertion—this answer not generally deemed satisfactory—Observations upon the subject in dispute.

THE subject, which comes next in order, will be that of the Objections that are usually

ally made against certain Terms used by the Society, and against its Disuse of Titles of Honour, as sanctioned by the world.

On the use of the words "Friend," and "Neighbour," it is usually observed, that these are too limited in their meaning, to be always, if used promiscuously, representatives of the truth. If the Quakers are so nice, that they will use no expression that is not precisely true, they should invent additional terms, which should express the relative condition of those, with whom they converse. The word "Friend" denotes esteem; and the word "Neighbour," proximity of dwelling. But all the persons, to whom the Quakers address themselves, are not persons whom they love and respect, or who are the inhabitants of the same neighbourhood with themselves. There is, it is said, as much untruth in calling a man Friend, or Neighbour, who is not so, as Excellency, in whom there may be nothing that is excellent.

The Quakers, in reply to this, would observe, that they use the word Friend as significative of their own union, and, when they speak to others, as significative of their Christian relation one to another. In the
same

same sense they use the word Neighbour. Jesus Christ, when the lawyer asked him who was his neighbour, gave him a short history of the Samaritan*, who fell among thieves; from which he suggested an inference, that the term Neighbour was not confined to those, who lived near one another, or belonged to the same sect, but that it might extend to those, who lived at a distance, and to the Samaritan equally with the Jew. In the same manner he considered all men as brethren†: that is, they were thus scripturally related to one another.

Another objection, which has been raised against the Society on this part of the subject, is levelled against its disuse of the titles of honour of the world. St. Luke, it has been said, makes use of the term Most Excellent, when he addresses Theophilus; and St. Paul, of the words Most Noble, when he addresses Festus. Now these teachers and promulgators of Christianity would never have given these titles, if they had not been allowable by the Gospel.

* Luke x. 29.

† Matt. xxiii. 8.

As this last argument was used in the time of Barclay, he has noticed it in his celebrated Apology:—"Since Luke," says he, "wrote by the dictates of the infallible Spirit of God, I think it will not be doubted but Theophilus did deserve it, as being really endued with that virtue; in which case we shall not condemn those, who do it by the same rule. But it is not proved that Luke gave Theophilus this title, as that which was inherent to him either by his father, or by any patent Theophilus had obtained from any of the princes of the earth, or that he would have given it to him in case he had not been truly Excellent; and without this be proved, which never can, there can nothing hence be deduced against us. The like may be said of that of Paul to Festus, whom he would not have called such, if he had not been truly Noble; as indeed he was, in that he suffered him to be heard in his own cause, and would not give way to the fury of the Jews against him. It was not because of any outward title bestowed upon Festus that he so called him, else he would have given the same
compel-

compellation to his predecessor Felix, who had the same office; but, being a covetous man, we find he gives him no such title."

This is the answer of Barclay. It has, however, not been deemed quite satisfactory by the world. It has been observed against it, that one good action will never give a man a right to a general title. This is undoubtedly an observation of some weight. But it must be contended, on the other hand, that both Luke and Paul must have been apprised that the religion, they were so strenuous in propagating, required every man to speak the truth. They must have been apprised, also, that it inculcated humility of mind. And it is probable, therefore, that they would never have bestowed titles upon men, which should have been false in their application, or productive of vanity and pride. St. Luke could not be otherwise than aware of the answer of Jesus Christ, when he rebuked the person for giving him the title of Good, because he was one of the evangelists who recorded it*. And St. Paul could not have been otherwise than aware

* Luke xviii. 18.

of it also, on account of his intimacy with St. Luke, as well as from other causes.

Neither has this answer of Barclay been considered as satisfactory, for another reason. It has been presumed that the expressions of Excellent, and of Noble, were established titles of rank; and if an evangelist and an apostle used them, they could not be objectionable if used by others. But, in reply to this, let us admit for a moment that they were titles of rank. How happens it that St. Paul, when he was before Festus, and not in a judicial capacity, (for he had been reserved for Cæsar's tribunal,) should have given him this epithet of Noble; and that, when summoned before Felix, and this in a judicial capacity, he should have omitted it? This application of it to the one, and not to the other, either implies that it was no title; or, if it was a title, as has been presumed, that St. Paul had some reason for this partial use of it. And in this case no better reason can be given, than that suggested by Barclay. St. Paul knew that Festus had done his duty. He knew, on the other hand, the abandoned character of Felix. The latter was then living, as Josephus relates, in open adultery
7 with

with Drusilla, who had been married to Azis, and brought away from her husband by the help of Simon, a magician. And this circumstance, probably, gave occasion to Paul to dwell upon temperance, (or continence, as the word might be rendered,) among other subjects, when he made Felix tremble. But, besides this, he must have known the general character of a man, of whom Tacitus complained that "his government was distinguished by servility, and every species of cruelty and lust*." If, therefore, the epithet of Noble was an established title for those Romans, who held the government of Judæa, the giving of it to one, and the omission of it to the other, would probably show the discrimination of St. Paul as a Christian, that he had no objection to give it where it could be applied with truth, but that he refused it where it was not applicable to the living character.

But that the expression of Excellent, or of Noble, was any title at all, there is no evidence to show. And first, let us examine the word, which was used upon this occa-

* Per omnem sævitiam et libidinem jus regium servili ingenio exercuit.

sion.

sion. The original Greek word* has no meaning as a title in any lexicon that I have seen. It relates both to personal and civil power; and, in a secondary sense, to the strength and disposition of the mind. It occurs but in four places in the New Testament. In two of these it is translated Excellent, and in the others, Noble. But Gilbert Wakefield, one of our best scholars, has expunged the word Noble, and substituted Excellent, throughout. Indeed, of all the meanings of this word, Noble is the least proper. No judgment, therefore, can be pronounced in favour of a title by any analysis of this word.

Let us now examine it as used by St. Luke. And here almost every consideration makes against it, as an established title. In the first place, the wisest commentators do not know who Theophilus was. It has been supposed by many learned Fathers, such as Epiphanius, Salvian, and others, that St. Luke, in addressing his Gospel to Theophilus, addressed it, as the words "Excellent Theophilus" import, to every "firm lover of God," or, if St. Luke uses the style

* *Καρίσος.*

of Athanasius*, to every "good Christian." But on a supposition that Theophilus had been a living character, and a man in power, the use of the epithet is against it, as a title of rank; because St. Luke gives it to Theophilus in the beginning of his Gospel, and does not give it to him when he addresses him in the Acts. If, therefore, he had addressed him in this manner, because Excellent was his proper title on one occasion, it would have been a kind of legal, and at any rate a disrespectful, omission, not to have given it him on the other.

With respect to the term Noble, as used by St. Paul to Festus, the sense of it must be determined by general as well as by particular considerations. There are two circumstances, which, at the first sight, make in favour of it as a title. Lysias† addresses his letter to the "most Excellent Felix," and the orator Tertullus‡ says, "We accept it always, and in all places, most Noble Felix!"—But there must be some drawback from the latter circumstance, as an argument of weight. There is reason to suppose that

* *Μακάριος* and *Φιλόχριστος* are substituted by Athanasius for the word Christian.

† Acts, xxiii. 26. ‡ Acts xxiv. 3.

this expression was used by Tertullus as a piece of flattery, to compass the death of Paul; for it is of a piece with the other expressions, which he used, when he talked of the "worthy deeds" done by the providence of so detestable a wretch as Felix. And it will always be an objection to Noble, as a legal title, that St. Paul gave it to one governor, and omitted it to another, except he did it for the reasons that have been before described.

To these observations we may add another, which will be of considerable importance in this dispute, namely, that legal titles of eminence were not then, as at this day, in use. Agrippa had no other, or at least Paul gave him no other, title than that of King. If Porcius Festus had been descended from a Patrician, or had had the statues of his ancestors, he might, on these accounts, be said to have been of a Noble family. But we know that nobody, on this account, would have addressed him as Noble in those days, either by speech or letter. The first Roman, who was ever honoured with a legal title, as a title of distinction, was Octavius, upon whom the Senate, but a few years before the birth of Paul, had conferred

conferred the name of Augustus. But no procurator of a province took this title. Neither does it appear that this circumstance gave birth to inferior titles to those in inferior offices in the government. And indeed on the title "Augustus" it may be observed, that though it followed the successors of Octavius, it was but sparingly used, being mostly used on medals, monumental pillars, and in public acts of the State. Pliny, in his Letters to Trajan, though reputed an excellent prince, addressed him only as Sir, or Master; and he wrote many years after the death of Paul. Athenagoras, in addressing his book, in times posterior to these, to the emperors M. Aurelius Antoninus and L. Aurelius Commodus, addresses them only by the title of "Great Princes." In short, titles were not in use. They did not creep in, so as to be commonly used, till after the statues of the emperors had begun to be worshipped by the military as a legal and accustomary homage. The terms of Eternity and Divinity, with others, were then ushered in, but these were confined wholly to the emperors themselves. In the time of Constantine, we find the title of

Illustrious. This was given to those princes, who had distinguished themselves in war, but it was not continued to their descendants. In process of time, however, it became more common, and the son of every prince began to be called Illustrious.

SECTION VI.

Thirdly, against the alteration of the names of the days and months—People, it is said, do not necessarily pay homage to idols, who continue in the use of the antient names—If the Quaker-principles, also, were generally adopted on this subject, language would be thrown into confusion—Quakers, also, by attempting to steer clear of idolatry, fall into it—Replies of the Quakers to these objections.

THE next objections for consideration, which are made against the language of the Society, are those, which relate to their alteration of the names of the Days and the Months. These objections are commonly made, when the language of the Quakers becomes a subject of conversation with the world.

“ There

“ There is great absurdity, it is said, in supposing that persons pay any respect to Heathen idols, who retain the use of the antient names of the divisions of time. How many thousands are there, who know nothing of their origin ! The common people of the country know none of the reasons why the months and days are called as they are. The middle classes are mostly ignorant of the same. They, who are well informed on the subject, never once think, when they mention the months and days, on the reason of the rise of their names. Indeed the almost hourly use of those names secures the oblivion of their origin. Who, when he speaks of Wednesday and Thursday, thinks that these were the days sacred to Woden and Thor ? But there can be no idolatry, where there is no intention to idolize.”

“ Great weakness, it is said again, is manifested by the Quakers, in quarrelling with a few words in the language, and in living at peace with others, which are equally objectionable. Every reason, it is said, must be a weak one, which is not uni-

versal. But if some of the reasons given by the Quakers were universally applied, they would throw language into as much confusion as the builders of Babel. The word Smith, for example, which is the common name of many families, ought to be objected to by this rule, if the person, to whom it belongs, happens to be a carpenter. And the word Carpenter, which is likewise a family-name, ought to be objected to, if the person so called should happen to be a smith. And, in this case, men would be obliged to draw lots for numbers, and to be called by the numerical ticket, which they should draw."

"It is objected, again, to the Quakers, that by attempting to steer clear of idolatry they fall into it. They are considered to be genuine idolaters in this case. The blind Pagan imagined a moral being, either heavenly or infernal, to inhere in a log of wood or a block of stone. The Quakers, in like manner, imagine a moral being, Truth or Falsehood, to exist in a lifeless word, and this independently of the sense in which it is spoken, and in which it is
known

known that it will be understood. What is this, it is said, but a species of idolatry, and a degrading superstition?"

The Quakers would reply to these observations: First, that they do not charge others with idolatry in the use of these names, who know nothing of their origin, or who feel no impropriety in their use.

Secondly, that if the principle, upon which they found their alterations in language, cannot, on account of existing circumstances, be followed in all cases, there is no reason why it should not be followed where it can. In the names of men, it would be impossible to adopt it. Old people are going off, and young people are coming up, and people of all descriptions are themselves changing; and a change of names to suit every person, condition, and qualification, would be impossible.

Thirdly, that they pay no more homage or obeisance to words, than the obeisance of truth. There is always a propriety in truth, and an impropriety in falsehood. And in proportion as the names of things accord with their essences, qualities, properties, characters,

racters, and the like, they are more or less proper. September, for example, is not an appropriate name, if its meaning be inquired into, for the month which it represents : but the Ninth Month is, and the latter appellation will stand the test of the strictest inquiry.

They would say, again, that this, as well as the other alterations in their language, has had a moral influence on the Society, and has been productive of moral good. In the same manner as the dress, which they received from their ancestors, has operated as a guardian or preservative of virtue, so has the language which they received from them also. This language has made the world overseers of the conduct of the Society. A Quaker is known by it as much as by his dress. It operates, by discovering him, as a check upon his actions. It keeps him, also, like the dress, distinct from others. And the Quakers believe that they can never keep up their Christian discipline, except they keep clear of the spirit of the world. Hence it has been considered as of great importance to keep up the plain language.

language. And this importance has been further manifested by circumstances, that have taken place within the pale of the Society. For, in the same manner as they, who begin to depart from the simplicity of dress, are generally in a way to go off among the world, so are those, who depart from the simplicity of the language. Each deviation is a sign of a temper for desertion. Each deviation brings them in appearance nearer to the world. But the nearer they resemble the world in this respect, the more they are found to mix with it. They are of course the more likely to be seduced from the wholesome prohibitions of the Society. The language, therefore, of the Quakers has grown up insensibly as a wall of partition, which could not now, it is contended, be taken away, without endangering the innocence of their youth.

SECTION VII.

Advantages and disadvantages of the system of the Quaker-language—Disadvantages are, that it may lead to superstition and hypocrisy—Advantages are, that it excludes flattery—is founded upon truth—promotes truth, and correctness in the expression of ideas—Observation of Hobbes—would be the most perfect model for an universal kalendar—The use or disuse of this system may, either of them, be made beneficial to morality.

I HAVE now given to the reader the objections that are usually made to the alterations, which the Quakers have introduced into the language of the country, as well as the replies which they themselves would make to these objections. I shall solicit the continuance of his patience a little longer, or till I have made a few remarks of my own upon this subject.

It certainly becomes people, who introduce great peculiarities into their system, to be careful that these are well founded, and to consider how far they may bring their
minds

minds into bondage, or what moral effects they may produce on their character in a course of time.

On the reformed language of the Society it may be observed, that both advantages and disadvantages may follow, according to the due or undue estimation, in which individuals may hold it.

If individuals should lay too great a stress upon language, that is, if they should carry their prejudices so far against outward and lifeless words, that they should not dare to pronounce them, and this as a matter of religion, they are certainly in the way of becoming superstitious, and of losing the dignified independence of their minds.

If, again, they should put an undue estimate upon language, so as to consider it as a criterion of religious purity, they may be encouraging the growth of hypocrisy within their own precincts. For if the use of this reformed language be considered as an essential of religion, that is, if men be highly thought of in proportion as they conform to it rigidly, it may be a covering to many to neglect the weightier matters of righteousness. At least, the fulfilling of such minor
duties

duties may shield them from the suspicion of neglecting the greater : and if they should be reported as erring in the latter case, their crime would be less credited under their observance of these minutiaæ of the law.

These effects are likely to result to the Society, if the peculiarities of their language be insisted on beyond their due bounds. But, on the other hand, it must be confessed, that advantages are likely to follow from the same system, which are of great importance in themselves, and which may be set off as a counterbalance to the disadvantages described.

The Quakers may say, and this with the greatest truth, " We have never cringed or stooped below the dignity of men. We have never been guilty of base flattery. We have never been instrumental in raising the creature, with whom we have conversed, above his condition, so that, in the imagination of his own consequence, he should lose sight of his dependence on the Supreme Being, or treat his fellow-men, because they should happen to be below him, as worms or reptiles of the earth."

They may say, also, that the system of
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their language originated in the purest motives, and that it is founded on the sacred basis of truth.

It may be said, also, that the habits of caution, which the different peculiarities in their language have introduced and interwoven into their constitutions, have taught them particularly to respect the truth, and to aim at it in all their expressions, whether by speech or letters; and that it has given them a peculiar correctness in the expression of their ideas, which they would never have had by means of the ordinary education of the world. Hobbes says, “Animadvertite, quàm sit ab improprietate verborum prònum hominibus prolabi in errores circa res*!” or, “How prone men are to fall into errors about things, when they use improper expressions!” The converse of this proposition may be observed to be true with respect to the Quakers, or it may be observed that the study of proper expressions has given them correct conceptions of things, and has had an influence in favour of truth.

* Hobbesii Examen et Emend. Hod. Math. p. 55. edit. Amstel.

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There are no people, though the common notion may be otherwise, who speak so accurately as the Quakers ; or whose letters, if examined on any subject, would be so free from any double meaning, so little liable to be mistaken, and so easy to be understood.

It may be observed, also, on the language of the Society, that is, on that part of it, which relates to the alteration of the names of the months and days, that this alteration would form the most perfect model for an universal kalendar of any that has yet appeared in the world. The French nation chose to alter their kalendar ; and, to make it useful to husbandry, they designated their months so that they should be representatives of the different seasons of the year. They called them Snowy, and Windy, and Harvest, and Vintage-months, and the like. But in so large a territory as that of France, these new designations were not the representatives of the truth. The northern and southern parts were not alike in their climate ; much less could these designations speak the truth for other parts of the world : whereas numerical appellations might be
adopted

adopted with truth, and be attended with usefulness to all the nations of the world, who divided their time in the same manner.

On the latter subject, of the names of the days and months, the alteration of which is considered as the most objectionable by the world, I shall only observe, that if the Quakers have religious scruples concerning them, it is their duty to persevere in the disuse of them. Others, on the other hand, who have no such scruples, are under no obligation to follow their example. And in the same manner as the Quakers convert the disuse of these antient terms to the improvement of their moral character, so those of the world may convert the use of them to a moral purpose. Man is a reasonable and moral being, and capable of moral improvement; and this improvement may be made to proceed from apparently worthless causes. If, for example, we were to find crosses or other Roman-Catholic relics fixed in the walls of our places of worship, why should we displace them? Why should we not rather suffer them to remain, to put us in mind of the necessity of thankfulness for the reformation in our religion? If, again, we were

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to find an altar, which had been sacred to Moloch, but which had been turned into a stepping-stone to help the aged and infirm upon their horses, why should we destroy it? Might it not be made useful to our morality, as far as it could be made to excite sorrow for the past, and gratitude for the present? And, in the same manner, might it not be edifying to retain the use of the antient names of the days and months? Might not thankful feelings be excited in our hearts, that the crime of idolatry had ceased among us, and that the only remnant of it was a useful signature of the times? In fact, if it be the tendency of the corrupt part of our nature to render innocent things vicious; it is, on the other hand, in the essence of our nature to render vicious things in process of time innocent; so that even the remnants of idolatry and superstition may be made subservient to the moral improvement of mankind.

CHAPTER IV.

Address—All nations have used ceremonies of address—George Fox bears his testimony against those in use in his own times—sufferings of the Quakers on this account—makes no exception in favour of royalty—his dispute with Judge Glynn—Modern Quakers follow his example—use no ceremonies even to Majesty—various reasons for their disuse of them.

ALL nations have been in the habit of using outward gestures or ceremonies, as marks of affection, obeisance, or respect. And these outward ceremonies have been different from one another ; so much so, that those, which have been adjudged to be suitable emblems of certain affections or dispositions of the mind among one people, would have been considered as very improper emblems of the same, and would have been even thought ridiculous, by another. Yet all nations have supposed that they employed the most rational modes for these purposes. And indeed there were probably none of these out-

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ward gestures and ceremonies, which in their beginning would not have admitted of a reasonable defence. While they continued to convey to the minds of those, who adopted them, the objects for which they were intended, or while those, who used them, persevered with sincerity in their use, little or no objection could be made to them by the moralist. But as soon as the ends of their institution were lost, or they were used without any appropriate feeling of the heart, they became empty civilities, and little better than mockery or grimace.

The customs of this sort, which obtained in the time of George Fox, were similar to those, which are now in use on similar occasions. People took off their hats, and bowed, and scraped with their feet. And these things they did, as marks of civility, friendship, or respect to one another.

George Fox was greatly grieved about these idle ceremonies. He lamented that men should degrade themselves by the use of them, and that they should encourage habits that were abhorrent of the truth. His feelings were so strong upon this subject, that he felt himself called upon to bear
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his testimony against them. Accordingly, he never submitted to them himself; and those, who received his religious doctrines, followed his example.

The omission of these ceremonies, however, procured both for him and his followers, as had been the case in the change of Thou for You, much ill-will and harsh treatment. The Quakers were derided and abused. Their hats were taken forcibly from their heads, and thrown away. They were beaten and imprisoned on this sole account. And so far did the world carry their resentment towards them for the omission of these little ceremonies, that they refused for some time to deal with them as tradesmen, or to buy things at their shops; so that some Quakers could hardly get money enough to buy themselves bread.

George Fox, however, and his associates, persevered in the disuse of all honours, either by the moving of the hat, or the usual bendings of the body; and as, if it were morally right to dispense with any custom towards one, it would be so to dispense with it towards another, they made no exception even in favour of the chief magistrate of the
VOL. I. 2 A land.

land. George Fox, when he visited Oliver Cromwell, as Protector, never took off his hat: and it is remarkable that the Protector was not angry with him for it.

Neither did he take off his hat to the Judges at any time, notwithstanding that he was so often brought before them. Controversies sometimes took place between him and them in the public court upon these occasions; one of which I shall notice, as it marks the manner of conducting the jurisprudence of those times.

When George Fox and two other Friends were brought out of Launceston gaol to be tried before Judge Glynn, who was then chief justice of England, they came into court with their hats on. The Judge asked them the reason of this; but they said nothing. He then desired them to pull off their hats; but they still said nothing. He then told them that the Court commanded them to pull off their hats. Upon this, George Fox addressed them in the following manner: "Where," says he, "did ever any magistrate, king, or judge, from Moses to Daniel, command any to put off their hats when they came before them in their courts,
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either amongst the Jews, who were God's people, or among the Heathen? And if the law of England doth command any such thing, show me that law, either written or printed." Judge Glynn upon this grew angry, and replied, that "he did not carry his law-books upon his back."—"But," says George Fox, "tell me where it is printed in any statute-book, that I may read it." The Judge, in a vulgar manner, ordered him away; and he was accordingly taken away, and put among thieves. The Judge, however, in a short time afterwards ordered him up again, and on his return put to him the following question: "Come," says he, "where had they hats, from Moses to Daniel? Come, answer me. I have you fast now." George Fox replied, that "he might read in the third chapter of Daniel that the three children were cast into the fiery furnace, by Nebuchadnezzar's command, with their coats, their hose, and their hats on." The repetition of this apposite text stopped the Judge from any further comments on the custom, and he ordered him and his companions to be taken away again. And they were accordingly taken away, and

were thrust again among thieves. In process of time, however, this custom of the Quakers began to be known among the Judges; who so far respected their scruples, as to take care that their hats should be taken off in future in the court.

These omissions of the ceremonies of the world, as begun by the primitive members of the Society, are continued by the modern. They neither bow, nor scrape, nor take off their hats, to any by way of civility or respect; and they carry their principles, like their predecessors, so far, that they observe none of those exterior parts of politeness even in the presence of royalty. The Quakers are in the habit, on particular occasions, of sending deputies to the King. And it is remarkable that his present Majesty always sees them himself, if he be well, and not by proxy. Notwithstanding this, no one in the deputation ever takes off his hat. Those, however, who are in waiting in the antichamber, knowing this custom of the Quakers, take their hats from their heads, before they enter the room where the King is. On entering the room they neither bow, nor scrape, nor kneel; and as this ceremony cannot be performed

formed for them by others, they go into the royal presence in a less servile or more dignified manner than either the representatives of sovereigns, or those who have humbled nations by the achievement of great victories.

The ground, upon which the Quakers decline the use of the ordinary ceremonies just mentioned, is, that these are the honours of the world. Now, as the honours of the world, they consider them as objectionable on several accounts.

First, they hold them to be no more the criterions of obeisance and respect, than they hold mourning garments to be the criterions of sorrow. But Christianity is never satisfied but with the truth. It forbids all false appearances. It allows no image to be held out, that is not a faithful picture of its original, or no action to be resorted to, that is not correspondent with the feelings of the heart.

In the second place, they presume that, as honours of the world, all such ceremonies are generally of a complimentary nature. No one bows to a poor man; but almost every one to the rich; and the rich to one another. Hence, bowing is as much a species of flattery through the medium of the body,

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as the giving of undeserved titles through the medium of the tongue.

As honours of the world, again, they think them censurable, because all such honours were censured by Jesus Christ. On the occasion, on which he exhorted his followers not to be like the Scribes and Pharisees, and to seek flattering titles, so as to be called Rabbi Rabbi of men, he exhorted them to avoid all ceremonious salutations, such as greetings in the market-places. He couples the two different customs of flattering titles and salutations in the same sentence, and mentions them in the same breath. And though the word "Greetings" does not perhaps precisely mean those bowings and scrapings, which are used at the present day, yet it means, both according to its derivation and the nature of the Jewish customs, those outward personal actions or gestures, which were used as complimentary by the Jewish world.

With respect to taking off the hat, the Quakers have an additional objection to this custom, quite distinct from the objections that have been mentioned above. Every minister in the Quaker-Society takes off his
hat

hat either when he preaches or when he prays. St. Paul enjoins this custom*. But if they take off their hats, that is, uncover their heads, as an outward act enjoined in the service of God, they cannot with any propriety take them off, or uncover their heads, to men, because they would be giving to the creature the same outward honour, which they give to the Creator. And in this custom they conceive the world to be peculiarly inconsistent. For men go into their churches, and into their meetings, and take off their hats, or uncover their heads, for the same reason as the Quaker-ministers when they pray (for no other reason can be assigned) and when they come out of their respective places of worship they uncover them again, on every trivial occasion, to those whom they meet, using to man the same outward mark of homage as they had just given to God.

* 1 Cor. chap. xi.

CHAPTER V.

Manners and conversation—Quakers esteemed reserved—this an appearance owing to their education—their hospitality in their own houses—the freedom allowed and taken—their conversation limited—politics generally excluded—Subjects of conversation examined in our towns—also in the metropolis—no such subjects among the Quakers—their conversation more dignified—Extraordinary circumstance, that takes place occasionally in the company of the Quakers.

THE Quakers are generally supposed to be a stiff and reserved people, and to be a people of severe and uncourteous manners. I confess there is something in their appearance, that will justify the supposition in the eyes of strangers, and of such as do not know them: I mean, of such as just see them occasionally out of doors, but do not mix with them in their houses.

It cannot be expected that persons, educated like the Quakers, should assimilate much in their manners to other people. The very dress they wear, which is so different
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from that of others, would give them a stiff appearance in the eyes of the world, if nothing else could be found to contribute towards it. Excluded also from much intercourse with the world, and separated at a vast distance from it by the singularity of many of their customs, they would naturally appear to others to be close and reserved. Neither is it to be expected that those, whose spirits are never animated by music, or enlivened by the exhibitions of the theatre, or the diversions which others follow, would have other than grave countenances. Their discipline, also, which calls them so frequently to important duties, and the dispatch of serious business, would produce the same feature. I may observe, also, that a peculiarity of gait, which might be mistaken for awkwardness, might not unreasonably be expected in those, who had neither learned to walk under the guidance of a dancing-master, nor to bow under the direction of the dominion of fashion. If those and those only are to be esteemed really polished and courteous, who bow, and scrape, and salute each other by certain prescribed gestures, then the members of this Society
will

will appear to have contracted some rust, and to have an indisputable right to the title of a clownish and inflexible people.

I must observe, however, that these appearances, though they may be substantial in the estimation of those, who do not know them, gradually vanish with those, who do. Their hospitality in their own houses, and their great attention and kindness, soon force out of sight all ideas of uncourteousness. Their freedom, also, soon annihilates those of stiffness and reserve. Their manners, though they have not the polished surface of those, which are usually attached to fashionable life, are agreeable when known.

There is one trait in the Quaker-manners, which runs through the whole Society, as far as I have seen in their houses, and which is worthy of mention. The Quakers appear to be particularly gratified, when those, who visit them, ask for what they want. Instead of considering this as rudeness or intrusion, they esteem it a favour done them. The circumstance of asking on such an occasion is to them a proof that their visitors feel themselves at home. Indeed, they

they almost always desire a stranger, who has been introduced to them, "to be free." This is their usual expression. And if he assures them that he will, and if they find him asking for what he wishes to have, you may perceive in their countenances the pleasure, which his conduct has given them. They consider him, when he has used this freedom, to have acted, as they express it, "kindly." Nothing can be more truly polite than that conduct to another, by which he shall be induced to feel himself as comfortably situated as if he were in his own house.

As the Quakers desire their visitors to be free, and to do as they please, so they do not fail to do the same themselves, never regarding such visitors as impediments in the way of their concerns. If they have any business or engagement out of doors, they say so and go, using no ceremony, and but few words as an apology. Their visitors, I mean such as stay for a time in their houses, are left in the interim to amuse themselves as they please. This is peculiarly agreeable, because their friends know when they visit them, that they neither restrain, nor shackle, nor put them to inconvenience.

venience. In fact, it may be truly said, that if satisfaction in visiting depends upon a man's own freedom to do as he likes, to ask and to call for what he wants, to go out and come in as he pleases; and if it depends also on the knowledge he has, that in doing all these things he puts no person out of his way, there are no houses where people will be better pleased with their treatment, than in those belonging to the members of this Society.

This trait in the character of its members is very general. I would not pretend, however, to say it is universal: but it is quite general enough to be pronounced a feature in their domestic character. I do not mean, by the mention of it, to apologize in any manner for the ruggedness of manners of some Quakers. There are undoubtedly solitary families, which having lived in places where there have been scarcely any of their own Society with whom to associate, and which having scarcely mixed with others of other denominations, except in the way of trade, have an uncourteousness, ingrafted in them as it were by these circumstances, which no change of situation afterwards has been able to obliterate.

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The subjects of conversation among the Quakers differ, like those of others; but they are not so numerous, neither are they of the same kind as those of other people.

Their conversation is usually cramped or fettered, for two reasons; first, by the caution, that prevails among the members of the Society, relative to the use of idle words; and, secondly, by the caution that prevails among them relative to the adapting of their expressions to the truth. Hence the primitive Quakers were persons of few words.

The subjects also of their conversation are limited for several reasons. The Quakers have not in general the same classical or philosophical education, as persons of other denominations. This circumstance will of course exclude many topics from their discourse.

Religious considerations also exclude others. Politics, which generally engross a good deal of attention, and which afford an inexhaustible fund of matter for conversation to a great part of the inhabitants of the island, are seldom introduced, and, if introduced, very tenderly handled in general among this Society. I have seen aged
Quakers

Quakers gently reprove others of tenderer years, with whom they happened to be in company, for having started them. It is not that the Quakers have not the same feelings as other men, or that they are not equally interested about humanity, or that they are incapable of opinions on the changeable political events that are passing over the face of the globe, that this subject is so little agitated among them. They are usually silent upon it for particular reasons. They consider, first, that as they are not allowed to have any direction, and in many cases could not conscientiously interfere, in government-matters, it would be folly to disquiet their minds with vain and fruitless speculations. They consider, again, that political subjects frequently irritate people, and make them warm. Now this is a temper, which they consider to be peculiarly detrimental to their religion. They consider themselves, also, in this life, as on a journey to another, and that they should get through it as quietly and as inoffensively as they can. They believe, again, with George Fox, that, "in these lower regions, or in this airy life, all news is uncertain.

tain. There is nothing stable. But in the higher regions, or in the kingdom of Christ, all things are stable; and the news is always good and certain*.”

As politics do not afford matter for much conversation in the Quaker-Society, so neither do some other subjects that may be mentioned.

In a country-town, where people daily visit, it is not uncommon to observe, whether at the card- or the tea-table, that what is usually called Scandal forms a part of the pleasures of conversation. The hatching up of suspicions on the accidental occurrence of trivial circumstances,—the blowing up of these suspicions into substances and forms,—animadversions on characters,—these, and such-like themes, wear out a great part of the time of an afternoon or an evening visit. Such subjects, however, cannot enter where Quakers converse with one another. To avoid tale-bearing and detraction is a lesson inculcated into them in early youth. The

* There is always an exception in favour of conversation on politics, which is, when the Government are agitating any question, in which their religious freedom or their interests are involved.

maxim is incorporated into their religion, and of course follows them through life. It is contained in one of their Queries. This Query is read to them in their meetings, and the subject of it is therefore repeatedly brought to their notice and recollection. Add to which, that if a member were to repeat any unfounded scandal, that operated to the injury of another's character, and were not to give up the author, or make satisfaction for the same, he would be liable, by the rules of the Society, to be disowned.

I do not mean to assert here that a person of this Society never says a harsh thing of another man. All, who profess to be, are not Quakers. Subjects of a scandalous nature may be introduced by others of another denomination, in which, if Quakers are present, they may unguardedly join. But it is certainly true, that Quakers are more upon their guard with respect to scandalizing others than many other people. Nor is this unlikely to be the case, when we consider that caution in this particular is required of them by the laws of their religion. It is certainly true, also, that such subjects are never introduced by them, like those at country tea-tables, for
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the sole purpose of producing conversation. And I believe I may add with truth, that it would even be deemed extraordinary by the Society, if such subjects were introduced by them at all.

In companies, also, in the metropolis, as well as in country towns, a variety of subjects afford food for conversation, which never enter into the discourse of the Quakers.

If we were to go into the company of persons of a certain class in the metropolis, we should find them deriving the enjoyments of conversation from some such subjects as the following : One of the company would probably talk of the exquisitely fine manner in which an actress performed her part on a certain night. This would immediately give birth to a variety of remarks. The name of one actress would bring up that of another ; and the name of one play that of another ; till at length the stage would become the source of supplying a subject for a considerable time. Another would probably ask, as soon as this theatrical discussion was over, the opinion of the company on the subject of the duel, which the morn-
VOL. I. 2 B ing

ing papers had reported to have taken place. This new subject would give new fuel to the fire, and new discussions would take place, and new observations fly about from all quarters. Some would applaud the courage of the person, who had been killed; others would pity his hard fate: but none would censure his wickedness for having resorted to such dreadful means for the determination of his dispute. From this time the laws of honour would be canvassed, and disquisitions about punctilio, and etiquette, and honour, would arrest the attention of the company, and supply them with materials for a time. These subjects would be followed by observations on fashionable head-dresses, by the relation of elopements, by the reports of affairs of gallantry. Each subject would occupy its own portion of time. Thus each would help to swell up the measure of conversation, and to make up the enjoyment of the visit.

If we were to go among persons of another class in the metropolis, we should probably find them collecting their entertainment from new topics. One would talk on the subject of some splendid rout.

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He would expatiate on the number of rooms that were opened, on the superb manner in which they were fitted up, and on the sum of money that was expended in procuring every delicacy that was out of season. A second would probably ask, if it were really known, how much one of their female acquaintance had lost at faro. A third would make observations on the dresses at the last drawing-room. A fourth would particularize the liveries brought out by individuals on the Birth-day. A fifth would ask who was to have the vacant red riband. Another would tell how the minister had given a certain place to a certain nobleman's third son, and would observe that the whole family were now provided for by Government. Each of these topics would be enlarged upon, as successively started; and thus conversation would be kept going during the time of the visit.

These and other subjects generally constitute the pleasures of conversation among certain classes of persons. But among the Quakers they can hardly even intrude themselves as topics at all. Places and pensions they neither do nor can hold. Levees

and drawing-rooms they neither do nor would consent to attend, on pleasure. Red ribands they would not wear if given to them. As to splendid liveries, these would never occupy their attention. Liveries for servants, though not expressly forbidden, are not congenial with the spirit of the Quaker-system. And as to gaming, plays, or fashionable amusements, these are forbidden, as I have amply stated before, by the laws of the Society.

It is obvious, then, that these topics cannot easily enter into conversation where Quakers are. Indeed, nothing so trifling, ridiculous, or disgusting, occupies their minds. The subjects, that take up their attention, are of a more solid and useful kind. There is a dignity, in general, in their conversation, arising from the nature of these subjects, and from the gravity and decorum with which it is always conducted. It is not to be inferred from hence that their conversation is dull and gloomy. There is often no want of sprightliness, wit, and humour. But then this sprightliness never borders upon folly; (for all foolish jesting is to be avoided,) and it is always decorous. When
vivacity

vivacity makes its appearance among the members of this Society, it is sensible, and it is uniformly in an innocent and a decent dress.

In the company of the Quakers a circumstance sometimes occurs, of so peculiar a nature, that it cannot well be omitted in this place. It sometimes happens that you observe a pause in the conversation. This pause continues. Surprised at the universal silence now prevailing, you look round, and find all the members in the room apparently thoughtful. The history of the circumstance is this : In the course of the conversation, the mind of some one of the persons present has been either so overcome with the weight or importance of it, or so overcome by inward suggestions on other subjects, as to have given himself up to meditation, or to passive obedience to impressions upon his mind. This person is soon discovered by the rest, on account of his particular silence and gravity. From this moment the Quakers in company cease to converse. They become habitually silent, and continue so, both old and young, to give the apparently meditating person an opportunity
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of pursuing uninterruptedly the train of his own thoughts. Perhaps, in the course of his meditations, the subject, that impressed his mind, gradually dies away, and expires in silence. In this case you find him resuming his natural position, and returning to conversation with the company as before. It sometimes happens, however, that, in the midst of his meditations, he feels an impulse to communicate to those present the subject of his thoughts, and breaks forth, seriously explaining, exhorting, and advising, as the nature of it permits and suggests. When he has finished his observations, the company remain silent for a short time; after which they converse again as before.

Such a pause, whenever it occurs in the company of the Quakers, may be considered as a devotional act. For the subject, which occasions it, is always of a serious or religious nature. The workings in the mind of the meditating person are considered either as the offspring of a solemn reflection upon that subject, suddenly and almost involuntarily, as it were, produced by duty, or as the immediate offspring of the agency of the Spirit. And a habitual silence is as
much

much the consequence, as if the persons present had been at a place of worship.

It may be observed, however, that such pauses seldom or never occur in ordinary companies, or where members ordinarily visit one another. When they take place, it is mostly when a minister is present, and when such a minister is upon a religious visit to the families of a certain district. In such a case, such religious pauses and exhortations are not unfrequent. A man, however, may be a hundred times in the company of the Quakers, and never be present at one of them, and never know indeed that they exist at all.



CHAPTER VI.

Custom before meals—Antients formerly made an oblation to Vesta before their meals—Christians have substituted grace—Quakers agree with others in the necessity of grace, or thankfulness, but dare not adopt it as a devotional act, unless it come from the heart—allow a silent pause for religious impressions on these occasions—Observations on a Scotch grace.

THERE was a time in the early ages of Greece, when men, apparently little better than beasts of prey, could not meet at entertainments without quarrelling about the victuals before them. The memory of this circumstance is well preserved in the expressions of early writers. In process of time, however, regulations began to be introduced, and quarrels to be prevented, by the institution of the office of a divider or distributor of the feast, who should carve the food into equal portions, and help every individual to his proper share. Hence the terms $\Delta\alpha\iota\varsigma \epsilon\acute{\iota}\sigma\eta$, or Equal Feast, which so frequently occur in Homer., and which were

in use in consequence of the division just mentioned, were made use of, to show that the feasts then spoken of by him were different from those of former times. When Homer wishes to describe persons as more civilized than others, he describes them as having this equal feast; that is, men did not appear at these feasts, like dogs and wolves, and instantly devour whatever they could come at, and in the end tear each other to pieces; but they waited till their different portions of meat had been assigned them, and then ate them in amity and love.

At the time when we find the custom of one man carving for all his guests to have been in use, we find also that another had been introduced among the same people. The Greeks, in the heroic ages, thought it unlawful to eat, till they had first offered a part of their provision to the gods. Hence, oblations to Vesta, and afterwards to others, whom their superstition had deified, came into general use, so that these were always made before the victuals on the table were allowed to be tasted by any of the guests.

These two customs since that time have come regularly down to the present day.

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Every person helps his family and his friends at his own table. But as Christians can make no sacrifices to Heathen deities, we usually find them substituting thanksgiving for oblation, and giving to the Creator of the universe, instead of an offering of the first fruits from their table, an offering of gratitude from their hearts. This oblation, which is now usually denominated Grace, consists of a form of words, which, being expressive either of praise or thankfulness to God for the blessings of food, with which he continues to supply them, is repeated by the master of the family, or by a minister of the gospel, if present, before any one partakes of the victuals that are set before him. These forms, however, differ, as used by Christians. They differ in length, in ideas, in expression. One Christian uses one form, another uses another. It may, however, be observed, that the same Christian generally uses the same form of words, or the same grace, on the same occasion.

The Quakers, as a religious body, agree in the propriety of grace before their meals; that is, in the propriety of giving thanks to the Author of every good gift for this particular

ticular bounty of his providence, as to the articles of their daily subsistence ; but they differ as to the manner and seasonableness of it on such occasions. They think that people, who are in the habit of repeating a determined form of words, may cease to feel, as they pronounce them ; in which case the grace becomes an oblation from the tongue, but not from the heart. They think, also, that, if grace is to be repeated regularly, just as the victuals come, or as regularly and as often as they come upon the table, it may be repeated unseasonably, that is, unseasonably with the state of the heart of him, who is to pronounce it ; that the heart of man is not to-day as it was yesterday, nor at this hour what it was at a former, nor on any given hour alike disposed ; and that if this grace is to be said when the heart is gay, or light, or volatile, it ceases to be a devotional act, and becomes at least a superfluous and unmeaning, if not a censurable, form.

The Quakers, then, to avoid the unprofitableness of such artificial graces on the one hand, and, on the other, to give an opportunity to the heart to accord with the tongue, whenever it is used in praise of
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the Creator, observe the following custom: When they are all seated at table, they sit in solemn silence, and in a thoughtful position, for some time. If the master of the family, during this silence, should feel any religious impression on his mind, whether of praise or thankfulness, on the occasion, he gives utterance to his feelings. Such praise or thanksgiving in him is considered as a devotional act, and as the Quaker-grace. But if, after having waited in silence for some time, he feel no such religious disposition, he utters no religious expression. The Quakers hold it better to say no grace, than to say that, which is not accompanied by the devotion of the heart. In this case he resumes his natural position, breaks the silence by means of natural discourse, and begins to carve for his family or his friends.

This is the ordinary way of proceeding in Quaker-families, when alone, or in ordinary company. But if a minister happen to be at the table, the master of the family, conceiving such a man to be more in the habit of religious impressions than himself, or any ordinary person, looks up, as it were, to him, as to a channel from whence it is possible

sible that such religious exercise may come. If the minister, during the solemn, silent pause, be impressed, he gives utterance as before : if not, he relieves himself from his grave and thoughtful position, and breaks the silence of the company by engaging in natural discourse. After this, the company proceed to their meals.

If I were to be asked whether the graces of the Quakers were frequent, I should reply in the negative. I never heard any delivered, but when a minister was present. The ordinary grace, therefore, of private families consists in a solemn, silent pause, between the time of sitting down to the table and the time of carving the victuals, during which an opportunity is given for the excitement of religious feelings. A person may dine fifty times at the tables of the Quakers, and see no other substitution for grace than this temporary, silent pause. Indeed, no other grace than this can be consistent with their principles. It was coeval with the institution of the Society, and must continue while it lasts. For thanksgiving is an act of devotion. Now no act, in the opinion of the Quakers, can be devotional or
spiritual,

spiritual, except it originate from above. Men, in religious matters, can do nothing of themselves, or without the Divine aid. And they must therefore wait in silence for this spiritual help, as well in the case of grace, as in the case of any other kind of devotion, if they mean their praise or thanksgiving on these occasions to be an act of religion.

There is in the Quaker-grace, and its accompaniments, whenever it is uttered, an apparent beauty and an apparent solemnity, which are seldom conspicuous in those of others. How few are there who repeat the common artificial graces feelingly, and with minds intent upon the subject! Grace is usually said as a mere ceremony or custom. The Supreme Being is just thanked in so many words, while the thoughts are often rambling to other subjects. The Quaker-grace, on the other hand, whenever it is uttered, does not come out in any mechanical form of words, which men have used before, but in expressions adapted to the feelings. It comes forth, also, warm from the heart. It comes after a solemn, silent pause; and it becomes, therefore, under all these

these circumstances, an act of real solemnity and genuine devotion.

It is astonishing how little even men of acknowledged piety seem to have their minds fixed upon the ideas contained in the mechanical graces, which they repeat. I was one afternoon at a friend's house, where there happened to be a clergyman of the Scottish church. He was a man deservedly esteemed for his piety. The company was large. Politics had been discussed some time, when the tea-things were introduced. While the bread and butter were bringing in, the clergyman, who had taken an active part in the discussion, put a question to a gentleman, who was sitting in a corner of the room. The gentleman began to reply, and was proceeding in his answer, when of a sudden I heard a solemn voice. Being surprised, I looked round, and found it was the clergyman, who had suddenly started up, and was saying grace. The solemnity, with which he spoke, occasioned his voice to differ so much from its ordinary tone, that I did not, till I had looked about me, discover who the speaker was. I think he might be engaged from three to four minutes

minutes in the delivery of this grace. I could not help thinking, during the delivery of it, that I never knew any person say grace like this man : nor was I ever so much moved with any grace, or thought I ever saw so clearly the propriety of saying grace, as on this occasion. But when I found that on the very instant the grace was over, politics were resumed ; when I found that no sooner had the last word in the grace been pronounced, than the next, which came from the clergyman himself, began by desiring the gentleman before mentioned to go on with his reply to his own political question ; I was so struck with the inconsistency of the thing, that the beauty and solemnity of his grace all vanished. This sudden transition from politics to grace, and from grace to politics, afforded a proof that artificial sentences might be so frequently repeated, as to fail to re-excite their first impressions ; or that certain expressions, which might have constituted devotional acts under devotional feeling, might relapse into heartless forms.

I would not wish, by the relation of this anecdote, to be understood as reflecting in
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the slightest manner on the practice of the Scottish church: I know well the general sobriety, diligence, piety, and religious example of its ministers. I mentioned it merely to show, that even where the religious character of a person was high, his mind, by the frequent repetitions of the same forms of expression on the same occasions, might frequently lose sight of the meaning and force of the words as they were uttered, so that he might pronounce them without that spiritual feeling, which can alone constitute a religious exercise.



CHAPTER VII.

Customs at and after meals—Quakers never drink healths at dinner, nor toasts after dinner—the drinking of toasts a Heathen custom—interrupts often the innocence, and leads to the intoxication, of the company—Anecdote of Judge Hale—Quakers sometimes in embarrassing situations on account of this omission—Quaker-women seldom retire after dinner, and leave the men drinking—Quakers a sober people.

THE members of this Society, though they are occasionally found in the custom of saying grace, do not, as I have stated, either use it as regularly, or in the same manner, as other Christians.

Neither do they at their meals, or after their meals, use the same ceremonies as others. They have exploded the unmeaning and troublesome custom of drinking healths at their dinners.

This custom they have rejected upon the principle, that it has no connection with true civility. They consider it as officious, troublesome, and even embarrassing, on some occasions. To drink to a man, when he is lifting his victuals to his mouth, and by calling off his attention to make him drop them, or to interrupt two people who
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been the first to have made upon the practice of it, has been adopted by many, not out of compliance with their example, but on account of the trouble and inconveniences attending it ;—that the custom is not now so general as it was ;—that in the higher and more fashionable circles it has nearly been exploded ;—and that among some of the other classes of society it is gradually declining.

With respect to the custom of drinking toasts after dinner, the Quakers have rejected it for various reasons.

They have rejected it, first, because, however desirable it may be that Christians should follow the best customs of the Heathens, it would be a reproach to them to follow their worst : or, in other words, it would be improper for men, whose religion required spirituality of thought and feeling, to imitate the Heathens in the manner of their enjoyment of sensual pleasures. The laws and customs of drinking, the Quakers observe, are all of Heathen origin. The similitude between these and those of modern times is too remarkable to be overlooked ; and too striking not to warrant them

them in concluding, that Christians have taken their model on this subject from Pagan practice.

In every Grecian family, where company was invited, the master of it was considered to be the king or president of the feast in his own house. He was usually denominated the Eye of the company. It was one of his offices to look about and to see that his guests drank their proper portions of the wine. It was another, to keep peace and harmony among them. For these purposes his word was law. At entertainments at the public expense the same office existed ; but the person then appointed to it was nominated either by lot, or by the votes of the persons present. This custom obtains among the moderns. The master of every family at the present day presides at his own table for the same purposes. And at great and public dinners at taverns a similar officer is appointed, who is generally chosen by the committee, who first meet for the proposal of the feast.

One of the first toasts that were usually drunk among the antient Greeks, was to the "Gods." This entirely corresponds with the modern idea of Church ; and if the Go-

vernment had been only coupled with the Gods in these antient times, it would have precisely answered to the modern toast of "Church and State."

It was also usual at the entertainments, given by Grecian families, to drink to the prosperity of those persons, for whom they entertained a friendship, but who happened to be absent. No toast can better coincide than this, with that, which is so frequently given, of "Our absent friends."

It was also a Grecian practice for each of the guests to name his particular friend; and sometimes, also, his particular mistress. The moderns have also a parallel for this: every person gives (to use the common phrase) his Gentleman, and also his Lady, in his turn.

It is well known to have been the usage of the antient Greeks, at their entertainments, either to fill, or to have had their cups filled for them, to the brim. The moderns do precisely the same thing. Glasses so filled have the particular name of Bumpers: and however vigilantly an antient Greek might have looked after his guests, and made them drink their glasses filled in this manner, the presidents of modern times
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are equally vigilant in enforcing an adherence to the same custom.

It was an antient practice, also, with the same people, to drink three glasses when the Graces, and nine when the Muses, were named; and three, and three times three, were drunk on particular occasions. This barbarous practice has fortunately not come down to the moderns to its full extent; but they have retained the remembrance of it, and celebrated it in part, by following up their toast, on any extraordinary occasion, not with three or nine glasses of wine, but with three or nine cheers.

Among the antients before mentioned, if any of the persons present were found deficient in drinking their proper portions, they were ordered by the president either to drink them, or to leave the room. This usage has been a little altered by the moderns. They do not order those persons to leave the company, who do not comply with the same rules of drinking as the rest, but they subject them to be fined, as it is termed; that is, they oblige them to drink double portions for their deficiency, or they punish them in some other manner.

From hence it will be obvious that the
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laws of drinking are of Heathen origin ; that is, the custom of drinking toasts originated, as the Quakers contend, with men of heathen minds and affections, for a sensual purpose ; and it is therefore a custom, they believe, which men of Christian minds and affections should never follow.

The Quakers have rejected the custom, again, because they consider it to be inconsistent with their Christian character in other respects. They consider it as morally injurious : for toasts frequently excite and promote indelicate ideas, and thus sometimes interrupt the innocence of conversation.

They consider it as morally injurious, again, because the drinking of toasts has a direct tendency to promote drunkenness.

They, who have been much in company, must have had repeated opportunities of witnessing that this idea of the Quakers is founded in truth. Men are undoubtedly stimulated to drink more than they like, and to become intoxicated, in consequence of the use of toasts. If a man has no objection to drink toasts at all, he must drink that which the master of the house proposes ; and it is usual in this case to fill a bumper. Respect to his host is considered as demanding this,

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Thus one full glass is secured to him at the outset. He must also drink a bumper to the King, another to Church and State, and another to the Army and Navy. He would in many companies be thought hostile to the Government, if, in the habit of drinking toasts, he were to refuse to drink these, or to honour them in the same manner. Thus three additional glasses are entailed upon him. He must also drink a bumper to his own toast. He would be thought to dishonour the person, whose health he had given, if he were to fail in this. Thus a fifth glass is added to his share. He must fill a little, besides, to every other toast, or he is considered as deficient in respect to the person, who has proposed it. Thus many additional glasses are forced upon him. By this time the wine begins to act, when new toasts, of a new nature, assail his ear, and he is stimulated to new potions. There are many toasts of so patriotic, and others of so generous and convivial a nature, that a man is looked upon as disaffected, or devoid of sentiment, who refuses them. Add to this, that there is a sort of shame, which the young and generous in particular feel in being outdone, and in not keeping pace with
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the rest, on such occasions. Thus toast being urged after toast, and shame acting upon shame, a variety of causes conspires at the same moment to drive him on, till the liquor at length overcomes him, and he falls eventually a victim to its power.

It will be manifest from this account, that the laws of drinking, by which the necessity of drinking a certain number of toasts is enjoined,—by which bumpers are attached to certain classes of toasts,—by which a stigma is affixed to a non-compliance with the terms,—by which, in fact, a regular system of etiquette is established,—cannot but lead, except a man is uncommonly resolute or particularly on his guard, to intoxication. We see, indeed, instances of men drinking glass after glass, because stimulated in this manner, even against their own inclination, nay even against the determination they had made before they went into company, till they have made themselves quite drunk. But had there been no laws of drinking, or no toasts, we cannot see any reason, why the same persons should not have returned sober to their respective homes.

It is recorded of the great Sir Matthew Hale, who is deservedly placed among the
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great men of our country, that, in his early youth, he had been in company, where the party had drunk to such excess, that one of them fell down apparently dead. Quitting the room, he implored forgiveness of the Almighty for this excessive intemperance in himself and his companions, and made a vow, that he would never drink another health while he lived. This vow he kept to his dying day. It is hardly necessary for me to remark, that he would never have come to such a resolution, if he had not believed either that the drinking of toasts had produced the excesses of that day, or that the custom led so naturally to intoxication, that it became his duty to avoid it.

The Quakers, having rejected the use of toasts upon the principles assigned, are sometimes placed in a difficult situation, in which there is an occasion for the trial of their courage, in consequence of mixing with others, by whom the custom is still followed.

In companies, to which they are invited in regular families, they are seldom put to any disagreeable dilemma in this respect. The master of the house, if in the habit of giving toasts, generally knowing the custom of the Society in this instance, passes over any
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member of it, who may be present, and calls upon his next neighbour for a toast. Good-breeding and hospitality demand that such indulgence and exception should be given.

There are situations, however, in which their courage is often tried. One of the worst, in which a Quaker can be placed, and in which he is frequently placed, is that of being at a common room in an inn, where a number of other travellers dine and sup together. In such companies, things are seldom conducted so much to his satisfaction in this respect as in those described. In general, as the bottle passes, some jocose hint is conveyed to him about the toast; and though this is perhaps done with good humour, his feelings are wounded by it. At other times, when the company are of a less liberal complexion, there is a determination, soon understood among one another, to hunt him down, as if he were fair game. A toast is pressed upon him, though all know that it is not his custom to drink it. On refusing, they begin to tease him. One jokes with him: another banTERS him. Toasts, both illiberal and indelicate, are at length introduced: and he has no alternative but that of bearing the banter, or of quitting the room. I have seen
a Quaker

a Quaker in such a company (and at such a distance from home that the transaction in all probability never could have been known, had he, in order to free himself from their attacks, conformed to their custom) bear all their raillery with astonishing firmness, and courageously struggle against the stream. It is certainly an awkward thing for a solitary Quaker to fall into such companies; and it requires considerable courage to preserve singularity in the midst of the prejudices of ignorant or illiberal men.

This custom, however, of drinking toasts after dinner, is, like the former of drinking healths at dinner, happily declining. It is much to the credit of those, who move in the higher circles, that they have generally exploded both. It may be owing to this circumstance, that though we find persons of this description labouring under the imputation of levity and dissipation, we yet find them respectable for the sobriety of their lives. Drunkenness, indeed, forms no part of their character; nor, generally speaking, is it a vice of the present age as it was of former ages: and there seems to be little doubt, that, in proportion as the custom of drinking healths and toasts, but more particularly

ticularly the latter, is suppressed, this vice will become less and less a trait in the national character.

There are one or two other customs of the Quakers, which I shall notice before I conclude this chapter.

It is one of the fashions of the world, where people meet in company, for men and women, when the dinner is over, to drink their wine together, and for the women, having done this for a short time, to retire. This custom of the females withdrawing after dinner was probably first insisted upon, from an idea, that their presence would be a restraint upon the circulation of the bottle, as well as upon the conversation of the men. The members, however, of this Society seldom submit to this practice. Men and women generally sit together and converse as before dinner. I do not mean by this, that women may not retire if they please, because there is no restraint upon any one in the company of the Quakers: nor do I mean to say that women do not occasionally retire, and leave the men at their wine. There are a few rich families, which, having mixed more than usually with the world, allow of this separation. But where one allows it, there are ninety-nine,

nine, who give wine to their company after dinner, who do not. It is not a Quaker-custom, that, in a given time after dinner, the one should be separated from the other sex.

It is a pity that the practice of the Quakers should not have been adopted by others of our own country in this particular. Many advantages would result to those, who were to follow the example. For, if women were allowed to remain, chastity of expression and decorum of behaviour would be more likely to be insured. Their presence, also, would operate as a check upon drunkenness. Nor can there be a doubt that women would enliven and give a variety to conversation ; and, as they have had a different education from men, that an opportunity of mutual improvement might be afforded by the continuance of the two in the society of one another.

It is also usual with the world in such companies, that the men, when the females have retired, should continue drinking till tea-time. This custom is unknown to the Quakers, even to those few, who allow of a separation of the sexes. It is not unusual with them to propose a walk before tea, if the weather permits. But even in the case
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where they remain at the table, their time is spent rather in conversing than in drinking. They have no toasts, as I have observed, which should induce them to put the bottle round in a given time, or which should oblige them to take a certain number of glasses. The bottle, however, is usually put round, and each helps himself as he pleases. At length one of the guests, having had sufficient, declines filling his glass. Another in a little time declines also for the same cause. A third, after having taken what he thinks sufficient, follows the example. The wine is soon afterwards taken away, and this mostly long before the hour of drinking tea. Neither drunkenness, nor any situation approaching to drunkenness, is known in the Quaker-companies. Excess in drinking is strictly forbidden by the laws of the Society. It is a subject of one of their Queries. It is of course a subject, that is often brought to their recollection. Whatever may be the faults of the Quakers, they must be acknowledged to be a sober people.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

