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the best wishes of the author.
C. Marshall Taylor

John Greenleaf Whittier

The Quaker

By

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John Greenleaf Whittier

Introductory

MANY of us have been engaged in one way or another in commemorating an event that took place three hundred years ago, an event which provided the springboard for the launching of the Quaker movement throughout the world. Since then there have been many, many members of the Society of Friends, who have tried, and successfully so, to follow the pattern as set forth by George Fox and the early Friends.

In America Rufus M. Jones selected two persons as being the outstanding Friends of their particular century, John Woolman for the eighteenth, and John Greenleaf Whittier for the nineteenth. We of this century could rightfully nominate Rufus Jones to represent us in the present era.

It is my purpose to give particular attention to John Greenleaf Whittier, and it is perhaps appropriate to consider how much we are indebted to Whittier not for his poetry alone, but for the many different facets of his character and life.

Friends on both sides of the Atlantic have long sung the praises of Whittier's poetry, best exemplified in a letter I received from a member of London Yearly Meeting, in which he stated, " I owe far more to Whittier and Lowell than to all our English poets put together," and London Yearly Meeting in its *Christian Life, Faith and Thought* devotes almost as much space quoting Whittier as it does to George Fox ; and in commemorating the three hundredth anniversary of an outstanding event in Fox's life, it is not out of place to give attention to Whittier, the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of whose birth is soon to take place.

However, Howard Hodgkin in his introduction to *A Selection from the Poems of John Greenleaf Whittier*, first published in 1896, rates Tennyson much higher as a poet, saying that " as a poet Whittier occupies but a lowly place beside his great contemporary," but hastens to add that ultimately Whittier will deservedly have a permanent hold on future generations, stating that " There was no such inequality as regards spiritual insight between these two inspired teachers of England and America."

It is interesting to note that a Russian writer makes some interesting comparisons. " The Englishman was a court poet. The American was a poet of Freedom. The first was honoured by the Queen, but the second was the inspiration and guiding spirit of an entire people. All his life was dedicated to the struggle for freedom of the oppressed negro. He played an active role in the political social life, but never sought power or honours, and was buried in a small country cemetery, whereas Tennyson was elevated to the peerage and buried in Westminster Abbey."[1]

Then again, such an outstanding figure as Winston Churchill astounded his admiring American public, when he recited " Barbara Frietchie " in its entirety to the then President of the United States, Franklin D. Roosevelt, as they were riding together through Frederick, Maryland, the locale of the poem. No other person in the party could do more than recite the line " Shoot, if you must, this old grey head, but spare your country's flag, she said."

One concept about Whittier needs to be greatly revised. True he was born on a farm, had little academic training,[2] and while he prided himself on the limited library[3] available to him in early youth, few have surpassed his ability to

[1] In the Supplement of the Journal, *Historical Messenger*, St. Petersburg, Russia, published January, 1893, just after both poets had died in the autumn of 1892.

[2] Haverford College conferred an honorary degree on him in absentia (1860). Harvard University honoured him with two degrees: Master of Arts, Honoris causa, July, 1860; Doctor of Laws, Honoris causa, 8th November, 1886. The State of Massachusetts elected him an overseer of Harvard, 16th February, 1858, serving until 1871. He was a member of the Board of Trustees of Brown University from 1869-1892.

[3] The author has in his collection, the first copy of Burns' Poems ever owned by Whittier, and it contains many pencil markings by him. Inscription on the title-page reads, " John Greenleaf Whittier, with regards of J.F.O. (T.S.), May, 1830. Philadelphia, J. Crissy and J. Grigg, 1828."

absorb everything he read[1] or heard. His first emphasis was the Bible which he learned at his mother's knee. The family library consisted of some twenty books, mostly Quaker journals, and *Pilgrim's Progress*. But he admitted that he walked miles to borrow a good book whenever he heard of one.

It is interesting to note that on his first trip to the big city (Boston) Whittier purchased a copy of Shakespeare, along with a copy of one of the Waverley Novels, which he admitted his sister and he read " with surreptitious enthusiasm."

Pacifist that our poet was, some have criticized him for the warlike expressions in some of his poems.[2], [3] My theory of the reason he put so much fervour into the lines to Barbara Frietchie was not so much the words she is supposed to have said, but rather her spirit. Whittier had little use for pronouncements unless they were followed up by action. His aim was to praise Barbara not for her warlike attitude, but rather for her willingness to " fight "[4] for a cause. Whittier had spent much of his whole life in trying to arouse people to recognize the evils of slavery, and he found great fault with so many Friends, who, though against slavery, were unwilling actively to engage in public denunciation of

[1] Hawthorne in his review in *The Literary World*, 17th April, 1847, of Whittier's " The Supernaturalism of New England," complained " Mr. Whittier has read too much." See Randal Stewart: *The New England Quarterly*, September, 1936.

[2] One wonders what the Quaker poet, and many modern Quakers too for that matter, would have done without the imagery of war and battle. (See John W. Chadwick, *The New World*, March, 1893.) He once said of himself without intending any disparagement of any peaceable ancestry, " I have still strong suspicions that somewhat of the old Norman blood, something of the grim Berserker spirit, has been bequeathed to me." *Collected Writings*, Vol. 5, p. 346. Celia Thaxter called Whittier " God's soldier, through all his life, fighting steadfastly for truth and right, never for an instant flinching under any circumstance."

[3] " After all I do not think it strange that a Quaker's song (Ein Feste Burg Ist Unser Gott) should be out of place in the army "—Whittier's letter to John W. Hutchinson, Amesbury 6th, 3d month, 1862, John Wallace Hutchinson: *Story of the Hutchinsons*. 1896, p. 397.

[4] James Russell Lowell in reviewing Whittier's *In War Time and Other Poems*, in *The North American Review*, XCVIII (Jan. 1864), 290-292, compared the Quaker's martial strains in contrast to his peaceful birthright, saying " Here is indeed a soldier prisoner on parade in a drab coat, with no hope of exchange, but with a heart beating time to the tap of the drum." See *Whittier and The American Writers*. A Dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, University of Tennessee, by Joseph M. Ernest, Jr., June, 1952, p. 74.

the great evil.[1], [2] In " To ——— With a Copy of John Woolman's Journal," he says,

" Idle Faith unknown to action
Dull and cold and dead."

To him Barbara represented a person willing to take a stand and face the consequence, come what may.

Whittier had a photographic mind, which enabled him to know the world intimately through other people's travels, writings, and lectures.[3] Take the case of Barbara Frietchie. The town of Frederick does have clustered spires, but Whittier never visited Frederick. How did he obtain such an intimate knowledge of the town ? Almost a year before Whittier first heard the story of Barbara, he had read Oliver Wendell Holmes's travel story in the December, 1862, issue of the *Atlantic Monthly*.[4] In this story there was an excellent description of Frederick, and it is interesting to note how Whittier used this memory picture in writing the poem. The moment Frederick was mentioned, the poet recollected what Holmes had written—" In approaching Frederick, the singular beauty of its clustered spires struck me very much. I wish some wandering photographer would take a picture of the place, a stereoscopic one if possible to show how gracefully, how charmingly its group of steeples nestle among the Maryland hills." Then read the second verse of Barbara Frietchie :

The clustered spires of Frederick stand
Green-walled by the hills of Maryland.

When Holmes wished that some photographer take a picture of the place, he had no idea that a photographer

[1] See " Whittier " by Annie Fields, *Harper's Magazine*, February, 1893. " He was rejoicing over Garibaldi's victory. He said that he had been trying to arouse the interest of Friends, but it usually took about two years to thoroughly awaken them to any great topic."

[2] In a letter to Thomas Clarkson 10th of the 7th mo. 1844, Whittier wrote : " I regret to be obliged to tell thee, however, that the religious society with which I am connected does not appear to participate in any considerable extent in the efforts for making for emancipation. One New England Yearly Meeting at its late session, *passed over the subject* in silence, with the exception of a slight notice of it in an epistle. The late North Carolina Yearly Meeting adopted a minute advising Friends *not to assist or shelter* the poor *fugitives from the prison house of slavery*. Is this not a sad position for Friends ? "—*American Literature*, January, 1936.

[3] Whittier said to Annie Fields when she asked him if he never felt tempted to go to Quebec, " O no," he replied, " I know it all by books and pictures just as well as if I had seen it."

[4] O. W. Holmes : *My Hunt After The Captain.*

would come along, not a professional photographer but a poet who has put into words the scenic background of the heroic stand made by an immortal figure—Barbara Frietchie. This poem will probably outlive every other poem that Whittier wrote, at least until nations give up their individual flags.

Few poets knew the Bible as Whittier did, for as E. C. Stedman said, " Its letter rarely is absent from his verse, and its spirit never." R. H. Stoddard wrote that " Mr. Whittier has his Bible at his finger-ends, and is as familiar with its history as with that of his native land."[1]

Whittier had the highest esteem for the Scriptures, but they were for him the rule of Faith and practice, and not the word of God. He insisted like his colonial hero Pastorius upon interpreting the Bible by the Inward Light :[2]

> Within himself he found the law of right
> He walked by faith and not the letter sight,
> And read his Bible by the Inward Light.

A study made of Whittier's use for the Bible showed 816 references coming from the Bible directly or indirectly.[3] It is interesting to note that his favourite references were to the hem of Jesus's garment, and the seamless robe, and to the letter and the spirit.

The most scathing lines ever penned by Whittier take their significance from I Samuel iv. 21, 22, in his poem " Ichabod " in derision of Daniel Webster's failure to take the stand, come what may. He castigates Webster by insisting that he

> Walk backward, with averted gaze
> And hide the shame.

Home Life

RUFUS JONES said :

> Beyond question, the most important early formative influence in shaping Whittier's inner life, was the rare quality of the Quaker home in which he was nurtured . . . [and it] was one of the best nurseries the modern world has seen for the formation of moral strength and inward spiritual depth. Each day, regardless of the

[1] *Appleton's Journal*, 15th April, 1871.
[2] E. J. Bailey : *Religious Thought in the Greater American Poets*, 1922.
[3] James Stacy Stevens : *Whittier's Use of the Bible*, Univ. of Maine Studies, Second Series, No. 16, December, 1930.

urgency of secular tasks, and the press of practical duties, the family gathered for a period of worship and preparation . . . In these times of reverent family silence, amid these 'still dews of quietness,' Whittier formed that abiding faith of his—that God is the one absolute reality . . . It is hardly possible to overemphasize the influence on the boy of these pauses of family worship. They helped to fuse the family life into a living unity, and they brought the individual members to the deep springs and fountains of living water.[1]

It is in " Snow-Bound " that Whittier describes his home life, and it is

out of such homes, even as Whittier himself, have come the men and women who have made this nation great. This is why—because he has shown us such a home—Whittier should be honoured in America, this is why he will continue to be read by those of other countries who wish to know us, when other more brilliant poets are passed by.[2]

But Matthew,[3] the brother, grew up in the same home, was subjected to the same influence, but how different was he, thrice married, forsaking his second wife, and all through life a source of worry and great concern to his famous brother. Matthew was disowned from the Society of Friends.[4] A similar disparity[5] between brothers existed in the Garrison family.

Genteel poverty was the order of the day in the Whittier household on the farm, for as he said :

I was called home by the illness of my father, who died soon after in 1830. I then took charge of the farm and worked hard ' to make both ends meet ; ' and aided by my mother's and sister's thrift and economy, in some measure succeeded.[6]

As one writer puts it,

prosperity had never wooed the Massachusetts Quakers away from the simple life, as it had done with so many Philadelphia Friends, but a narrow domestic economy and social non-conformity nourished their religion of peace and good-will.[7]

[1] " Whittier's Fundamental Religious Faith," *Byways in Quaker History*, 1944, p. 20.

[2] *Snow-Bound* (Loyola English Classics), Chicago, 1935, pp. 111 and 114.

[3] Lloyd Wilfred Griffin : " Matthew Franklin Whittier," *New England Quarterly*, December, 1941.

[4] See Seabrook Monthly Meeting Minute—Amesbury, 3rd of 11th mo. 1836. Dover Monthly Meeting Minute—Dover, 22nd of 2nd mo., 1837. Seabrook Monthly Meeting Minute—4th of 5th mo., 1837.

[5] Information received from Walter Merrill, Marblehead, Mass.

[6] Letter dated Amesbury, 5th Mo., 1882, Haverhill Public Library.

[7] V. L. Parrington : *Main Currents in American Thought*, New York, 1927, p. 361.

International Friendships

IN many respects Whittier was closer to the leading English Quakers of his day than to the Quakers of his own country, particularly so in the anti-slavery field. He had very little literary society in Amesbury, where he was held in high esteem by his fellow townsmen, and consulted on " every matter from killing a pig to reconciling a man and wife."[1]

A friend once said to him : " I suppose thee moves about at Amesbury as Cowper did at Olney." He simply bent his head and looked very modest.

William Forster[2], an English Quaker, visited Haverhill in 1823 and made a lasting impression on young Whittier, which he acknowledged in the poem "William Forster" (1854) :

> The years are many since his hand
> Was laid upon my head,
> Too weak and young to understand
> The serious words he said.
>
> Yet often now the good man's look
> Before me seems to swim,
> . . .
> He walked the dark world, in the mild
> Still guidance of the Light ;
> . . .
> Low bowed in silent gratitude,
> My manhood's heart enjoys
> That reverence for the pure and good
> Which blessed the dreaming boy's.[3]

But especially to Joseph Sturge, Whittier was indebted for financial and moral support, with the result that the poet wrote three poems involving his Friend Sturge. The first, " The Conquest of Finland " (1856), was prompted by an item in the *Friends Review* : " Joseph Sturge with a companion Thomas Harvey, has been visiting the shores of Finland to ascertain the amount of mischief and loss to poor and peaceable sufferers, occasioned by the gun boats of the

[1] See Abbey Newhall, *The Friend*, Philadelphia, Vol. 97 : p. 246.

[2] Buried in Friends Cemetery, Friendsville, Tenn. A dormitory at Friendsville Academy is named Forster Hall.

[3] In his own handwriting on the proofs for the Artists' Edition, in the author's collection, Whittier added : " He was the father of the Right Hon. William Edward Forster. He visited my father's house in Haverhill during his first tour in the United States."

allied squadrons in the late war, with a view to obtaining relief to them." It contains these lines of praise :

> And so to Finland's sorrow
> The sweet amend is made,
> As if the healing hand of Christ
> Upon her wounds were laid.

Then " In Remembrance of Joseph Sturge " (1859), he continued :

> Where war's worn victims saw his gentle presence
> Come sailing, Christ-like, in
>
> . . .
>
> Thanks for the good man's beautiful example
>
> . . .
>
> Not his golden pen's or lip's persuasion,
> But a fine sense of right,
> And Truth's directness, meeting each occasion
> Straight as a line of light.
>
> . . .
>
> His faith and works, like streams that intermingle
>
> . . .
>
> The very gentlest of all human natures.

And earlier, in the poem " To My Friend [Joseph Sturge,] on the Death of His Sister " (1845) Whittier puts his condolences in verse, one stanza of which has since been repeated at many a Friends funeral, without remembering in whose memory they were first penned :

> God calls our loved ones, but we lose not wholly
> What he hath given ;
> They live on earth, in thought and deed, as truly
> As in His heaven.

It is interesting to note that three stanzas out of this poem formed one of the first hymns published using Whittier's poetry.[1]

Earlier he immortalized Daniel Wheeler in a poem first printed in leaflet form, with the title " To the Memory of Daniel Wheeler." This is one of the very rarest of Whittier's first printings, with no Friends' library anywhere having a

[1] *A Book of Hymns for Public and Private Devotion* (compiled by Samuel Longfellow and Samuel Johnson), 1846, p. 342, with the title " The Angels of Grief."

copy of it. It did appear in *The Friend*[1] and *The Missionary Memorial.*[2]

As for Joseph John Gurney, it is significant that Whittier's interest in this highly controversial Quaker, was largely confined to Gurney's anti-slavery activities. It is not to be expected that Whittier would support his views on the Bible and the distinct theological system so different from what Whittier favoured.[3] While Whittier maintained his membership in a Gurneyite meeting throughout his life, there was not the least doubt that he did so due to his faith in the Society as a whole, and not because he embraced the Gurneyite conception of Quakerism. That Whittier was right in his lukewarmness toward Gurney, is best illustrated by what Rufus M. Jones, himself a life-long member of the Gurneyite grouping of Friends, said when he credited Gurney with having

> changed the entire Quaker emphasis from an inward mystical religion with a social passion, to a basic theological system, from which American Quakerism in the large has never wholly recovered.[4]

Whittier never wrote any eulogizing poem in memory of Gurney as he did of those English Quakers with whom he had great spiritual unity.

No survey of Whittier's influence would be complete without reference to the great mutual admiration and respect that existed between John Bright and himself, best illustrated by a letter written by the poet.

> How I regret that I have never seen him! We had much in common in our religious faith, our hatred of war and oppression. His

[1] Philadelphia, 1st August, 1840, p. 348.

[2] New York, 1846, p. 31, with the title "A Memorial" carrying the following caption: "Daniel Wheeler, a minister of the Society of Friends, and who had labored in the cause of His Divine Master in Great Britain, Russia and the Islands of the Pacific, died in New York in the spring of 1840, while on a religious visit to this country." Wheeler was buried in Friends' Cemetery, Brooklyn, N.Y. This heading, no doubt, was written by Whittier.

[3] A letter in author's collection by Whittier to Elizabeth Stuart Phelps Ward, dated Amesbury, 9th mo. 22nd, 1871, reads in part: "We can do without the Bible or Church, but we cannot do without God; and of Him all are sure. All that science and criticism can urge cannot shake the self-evident truth that He asks me to be true, just, merciful, and loving. And because He asks me to be so I know that He is Himself what He requires of me."

[4] "The Great Succession of Torch Bearers"—Rufus M. Jones, delivered at Arch Street Meeting House, Philadelphia, xi.3.1946. *Friends Intelligencier*, 1946, p. 647ff.

great genius seemed to me to be always held firmly in hand by a sense of duty, and by the practical commonsense of a shrewd man of business. He fought through life like an old knight-errant, but without enthusiasm. He had no personal ideals. I remember once how he remonstrated with me for my admiration for General Gordon. He looked upon that wonderful personality as a wild fighter, a rash adventurer, doing evil that good might come. He could not see him as I saw him, giving his life for humanity, alone and unfriended in that dreadful Soudan. He did not like the idea of fighting Satan with Satan's weapons. Lord Salisbury said truly that John Bright was the greatest orator England had produced, and his eloquence was only called out by what he regarded as the voice of God in his soul.[1]

It was to John Bright that Whittier wrote :

I take pleasure in enclosing to thy care, for the benefit of the unemployed people of your manufacturing districts, a bill of exchange on Fallamon Brothers & Company of London, for [£]32 14s. 1d. ([$]238.00 of our money), the sum contributed by the people of the villages of Amesbury and Salisbury for that purpose.[2]

With grateful appreciation of thy generous efforts to promote good feelings between the people of England and the United States and of thy eloquent and truthful presentation of the great question involved in our terrible arbitrament, I am,

Very truly thy friend

John Greenleaf Whittier.

There is substantial support to the thought that Whittier's close friendship with John Bright, helped play an important part in the favourable attitude of the Quaker statesman toward the Union side in the war of the Rebellion.

It is interesting to note how closely Whittier followed Bright's moves, and in a letter Whittier states :

I read with interest thy article on the Irish Question and think some of its suggestions wise. But I see nothing for the Governor to do but to lay a heavy hand on the brutal and cowardly assassins who think it right and proper to murder a neighbour who is honest enough to pay his debts. It is impossible to reason with unreason. It seems to me that such men as Bright and Forster have gone to extremes in their concessions to Ireland as far as rent is concerned.[3]

Then he suggested to Bright in 1886 the basis for a British Commonwealth of Nations, somewhat akin to the set-up which now exists :

[1] Annie Fields : " Whittier." *Harper's Magazine*, February, 1893.
[2] Letter dated Amesbury i.2.1863—Amesbury Public Library.
[3] Letter to an unidentified person—dated Danvers, Mass., 11th mo., 27, 1881. *Whittier's Correspondence*, 1830-1892. Edited by John Albree, pp. 226 and 227.

I appreciate the serious question which agitates Great Britain at this time, and I do not feel I fully understand it. I doubt the propriety of our meddling with it on this side of the water. It has indeed occurred to me that a federation system in which Ireland, Scotland, Canada, Australia, and India could all be represented in the common Parliament of England, might be a solution of the question.[1]

But just a few years earlier we find Bright writing :

' The Virginian Slave Mother's Lament ' has often brought tears to my eyes, and in the poem of ' Snow Bound ', there are lines which have nothing superior to them in beauty and pathos in our language, and the ' Eternal Goodness ' is another poem which is worth a crowd of sermons which are spoken from the pulpit of our sects and churches, and which I do not wish to undervalue.[2]

Probably Whittier enjoyed Charles Dickens, best of all his non-Quaker English friends, and after attending one of the justly famous readings in Boston, related to a friend that

his reading is wonderful, far beyond any expectations. Those marvellous characters of his come forth, one by one, real personages, as if their original creator had breathed new life into them . . . But it is idle to talk about it ; you must beg, borrow, or steal a ticket and hear him. Another such star-shower is not to be expected in one's life time.[3]

Undoubtedly Whittier was greatly influenced by English, Scottish and German poets and writers. Many biographers record the influence of Milton and rightly so because Whittier said that his " whole life " had " felt the influence of his writing."[4] In passing it is interesting to note that the Milton window in St. Margaret's Church, Westminster, carries four lines which Whittier wrote specially for that purpose, reading as follows :

> The New World honours him whose lofty plea
> For England's freedom made her own more sure,
> Whose song, immortal as its theme, shall be
> Their common freehold while both worlds endure.

Byron undoubtedly had great influence over Whittier as revealed in the early poems.

[1] Letter. S. T. Pickard, *Life and Letters of J. G. Whittier*, 1895, p. 715.
[2] Letter to Augustine Jones, from One Ash, Rochdale, 24th September, 1884. From an unidentified source comes the story that John Bright could recite " Snow Bound " from beginning to end. I have been unable to verify this legend.
[3] Letter. Houghton Library, Harvard University.
[4] " Milton's prose has long been my favorite reading. My whole life has felt the influence of his writings." Annie Fields : " Whittier," *Harper's Magazine*, February, 1893.

A recent and thorough study of Dr. Alvin Thaler[1] of the University of Tennessee, reveals that Whittier during the course of his life knew intimately the works of Bacon, Marvell, Milton, Bunyan, Baxter, Sterne, Burns, Scott, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Lamb, Dickens, Macaulay, Carlyle, Tennyson, both Brownings, and many others, and the influence of these various literary people is, oftimes, definitely traceable in his poems.

Whittier wrote several poems having to do with early English Quakerism, one particularly appropriate this year, having the title "Revelation" relating to an episode in the life of George Fox, and "The King's Missive." In prose he recited the stories of James Nayler, Thomas Elwood, Andrew March, and John Roberts, and in "Leaves from Margaret Smith's Journal," he developed the alleged diary[2] of an English girl visiting New England in 1678 and 1679.

Whittier was particularly fond of Daniel O'Connell and ranked him with Wilberforce and Clarkson in his great devotion to the anti-slavery cause, and in the cause of "Human Liberty."[3]

To show how widely read Whittier was even in his early days, it is only necessary to cite an essay on Alexander Pushkin (1799-1837), who had African blood in his veins:

> Can it be possible that this man, so wonderfully gifted, so honored, so lamented was a colored man—a negro? . . . We have alluded to this remarkable man for the purpose of exposing the utter folly and injustice of the common prejudice against the colored race in this country. It is a prejudice wholly incompatible with enlightened republicanism and true Christianity.

This was the first pronouncement about Pushkin to appear in America.[4]

But in the final analysis, it was to Robert Burns that Whittier owed his greatest gratitude, as explained in a letter dated Amesbury, 5th mo., 1882.

> When I was fourteen years old my first schoolmaster, Joshua Coffin, the able, eccentric historian of Newbury, brought with him to our house, a volume of Burns' poems, from which he read, greatly to my delight. I begged him to leave the book with me, and set myself

[1] The *New England Quarterly*, March, 1951.
[2] Albert Mordell: *Quaker Militant*, p. 183.
[3] *Collected Writings*, Vol. VI, p. 325.
[4] *National Era*, 11th February, 1847; reprinted. *Friends Intelligencer*, Philadelphia, Vol. 94 (1937), p. 159, with note by T. Franklin Currier.

at once to the task of mastering the glossary of the Scottish dialect. This was about the first poetry I had ever read (with the exception of that of the Bible of which I have been a close student), and it had a lasting influence upon me.

Many of Whittier's earlier poems were in the Scottish dialect, but my theory is that he copied Burns in another way. If you will compare cuts of Whittier and Burns, portraying each in their early manhood, you will, no doubt, immediately note a close resemblance in their " side burns." Certainly there was no Quaker influence in such an adornment, and it was not the prevailing style at the time, so my conviction is that Whittier not only copied Burns' poetic style, but also his manner of beard, namely " side burns." It should also be remembered that Whittier was quite a dresser in his youth, and throughout his life had his Philadelphia tailor make his suits to measure, always cut Quaker style.

Organizational Quakerism

WHITTIER was ever thankful that Divine Providence gave him a birthright in the Society of Friends. He was proud of the Society, and unlike some modern Quakers, never lost sight of nor forgot his birthright. He was ever mindful of his own falling far short of the ideals of the Society. This pride in the Society was even expressed in his last will and testament :

> It is my wish that my funeral may be conducted in the plain and quiet way of the Society of Friends, with which I am connected not only by birthright, but also by a settled conviction of the truth of its principles and the importance of its testimonies, [yet, as he said, he] had a kind feeling towards all who are seeking, in different ways from mine, to serve God and benefit their fellow men.

But as stated by a writer in *The Friend* (London) of 6th December, 1907, (Whittier Centenary Supplement), " Glad as we are now to recognize his place among us, we should not forget that, especially during his more strenuous years, he was rarely regarded by our forefathers with complacency. He was radical and uncompromising in his religion as well as in his political attitude, and he expressed himself in ways which gave occasion for much heartburning to the elders of his Church. The only orthodoxy to which he could subscribe was that of the Master who lived the life

of love in the presence of God. He hated unprofitable disputation, but he demanded liberty, and he could never separate the Quakerism to which he led from its witness to the Divine Immanence. If, on the religious side, he belongs, as he said, ' to the Fox, Penn and Barclay school,' on the social side he follows Woolman."

Not much has ever been said about Whittier's uneasiness in remaining a member of a religious Society which he dearly loved, but it is certainly true that he was far too progressive theologically and politically, for most of the members of the Society of Friends in New England.

For instance, in a note to Joseph Sturge, he wrote:

Our Yearly Meeting is held next week, and I had intended to go but at present I do not see my way clear to do so. We had the subjects of slavery, temperance and education before our Monthly Meeting, and my views on these points were not agreeable to some of the elderly Friends. I felt bound to decline acting as representative to the Quarterly Meeting of last month, as I could not feel I could truly represent the feeling of the meeting on these important matters. I am more and more satisfied that my place in the Society should be that of a simple member—nay, that it must be so, so long as my views of duty are so widely different from those of a majority of my friends.[1]

It was Lowell who put into verse the constraint which Whittier felt in his own religious family:

> There is Whittier, whose swelling and vehement heart
> Strains the strait-breasted drab of the Quaker apart
> And reveals the live man, still supreme and erect
> Underneath the benumming wrappers of the sect.[2]

In a discussion with E. Lloyd as to their religious difference, he said:

I see we cannot think alike about Friends. I am sorry but it cannot be helped. Heart and soul, I am a Quaker, but at the same time I am but an indifferently good Quaker—I take my own way and Friends theirs. I don't well see how I could be any more free.[3]

When he arrived in Philadelphia in January, 1837,

he found the Society of Friends upon whose co-operation he had counted, had but recently been rent asunder by one of those unhappy controversies which so often mark the decline of practical righteousness. The martyr-age of the Society had passed—wealth and luxury

[1] Letter, 12.vi.1845. Friends House, London, MS. Box 10 (3), 1.

[2] James Russell Lowell: *Table for Critics.*

[3] M.V. Denervaud: *Whittier's unknown romance*, 1922, p. 31, M. H. Shackford in *Whittier and the Cartlands*, 1950, p. 17, states: "J. G. Whittier told Gertrude Cartland very positively that Elizabeth Lloyd was the only woman he had ever loved."

had taken the place of the old conflicts. There was a growing conformity to the maxims of the world in trade and fashion, and with it a corresponding unwillingness to hazard respectability by the advocacy of unpopular reforms. Unprofitable speculation and disputation on one hand, and a vain attempt on the other to enforce uniformity of opinion, had measurably lost sight of the fact that the end of the gospel is love, and that charity is its crowning reward.[1]

And in a letter he said :

Give my love to Lucretia Mott, and tell her I have never forgotten the kind welcome and generous sympathy she gave the young abolitionist at a time when he found small favor with his ' orthodox ' bretheren.[2]

In his first issue as editor of the *Pennsylvania Freeman* he said, " the ancient and excellent testimony (of the Society of Friends) against slavery has been, in too many instances, sacrificed to prejudice, mercantile connections with stockholders and a somewhat inconsistent dread of association with other sects for any other purposes than those of worldly gain."[3]

Quarterly Meetings date from Fox's day, and Whittier, health permitting, always attended Salem Quarterly Meeting, held at Amesbury the last Saturday in May each year. It should be said that this quarterly event combining religious obligation with social opportunity was typical of Quakerism in Whittier's day, but has long since lost much of its power in our Society.

One can easily imagine the thrill that came to those who were invited to Whittier's home at Quarterly Meeting time. Obviously, an invitation from him was eagerly sought after and if obtained never refused. Why should it be ? It was not unusual to have forty people to dinner and it is said that Whittier enjoyed carving roast beef for all the multitude.

He writes in May, 1884 :

Next week our annual Friends meeting comes off at Amesbury, When I hope to see a good many old and dear friends of our faith. I am not much of a sectarian and care little for creeds, but I like to hear the Quaker speech and see the Quaker dress.

We all work too hard ; we are hurried, excited [Forgive our foolish ways],[4] all trying to answer the Sphinx's questions, all afraid of ' Mrs. Grundy ' ; in run over religion, politics, charities, by steam

[1] *Collected Writings*, Vol. VII, pp. 3, 4.
[2] *Sketches and Reminiscences of the Radical Club*, p. 389.
[3] John A. Pollard : *J. G. Whittier*, 1949, p. 164.
[4] Added by author.

and electricity. The old Friends used to dwell upon the need of getting into the quiet '. There seems no quiet to get into.

If I ever feel like enjoying anyone, it is not the world famous author, but some serene, devout soul who has made the life of Christ his own, and whose will is the divine will.[1]

Whittier attended Yearly Meetings quite regularly, except for a period when public anti-slavery activity was frowned upon by the Friends who held their annual sessions at Newport, R.I. It was suggested to Whittier that his presence was not urged because his " words would not have weight."

So far as I can determine Whittier was never appointed a Representative to Yearly Meeting. The meeting records show him often-times appointed as a representative of Amesbury Preparative Meeting to Seabrook Monthly Meeting, and in the next higher bracket, from Seabrook Monthly Meeting to Salem Quarterly Meeting, but never to his Yearly Meeting.

Religion

THERE is religion in everything around us—a calm and holy religion in the unbreathing things of nature, which men do well to imitate. It comes quietly and without excitement. It does not rouse up the passions; it is untrammeled by the creeds, and unshadowed by the superstitions of men. It looks out from every star. It breaks, link after link, the chain that binds us to materiality, and which opens to our imagination a world of spiritual beauty and holiness.

This statement is attributed to Whittier, who at that time was just past twenty-two, and it was considered by some to be Hicksiteish, best explained in the words of Moses A. Cartland:

Thus they stamp Hicksism on everything which does not have a direct testimony of the Savior of man—to clear any composition of being of that doctrine, it must recognize the grand laws of the Gospel, for to be silent on *that* is, in one sense, a crime.[2]

Soon after his death, it was stated the Unitarians and the

[1] Charlotte F. Bate: " Glimpses of Whittier's Faith and Character." *McClure's Magazine*, January, 1894.

[2] M. H. Shackford: *Whittier and the Cartlands*, Wakefield, Mass., 1950.

Universalists claimed him,[1] but he was no Unitarian[2] even though so many of his intimate literary friends were members of that sect. In eulogizing William Ellery Channing, he was careful that no one should mistake his just praise of the man as an adoption of his religious views, saying in a note on the poem, " Channing " :

> The last time I saw Dr. Channing was in the summer of 1841 when in the company with my English friend, Joseph Sturge, I visited him in his summer residence in Rhode Island. In recalling the impression of that visit, it can scarcely be necessary to say, that I have no reference to the peculiar religious opinions of a man whose life, beautifully and truly manifested above the atmosphere of sect, is now the world's common legacy,[3]

and in another letter he wrote :

> What a loss to us—to the country—the world even—is the death of Dr. Channing ! Bigots will think of him only as a heretic Unitarian : that the pure, the wise, the good, the truly Christian will come to linger upon his memory as that of a man who, like his Divine Master, went about doing good, with a love to God and love to man—an eloquent apostle of the Philanthropy of the Gospel.[4]

What pleased him least in the drift of 19th century Quakerism was its endeavour to assimilate the rigors of the sanguinary doctrines of the Atonement as preached in some Evangelical Churches. Whittier was not only the Quaker poet, but he was also the poet of Quakerism.

He found a sympathy and co-operation that transcended every sectarian boundary. It was no part of his dream that all the churches should give up their individual character and be resolved into a common element ; but it is increasingly a part of it that the divisions of the sects should cease to keep apart men and women of like aspirations, hopes and aims. He knew of no religion worthy of the name that was a thing apart from human suffering and need.[5]

Whittier minimized the importance of the historic life of Jesus

[1] Rev. J. C. Fletcher : " Whittier's Christian Belief," N.Y. *Evangelist*, 19th December, 1892.

[2] Rev. C. C. Hussey, a Unitarian minister, though born a Quaker, in reporting a long theological talk with Whittier two weeks before the latter's death, said that Whittier never believed in the infallibility of the Bible, and in regard to Christ, Whittier said to Hussey as he was leaving : " They would call thee and me Unitarians." " What Whittier Believed," sermon by Rev. M. J. Savage, *Boston Transcript*, December, 1892.

[3] *Collected Writings*, Vol. IV, p. 42.

[4] Letter—Harvard University, 19th November, 1842.

[5] J. W. Chadwick : " Whittier's Spiritual Career," *The New World*, March, 1893.

to emphasize the fact that every true believer may each day find within his own heart the gracious Lord reborn.[1]

Keep while you need it, brothers mine
With honest zeal your Christmas sign,
But judge not him who every morn
Feels in his heart the Lord Christ born !

The only orthodoxy that I am especially interested in is that of life and practice.[2] We must never be afraid of truth ; truth can never contradict itself.[3]

To Whittier, the unpardonable sin was none other than the denial of the word of God within his own heart, plus a settled conviction that the Inner Light was denied to no man and that spiritual democracy was a very real fact.[4] With it all, his religion while mystical, was eminently practical.[5] " Christianity is a life rather than a creed."[6]

To him in " The Vision of Echard " : " The heaven ye seek, the hell ye fear, are with yourselves alone."

" I have no fear of anything that science finds in searching through the material things."[7] He stated that " the notion that an intellectual recognition of certain dogmas is the essential condition of salvation lies at the bottom of all intolerance in matters of religion."[8]

In a letter to a friend Whittier summed up his whole religious philosophy in these words :

I have with thee a profound conviction of the truth of the immanence of the Divine Spirit—the immediate teaching—the present revelation of the Eternal Goodness. I think the time must come when this faith will be the stronghold of religion against which neither the revelations of science nor the criticism of the outward letter of Scripture can prevail.[9]

Finally, Whittier wrote :

Christianity is not simply historical and traditional but present and permanent, with its roots in the infinite past and its branches in the infinite future—the eternal spring and growth of Divine love, not the dying echo of words uttered centuries ago, never to be repeated,

[1] E. J. Bailey : *Religious Thought in the Greater American Poets*, Boston, 1922, p. 71.
[2] Augustus T. Murray : *Religious Poems of Whittier*, p. 19.
[3] *The Dial*, 16th December, 1907, Vol. 43, pp. 407-409.
[4] Bailey, op. cit., p. 74.
[5] Bailey, op. cit., p. 75.
[6] Augustus T. Murray : op. cit., p. 19.
[7] 72nd anniversary celebration of the New England Society, in New York City, 22nd December, 1877.
[8] *Collected Writings* : Vol. VI, p. 129.
[9] In author's collection, date probably 30th August, 1876.

but God's good tidings spoken fresh in every soul—the perennial fountain and unstinted outflow of wisdom and goodness, forever old and forever new.[1]

Credal Slavery

MOST reviews of the life of Whittier give major attention to his humanitarian efforts in behalf of the slave, but fail adequately to recognize his other great concern which I have labelled " credal slavery."

Whittier never attended a theological seminary and he had not the advantages of our modern Woodbrooke or Pendle Hill, but one of his contemporaries claimed that he did ' more to broaden and liberalize the religious thought of the modern world than all the preachers put together '[2] and ' for sixty years he was more influential as a teacher of religion than any other man in America, who always looked for God not in creeds nor in books, but in his own soul, and in the world about him.'[3]

His greatest religious poem, " The Eternal Goodness," grew out of a religious controversy over matters of creed :

> I trace your lines of argument ;
> Your logic linked and strong
>
> . . .
>
> I dare nor fix with mete and bound
> The love and power of God.

It has shamed more bigotry, rebuked more theological brutality, encouraged more hope and trust, and comforted more trembling hearts than any other poem of our age. How can we ever be too grateful to the self-constituted committee of his Quaker brethren who, troubled by ' the larger hope ' the poet had expressed in ' The Two Angels,' visited him, and with their solemn protest brought this benediction on their heads and on us all.[4]

And in " Our Master,"

> Nor holy bread, nor blood of grape,
> The lineaments restore
> Of Him we know in outward shape
> And in the flesh no more
>
> . . .
>
> The letter fails, and systems fall,
> And every symbol wanes ;

[1] Dora Greenwell : *The Patience of Hope*, 1862. Introduction.
[2] M. J. Savage : " What Whittier Believed," *Boston Transcript*, December, 1892.
[3] W. H. Savage : " Whittier's Religion," *Arena*, Vol. 10, No. 2, July, 1894.
[4] John W. Chadwick : " Whittier's Spiritual Career," *The New World*, March, 1893.

and in " To —— With a Copy of Woolman's Journal "

Hollow creed and ceremonial,
Whence the ancient life hath fled,
. . .
But a soul-sufficing answer
Hath no outward origin ;

Then again in " To Ronge "[1] he urges us to

Leave creeds to closet idlers.

In a letter in 1886, he said :

slowly but surely the dreadful burden of the old belief in the predetermined eternity of evil is being lifted from the heart of humanity, and the goodness of God, which leadeth to repentence, is taking the place of the infinite scorn which made love well nigh impossible.[2]

In " The Quaker Alumni," he says :

Enough and too much of the sect and the name,
What matters our label, so truth be our aim ?
The creed may be wrong, but the life may be true,
And hearts beat the same under drab coats or blue.

In " The Minister's Daughter " he questions the doctrine,

How of His will and pleasure
All souls, save a chosen few,
Were doomed to the quenchless burning
And held in the way thereto.

After Stanley Pumphrey's visit to the U.S.A. in 1876, Whittier wrote to Augustine Jones :

I hope he will go home with a milder estimate of the poor Unitarians than that of our English Friends generally. They seem to think no good can possibly come from such a doomed class of heretics.

And further he wrote :

I am a Quaker by birthright and sincere convictions, but am no sectarian in the strict sense of the term. My sympathies are with the Broad Church of Humanity.[3]

Heart and soul, I am a Quaker, as respect forms, rituals, priests and churches, an iconoclast unsparing as Milton or John Knox. I don't see any saving virtue in candles, surplices, altars and prayer books.[4]

[1] Johannes Ronge (1813-1887), a Silesian priest.
[2] W. H. Savage : " Whittier's Religion," *Arena*, Vol. 10, No. 2, July, 1894.
[3] Presentation of Whittier's Portrait, Friends School, Providence R.I.
[4] Letter to E. Lloyd ; M. V. Denervaud: *Whittier's Unknown Romance*, Boston, 1922, p. 31.

I know not of His hate, I know only His goodness and His love.[1]
No wrong by wrong is righted, and only hate can come of hating.[2]
Love scarce is love that never draws the sunshine of forgiving.[3]

To my way of thinking, Whittier's life can be divided into two major eras, the first the anti-slavery period and the other, his great campaign against creeds. Many of his religious poems, mostly written in the latter period, have a direct reference to creeds, but it is interesting to note that London Yearly Meeting in quoting from Whittier's poetry, refrains from quoting any poem involving his antipathy to creeds.[4] This is rather surprising when you consider how opposed London Y.M. is to anything of a credal nature.

Manifestos

ON four occasions Whittier set forth his ideas concerning the Society of Friends. At the outbreak of the War of the Rebellion in the U.S.A. in 1861, he stated what he considered the obligation of Quakers in wartime,[5] saying: "We have no right to ask or expect an exemption from the chastisement which Divine Providence is inflicting upon the nation. Steadily and faithfully maintaining our testimony against war, we owe to the cause of truth to show that exalted heroism and generous self-sacrifice are not incompatible with our own pacific principles. Our mission is, at this time to mitigate the sufferings of our countrymen, to visit and aid the sick and the wounded, to relieve the necessities of the widow and the orphan, and to practice economy for the sake of charity. Let the Quaker bonnet be seen by the side of the black band of the Catholic Sister of Charity in the hospital ward. Let the same heroic devotion

[1], [2], [3] E. J. Bailey, op. cit., pp. 91, 97, 101.

[4] Cf. *Christian Life, Faith and Thought in the Society of Friends.*

[5] As a little boy Whittier once remarked that "he thought David could not have been a Friend, as he was a man of war." Barrett Wendell: *Stilligeri and Other Essays*, New York, 1893.

In the Introduction to Dora Greenwell: *The Patience of Hope*, Boston, 1862, he wrote: "Christianity is not simply historical and traditional, but present and permanent, with its roots in the infinite past and its branches in the infinite future—the eternal spring and growth of Divine love; not the dying echo of words uttered centuries ago, never to be repeated, but God's good tidings spoken afresh in every soul—the perennial fountain and unstinted outflow of wisdom and goodness, forever old, and forever new."

to duty which our brethren in Great Britain manifested in the Irish famine and pestilence be reproduced on this side of the water, in mitigating the horrors of war and its attendant calamities. What hinders us from holding up the hands of Dorothea Dix in her holy work of mercy at Washington? Our society is rich, and of those to whom much is given much will be required in this hour of proving and trial."[1]

The following letters were addressed to the editor of *The Friends' Review* about some changes of principle and practice in the Society.

Amesbury, 2d. mo., 1870.

To the Editor of *The Review* :[2]

ESTEEMED FRIEND,—If I have been hitherto a silent, I have not been an indifferent, spectator of the movements now going on in our religious Society. Perhaps from lack of faith, I have been quite too solicitous concerning them, and too much afraid that in grasping after new things we may let go of old things too precious to be lost. Hence I have been pleased to see from time to time in thy paper very timely and fitting articles upon a Hired Ministry and Silent Worship.

The present age is one of sensation and excitement, of extreme measures and opinions, of impatience of all slow results. The world about us moves with accelerated impulse, and we move with it : the rest we have enjoyed, whether true or false, is broken ; the title-deeds of our opinions, the reason of our practices, are demanded. Our very right to exist as a distinct society is questioned. Our old literature—the precious journals and biographies of early and later Friends—is comparatively neglected for sensational and dogmatic publications. We hear complaints of a want of educated ministers ; the utility of silent meetings is denied, and praying and preaching regarded as matters of will and option. There is a growing desire for experimenting upon the dogmas and expedients and practices of other sects. I speak only of admitted facts, and not for the purpose of censure or complaint. No one has less right than myself to indulge in heresy-hunting or impatience of minor differences of opinion. If my dear friends can bear with me, I shall not find it a hard task to bear with them.

But for myself I prefer the old ways. With the broadest possible tolerance for all honest seekers after truth, I love the Society of Friends. My life has been nearly spent in laboring with those of other sects in behalf of the suffering and enslaved ; and I have never felt like quarrelling with Orthodox or Unitarians, who were willing to

[1] A circular printed in Amesbury on June 18, 1861, entitled *To Members of the Society of Friends.*

[2] *Friends Review* (Philadelphia), ii.19.1870 ; reprinted in *Collected Writings*, Vol. VII, 305-310.

pull with me, side by side, at the rope of Reform. A very large proportion of my dearest personal friends are outside of our communion; and I have learned with John Woolman to find 'no narrowness respecting sects and opinions.' But after a kindly and candid survey of them all, I turn to my own Society, thankful to the Divine Providence which placed me where I am; and with an unshaken faith in the one distinctive doctrine of Quakerism—the Light within—the immanence of the Divine Spirit in Christianity. I cheerfully recognize and bear testimony to the good works and lives of those who widely differ in faith and practice; but I have seen no truer types of Christianity, no better men and women, than I have known and still know among those who not blindly, but intelligently, hold the doctrines and maintain the testimonies of our early Friends. I am not blind to the shortcomings of Friends. I know how much we have lost by narrowness and coldness and inactivity, the overestimate of external observances, the neglect of our own proper work while acting as conscience-keepers for others. We have not as a Society, been active enough in those simple duties which we owe to our suffering fellow-creatures, in that abundant labor of love and self-denial which is never out of place. Perhaps our divisions and dissensions might have been spared us if we had been less 'at ease in Zion.' It is in the decline of practical righteousness that men are most likely to contend with each other for dogma and ritual, for shadow and letter, instead of substance and spirit. Hence I rejoice in every sign of increased activity in doing good among us, in the precious opportunities afforded of working with the Divine Providence for the Freedmen and Indians; since the more we do, in the true spirit of the gospel, for others, the more we shall really do for ourselves. There is no danger of lack of work for those who, with an eye single to the guidance of Truth, look for a place in God's vineyard; the great work which the founders of our Society began is not yet done; the mission of Friends is not accomplished, and will not be until this world of ours, now full of sin and suffering, shall take up, in jubliant thanksgiving, the song of the Advent: 'Glory to God in the highest! Peace on earth and good-will to men!'

It is charged that our Society lacks freedom and adaptation to the age in which we live, that there is a repression of individuality and manliness among us. I am not prepared to deny it in certain respects. But, if we look at the matter closely, we shall see that the cause is not in the central truth of Quakerism, but in a failure to rightly comprehend it; in an attempt to fetter with forms and hedge about with dogmas that great law of Christian liberty, which I believe affords ample scope for the highest spiritual aspirations and the broadest philanthropy. If we did but realize it, we are 'set in a large place.'

'We may do all we will save wickedness.'

'Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.' Quakerism, in the light of its great original truth, is 'exceeding broad.' As interpreted by Penn and Barclay it is the most liberal and catholic of faiths. If we are not free, generous, tolerant, if we are not up to or

above the level of the age in good works, in culture and love of beauty, order and fitness, if we are not the ready recipients of the truths of science and philosophy—in a word, if we are not full-grown men and Christians, the fault is not in Quakerism, but in ourselves. We shall gain nothing by aping the customs and trying to adjust ourselves to the creeds of other sects. By so doing we make at the best a very awkward combination, and just as far as it is successful, it is at the expense of much that is vital in our old faith. If, for instance, I could bring myself to believe a hired ministry and a written creed essential to my moral and spiritual well-being, I think I should prefer to sit down at once under such teachers as Bushnell and Beecher, the like of whom in Biblical knowledge, ecclesiastical learning, and intellectual power, we are not likely to manufacture by half a century of theological manipulation in a Quaker 'school of the prophets.' If I must go into the market and buy my preaching, I should naturally seek the best article on sale, without regard to the label attached to it.

I am not insensible of the need of spiritual renovation in our Society. I feel and confess my own deficiencies as an individual member. And I bear a willing testimony to the zeal and devotion of some dear friends, who, lamenting the low condition and worldliness too apparent among us, seek to awaken a stronger religious life by the partial adoption of the practices, forms, and creeds of more demonstrative sects. The great apparent activity of these sects seems to them to contrast very strongly with our quietness and reticence; and they do not always pause to inquire whether the result of this activity is a truer type of practical Christianity than is found in our select gatherings. I think I understand these brethren; to some extent I have sympathized with them. But it seems clear to me, that a remedy for the alleged evil lies not in going back to the 'beggarly elements' from which our worthy ancestors called the people of their generation; not in will-worship; not in setting the letter above the spirit, not in substituting type and symbol, and oriental figure and hyperbole for the simple truths they were intended to represent; not in schools of theology; not in much speaking and noise and vehemence, nor in vain attempts to make the 'Plain Language' of Quakerism utter the Shibboleth of man-made creeds: but in heeding more closely the Inward Guide and Teacher; in faith in Christ not merely in His historical manifestation of the Divine Love to humanity, but in His living presence in the hearts open to receive him; in love for Him manifested in denial of self, in charity and love to our neighbor; and in a deeper realization of the truth of the apostle's declaration: 'Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.'

In conclusion, let me say that I have given this expression of my opinions with some degree of hesitation, being very sensible that I have neither the right nor the qualification to speak for a society whose doctrines and testimonies commend themselves to my heart and head, whose history is rich with the precious legacy of holy lives and of whose usefulness as a moral and spiritual force in the world I am fully assured.

Amesbury, 3d mo., 1870.

To the Editor of *The Review* :[1]

Having received several letters from dear friends in various sections suggested by a recent communication in thy paper, and not having time or health to answer them in detail, will thou permit me in this way to acknowledge them, and to say to the writers that I am deeply sensible of the Christian love and personal good-will to myself, which, whether in commendation or dissent, they manifest ? I think I may say in truth that my letter was written in no sectarian or party spirit, but simply to express a solicitude, which, whether groundless or not, was nevertheless real. I am, from principle, disinclined to doctrinal disputations and so-called religious controversies, which only tend to separate and disunite. We have had too many divisions already. I intended no censure of dear brethren whose zeal and devotion command my sympathy, notwithstanding I may not be able to see with them in all respects. The domain of individual conscience is to me very sacred ; and it seems the part of Christian charity to make a large allowance for varying experiences, mental characteristics, and temperaments, as well as for that youthful enthusiasm which, if sometimes misdirected, has often been instrumental in infusing a fresher life into the body of religious profession. It is too much to expect that we can maintain an entire uniformity in the expression of truths in which we substantially agree ; and we should be careful that a rightful concern for 'the form of sound words' does not become what William Penn calls 'verbal orthodoxy.' We must consider that the same accepted truth looks somewhat differently from different points of vision. Knowing our own weaknesses and limitations, we must bear in mind that human creeds, speculations, expositions, and interpretations of the Divine plan are but the faint and feeble glimpses of finite creatures into the infinite mysteries of God.

> ' They are but broken lights of Thee,
> And Thou, O Lord, art more than they.'

Differing, as we do, more or less as to means and methods, if we indeed have the ' mind of Christ,' we shall rejoice in whatever of good is really accomplished, although by somewhat different instrumentalities than those which we feel ourselves free to make use of, remembering that our Lord rebuked the narrowness and partisanship of His disciples by assuring them that they that were not against Him were for Him.

It would, nevertheless, give me great satisfaction to know, as thy kindly expressed editorial comments seem to intimate, that I have somewhat overestimated the tendencies of things in our Society. I have no pride of opinion which would prevent me from confessing with thankfulness my error of judgment. In any event, it can, I think, do no harm to repeat my deep conviction that we may all labor, in the ability given us, for our own moral and spiritual well-being, and that of our fellow-creatures, without laying aside the princi-

[1] *Friends Review* (Philadelphia), iii.19.1870; reprinted in *Collected Writings*, Vol. VII, 311-314.

ples and practice of our religious Society. I believe so much of liberty is our right as well as our privilege, and that we need not really overstep our bounds for the performance of any duty which may be required of us. When truly called to contemplate broader fields of labor, we shall find the walls about us, like the horizon seen from higher levels, expanding indeed, but nowhere broken.

I believe that the world needs the Society of Friends as a testimony and a standard. I know that this is the opinion of some of the best and most thoughtful members of other Christian sects. I know that any serious departure from the original foundation of our Society would give pain to many who, outside of our communion, deeply realize the importance of our testimonies. They fail to read clearly the signs of the times who do not see that the hour is coming when, under the searching eye of philosophy and the terrible analysis of science, the letter and the outward evidence will not altogether avail us; when the surest dependence must be upon the Light of Christ within, disclosing the law and the prophets in our own souls, and confirming the truth of outward Scripture by inward experience; when smooth stones from the brook of present revelation shall prove mightier than the weapons of Saul; when the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, as proclaimed by George Fox and lived by John Woolman, shall be recognized as the only efficient solvent of doubts raised by an age of restless inquiry. In this belief my letter was written. I am sorry it did not fall to the lot of a more fitting hand; and can only hope that no consideration or lack of qualification on the part of its writer may lessen the value of whatever testimony to truth shall be found in it.

Then in 1886, when "Three Friends" (English)[1] published a revised edition of *A Reasonable Faith*, the preface stated:

We are glad to quote the cheering words of the venerable poet Whittier on the subject of our little book. Writing to a correspondent in England he says:

I am greatly interested in *A Reasonable Faith*, and I find myself in accord with it, and think it may be of great service. So far as I can see, it retains and emphasizes all that is vital in Christianity, while freeing it from much that is Jewish or Heathen; much that is false, sensuous, materialistic, and which manifestly is the cause of fast-growing doubt and Agnosticism. *A Reasonable Faith* is, in short, Quakerism pure and undefiled.'

This booklet has long since disappeared from most of our libraries, but it is interesting to note that those who would like to study Whittier's beliefs, can turn to it to determine what he meant when he labelled it "Quakerism pure and undefiled."[2]

[1] Francis Frith, William Pollard, William Turner.

[2] See Maurice Creasy in *The Friends Quarterly*, October, 1949, for the following: "Friends need today not merely 'a reasonable faith' but a still more dynamic one."

To many the poem " Requirement," written just a few years earlier than *A Reasonable Faith*, puts into poetry the basic idea of Whittier's Quaker philosophy, and therein he uses the word reasonable. The poem follows :

We live by Faith, but Faith is not the slave
  Of text and legend. Reason's voice and God's
  Nature's and Duty's, never are at odds.
What asks our Father of His children, save
Justice and mercy and humility,
  A reasonable service of good deeds,
  Pure living, tenderness to human needs,
Reverence and trust, and prayer for light to see
The Master's footprints in our daily ways ?
  No knotted scourge nor sacrificial knife
  But the calm beauty of an ordered life,
Whose very breathing is unworded praise !—
A life that stands as all true lives have stood,
Firm-rooted in the faith that God is Good.

When Edward Worsdell published *The Gospel of Divine Help*, in 1888, Whittier was asked to provide a prefatory note, which he was glad to do, because

It supplies a want, which, it seems to me, was never so strongly felt as at the present time, not only in the Society of Friends, but among the thoughtful and earnest seekers after truth in other denominations, who find it impossible to accept much which seems to them irreverent and dishonouring to God, in creeds founded on an arbitrary arrangement of isolated and often irrelevant texts—' The letter that killeth without the Spirit, which alone gives life.'

It is the honest work of an honest man, desirous of helping others who may be in doubt and discouragement, to find the light and peace into which he has been providentially led. It has my respect and sympathy.

It is interesting to note that though Edward Worsdell received such complete support from Whittier, there appears to have been a studied silence on the book by *The Friend*, *The British Friend*, and *The Friends Quarterly Examiner*.

These four instances provide the necessary prose materials for studying Whittier's religious beliefs, but the same ideas prevail in so much of his poetry, that today, most people turn to his poems for authoritative guidance on his religious thinking, best illustrated by the wide use of his hymns by most all religious groups.

Politics

IT is not too much to say that Whittier was as successful in politics as he was in poetry and " he had no hesitation about mixing religion with politics,"[1] saying early in his career : " Why depreciate agitation, lawful, peaceful, Christian agitation ? "[2]

Steadfastness of purpose and an unswerving allegiance to higher ideals, was constantly reiterated by Whittier in all his political activities, probably best exemplified in his letter accepting the nomination of the Liberty Party as a candidate from his district :

As an abolitionist, I believe neither my friends nor my enemies, if I have any, can justly accuse me of shrinking from any responsibility which in the course of events, seemed to devolve upon me. And so long as our cause is an unpopular one—so long as Church and State are united against its advocacy—I am willing to stand in any position which my friends assign me, and which does not conflict with my ideas of duty. I, therefore, cheerfully accept the nomination of the Convention, promising, however, that whenever our cause shall gather about it the elements of complete success, I shall be ready, with still greater cheerfulness, to give my support to some person better able than myself to represent the friend of impartial freedom in national councils.

Permit me to suggest the hope that all our measures to promote the success of our nominations, may be such as become men engaged in the high mission of moral and political reform. Leaving all low and dishonorable expedients to the advocates of parties making no pretensions to philanthropy, let us lean with hearty confidence on the justice and truth of our principles. The calumnies, the misrepresentations, the personal abuse of our opponents, will soon be forgotten, with all their party watchwords and petty issues. It is our calling to hold up the long neglected truth that Personal Rights are the fountain and source of all others : to infuse into our country's legislation the spirit of the Divine precept, of doing unto others as we would others should do to us.

Let other men twist themselves as they please, to gratify the present tastes of the people. I choose to retain undisturbed the image of my God. I hate slavery in all its forms, degrees and influences and I deem myself bound by the highest moral and political obligations not to let that sentiment of hate be dormant and smouldering in my own breast, but to give it free vent and let it blaze forth, that it may kindle equal ardor through the whole sphere of my

[1] W. H. Savage : " Whittier's Religion," *Arena*, Vol. 10, No. 2, July, 1894.

[2] Letter—*Salem Register*, 17th December, 1835—his 28th birthday.

influence, I would not have this fact disguised for any office the people have it in their power to give.[1]

And yet after the War of the Rebellion was over, he was the first to forgive, as he did in a letter:

(1865) As respects the misguided masses of the South, the shattered and crippled remnants of the armies of treason, the desolate wives, mothers, and children mourning for dear ones who have fallen in a vain and hopeless struggle, it seems to me our duty is very plain. We must forgive their past treason, and welcome and encourage their returning loyalty. None but cowards will insult and taunt the defeated and defenceless. We must feed and clothe the destitute, instruct the ignorant, and, bearing patiently with the bitterness and prejudice which will doubtless for a time thwart our efforts and misinterpret our motives, aid them in rebuilding their states on the foundation of freedom. Our sole enemy was slavery, and slavery is dead. We have now no quarrel with the people of the South, who have really more reason than we have to rejoice over the downfall of a system which impeded their material progress, perverted their religion, shut them out from the sympathies of the world, and ridged their land with the graves of its victims . . .[2]

In more intimate terms he wrote to a friend:[3]

I was never any enemy of the South or the holders of slaves. I inherited from my Quaker ancestry hatred of slavery, but not of slaveholders. To every call of suffering or distress in the South, I have promptly responded to the extent of my ability . . . I am sure no one rejoices more heartily than I do at the prosperity of the Southern States.

He was ever loyal to the Republican Party and in 1885 stated:

As a Republican from the outset,[4] I am proud of the noble record of the party; but so far as I can see, the Republican party has still its mission and future. When labor shall everywhere have its just reward, and the gains of it are made secure to the earners; when education shall be universal, and North and South, all men shall have the free and full enjoyment of civil rights and privileges, irrespective of color or former condition; when every vice which debases the community shall be discouraged and prohibited; when merit and fitness shall be the condition of office; and when sectional distrust and prejudice shall give place to well-merited confidence in the loyalty and patriotism of all, then will the works of the Republican party, as a party, be ended.[5]

[1] *Essex Gazette*, 20th October, 1842.
[2] "Amesbury Villager", *Collected Writings*, Vol. VII, pp. 153-154.
[3] John Albree: *Whittier Correspondence*, 1830-1892, p. 175.
[4] He helped to found the Republican Party.
[5] *Collected Writings*, Vol. VII, p. 241.

One eminent lawyer from Providence, R.I., once said :

It is sometimes said that an individual without office or wealth or power, can do very little, but I doubt if there is an official in Church or State in this country, whose utterance on a moral question would have more weight with thoughtful men and women than a short letter printed in a newspaper, and signed, ' Thy friend, John G. Whittier.'[1]

In his early years he said : " Politics is the only field now open to me, and there is something inconsistent in the character of a poet and a modern politician,"[2] and he was willing to further a cause by compromise and concession.[3]

But while feeling and willing to meet all the responsibilities of citizenship and deeply interested in questions which concern the welfare and honor of the country, I have as a rule, declined overtures for acceptance of public stations.[4] I have always taken an active part in elections, but have not been willing to add my own example to the greed of office.[5]

When he was a member of the Massachusetts Legislature, he would take no oath, nor address the chair.[6]

" Forget, forgive and unite " were his words of political wisdom to a town meeting in his own village, Amesbury, and it is a matter of record that Whittier's influence was very potent in bringing about the first nomination of Abraham Lincoln for the Presidency of the United States.

He had the honour of being a member of the Electoral Colleges in 1860 and 1864—Lincoln election years—and in the judgment of James G. Blaine, who ran for Presidency in 1876, Whittier was the greatest politician he ever met.[7] In fact, as a result of Whittier's success in guiding politics in far away Iowa, a college was named after him, at first without his consent, but later approved, after successful diplomatic approach of the right parties, Whittier gave the institution his blessing.

[1] " Memories of J. G. W " G. Augustine Jones., unpublished MS. in possession of the author.

[2] Pickard, op. cit., 1895, p. 101.

[3] Bliss Perry : *John Greenleaf Whittier*, Boston, 1907, p. 20.

[4] i.e. Elected offices.

[5] His short autobiography, dated Amesbury, 5th mo. 1882. Reprinted in *J. G. Whittier*, by George R. Carpenter, 1903, p. 302.

[6] *American Poets and Their Theology*, Augustus Hopkins Strong, 1916, pp. 113, 125.

[7] Charles Arthur Hawley : *Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, April 1936, p. 133.

Whittier wrote several poems regarding the individual's duty on Election Day, but the poem " The Quakers Are Out " is the one that most appeals to us, and it had a great influence in arousing the support of the Quakers in Pennsylvania at the time (1860).

On one occasion he wrote a letter relative to a controversy he had with a certain editor : " I ought to have doffed my Quaker coat and gone to fisticuffs with its Editor,"[1] and in another letter :

> I long to go to Philadelphia—to urge upon the members of my Religious Society the duty of putting their shoulders to the work—to make their solemn testimony against slavery visible over the whole land—to urge them by the holy memories of Woolman and Benezet and Tyson, to come up as of old to the standard of Divine Truth, though even the fires of another persecution should blaze around them.[2]

The most publicized statement Whittier ever made on politics was his advice[3] to a young man : " My lad, if thou would'st win success, join thyself to some unpopular but noble cause."

Reform

WHITTIER was most certainly a reformer, but by constitutional methods, and his ideas on this subject are best presented by direct quotation :

> [Some] of our fellow-citizens have an especial dislike of theorists, reformers, uneasy spirits, speculators upon the possibilities of the world's future, constitution builders, and believers in progress . . The idea of making the world better and happier is to them an absurdity. He who entertains it is a dreamer and a visionary, destitute of common sense and practical wisdom.
>
> But truth, even when ushered into the world through the medium of dull romance and in connection with a vast progeny of errors, however ridiculed and despised at first, never fails in the end of finding a lodging-place in the popular mind.
>
> It is not that we should look with charity and tolerance upon the schemes and speculations of the political and social theorists of our day ; that, if unprepared to venture upon new experiments and radical changes, we should at least consider that what was folly to our ancestors is our wisdom, and that another generation may successfully put in practice the very theories which now seem to us

[1] Letter to Caleb Cushing, x.31.1832. Author's collection.
[2] Letter. Boston Public Library, xi.12.33.
[3] S. T. Pickard, op. cit., p. 122.

absurd and impossible? Many of the evils of society have been measurably removed or ameliorated; yet now, as in the days of the Apostle, 'the creation groaneth and travaileth in pain,' and although quackery and empiricism abound, is it not possible that a proper application of some of the remedies proposed might ameliorate the general suffering? Rejecting as we must, whatever is inconsistent with or hostile to the Doctrine of Christianity, on which alone rests our hope for humanity, it becomes us to look kindly upon all attempts to apply these doctrines to the details of human life, to the social, political, and industrial relations of the race. If it is not permitted us to believe all things, we can at least hope them. Despair is infidelity and death. Temporally and spiritually, the declaration of inspiration holds good, 'We are saved by hope.' [1]

And along a little different approach he once wrote:

Reform has its martyrs as well as wisdom; and he who has nothing better to show of himself than the scars and bruises which the popular foot has left upon him, is not even sure of winning any of the honors of martyrdom as some compensation of its pains. To the reformer, in an especial manner, comes the truth that whoso ruleth his own spirit is greater than he who taketh a city. Patience, hope, charity, watchfulness unto prayer—how needful are all these to his success! Without them he is in danger of ingloriously giving up his contest with error at the first repulse; or, with that spiteful philanthropy we sometimes witness, taking a sick world by the nose like a spoiled child, and endeavouring to force down its throat the rejected nostrums for its relief.

The true work of Reform must be wrought in the spirit of the Divine Master. Following his footsteps no effort, however small, which the reformer puts forth for the right cause fails of its effect. No voice, however feeble lifted up for truth, dies amidst the confused noises of time. Through discord of sin and sorrow, pain and wrong, it rises, a deathless melody whose notes of pity and sadness are hereafter to be changed to triumph as they blend with the great harmony of a reconciled universe.[2]

Late in life he wrote:

I quite sympathize with thee in what thee say of the 'causes.' Against my natural inclinations I have been fighting for them half of my life. 'Woe is my Mother.' I have suffered dreadfully from coarseness, self-seeking vanity, and assinine stupidity among associates, as well as the coldness, open hostility and worst the ridicule of the outside world, but I now see that it was best, and that I needed it all.[3]

There is the possibility that Whittier in the minds of many was more than a reformer, and should rightly be classed an agitator. At least one of his contemporaries, David

[1] *Collected Writings*, Vol. VII, pp. 199-208.
[2] MS. in author's collection, apparently never published.
[3] Letter to Elizabeth Stuart Phelps Ward, 7th April, 1878.

Bartlett, claimed that " we know of no man more worthy of the name agitator than he (Whittier) and is sure to live in the hearts of future generations."[1]

If at times Whittier appeared harsh and extreme in his views, it should be remembered that he wrote his autobiography on this point in his poem, " My Namesake " :

> He loved his friends, forgave his foes ;
> And, if his words were harsh at times,
> He spared his fellow men,—his blows
> Fell only on their crimes.

Music

ONE of the greatest paradoxes in considering the Quaker poet is the fact that so much of his poetry is set to music. He once said : " The Gods have made me most unmusical," but with over one hundred hymns and many other musical scores, using Whittier's words, it is likely that the world will long remember him.

It is unfortunate that some people in attempting to justify a situation, quite often quote someone of fame to prove their point. This happened recently in considering Whittier's attitude toward music as part of worship.

Professor Charles Woodman, in his *Quakers Are That Way*, quotes part of a letter which Whittier once wrote. The quoted part of the letter reads :

> I need not tell thee that I have no scruples against music as an art, or natural gift. It is innocent enough in itself, but it may be abused, or misdirected, as in corrupting sensuous compositions and songs, or in military matters.
>
> I see nothing in it more inconsistent with Quakerism than poetry, rhetoric or painting.[2]

Why Professor Woodman omitted the final sentence in the paragraph as Whittier wrote it, baffles me. It reads : " We both think the old Quaker testimony against it, as a form of worship, is right ! "

Apparently the Moses Brown School in Providence, Rhode Island, was the first Friends School in America to

[1] *Modern Agitators and Reformers*, New York, 1853, pp. 240-265.

[2] To Augustine Jones, Danvers, 12 mo. 16, 1880. *The History of Friends School, Providence, R.I.*

allow instruction in music to its students,[1] and Whittier's favourable attitude on this point was largely responsible for this liberality, being far ahead of the prevailing Quaker attitude of that day toward music in general, and its allowance in American Friends schools in particular. We have one Friends boarding school in the United States which continues to forbid any musical instruments under its roof.

Humour

WHITTIER's balanced sense of humour was one of his saving graces. He is credited with being a wonderful story teller, enjoying the lighter side of life in appropriate circumstances, which biographers have often failed to relate.

As a good native New Englander, he commented once in a letter, that

> We have our annual Thanksgiving on Fifth Day next, specially ordered by the Governor and Council of the Old Bay State. It doesn't take quite so strong hold of ' Friends ' as of others, but even they feel the contagious influence more or less. There is an awful massacre of fat turkeys and ducks and chickens and geese—acres of pumpkin pie are smoking from the ovens and all sorts of preparations are being made for our great Yankee festival—our feast of Tabernacles, our yearly gathering of scattered households and sundered families. Spite of Quakerism and its ascetic notions, I like this good old custom. It is beautiful, full of kindliness and charity and love and good will; and were I Governor, I would have a dozen of these days instead of one.[2]

Then in a letter to Elizabeth Stuart Ward Phelps he wrote:

> What a pity it is that we cannot shut down the gate and let the weary wheels rest awhile! For myself I have to work hard to be idle; I have to make it a matter of duty to ignore duty and amuse myself with simple stories, play with dogs and cattle and talk nonsense as if I were not a Quaker. My physician says that a man of active brain ought to make a fool of himself occasionally and unbend at all hazards to his dignity.[3]

That he carried this sense of humour almost to his dying day, is best illustrated by a letter[4] written just six months

[1] Clark Shore, of Fall River, Mass., presented a grand piano to the School in 1881.

[2] To Wm. J. Allinson, xi.19.1842. Haverford College.

[3] Author's collection; dated iv.7.1878.

[4] Charles F. Bates: "Glimpses of Whittier's Faith and Character," *McClure's Magazine*, January, 1894.

before his death, in which after a three months' struggle with grippe, he says :

It has left me very weak, but I am thankful that I am gaining daily. The Irishman's description of the grippe ' that he was deadly sick for three weeks after he was entirely well ' is confirmed by my own experience.

Probably one of the best combinations of humour with practical psychology is the way Whittier handled the problem of having so many curiosity seekers call at his home in Amesbury, coming from far and near, in most cases just to obtain his autograph. It interfered with his work, and became a source of great annoyance at times. So he invented the following stratagem, which consisted of his keeping his hat on a peg inside the front door. When the door bell rang, he would proceed to answer it, but put on his hat before opening the door, and the visitor could see that apparently Mr. Whittier was prepared to go out. The following conversation is typical of what happened :

Visitor : Good morning, Mr. Whittier.

Whittier : Good morning. (If the visitor was someone who really had some good reason for calling on Whittier, the hat would be removed and the visitor invited in, but if the person calling seemed to be just a curiosity seeker, then the visitor might say :)

Visitor : Mr. Whittier, I see that you are going out.

Whittier : I do have my hat on (which he then kept on and visitor politely withdrew. Whittier had spoken no untruth, but by this defence mechanism, was enabled to prevent a lot of curiosity seekers from wasting his time).

Sir Edmund Gosse visited Whittier in his later years at his Danvers home, on a cold, bleak December morning, and said, in relating how the poet enjoyed reminiscing :

His eyes flashed, he slapped his knees, he may almost be said to have gesticulated, and there was something less than Quakerly quietism in his gusto in relating exciting incidents.[1]

His humour on religious matters is best illustrated by a letter he wrote saying :

Some years ago, when I was slowly getting up from illness, an honest friend of mine, an orthodox minister in the very kindness of his heart thought to help me on by administering a poem in five cantos, illustrating the five points of Calvinism. I could only take a homoeopathic dose of it. Its unmistakable flavor of brimstone disagreed with my stomach, probably because I was a Quaker.[2]

[1] Sir Edmund Gosse : *Portraits and Sketches*, London, 1912, p. 141.
[2] To Annie Fields, 2d. mo., 9, 1888. S. T. Pickard, op. cit., 731.

Hymns

SO long as hymns are sung, it will be almost impossible to forget Whittier, for many of his poems now set to music, occupy permanent positions in many of our hymnals. As has been said, his hymns are " made up of stanzas quarried from his poems like jewels cut out of their matrix."[1] One writer puts it : " the Quaker who seldom uses singing in his own service of public worship, has helped the whole Church of God to sing some wonderful hymns."[2]

The two poems, " The Eternal Goodness " and " Our Master " come right out of the Bible, and, as Whittier himself acknowledged, " I am sure it (Eternal Goodness) came out of my heart."[3]

The most popular hymn, worldwide, is, " Dear Lord and Father of Mankind," first used by Garrett Horder in his *Congregational Hymns* in 1884.

The first hymn in the new B.B.C. Hymnal is one by Whittier, " All as God wills." Of course, the position accorded this hymn comes not because of any preference of the compilers, but because the hymns are arranged alphabetically.

The late Frederick Gillman once told me of an interesting experience he had in serving on a hymnal committee. Apparently one member of the committee was a staunch Church of England prelate, who at first objected to the use of any of Whittier's hymns because Whittier had never been ordained as a minister. The other members of the committee objected to such a narrow viewpoint and several of Whittier's hymns were finally included.

Some years ago, I made a survey of the hymnals used by Friends' Churches in the U.S.A. and it was most revealing to find so many hymnals used by the pastoral Friends with very few if any Whittier hymns in them. In fact, I came to the conclusion after this study, that you could determine the religious thinking of each group by the hymnal used. It was not necessary to inquire as to details. The choice of the hymnal was as indicative as the litmus test would be in determining the acidity or alkalinity of a solution.

[1] John A. Pollard : *John Greenleaf Whittier*, 1949, p. 467.
[2] Charles H. Bloom : *Homiletic Review*, May, 1925.
[3] Augustus T. Murray : *Religious Poems of Whittier*, 1934, p. 12.

As time goes on, it is likely that Whittier will finally be remembered more for the words he wrote which eventually were set to music, than for his poetry in general. Certainly no one who consciously sings the words of his hymns can escape the power of his spirit :

Our Lord and Master of us all !
Whate'er our name or sign,
We own Thy sway, we hear Thy call,
We test our lives by Thine.

Probably Phillips Brooks[1] of Boston himself a very ardent anti-slavery orator, puts in a nutshell the esteem with which Whittier continues to be regarded both by Friends and others. Whittier received the following letter[2] on his last birthday Dec. 17, 1891 :—

Dear Mr. Whittier,

I have no right, save that which love and reverence may give, to say how devoutly I thank God you have lived, that you are living & that you will always live.

May his peace be with you more & more.

Affectionately your friend
Phillips Brooks.

[1] A very prominent New England Episcopal clergyman, noted for his "low church" views.

[2] In the author's collection.