

John Perrot

early Quaker schismatic

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TO MY GOOD FRIENDS
CHRISTOPHER J. KANE AND
JEAN-FRANCOIS SAMIER

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INTRODUCTION

FREQUENTLY in my studies of early English and American Quakerism I have come across something which sooner or later led to John Perrot—a rather shadowy figure who soon began to intrigue me. What was Perrot really like? What did he actually do and say? Why had no real study of Perrot ever been made? What were the causes (and results) of the Perrotonian controversy? Was Perrot primarily responsible for this great schism which occurred in early Quakerism? Or was it George Fox? How much influence, negatively speaking, did Perrot have on the developing organization of the Quaker movement? These and many related questions inspired me to undertake this study of John Perrot.

When I first began my research my sympathies were much more with Perrot than with Fox. As my work progressed—and especially as I began to weigh the various bits of information in order to proceed with the writing—my views began to change. I am now convinced that Fox was basically correct in his position, judgment, and action (even though Fox's fear of Perrot as a sort of "Nayler risen from the dead" may have made him "hard" at some points).

I would like to express my appreciation to the staffs of the Friends House Library (London), the British Museum, the Public Records Office (London), the Friends Historical Library (Dublin), and the Irish Historical and Genealogical Office (Dublin Castle) for their kind assistance in obtaining the various manuscripts and printed documents required. My friends Henry J. Cadbury and Edward H. Milligan gave me much needed encouragement in my research and have also read the completed manuscript. Finally, I wish to thank the Friends Historical Society (England) and Friends Historical Association (USA) for publishing this monograph.

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June 1969

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN CITATIONS

Besse, *Sufferings*

Joseph Besse, *A collection of the sufferings of the people called Quakers for the testimony of a good conscience, from the time of their being first distinguished by that name in the year 1650 to the time of the Act commonly called the Act of Toleration . . . 1689*, 2 vol., London, 1753. This folio work should be distinguished from the author's *An abstract of the sufferings of the people call'd Quakers*, 3 vol., London, 1733-8, 8vo.

Braithwaite, *BQ*

William Charles Braithwaite, *The beginnings of Quakerism*, London, 1912; 2nd ed. revised by Henry J. Cadbury, Cambridge, 1955.

Braithwaite, *SPQ*

William Charles Braithwaite, *The second period of Quakerism*, London, 1919; 2nd ed. prepared by Henry J. Cadbury, Cambridge, 1961.

Fox, *Camb. Jnl.*

The journal of George Fox, edited from the MSS by Norman Penney, 2 vol., Cambridge, 1911.

JFHS

The journal of the Friends Historical Society, vol. 1→, 1903/4→ in progress.

Sewel, *History*

William Sewel, *The history of the rise, increase and progress of the Christian people called Quakers . . . written originally in Low Dutch . . . and by himself translated into English*, London, 1722. The 3rd ed., 2 vol., London, 1795, has been used for greater ease of reference.

SWARTHMORE MSS

The Swarthmore MSS at Friends House, London, is a collection of some 1400 letters, papers, etc., bound in 7 volumes. The main collection (vol. 1-4) contain letters from various Friends, chiefly to Margaret Fell or George Fox. Volumes 5 and 6, formerly belonging to Robert Barclay (1833-1876) was purchased for the Society of Friends in 1895 and includes largely epistles and documents other than personal letters. Vol. 7 (James Backhouse volume) was purchased in 1907 and is made up almost entirely of documents emanating from George Fox. Volumes 1-4 were transcribed in 1866-9 by Emily Jermyn (1816-1909) and the remaining volumes were subsequently transcribed. Reference in footnotes throughout this monograph is to original and transcript.

JOHN PERROT'S PRINTED WORKS

A microfilm is now available containing all John Perrot's printed works (Wing P1610-1642 inclusive). Intending purchasers should enquire in the first instance of:

Library of the Society of Friends
Friends House
Euston Road
London NW1 2BJ

CHAPTER I

JOHN PERROT IN IRELAND, 1655-1656

John Perrot's origins are unknown. It has been claimed that he was the illegitimate son of Sir John Perrot (himself reputed to be the natural son of Henry the Eighth), governor of Ireland in the latter part of the sixteenth century.¹ There is no confirmation of this relationship, which really seems unlikely, for Sir John Perrot was recalled from Ireland in 1588 and died in the Tower *c* 1592. Another tradition reports that he was a blacksmith at Sedbergh,² but there exists no known record of John Perrot's dwelling there—although a Parrott family did join the Society of Friends in Sedbergh rather early. The names Perrot and Parrott were found in several parts of Ireland and England at the end of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth centuries.

John Perrot first came to our attention in 1655 in Ireland, where he was a Baptist living about two miles outside Waterford. Perrot's wife and small children were still living there in 1659 when they were visited by Thomas Morford.³ It was in 1655 that Perrot was convinced by Edward Burrough,⁴ who, with Francis Howgill, was active in an Irish mission for many months and who had some real successes—especially among the Cromwellian garrisons in Waterford, Cork, and elsewhere around the island.

¹ E. K. Barnard, "The Welsh Haverford", *Friends Intelligencer*, lxvi (1909), 674-675.

² Spriggs MSS 1/18 (MS vol. 156, Friends House Library, London), contains this statement: "John Perrot was a blacksmith at Sedberg and his last descendent of that name died there lately aged more than 80. He frequently attended meetings, but kept a public house & was a great drunkard & a fiddler. His relations applied for him to be burried among Friends but it was refused." This tradition was told by J. Buckley in 1868.

³ Swarthmore MSS 1/26 [Trans. ii, 781]. This collection of manuscripts is found in Friends House Library, London.

⁴ Letter of John Perrot to Edward Burrough, dated first of first month, 1657, says, "Thou who didst travell for me in the day of my birth . . ." Cf. William C. Braithwaite, *BQ*, p. 421. Cf. Letter by Edward Burrough to Robert Dring and Gerard Roberts, 21 January 1656, found in Markey MSS p. 104 [Friends House Library, London], where Burrough talks of Perrot's assistance in writing letters and papers. He also notes that Perrot "hath been much with me of late, & he hath been at many Steeple houses, he was Eminent in the Nation, & is a pretty Man".

Perrot's embracing of Quakerism soon made him a "labourer in the gospel of Christ Jesus" who travelled in various parts of Ireland where he met persecution and suffering. Besse, the great chronicler of Quaker sufferings, does not mention any of Perrot's sufferings.¹ The same thing is true of the early Fuller and Holms work on Irish Quaker suffering.² Yet, there does exist a manuscript letter from John Perrot to Henry Cromwell, Lord Deputy of Ireland, which refers to Perrot's rude reception in a number of unnamed places—as well as two imprisonments in Limerick in April 1656. From Limerick, Perrot was sent as a prisoner to Dublin by Colonel Henry Ingoldesby, "Governor" of Limerick. Writing to Henry Cromwell from this Dublin imprisonment, on the first of third month (O.S.), Perrot said:

And my share of suffering & persecution I have & doe under goe as well by beatings, threttenings & Cruell mockings & scoffings as by Imprisonment & tryalls & hallings before Rulers & Magistrates but all being for the lord's sake, & for his ever lasting truthes sake I beare with Content, it being the yoake of my lord & saviour, & the takeing up of his Crowne of thornes, & seeing it is onely truly & directly soe & all matters else but pretences, & false accusations & slanders heaped up to geather, to Continue their Cruell hand of persecution upon me, which hath followed mee fro[m] Limericke unto this Citty.³

Elsewhere Perrot speaks of having been imprisoned in Kilkenny and then sent up to Dublin by the "governor" of Kilkenny. In spite of this earlier treatment there, Perrot returned to Kilkenny to plead the cause of about one hundred and twenty Roman Catholics who had been imprisoned and were about to be shipped to Barbados. Perrot later described this humanitarian move in a letter to the Pope:

Once, when about 120 persons were imprisoned in the City of Kilkenny, to be sent as Captives to the Barbados, & but one

¹ Joseph Besse, *A Collection of the Sufferings of the People called Quakers*, [etc.], London, 1753, 2 vol.

² A. Fuller and T. Holms, *A Compendius View of Some Extraordinary Sufferings Of the People call'd Quakers, Both in Person and Substance, In the Kingdom of Ireland, From the Year 1655 to the End of the Reign of King George First*, Dublin, 1731.

³ Lansdowne MSS, British Museum. This letter has been printed in the *Journal of the Friends Historical Society*, viii (1911), 20-24; cited as *JFHS* in subsequent notes. This quotation is found on p. 23.

man more besides me in all that Land, either English or Irish, that durst to appear in their behalf; to plead their cause for them; which the God of Heaven knows I did (without an Earthly Reward) with the Governor of that City; (who sometime before that, sent me up prisoner to Dublin, prosecuting my Life, because I had written about three sheets of Paper, that represented the sore Grievances and heavy Oppressions of all thy Children in the Land, which none of them instigated me unto, but was only carried forth thereunto in the Mercies, Pities and Compassions that God had put in my soul, beholding them *a bleeding People*). With the said Governour I pleaded (for the said persons) first, in his private house, and next, with him, and all the Commissioners, in the open Court of Justice, and obtained a Warrant for the delivery of the said Prisoners, which I went personally to see executed; but the Marshal, hoping to gain Moneys, disobeyed it; which made me go a second time to the Court, and open the Cause afresh, whereby I obtained my Desire as full as I could possibly expect; for with a second Order I returned to that Prison (not giving trust to any human eye besides my own) and saw them all delivered.¹

The beneficiaries of Perrot's persistent concern and activities expressed their gratitude by falling down on their knees before Perrot in the open street, "worshipping" him as if he were a god and not a man. This action, like the pagans' worship of Barnabas as Zeus and Paul as Hermes, brought a denial—for Perrot remembered "the words of Christ, and of the Angel, that said, Thou shalt worship God, and Him only shalt thou worship."²

Perrot's attempts to meet the needs of the suffering Irish led him to several other humanitarian efforts in 1655 and 1656. His letter to the Pope continues:

Besides, other times I have appeared for some poor Widows, being formerly of *eminency* and *repute* in the World, and thy Children, and many other Roman Catholicks in their distresses; and God Almighty knows that the Pitties of my soul were such to them all, that I was so far from expecting a gift for all I did for them, that besides my Expenses in several Journies to serve their needs, my hand was open to all, and not one of thy children can say he came to my Door for an Alms, and went away empty-handed. Besides all this, the God of Knowledge remembers

¹ Letter of "John the lowly Lamb in the Life of Jesus the Son of God; to the Pope of Rome", included in John Perrot, *Battering Rams Against Rome, or the Battel of John, the Follower of the Lamb, Fought with the Pope and his Priests, whilst he was a Prisoner in the Inquisition-Prison of Rome*, London, 1661, pp. 123-127. This quotation is on pp. 123-124.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 124-125.

that I have stript off the Apparrel immediately from my body to cloath thy children that I saw in need and want.¹

John Perrot's concern reached out to embrace not only the suffering but also those who persecuted the innocent. Writing from prison in Dublin, Perrot was especially concerned with the spiritual welfare of lawyers whose high fees and dishonesty were calling them to judgment:

To all you Lawyers, Atturnyes, & Clarkes in the Citty of Dublin, and nation of Ireland The Almighty Searcher of all your heartes, and dark Corners in Secret, Sees & beholds your loathsome Abominacons, and how many of you joynes oftentimes, as one, in the Destruction of your neighbours by overthrowing his just Cause for your dishonest and unrighteous Rewards & gaine, & soe counts it your glory, to defraud, and your Rejoycing, to hisse at the innocency of the Sufferer, by your ungodly practises, for which thinges, you cannot Escape the Judgments which are at hand.²

The reader of this document, called "The Lawyers Fee," is strongly reminded of Amos and the other eighth century ethical prophets as Perrot catalogues the sins of the lawyers. His own present suffering must have heightened his awareness of their greed, pride, and callousness. Perrot, with all the confidence of an early Hebrew prophet that God was speaking through him, called out:

Behold, Behold, the Mighty Judge, & dreadfull god of heaven & Earth, is Arisen, and the day of your Overthrow, & utter confusion is comming to passe and doth hasten, wherein god shall mock at your feare, & laugh at your calamity, when vengeance & wrath shall be powred downe upon your heades, as you have, & doe in greedy & unrighteous manner heape up the Treasures of the Earth in your storehouses, to the building and raising up of high wales of pride and Arrogancy, and nurturing of the lusts of your pampered flesh, in Surfeiting, & drunknesse, Chambering & wantonnesse, your delights and treasure is on Earth, your whole life is but the sume of Dives nature, and his End and portion, will assuredly be your wages, Except you Repent, of all your false pleas and lying Orations, assertions and flatteryes, & of all your Extortings, upon your necessities of your Brethren, and double handed dealing: Howle, Howle & weepe, a day of Woe & misery is at hand and the Terrible Arme of the Lord is stretched forth, which hath rent your Coverings, and laid open your nakednesse, and shame to all the Children of light, and it is come to passe, that noe custome of your Law, can

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 125.

² Swarthmore MSS 5/22 [Trans. vii, 109].

cover or hide your Iniquity; but manifest are your Abominacons and the perfect shape of your Subtill deceipts, are plainly Seen, and all your cunning pretences, cannot change the colour of your detestable life and practises, which god hath beheld in righteousnesse, and will Judge in Equity, and in his day of wrath, your tongues shall plead to the Justnesse of your torment & in that hower, unto me shall you beare witnessse, that your many large fees are sums, which purchaseth unto your selves an Inheritance of horror & Vengeance, whilst your feet walkes in the subtill paths of guile, & Iniquity to defraud the Just and innocent.¹

Perrot, who wrote his document "The Lawyers Fee" from the "Common Goale of the fower [Four] Courtes, Dublin," on 7 May 1656, was convinced that it was "in love to your Soules" that this "warning unto all from the Lord is come"—that they might come to a "true & unfained repentance." As he calls these to repentance, he identifies himself as "a friend of Righteousnesse, a Subject to Government, a Lover of Justice, A faithfull Servant of the Lord, a prisoner for the true witnessse of Jesus, Called of men, as named in the flesh—John Perrot, but a new name hath which the world knoweth not."²

Perrot's strong sense of God's righteous nature and punishment of unrighteousness also led him to make prophetic announcements to various communities in Ireland. Addressed to the entire population of a city, Perrot's epistle would call upon "All yee People, Repent of your Pride, Envy, Drunknesse, Swearing, lyeing, cheating, whoredome [*i.e.*, apostasy], Uncleanesse, and all unrighteousnesse."³ They were told that "your Worships, and your wordes will not Save you for your life workes wickedness; Professor and Prophane, alike in one Nature of Sinne and Transgression, yea you are numbered as one in your Sins, and Iniquity in the accoumpt of God."⁴ In such a message Perrot, like the ancient prophets, was blunt. Only in such a way might the people be awakened to the great danger and be drawn to repentance:

Wexford, Thy Towne within Thy walls is measured, and it is found Shorte of the breadth of the holy Citty, A Stincke is

¹ *Ibid.* 5/22 [Trans. vii, 110].

² *Ibid.* 5/22.

³ John Perrot, "The Burden of Wexford," Swarthmore MSS 5/19 [Trans. vii, 91].

⁴ *Ibid.* 5/19.

within Thy Streetes, and loath Somenesse is within they dwellings, Thy Porte and haven is a gate of Entrance for Uncleanesse, The unclean into the filthy from the Coasts and Islands afarr off & neere thee, yea thy very borders are corrupt, Rottenesse hangs upon thy Skirts, and thou art the most defiled of any, Egypt was thy figure where famine was, and the Darknesse of that Land is the possession of thy Sons: and the blacknesse of the Night, the Portion of thy Daughters, Thou art unworthy, and not worth the nameing, in the remembrance of gods love, for against it thou hast kick't and thy doers do stand Still Shut: against gods Angell's, until a fire passe through thee, which Shall as surely come to passe.¹

Such a message, like that of the ancient prophets of doom, was designed to speak to those that might hear: "Weepe and Sorrow and mourne with teares, Turne to the Lord, O Remnant, and forsake not the way of peace, Let thy young Ones heare, and come foorth, before the Desolation Overtaketh; . . ." ²

It seems clear that John Perrot took up the role of a Quaker minister or "Publisher of the Truth" shortly after his convincement by Burrough. This aspect of his work also shows up in his early letters—when an epistle had to substitute for the leader now in jail. Like Paul, Perrot felt the need to communicate with those from whom he was separated and to remind them of his deep affection for them:

I your frend & Bro^r the prissoner of the Lord, toward you all am moved, in bowells of Everlastinge unspeakeable Love, heareby to signify unto you my remembrance of you all by this token of my indered affection, yea with you the truly begottne seed of god my h[e]art is affected; for when I heard of the Comlyness of your grouth for Joy thereof my Soule was even Rainshed [?] & now in the midst of my sufferings it would allsoe abound to my Refreshment to heare how you stand dilygent & faithful in the worke of the Lord which is begun in you; . . .³

Perrot tells his "dearly beloved Friends & Brethren" how he himself fares, feeling that his own burden has been greatly increased by the expulsion of Howgill and Burrough from Ireland early in 1656: "for Even for Zion's sake I travaile & for the seedes sake which Lyes in Captivitie I suffer, & my Burthens are unutterable which have soe much the more increased thorow the Loss of the faithfull Ministers

¹ *Ibid.*

² *Ibid.*

³ Swarthmore MSS 5/14 [Trans. vii, 75].

which Among you have Laboured, . . ."¹ Necessarily much of the purpose of any such letter was to inspire and encourage those Quakers who wavered in this time of crisis and suffering: "And Blessed are you if now in the day of tryall you stand stedfast & are found faithfull unto the death for behould for you is layd up A crowne of imortall Life."²

Caught up in the enthusiasm and apocalyptic expectations of the opening decade of Quakerism, John Perrot waxes eloquent as he tells of the coming end to the suffering, misery, and persecution which has come upon Friends. His language is a mixture of the symbols and imagery of the Old and New Testaments as he comforts his flock:

And now hereby the word of the Lord god is sent unto you; The Glory of the Lord is at hand & is ready to be revealed; Endlesse, Eternall Everlasting Refreshm^t Peace & Joy of all, that with Patience possesse their soules in the houre of Zions Travell; Behold, Behold, you young ones shall not want strength, but you that are tender in yeares shall grow in stature, & you that are feeble shall grow mighty in Valour, & you that are fooles shall Increase in wisdom, & you that are despised & whose name is but a mock, & stands as a signe to laugh at, by the Evill Generation of men, & whose dwellings are but pillars. pillars of Contempte, to the Inhabitants of the Earth, Even Thus sayth the Lord the God of Jacob, Even in you shall my soule take pleasure, whose temple I will make the habitation of dwelling, & holiness, and noe more shall you be a proverb, or an hissing, but for your sakes Nations will I overturne, & Kingdomes will I overthrow, & your labours shall end in Peace, & Eternall Rest sayth the Lord of Hostes the Prince of Peace, And that your Eyes may see this come to passe & be finished with I will assuredly bring to an End, all, as my faithful servants, stand in my feare, dread, & Awe, & hearken unto my pure voyce, & stand faithfull in my Councill the light in all your Consciences is that which will keepe you in all my statutes as by it you are guided, and as thereunto you are faithfull unto the End These & Greater things than these, shall you see come to Passe, to your Everlasting Redemption & Rejoycing, & the Glory of my owne Name Sayth the Judge of heaven & Earth.³

This letter, written from Dublin on 9 May 1656, ends with a rather moving closing: "Deare heartes, in the Eternall unity I Rest your deare freind & Brother who is in bonds, A sufferer for the Testimony of Jesus."

¹ *Ibid.* 5/14. Concerning the expulsion of Howgill and Burrough from Ireland, see Braithwaite, *BQ*, p. 217.

² Swarthmore MSS 5/14.

³ *Ibid.* 5/14.

Little beyond what has already been sketched is known about the remaining months that John Perrot spent in Ireland, so that his travels, message, persecution, and sufferings are left to one's imagination. But already, in the small amount of the 1655-1656 material which has been found, something of the early Perrot has been seen. As he stands upon the threshold of his continental journey, Perrot is clearly a deeply religious man who feels the divine presence so strongly that he is able to use the ancient formula of the prophets and of Paul ("Thus saith the Lord"). He is also one who is caught up in the apocalyptic dreams, hopes, and expectations of early Quakerism—feeling that the Kingdom of God is truly at hand. His concern for the spiritual growth and welfare of others is as great as his desire for his own growth in the Light. Persecution and suffering hold no threat for this man who has already been "a prisoner for the true witness of Jesus" and a "sufferer for the Testimony of Jesus."

CHAPTER II

A SOJOURN IN ENGLAND, 1656-1657

John Perrot, so much a part of the Irish Quaker scene in 1655 and early 1656, was meant for something bigger than Ireland. Like the Apostle Paul, he was one who felt called to break new ground—moving into areas where Quakerism either had not yet appeared or was only now beginning to be proclaimed. And, like Paul who had the vision of the Macedonian beckoning him to come on over into Europe, so did Perrot undergo some sort of religious experience which commanded him to put aside family, home, and his ministry among the Irish and go off into “a farr country.” While Perrot was in Catherlagh he received what St Francis would have called a “visitation of the Lord” which was as moving and as real as any experienced by Paul or St Francis. Written at the very time, Perrot’s account is as follows:

The word of the Lord came unto me the 17th day of the Sixth Mo: [O.S., *i.e.* August] about the first houre of the latter parte of the day Saying, write: My words in thy Mouth I have putt to beare witness of my Everlasting Name, and behold I the Lord who have chosen thee from amongst men, doe Send thee into a farr country having given thee a sharpe Instrum^{tt} to thresh upon the Mountaines of Turkey; Two Cittyes before thy face I have Sett, wherein thou Shalt cry; The Prophett of the Lord; The prophet of the Lord is arisen, the word of whose mouth is the Sword of Jehovah's wrath, to cut and cast downe, your prophet from the Tower of your Temple, and this I require of thee among the bloodthirsty people, Boldnesse & faythfulnesse in the Message of my word, and a doore of utterance I will be unto thee, and many shall bow before thee, for behold I am God, and all power is mine, and my strength shall not fayle thee in the day of Tryall only be thou bold, & faythfull, feare not thy life for that which is Eternall, & Everlasting, is the free gift of my grace, & shall be the Reward of thy Service in my work whereunto I have called thee, and thy whole life Sacrificed heerin, is that of thee I require, which according to the purpose of my unchangeable Mind & will, by me will be accepted, And this is the promise which I make with thee, in thy faythfull Obedience; Thine will I deale graciously with, The Lord & husand of thy family I will bee, and the father of thy begotten I will for Ever Stand, & in my rest thy peace shall be Everlasting.¹

¹ Although this document is on the same sheet as Swarthmore MSS 5/20, it is recorded with 5/19 in the Transcripts [see Trans. vii, 92-93].

John Perrot was something of a poet and a mystic. His language, like that of other seventeenth century Quakers such as Fox and Nayler, was greatly influenced by biblical imagery, symbols, and vocabulary. Remembering these things, as well as the fact that a religious experience is almost impossible to describe in everyday language, we should simply note that Perrot—already embarked upon a new life as a result of his convincement—now had undergone some sort of “watershed” experience. Life after this suddenly revealed awareness of his new calling would necessarily lead off in a new direction.

It was quite natural that Perrot, drawn toward “Turkey,”¹ would stop in England for a time. Just as Paul some sixteen centuries before had sought the acquaintance of some of the leaders of the Jerusalem church, so Perrot was led to seek the acquaintance and support of the “pillars” of the Quaker movement in England. Sometime after his Catherlagh experience on 17 August, John Perrot crossed the Irish Sea. Just when he made this move is unknown, but it was certainly by 25 December when John Perrot signed one of the numerous petitions asking that James Nayler’s remaining sentence be remitted.²

One of the great unanswered questions about Perrot is whether or not he knew Nayler. Was he a witness to the turbulent developments of the 1656 autumn? Did these two men, who had so much in common, ever meet? Why was it that later on, when the battle line was drawn between Fox and Perrot, many of Nayler’s former partisans moved over to support John Perrot against Fox? Quite clearly, Perrot was not one of Nayler’s followers, for, in the spring of 1657, he writes to William and Margaret Blanch of Waterford, Ireland, that “The Agents of J: N: would come creeping on their Bellies to be owned yea: Martha their Miserable Mother, this day hath bin [with?] us, & all her witchery & filthy Enchantm^t is set at Naught, they are left

¹ He seems to have included in this area both Greece and Palestine.

² Norman Penney (ed.), *Extracts from State Papers Relating to Friends, 1654-1672*, London, 1913, p. 22, records a petition to Oliver Cromwell and the Parliament signed by Perrot and eighty-seven other people (not all of whom were Quakers). Concerning these December petitions, see Emilia Fogelklou, *James Nayler, The Rebel Saint*, London, 1931, p. 204.

for Miserable Examples, unto all that feare god; Pride & Vaine glory, & fleshly liberty, was there Overthrow."¹

Perrot's English stay lasted several months, with part of it being spent in London where the enthusiasm and excitement must have been intense:

Friends from severall Nations, are returned with their sheaves, & many Ministers from Severall places are heere, & the work soe great, & soe many crying, as scarcely can be Exprest, see all of you that it goe on at home, & the same will shew you it all abroad! G[eorge] F[ox] & E[dward] B[urrough] is here, with severall that are for severall Nations, & great & precious service here is.²

The excitement of being with Fox and Burrough, in addition to the added stimulus of fellowship and conversation with those who had "returned with their sheaves" from "several Nations," must have inspired and energized Perrot for his own role as a minister and increased his eagerness to move on toward the Mediterranean World.

In addition to this known stay in London, Perrot must have spent a considerable period of time in the west of England. Two years later, early in 1659, writing from Rome, John Perrot produced a letter "to friends in the west of England." Its language suggests that a very close relationship has developed between the writer and these now unknown Quakers:

My dearest brethren My life is truly in the midst of you all. All feele how my love encompasseth your loynes as a girdle of refined gold, yea I say unto you, That the love which I already have in heaven, is most assuredly amongst you, The day cannot passe over without the double or two fold, yea ten times double remembrance of the lambes of my father, Feele my heart in this breast and then seale me in your inwardes, Be found in the life.³

Appended to this letter to Quakers in the west of England is one to all English Friends—"To the brethren in the unity

¹ Swarthmore MSS 5/27 [Trans. vii, 125]. This letter is signed by John Perrot, Humphrey Norton, and William Shawe and is meant to be shared with Waterford Friends and Friends throughout Ireland. Concerning the "ranter" Mildred, cf. Fogelklou, *James Nayler*, pp. 233-234, 249. Besse, *Sufferings*, ii, 367, 371 mentions 1660 and 1661 sufferings of William and Margaret Blanch of Waterford.

² Swarthmore MSS 5/27.

³ Swarthmore MSS 5/15 [Trans. vii, 79].

and fellowship of the life of virginity of innocency, called Quakers in England and elsewhere." Perrot, writing from his Roman prison, expresses a deep oneness with these English Friends, using his characteristic poetic language:

myne endlesse love reacheth you, and with the sweet armes of the grace and peace of my heavenly father I imbrace you, I greet, salute and kisse you one by one, yea all as one in the one onely, in whome is noe variation nor change, with the undefiled lipps of sincerity, which never uttered uncleannesse, lewdnesse, deceit, or a lye. Feele and know me as neere you as the flesh which cleaveth to your bones, as purely and perfectly in you as the blood of life in your hearts, Ah Sion if thee I forget, Let my bowells burst in my body, and let my carcasse quickly become meate for hungry Eagles, and let the vulture also teare my flesh from my bones, I cease not Night nor day in every watch to present you as a living sacrifice upon the alter of the holiest of holiests.¹

After this English stay of uncertain duration Perrot was ready to push on toward Italy, Greece, and Turkey rather than return home to Ireland (where his wife and children continued to dwell for some years). It is doubtful whether Perrot ever saw Ireland again, except during a brief visit between his 1661 return from imprisonment by the Inquisition and before his removal to Barbados in 1662. Ireland, however, remained very much upon his mind—so that from time to time he directed a number of documents to various cities and officials in Ireland, as well as towards the Baptists there.²

Perrot's stay in England, spent in proclamation of the Quaker message and in association with many of the Quaker leaders, prepared him for his continental ministry. The excitement of being in London during the spring of 1657, when the Quaker missionary activity had already reached through Europe and to America, fanned the missionary fire lit by his Catherlagh experience. Perrot, apparently

¹ Swarthmore MSS 5/15 [Trans vii. 80].

² John Perrot, "To the city of Limerick, Kilkenny, & Baptists," Swarthmore MSS 5/23 [Trans. vii. 111]; "To all the Baptists in Ireland," Swarthmore MSS 5/24 [Trans. vii. 105]; "An Epistle from John Perrot To Friends in Ireland," Swarthmore MSS 5/33 [Trans. vii. 141]; "From Venice: John Perrot to friends in Ireland," Swarthmore MSS 5/24 [Trans. vii. 105a].

both theologically and personally acceptable in England in 1657, left for new fields of harvest. When he returned several years later, things were to be quite different. Although he still possessed a great following, Fox and many other Quaker leaders would be opposed to him.

CHAPTER III

THE ROAD TO ROME, 1657-1658

In the late spring or early summer of 1657 John Perrot moved onward to the continent. In this journey he was accompanied by two other male and three female Friends who also felt called to join in the mission to Turkey, so that altogether the party of Quakers numbered six. The three men were from Ireland—Perrot from Waterford, John Luffe [Love] from Limerick, and John Buckley who probably was from Kilkenny. It is possible that John Luffe had already been expelled for his Quaker activities from New England sometime before this journey to Turkey.¹ The three Quaker women on this mission were the well-known Mary Fisher, (expelled from Boston in 1656), Mary Pierce (part of the "Speedwell" group of Quakers also banished from Boston a little later in 1656), and Beatrice Beckley.

These six reached Leghorn in Italy on 29 July, landed on 6 August, and then spent the next two weeks holding services among the people living in Leghorn. Perrot's description of this work, preserved in a letter to Friends (and especially those in Ireland) records the opposition which suddenly arose.

in the towne of Leghorne . . . we had service, which day by day continued for the space of foureteene dayes, with the English Merchants Factors, with the Jews, Papists priests, Italians and Irish, At which Satan grew quickly into soe high a rage that there were certain conspiracyes between the Vaggabond English, Irish, Italians, and priests to take our lives, which the lord by wonders both night and day made knowne unto us.²

Perrot elsewhere discusses the somewhat miraculous way that he came to learn of this danger:

an Angel of the Lord awakened me out of my sleep, saying Arise and go to the Window: The which I did in very much dread and

¹ MS Port. 17/74, 75 (Friends House Library, London) contain in English the account of John Luffe's Roman trial as published by "a Papist." Item 75 says that Love (as the Papist chronicler spelled his name) had gone to New England when first leaving his home country but had been expelled.

² Swarthmore MSS 5/25 [Trans. vii. 109a].

trembling; where standing, I suddenly heard certain English-men in another Room at a Neighbour's house, wickedly conspiring my hurt; but blessed be God (who sent his Messenger to warn me) by the power of his own Life delivered and saved me, from the evil of the said Conspiracy.¹

Perrot had a meeting with the "English Agent who is both wise and Eminent in his place" and reported that he was "truly stricken, and convinced, with another French Merchant, both inhabitants in that towne."² His success here appears to have been much greater than among the Jews, even though Perrot reported interest and some convictions there also. The first meeting among the Jews was arranged by the English agent and held outside the city in the French merchant's vineyard. One of Perrot's papers addressed to the Jews created a great deal of resentment, so that on 12 August Perrot and John Luffe went to the Jewish synagogues where Perrot spoke to the Jews in Latin. That evening, following the service, a number of Jews followed the Quakers to their lodging in order to continue their discussions with Perrot—"part in latine, part in Italian, parte by interpretation, and one of them did openly confesse the truth, and many of them Said they were obliged to us in our travells and service."³

The preaching activities of the Quakers and the circulation of their Quaker books (in English, French, and Latin) created much talk throughout the town. Even the "Governour" was favoured with a number of publications. Such success could only cause difficulties: "The fire being amongst the English, and a flame kindled amongst the Jewes, put the Jesuits a trembling, and all on every hand was shakeing." It was quite natural, therefore, that Perrot was carried before the Inquisition:

I was carried to the Inquisition and there was examined by the Friars, who were commissioned by the Pope to officiate in that place, unto whom upon examinacon I gave acco^{tt} of my calls, service, and what books were in the custody of the Governour which was sent unto him by me, and given to him by another, and then shewed them in their Inquisition a booke which I

¹ John Perrot, *Battering Rams Against Rome; or The Battel of John, the Follower of the Lamb, Fought with the Pope and his Priests, whilst he was a Prisoner in the Inquisition-Prison of Rome*, London, 1661, p. A3.

² Swarthmore MSS 5/25.

³ Swarthmore MSS 5/25.

had written to the Turkes and Jewes,¹ when this they had all seene, and heard what I had said, they were much amazed, in themselves, and well knew not what to say unto me, but would have me depart, . . . insomuch as they unto me did discover the plott which the English had against us, and charged me with all to beware of my country men.²

Probably spurred on by his own growing interest, the Governor of Leghorn began to make inquiries about the Quakers, discussing them with both the English agent and the French merchant (who earlier had offered to help translate their books and to act as their interpreter). Their report had been so favourable that the Governor said that if the Quakers had been "sent by the Pope he should like it very well, and then we should be much honoured in that land." On 19 August, Perrot and his companions were summoned before the Governor for an interview which was conducted through "a Fryar [who] did interpret, but the Fryar did interpret false, and stood in much feare, and grew in much paleness, before us." Upon being asked when they planned to depart, the answer was "within 3 houres if the lord would we should be a Shipp board," for their ship was ready to sail. The Governor was willing that they might leave as they desired.

Once upon board the ship, the Quakers discovered that there was not enough wind to carry them out of the harbour, so that the vessel had to anchor once again—enabling a number of young factors to come back on board. To one of these Perrot gave a number of books, hoping that he would pass them out among his friends. Others, however, were not so kindly disposed towards the Quakers: "some being more desperately wicked, sought to hurt us and one drew his knife, and attempted sundry times to strike [me] in my face, but from the first to the last, power was not given to any of their hands to deminish a haire of our heads." Having

¹ Several of Perrot's works printed in 1660 and 1661 are directed to the Turks. One published in 1661 is directed toward Jews.

² Swarthmore MSS 5/25. George Bishop, *New England Judged, by the Spirit of the Lord*, London, 1703, p. 21 deals with the appearance of Perrot and Love [Luffe] before the Inquisition in Leghorn. Bishop suggests that the "book" written to "the Turkes and Jewes" was really two books, one "to the Grand Turk" and the other to the Jews. Bishop, who actually wrote his *New England Judged* in the 1660s, mentions that the old French merchant was named Origen. He also records that the Inquisition did "set them at Liberty, and discovered to them a Plot that some English had to Murder them; and bad[e] them beware of their Country-Men."

escaped this danger, the group sailed on 20 August for the Island of Zante, just off the shore of Turkey, arriving there 6 September.¹ Shortly after their arrival at Zant the group divided, with Perrot and John Buckley going across the Morea and visiting Corinth and Athens in Greece before going on to Smyrna where Mary Fisher, Mary Prince, Beatrice Beckley, and John Luffe were to join them after travelling through Candia.

It was during Perrot's stay in Athens that he took his quill in hand to write "To all the Baptists' in Ireland," a typical mid-seventeenth century religious tract:

I beare a love to the Remnant of the Lord which is yet behind, mingled with your Corrupt & strange seed, whilst I was among you I was Earnest for the Lords sake, with the witsnesse of his word, seeking an Entrance to provoke you unto Jelouzy, but god shewed me your hearts, & for all my Love, at best yee did but cast dirt, seeking to stayne my face, but the spots turned upon your owne garments and they were not shaken off[f] in your feasts.

Yee did count me your Enemy because I told you the truth, yee at Waterford, Remember yee not my last wordes unto you, how that I told you, god was gathering the wheate from among you, that from it he might wholly purge the chaffe, and make thereof pure graine, And doe yee not yet believe? . . .

When the Lord called me from among you, and yee heard the same thereof, did not yee make merry in your hearts Saying— Now our adversary is departed from among us, and did not therefore your vaine confidence, encourage Some of your blinde hearts with the rotten hope of the Stabillity of your kingdome? What thought yee then, that the word which was committed to me, was mine, and not the Lord's; Hath the winde of the Lord which blasted you (whilst I was in that nation with you) fayled Since, or will it fayle to divide your kingdome, & rent & blow your body asunder? . . .²

In his letter to Gerard Roberts Perrot describes some of the experiences he and John Buckley have had during this portion of their journey. In addition to the heat, cold, damp, and hunger which might have been expected, there were also "cruetyes & fraud and Robberyes by Turkes, & those called Christians, almost in all places bonds did hold us, yet the word of God thorow all had a free course & passage."³

¹ Swarthmore MSS 5/25. Cf. Braithwaite, *BQ*, p. 421.

² Swarthmore MSS 5/24 [Trans. vii. 105a].

³ John Perrot to Gerard Roberts (MS Box E, George Fox, Epistles, p. 39, Friends House Library, London: this item is a fragment containing pp. 17-56 of T in George Fox's Annual Catalogue). Cf. Perrot, *Battering Rams Against Rome*, pp. A3(b)-A4(a).

Perrot reports that he and Buckley have travelled through Greece speaking to Greeks and Turks in English and Italian and further reports that he had "cleared his conscience" in a number of places by "witnessing in Greek steeplehouses," writing and conversations. Their visit took them to Corinth, Athens, and Agrippa on the Isle of Negropont. It was at this last place that Perrot produced his *Epistle to the Greeks*.¹

Finally, toward the very end of the year, Perrot and Buckley were able to reach Smyrna after being held in Negropont by the exactions of a Pasha. The other four Quakers had been waiting in Smyrna since 18 November. When the English Consul at Smyrna discovered their plan to go to Turkey to convert the Sultan, he was kind to the Quakers but, at the same time, encouraged them to return to England. The group appears to have been somewhat convinced that this was the right thing to do, although Mary Prince for some reason remained in Smyrna several weeks after the others had departed for Venice before she herself took shipping for Venice and England.

The five, somewhat baffled at their lack of success in Smyrna and the various obstacles that seemed to block them from seeing the Great Sultan, started out for Venice but met a strong wind which forced them to the Isle of Zant where they had been half a year earlier. Here the group divided—with Mary Fisher and Beatrice Beckley "to passe into the Morea againe into Turkey . . . to goe toward Adrianople, where we heare the Turkes Emperour, lyes with his Army, being as is supposed Six days Journey from the place where they may land, as the lord makes way for their Passage."² John Buckley decided to take shipping for Constantinople and attempt to approach the Sultan from that spot. Ultimately Mary Fisher (accompanied by Beatrice Beckley, it would seem) made her famous visit to the Sultan, discharged her duty, and went back to Constantinople, where she met with John Buckley. Fisher and Beatrice Beckley, having been successful, were willing to go on back

¹ John Perrot, *An Epistle to the Greeks: Especially to those in and about Corinth and Athens*, London, 1661.

² Swarthmore MSS 5/36 [Trans. vii, 157].

to England, but Buckley (having thus far failed) had to be shipped out by the consul.¹

Perrot and Luffe do not appear to have had the same "duty" as these other three. Perrot's call at Catherlagh had been to proclaim his message in two cities "in a farr country." One of these was probably Athens or Smyrna, and the other was certainly Jerusalem, for Perrot's concern to visit Jerusalem (like that of George Robinson in the autumn of 1657 and Katherine Evans and Sarah Chevers in 1659)² continued to express itself in several of his later writings from Italy.³ Perrot and his "yoke-fellow" Luffe must have felt that God, in some strange way, was leading them back to Italy before allowing them to go on to Jerusalem. Perrot was content, therefore, to write his message to the "Great Turk".

The ship carrying Perrot and Luffe entered the Gulf of Venice on 25 February 1658, bringing closer to an end a most uncongenial voyage. The captain and his crew, angered by the talk and example of the two Quakers, had grown increasingly hostile towards both Perrot and Luffe. They were denied the use of the "Cooke-Roome, to dresse our provision" and were even threatened with being abandoned on some barren island in the Mediterranean when "the Captaine broke out in an outrageous manner" against Perrot. The captain had promised that when he succeeded in getting his two passengers to Venice ("they being Papist"), he would have Perrot burned. Perrot replied, he said, "I fear not man, whose breath is in his nostrils, but the God of life, who was my leader in all that he Called me unto."⁴

The ship was hit by a great catastrophe, which Perrot, being a child of his age, interpreted to be the anger of the Lord, saying that the very next day after the captain made this threat, God punished both the captain and the seamen (who had done their share of attacking the two Friends) by casting down "a ball of fire betwixt the Decks" and

¹ Besse, *Sufferings*, ii. 394; Braithwaite, *BQ*, pp. 422-424. This journey of Mary Fisher (and Beatrice Beckley?) must have taken place in 1657 or 1658 rather than in 1660 as often thought.

² Besse, *Sufferings*, ii. 392-394, 399-420; Braithwaite, *BQ*, pp. 418-419, 428-429.

³ Cf. Swarthmore MSS 5/36 [Trans. vii. 157].

⁴ Perrot, *Battering Rams Against Rome*, p. A4(c); Swarthmore MSS 5/36.

causing "Fire to Rain down from Heaven in coals upon them."¹ In a letter to his friend Edward Burrough (who had been responsible for his convincement in Ireland), Perrot gives a rather graphic picture of the terrible event:

the Lord god rayned downe Snares of fire into the Shipp, which Splitt parte of the Maine Topp mast, and burned holes in the Sayles, it smote divers upon the Deck, it slew three, and Smote divers others. It alsoe twice came downe between the Deck, noe man knew how, the Scuttles being shutt, and Entered among the Turkes and Armenian Passagers and breake among them in the dreadfull Terrible Sound of Cannon, fired in the ship as if the shipp was fired there with, which slew one Turke and one Armenian Passenger besides those wounded, Soe in all there were five slaine, The two as I have said, and the Other three upon the Deck, which were Saylers. the one the Gunner an Englishman, the other a Carpenter a Dutch man, and the other an Italian.²

This catastrophe brought great fear and wailing to all on board, until the noise gave way to a deep silence in which Perrot was moved "to give foorth a shorte paper in Italian among them."³

Perrot and Luffe were landed in Venice on 22 March and were quarantined for a forty-day period. On the fourth day of this enforced stay in the Venice Lazaretto Perrot wrote his letter to Edward Burrough—"Deare and precious whome as an Elder I salute in the life of my Measure, unto whome beyond all measure of Expression my love is Bound, by the Same which begott me unto the father not to be forgotten." In this letter Perrot pours out his heart to Burrough, telling him of his travels, loneliness, sufferings, trials, and tribulations. Being so far from Friends, he has only God himself to call out to for help. Jerusalem is still very much upon his mind, but even more important than that is constant obedience to God:

Let not any marvayle in themselves why I am not more forward with my face to Jerusalem, for verely I am not without Travell,

¹ Perrot, *Battering Rams Against Rome*, p. A4(c).

² Swarthmore MSS 5/36. Cf. Perrot, *Battering Rams Against Rome*, p. A4(c).

³ Swarthmore MSS 5/36. Perrot appears to have been the only one of the six who knew any Italian. His knowledge of Latin has already been mentioned.

Travell without, and Travell within, until I gladly would See the Building of her Breaches of her Walls and her Gates which are burned with fire;—I am in my life given up to cry in Jerusalem without, and to sound God's mighty day in her streets; yet in all Estates, the Lord through mercy teacheth me dayly, Content, Soe that if in Venice my last Testimony shall be, and god except of the laying downe of my life there as the finishing of my Course, I am in the will and presence of the Lord, Content, or if to go further I am as willing, that yet if happily god may add (through mercy) gladnesse to my affliction, in coming to a Sight of a seed to by raysed, and come foorth, to the glory of his Name.¹

Quaker preaching in both Ireland and England had brought great numbers of convincements, but Perrot's efforts (and those of his companions) had brought relatively few as they had made their way through Italy, Greece, and along the coast of Turkey. Suffering seemed to have been the major fruit of their travail. Perrot was truly puzzled by this, yet he felt sure that his own effort and obedience were the important things:

If my Estate were well knowne to many, Some would Say it were better for me to dye then to live, yet I say not but thankes be unto god in all, through grace and mercy I live to him that hath called me from among many Brethren and truly I Reckon not my labour in vayne, though yet nothing is come foorth, haveing left the Earth to a Search, and Some few witnessed me, but how it will stand, I leave that to god, having my witness within me; in the presence of the Lord god, that I am this farr cleare, and blood is not charged upon me, and soe if after all, I returne as one Saved, or rather Spared a little while from death without, Seeing the Travell of my Soule brought foorth, yett I hope god will keepe me from Murmuring, and if another Reape that which I have Sowen, the Increase being brought into gods Treasury to his owne glory, I have still my desire, and that is all, Noe honour, Noe glory but god.²

As Perrot comes to the end of this letter, he expresses his gratitude that Francis Howgill, George Fox, and others have been thinking of him and have been ministering unto his needs.³ A letter from George Fox had just reached Perrot,

¹ Swarthmore MSS 5/36.

² *Ibid.*

³ Cf. Braithwaite, *BQ*, p. 420, concerning material help to Perrot and his companions on their swing to the east. Perrot was probably the treasurer for this group of six.

who says, "Welcombe it was to me, God saw the tyme was good and acceptable for it." At great length Perrot expresses his appreciation of Edward Burrough, then sends his greetings to "all the holy Brethren and family of the Lord in and about London and elsewhere," and especially to John Audland and William Deusbery [Dewsbury]. His final comment is that his "deare Companion" John Luffe, "who verely is a meet helpe unto Me," salutes Burrough and the rest of Friends.

Luffe and Perrot arrived in Venice in March 1658 and remained there until early May, when Perrot wrote his letter "To the Lords Flock in Ireland". Perrot, who has been away from Ireland for a year and a half or more, cries out his love for Irish Friends:

Oh you my brethren & Sisters, Lambes of the Lords flock, Lillyes of the lords fould, the glory of the garment of innocency which covers you, makes mine eyes to run with waters like the openings of little Springes, though I am farr distant from you in the travells and tryalls and patience of the gospel of our Lord, . . . Soe all deare lambes grow dayly in the innocency and Simplicity, and like mindednesse one toward another, and the vertue of the lord remain with you and be your portion for evermore,—Amen;—Soe my life wrapt up in the Eternall, which is the girdle of the glory of your assembles, is with you all, and there feele and read my Salutation of all the lords number . . . and therein receive us, both me and my dear Companion J: L: who have you in dayly remembrance.¹

From this letter and several other sources a rough sketch of Perrot's five or six weeks in Venice can be obtained. Perrot appears to have had a meeting with the Doge² and to have spent a great deal of time among the Jews.³ Having "cleared my Conscience heere in this Nation," Perrot felt that he must now move on—for God "Sends me to Rome, to batter in it, if not through it." From here he would "passe toward Jerusalem, and where else I leave it to my Creator

¹ Swarthmore MSS 6/44 [Trans. vii. 581]. Braithwaite, *BQ*, p. 424.

² His letter does not claim a meeting with the Doge: "I cleared my Conscience heere to this Nation in the Princes Pallace by the delivery of the Sundry writings which were moved to the Prince."

³ "With the Jews I had a precious Service Since I declared in theire Assembles, and had disputes with them, and writt to them, they took me as their Friend, I leave the work to god."

for I am not myne owne, and if I never see Jerusalem without, yet I am not Shorte of the promise, for myne Eye Seeth the good thinges of God." Here then, on "the 7th of the 3rd moneth" [O.S., *i.e.*, May] we see Perrot and Luffe perched for their departure from Venice to Rome.

CHAPTER IV

INTO THE FIERY FURNACE: ROME, 1658-1661

It is difficult not to think of "Daniel and the Lion's Den" or "Daniel's friends and the Fiery Furnace" as we consider Perrot's journey to Rome. Any threats, persecution, and suffering which Perrot and Luffe had experienced previously were nothing compared to what awaited them in the Eternal City. Their next encounter with the Inquisition could not come out as favorably as their first had.

The forty-day period of quarantine in the Venice Lazaretto ended in May 1658. Perrot and Luffe then spent a few days proclaiming their message to the Catholics and Jews. It was during this period that Perrot *either* had a personal visit with the Doge *or* else sent him some material to read.¹ By 7 May Perrot felt that he had "cleared his conscience" in so far as Venice was concerned and was now ready to move on.² It was almost a month later, however, when they reached Rome—for Perrot says that this arrival took place on 6 June.³

The chief purpose which Perrot had in coming to Rome was to see and speak with the Pope. With "all sobriety and modesty," he set out to do this—seeking to discover some channel of communication which might open the door for him. First of all, he sought the advice of Thomas Courtney, a Jesuit ("and English Confessor of [St] Peters"). Upon Courtney's advice Perrot went immediately to John Crey, who was an "Irishman, and Chaplain to the Pope," and before him spread his desire "an as unfolded sheet upon a smooth floor."⁴ Crey and Perrot had some conversation, but nothing was really agreed upon.

The discussion between Crey and Perrot must have been quite short compared to that which Crey undoubtedly started after Perrot's departure! Events moved so rapidly

¹ John Perrot, *To the Prince of Venice and All his Nobles: Which was Delivered for Him in His Palace, and Received by Him in His Council-Chamber [etc.]*, London, 1661.

² Swarthmore MSS 6/44 [Trans. vii. 581].

³ Perrot, *Battering Rams Against Rome*, p. 99.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 99-100.

that Perrot probably never knew exactly what happened to him. On 8 June he reports,

I was (by the Chief Marshal of the City, and by his Guard) taken out of Bed, in my Lodging, at the Sign of the Cock in *Piazza Formase*, stripped of all things, except the Apparrel which I wore; and so at a late hour of the night was led bound to one of the New Prisons, where the second day I was briefly interrogated by the Governour of the City, who at the same time verbally conceaded me consent to my Demand, of a sudden, fair, and public Tryal at Tribunal of Law; the which Equal deed mine Eye never saw put in execution and practice, . . .¹

Before six days had gone by, a second guard appeared, and Perrot "bound in a Coach," was taken to the Inquisition Prison. Many of the Roman Catholic "Ecclesiastical Orders" came to ask Perrot various questions and "received full and plain speech" from him. After a short period of time, it was decided to give the Quaker the "solid, clear, and in contradicted Licence, to write his mind in whatever thing he would." The Father Commissary of the Inquisition gave Perrot pen, ink, and paper for this, and Perrot then "cleared his conscience" by writing "a naked Explication of the words of Righteousness, in sundry manuscripts, and an Epistle general to the Romans."²

Perrot was kept a "close prisoner" in the Inquisition Prison for about eighteen weeks. The church officials, he felt, could not or would not answer his questions but "took occasion to censure me under the Judgment of being in the state of a *Mad-man*." And so Perrot was again bound and transported by coach—this time to the Prison of Madmen or Bedlam.

John Luffe appears to have been arrested and made a "close prisoner" at about the same time, so that John Stubbs, writing from Rome early in August reported that both Luffe and Perrot were "closed up so that none might see them" and that an Englishman who had tried to see them had no success whatsoever.³ By the end of 1658 Luffe was dead,⁴ and various stories were circulating about the

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 100.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 100-101.

³ MS Port. 17/77 (Friends House Library, London).

⁴ Swarthmore MSS 4/269 [Trans. i. 386]. William Caton writes that news of Luffe's decease has been received. Caton's letter is early in the eleventh month (O.S.).

nature of his death. The Romans said that he had *starved himself to death while fasting*. Charles Bayly, a Maryland Quaker who went to Rome to obtain Perrot's freedom and who later became the first governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, said that Luffe was secretly hanged.¹ Perrot also claimed that some of the Papists had confessed to him that Luffe was hanged.²

Caton's letter, which carried the news of Luffe's death, also reported Perrot's change of imprisonment from the Prison of Inquisition to Bedlam—"out of which there is more hopes of Redemption than out of the Inqui[sit]ion."³ What hopes English Friends in 1658 had of rescuing Perrot were soon dashed, for he was kept a prisoner for three years before finally obtaining his freedom in 1661. The three years that Perrot remained a prisoner must have been a living hell for him, as he suffered both physical and mental tortures at the hands of the Inquisition and his various jailers. Perrot reports that in Bedlam, or the "Prison of Mad-people",

I was first chained by the Neck to the Wall, in which chain I had the exact liberty of standing up straight, or sitting, or of lying down; but after three nights had passed, it was ordered that the chain was to be taken off my Neck, and another chain lock'd on my Leg, which was about six foot long, which gave me liberty to walk the length of three steps from the Wall where it was fastened, which abode unto me for the full time of fourteen weeks; in which space of time (it proving then to be the Winter season, and the Winter also proving very cold) shrank up the Sinews of my leg on which the chain was lock'd, so that when (at the expiration of the aforesaid fourteen weeks) it was taken off, I found myself a lame man; but (through sore suffering) in twelve days following the Lord (in whom I believe) made me again a sound lim'd [limbed] person . . .

Moreover, in the said time of my being Chain'd, I was divers times beaten, tortured, and sorely bruised and wounded in my body, by persons appointed thereunto, using for the most part a *dryed Bulls Pizzle* as the instrument for punishing of me, bruising and breaking my body with the same; yea, and after

¹ Charles Baily [Bayly], *A Seasonable Warning and Word of Advice to all Papists, But Most especially to those of the Kingdome of France*, London, 1663, p. 6.

² [John Perrot], *John Perrot's Answer to the Pope's feigned nameless Helper; or a Reply to the Tract Entitled, Perrot against the Pope*, London, 1662. A copy of this "Broadside" is at Friends House Library, London (Broadside, vol. B/34).

³ Swarthmore MSS 4/269 [Trans. i. 386].

that I had the freedom of the Room in which I was kept (which I judge could not exceed in latitude 9 and longitude 14 feet). I was also several times beaten and exceedingly wronged in my body, once especially my Torturers came into the Room, by whom I was stript of all my Cloathes from top to toe, and with the aforesaid Instrument fell upon me, and did in such manner beat me with the same [as I was stark naked] that they left me from the very crown of the head unto the soals of my feet, black and bloody, having broken their Instrument about me.¹

When physical torture was not being handed out, there was the "mental" rack upon which the prisoner was stretched and torn. Sometimes Perrot was threatened with galley slavery, torture on the soles of his feet, death by fire, or even being subtly poisoned.² Sometimes he was reviled, sometimes mocked. Infamous names were often given to him. At other times a rather different approach was used, so that Perrot was "tryed with wine, proved with women, tempted with riches and honour, and all the Pleasures that ever my heart could desire." Even while kneeling in prayer or "walking Praises and Thanksgivings unto God" he was subject to unmentionable abuses.³

The intense physical and mental suffering that Perrot was subjected to also produced deep spiritual anguish in this isolated, lonely, and tortured individual. A glimpse into his "Dark Night of the Soul" can be gained from the following passage (once again, making allowance for the poetic language and the thought-forms of the age, as well as the horrible conditions of his imprisonment):

When the wrath of Hell gaped as a gulf to swallow me in her belly of envy; when nets of Iron were spread about my habitation, and snares of steel set compassing my dwelling; when Serpents creeped over my body, and frogs danced on my face, when Scorpions ran over my head, and Dragons spat fire in my face, when the Spirits of infernal places encamped about me and sirrounded me with their dreadful flames; when they pierced me with Speares in my side, and that I daily felt their malice like the pains of arrows stuck fast in my heart; when they strove to slay me with vexation, and to murder me with the torments of oppression; when they spued out their vennom night and

¹ Perrot, *Battering Rams Against Rome*, pp. 128-129. Cf. John Perrot, *A Narrative of some of the Sufferings of J.P. in the City of Rome*, London, 1661, pp. 3-4.

² Perrot, *A Narrative of some of the Sufferings of J.P. in the City of Rome*, p. 4; *Battering Rams Against Rome*, p. 130.

³ Perrot, *Battering Rams Against Rome*, p. 130.

day in vileness of words against me, with bitterness of cursing in their mouth, and abominable oaths and blasphemies against the Righteous God of my Salvation . . . Then had I dreadful Visions by day, and most terrible dreams by night; then was my Soul in a Sea of sorrows; and in an immense Ocean of miseries; then was my bread affliction and any drink Tribulation; then did I water my Couch with my tears, and sowed them as seed on the ground; For then the Mountains did press me down with their weights, and rocks did even crush me to pieces; then did I make sobs as an ease to my soul, and sustained myself with the grievousness of groanes; then were sighings as a spouse in my bed, and tears as my solace with her; And oh then did I cry unto my God and poured out my complaints before him; I wrestled with his Angel night and day, and cast the Rivers of my Bleeding on his Altar; And then he *shewed me the sorrow of his Seed in the Earth, and the oppression of his righteous life by all the Nations thereof*; And though I could but discern the least part thereof, yet it was infinitely *more than my Sufferings*; and then he made me put my neck to the yoake thereof.¹

The whole experience of torture and suffering seemed both senseless and unbelievable to Perrot, for "if they judged me to be a Mad-man, they seemed to me to be nigh senseless, to seek me by Temptations of Cruelties and Pleasure, to turn to them, by sinning against the Lord of Righteousness."² Perrot remonstrated his persecutors in a way both firm and humble (especially when compared to some of Martin Luther's writings directed toward the Pope). He said that if the Pope, Cardinals, Doctors, Jesuits, Priests, Friars, Lawyers, Physicians, and all the wise Councils and Counsellors in Rome

were fallen so far from the knowledge of God and degenerated so much below humane Reason, as not to judge of a humane state in a more rational sort, then to conclude me to be a Mad-man, that Soul was in a most miserable destroying state that should trust unto their Judgements concerning any thing which they should judge was spiritual, tending to the Worship of God, and Salvation; For if all could not rightly judge of a Cause external, in so low a degree, it is impossible that they should judge of things spiritual, which are matters of the highest concernments; and therefore must needs conclude myself, a willful destroyer of mine own Soul, if I should have adhered unto such spirits, as were not able rightly to judge, betwixt a state of true sense and madness.³

¹ Perrot, *A Narrative of some of the Sufferings of J.P. in the City of Rome*, pp. 4-5.

² Perrot, *Battering Rams Against Rome*, pp. 131-132.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 132.

Perrot's imprisonment, shared by his companion Luffe for a few months before his death, lasted a full three years. The hope expressed by Caton on 3 January 1659 that it would be easier to redeem Perrot out of the "Prison of Madmen" or Bedlam than out of the Prison of the Inquisition had not proved real. How long the torture aspect of his treatment continued and how it varied in intensity from time to time is unknown. It could not have continued unabated for the whole three years. Still, though, one truly marvels at the man's faith, courage, and stamina which enabled him to withstand the crushing aspects of his situation.

Finally, however, some help did materialize in the appearance of other Friends (though not the first to arrive in Rome). Samuel Fisher and John Stubbs were in Rome in 1658, but it is rather clear that they did not see their imprisoned colleague. In a letter from Rome dated 7 August Stubbs had reported that an Englishman who had tried to see Perrot and Luffe had been unsuccessful.¹ Stubbs and Fisher probably made no real effort to see Perrot—either through feeling such an effort would be useless or perhaps desiring to disassociate themselves from the two Irish Quakers who had brought the Inquisition down upon themselves. Even though the second pair of Friends proclaimed much the same message as the Irish couple had, they probably were a bit more subtle and a little less antagonizing than Perrot and Luffe had been.²

Thomas Hart, a Londoner who was one of five English Quakers chosen to handle the 1658 Collection "for service beyond the seas," apparently made a journey to Rome and proved to be a real help to Perrot in his time of imprisonment

¹ MS Port. 17/77 (Friends House Library, London).

² William Sewel, *The History of the Rise, Increase, and Progress of the Christian People Called Quakers*, London, 1795, i. 472, reports: "About this same time Samuel Fisher and John Stubbs were also at Rome, where they spoke with some of the cardinals, and testified against the popish superstition. They also spread some books amongst the friars, some of which confessed the contents thereof to be truth, but said they, if we should acknowledge this publicly, we might expect to be burnt for it. Notwithstanding Fisher and Stubbs went free, and returned unmolested." Sewel's *Histori van de Ophomste, Aanwas, en Voorstang der Christenen bekend by den Naam van Quakers* (Amsterdam 1717), was first published in English in 1722. Here and elsewhere in this monograph quotation is for convenience taken from the second volume edition of 1795.

and suffering. No account of Hart's journey has yet been found, although Perrot writes that God

raised up his little babe my dear brother *Thomas Hart* to set his tender soul nearer unto my sufferings, and made him take my burthens on his back, and the yোক of my Tribulation on his neck, and made him sup of my sore sorrows and drink of the bleeding of my grieffe; and in the eternal bowels of his loving kindness and mercies, made him attend me with constant consolations and with renewed comforts of his life; . . . so that he was a joy to me in my tedious bonds, and gladnesse unto me.¹

When and how Hart came and how long he ministered unto Perrot's needs are unknown. His efforts, however, were enough to give Perrot the help he so desperately needed, so that he was able to go on until Charles Bayly and Jane Stokes put in their appearance. Charles Bayly² [Bayley, Bailey], who was convinced in Maryland by Elizabeth Harris³ in 1656,⁴ felt called to Europe in order to aid John Perrot. In 1670, this same Bayly, after a lengthy imprisonment in the Tower of London, became the first governor of the Hudson's Bay Company.⁵ Jane Stokes, whose background is unknown, travelled in Europe and America in the 1660's.

Charles Bayly left Maryland and stopped in England for a while before going on toward Rome. Just as he was setting out from England, he met Jane Stokes who had experienced the same moving or prompting to go to Rome to aid John Perrot. They travelled through France to Marseilles, took a ship to Genoa, travelled by land to Leghorn (arriving penniless) where they met William Ward, master of a vessel, and two other Quakers who took them in

¹ Perrot, *A Narrative of some of the Sufferings of J. P. in the City of Rome*, p. 9. Cf. Braithwaite, *BQ*, p. 326. For an early 1658 letter from Hart, still in England, mentioning Perrot's return from Smyrna to Venice, see Swarthmore MSS 3/7 [Trans. iv. 197].

² Kenneth L. Carroll, "From Bond Slave to Governor: The Strange Career of Charles Bayly (1632?-1680)" *JFHS*, lii (1968-1970), 19-38.

³ Kenneth L. Carroll, "Elizabeth Harris, The Founder of American Quakerism," *Quaker History*, lvii (1968), 96-111.

⁴ Swarthmore MSS 3/7 [Trans. iv. 197]; Kenneth L. Carroll, "Persecution of Quakers in Early Maryland (1658-1661)," *Quaker History*, liii (1964), 67-80; J. Reaney Kelly, *Quakers in the Founding of Anne Arundel County, Maryland*, Baltimore, 1963, 16, 20-21; Braithwaite, *BQ*, p. 426.

⁵ [Henry J. Cadbury], "The End of Another Schismatic, [Letter from the Past—183]," *Friends Journal*, vi (1960), 281-282; E. E. Rich, *The History of the Hudson's Bay Company, 1670-1870*, London, 1958, I, 65-109.

for a while until they were able to move on to Rome. Immediately upon their arrival in Rome, Bayly and Stokes went directly to the prison where Perrot was incarcerated, but they were refused admission.

After this rebuff, Bayly went to the Inquisition, saw the Inquisitor, and told him that "I was come from England for to see my brother J[ohn] P[errot] to which he answered I should see him, and appointed me to come to a certain place called Minerva, and there saith he, I will procure you liberty of the Cardinalls to see him."¹ Bayly himself was finally brought before the Inquisition.

While Charles Bayly was being questioned by the Inquisition, he offered to take the place of Perrot. He even tried to meet with and speak to the Inquisition each time it met (twice a week—once at Minerva and once at Monte-Cavallo, the Pope's residence). Many Jews and other people tried to persuade him to save himself rather than continue with his concern for Perrot. Finally Bayly was arrested at Minerva and taken to the "Pazzarella which was the Prison or Hospital of mad-men, where our dear Brother was a prisoner." While in this prison, he fasted for twenty days—feeling that God required this of him as a sign of the church officials' guilt in bringing about the death of John Luffe (whom they said fasted nineteen days and died on the twentieth from starving himself).²

In some unknown way Jane Stokes was also arrested and taken before the Inquisition.³ From the Inquisition she, too, was taken to the same prison where Perrot and Bayly were being held. Apparently any Quaker who came to Rome and sought out either the Pope or the Inquisition was thought to be insane and quickly deposited in the "Prison of Madmen" or Bedlam! And perhaps they were somewhat "insane" in seeking such an audience, but no more really than Mary Fisher in going to visit the Great Sultan in response to the command which God had given her. The early Quaker, like the ancient prophet, knew that he must be obedient.

The presence of Charles Bayly and Jane Stokes gave

¹ Perrot, *A Narrative of some of the Sufferings of J. P. in the City of Rome*, p. 14. Pp. 11-16 contain a letter written by Charles Bayly in August, 1661, describing these events.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 14-16.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

Perrot the spiritual help and consolation so much needed. Only a few months after his freedom was finally obtained, Perrot was able to write this about two who came to bear him company when the rest of the world had forsaken him:

Moreover the everlasting mercies of my God did stir up the bowells [of compassion] of [an]other two of his tender babes, named in the tent, *Jane Stokes* and *Charles Baylie* to come to visit me whilst I was as forsaken of all men, who in the uprightness of their hearts and perfect faith in my god of wonders, came travelling through land towards me, bruised in their righteous souls in abstinence and fasting,¹ in weakness and sore pains, yet spared not their bodies to the utmost, but in their faith persevered in their pilgrimage until they arrived to *Rome*, where C.B. offered his life to ransom me, and both of them entered into captivity for the love which they bore to my life; and *Charles* wore the irons of my bonds in fastings and sore sufferings, which melted my heart like wax, and made me drop down the tears of mine eyes, which pretious visitations of my Father's eternal love manifested unto me in tender compassions through the yerning bowels of these his beloved babes must never be forgotten by me.²

At the very end of May or the beginning of June, all three Quakers were finally released—bringing to an end three years of imprisonment for Perrot and a relatively short period for Stokes and Bayly. Sewel, the early Dutch Quaker historian, dates their release in May, but the epistle which Perrot wrote to Friends “upon his delivery from his long imprisonm^t” and which he sent to them “from without the gates of Rome” is dated 2 June 1661.³ It seems probable that Perrot and his fellow Quakers would have left Rome as rapidly as possible after obtaining their freedom—given the nature of their previous experiences, plus the threat that they were “being condemned to perpetual gally-slavery, if ever [they] returned again to Rome.”⁴

As these three liberated Quakers began their long and difficult journey back to England, Perrot sent this letter on ahead:

Israel hoste of the most high god, his majesty having fulfilled the vision of my head unto me, shewing himselfe thereby as the

¹ Probably Perrot is referring to their penniless state.

² Perrot, *A Narrative of some of the Sufferings of J.P. in the City of Rome*, pp. 9-10.

³ Sewel, *History*, 1795 ed., i. 490 (see p. 29 n. 2); Swarthmore MSS 5/42 [Trans. vii. 189].

⁴ Perrot, *A Narrative of some of the Sufferings of J.P. in the City of Rome*, p. 16.

holy and righteous seed, hath now lastly delivered me and the two Babes with me out of our Captivity in the citty of Rome whose faces of god turned towards you, for which I intreat you all in the holy spirit of meekenesse to blesse and prayse the name of the lord god, and give great thanks to his power, And soe the god of life keepe you and prosper you all in the vertue of his mercy and forgivenessse and power of his Eternal^M love to the end, amen.¹

¹ Swarthmore MSS 5/42 [Trans. vii, 189]. Can Perrot mean Charles II when he speaks of "his majesty" in the first line of this letter? Some years later he said that he owed his life to Charles II.

CHAPTER V
PAMPHLETEER AND LETTER WRITER 1657-1661

A man's writings usually tell a lot about him—showing his beliefs, hopes, dreams, spiritual and mental condition, etc. And so it is with John Perrot, who left behind him a great many documents, of one sort or another, produced over a relatively short period of the man's life. Our purpose here is not to analyze each of these documents but to see what they, individually and collectively, tell us about Perrot who soon became such a disruptive force in European and American Quakerism.

Among the more interesting tracts produced by Perrot during his Mediterranean travels are those to the Turks, Greeks, and Jews. The strong missionary impulse that carried Perrot through Southern Europe and to Turkey was marked by a universalistic outlook rather than by particularism. God was calling all people to the Light:

I say therefore unto all flesh living, Keep silence, and listen to the word of the Lord God in silence, (mark), listen to hear the word of the Lord in spirit, in silence, when all reason and earthly consultations and disputings, and questionings in the mind, is cast out, in the bed, in the vineyards, in the secret closet, in the fields, and then it shall come to pass to your remembrance, that there is something in man which convinceth a man of the evil of his wayes, . . .¹

No matter to what people Perrot was writing or talking, his message was designed to call them from darkness to light, from sin to salvation:

And now unto the appearance of his grace, that is to say, the light wherewith every man is lightned which cometh from the Messiah, they must be turned, which shines in their consciences, which (as I have said) doth shew a man in spirit and in secret his sinnes and the reward and wages thereof, which is death everlasting to all that dye and perish in their sins: And this light in a man's conscience will keep his heart pure, and in pure fear, out of the offence, as he is led by it, & it will lead into patience, temperance, meeknesse, chastity, charity, peace, and all vertues . . .

¹ John Perrot, *A Visitation of Love, and Gentle Greeting of the Turk, Etc.*, London, 1660, pp. 12-13.

. . . it will lead . . . unto quietness and settlednesse, out of strife and hard contentions, fighting and quarrellings, or raising of tumults or seditions, or heresies or sects, or many Opinions, to the dividing of Nations, but will unite all, and make all of one heart and of one mind, to establish Authority, & set the Supream in his Seat of Dominion to rule in righteousness, and establish his Seed forever, and will lead all into subjection to Authority . . .¹

Perrot really seemed motivated by a love for all men, whatever their religious persuasion might happen to be. He came "in love to visit," bringing a message of "a goodly Treasure" which had never failed to strengthen his "Fathers in a strange Land, or to nourish their seed in a Wilderness, or to give courage to them in weakness to vanquish the mighty force of their Enemies."² And so he expressed his hope to the "Great Turk" that "thou mayest come to the same, to drink of the same, and eat of the same, to be nourished with the same, unto the same life & dignity which the Lord giveth."³ Calling upon him to "Stand in the Light, as thy heart comes to be turned to it," Perrot promised the Sultan that he would then know that as he "stands in it, wisdom will never depart thy habitation, and the deepest counsel, thy secret chamber, which will establish thee in thy Throne, as it did Solomon the wise King in his Throne."⁴ Perrot then ended his appeal to the "Great Turk" with a cry from the heart:

Is there any pure Religion upon the Face of the Earth, but where the people doth do unto all men as they would men should do unto them, which the light in a man's conscience teacheth to do? And is not all profession of pure Religion and holiness without that pure peaceable practise, any other than abomination and rottennesse in the account of the holy, just God?⁵

As has already been shown in Chapters III and IV, Perrot had considerable dealings with Jews in Italy and must have pursued these contacts in other spots during his wanderings. In some places a real rapport appears to have sprung up between the travelling Quaker preacher and some members of the scattered Jewish communities. We have

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

² *Ibid.*, p. 18.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 23-24.

noted some of the Quaker-Jewish dialogues which took place in Leghorn and Venice (as well as the slightly later warning to Charles Bayley from friendly Jews in Rome). All of these must have been made possible by Perrot's love and concern for the "scattered Jews in Italy, Spain, Portugal, France, Holland, and the rest of the regions, and every island throughout the earth and seas." In his preaching to his Jewish listeners, Perrot expressed God's love for their *souls* but then moved on to attack their Jewishness—customs, practices, etc. Taking his cue from Paul and some of the early Church Fathers, Perrot believed that Children of Light were the true sons of Abraham or the true Jews (the True or New Israel).¹ While, in some ways, Perrot was in advance of his times in his attitude toward and relations with the Jews, at the same time he was still the product of his time—so that he held the view (still being wrestled with by several major Christian denominations) that the Jews suffered so much because they rejected Jesus as the Christ and slew him.² If such views were expressed openly by Perrot in his personal exchanges with the Jews, then some of them must have been "bigger" than Perrot at some points for the existing rapport not to have been totally destroyed.

One of the most surprising of our author's writings is his Epistle to the Greeks,³ which was written on the Island of Negroponte in September 1657. Somehow Perrot never really caught the distinction between the Greek Orthodox and the Roman Catholics, for he refers to the Greeks as "Roman Catholiques," to Rome as "your city Rome," and "to you Priests, Pope, and Patriarke, of the Lands, who say you sit in Peters seate!"⁴ At the same time, however, he was aware of some of the underlying ills of the Greek church:

Oh ye *Greek* Pastors, Priests and people, what can you plead for your Patriarch? Can you not read the deceitfulness of his succession, through the manner of his Election . . . who doth purchase unto himself that Title and Degree, with the price of a

¹ John Perrot, *Immanuel, the Salvation of Israel*, London, 1660. This document was actually written in August, 1657, while Perrot was in Leghorn.

² *Ibid.*

³ John Perrot, *An Epistle to the Greeks, Especially to those in and About Corinth and Athens*, London, 1661.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 10, 16, 31.

sum of moneyes, from the Emperour of the Turks, whom you yourselves do say is the Antichrist?¹

Such an indictment as this is only to be expected from one who opposed the "hireling ministry" in the British churches and attacked corruption (both civil and ecclesiastical) wherever he found it.

Perrot, whatever his national, class, and religious origins may have been, lived in Ireland before the start of his Quaker missionary activities. Here he was brought into real contact with Roman Catholics and developed the sort of love and active compassion for them which has already been pictured in Chapter I. In spite of the harsh treatment which he received at the hands of the Inquisition, Perrot's language and attitude toward Roman Catholics both during and after his imprisonment remained rather mild (especially considering the age and its prejudices). Although he felt that the Romans are "barren Mountains", he believed that they might become as "God's Husbandry in the Earth" if they would but "Wait in the Silence for the Revelation of the Lord from Heaven [who unto us is come] that [in you also] he may be known as witnessed, and testified to be come (according to the Promise) the second time without Sin unto Salvation."² In a passage filled with biblical imagery and poetic expression, heightened by apocalyptic expectations, he cries out in this "Epistle General to the Romans,"

Wait for his Appearance in the Clouds, to come breaking thorow the thickness of the blackness of the long night; to come down in the Earth as a burning fire, and to darken the Air with the smoak; to set the Heavens on fire, and to melt the Earth before him; that you may come to know the Wonders of God fulfilled . . . Wait for the Revelation of God's Plough in the Earth, for the tearing up of the Ground, and breaking the Clods thereof; for a due preparation to receive the Seed of the Kingdom, that you may become as God's Husbandry in the Earth, and no longer remain as the barren Mountains thereof.³

It was Perrot's desire to see the Pope (after an unsuccessful attempt to visit the "Great Turk") that took him to Rome. His hopes for such an interview were crushed by his

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

² Perrot, *Battering Rams Against Rome*, p. 13.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14.

sudden arrest, questioning by the Inquisition, and his subsequent imprisonment and torture in Rome. To the Pope the prisoner was able to write a letter that is remarkable for its mixture of strength and mildness—a sort of rainbow after the storm clouds have passed by—as can be seen in this brief quotation:

God is Light, and in him is no darkness at all, who hath sent his Son [as] a Light into the World, that all that believe in him who is the Light of the World, may have everlasting life; unto which Light thou must bow, and oughtest to lay down thy crown, at the feet of him who cometh in the Clouds thorow the blackness and darkness of the black and gloomy day.¹

To the "Governor of Rome" Perrot could write in a similar vein, calling upon him to come to the Light and to dwell in the Light "with thy mind and heart [e]stablished and fixed in it, which shews thy own transgression within, to have feeling of the Judgment of God upon the transgressor in thee." If the Governor would only come to the love of the Light and follow the Light, by it he would "be led out of sin and transgression, and then with the Light, by which all things are made manifest, in all matters of Judgment, thou wilt reach that of God in all, which in all will justify thee in the sight of God." By so doing, the Governor will stand "girded with Justice in the seat of Equity and Truth, a terror to evil-doers, and a praise to them that do well."²

These letters to various Roman Catholic figures are remarkably free of the venom and invective that marked so much of the religious literature of the age. The mild language of these appeals from his heart gave Perrot a much greater chance of reaching some of the more thoughtful and sensitive of these individuals than would have the sound and thunder which usually marked the controversial religious documents which often appeared as one denomination set its sights upon another and then, after taking aim, sought to demolish anything which got in its way. And so, to a "Franciscan of the Irish Convent in Rome," Perrot could write quietly but persuasively,

There are but two Seeds known unto all in the Substance, two Wills, two Natures, two Spirits, and each of them the ground and

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20.

² *Ibid.*, p. 25.

root which yeelds the fruit of good or evil in all, whether Prayers, Preaching, Plowing or Planting, even all which is brought forth within, or without, by either of them; the one, the Redemption out of the Fall, and from the ground of the first Apostacy in lost Adam, and the Restoration unto the first state of Innocency; the other, the Plant of Perdition, which holds in Captivity, even all the Professors of the Name of Christ, who are alienated from the Life of Christ in the ground of the second Apostacy, under which you have concluded yourselves.¹

These various epistles to the Romans in general, the Pope, the Governor, and a Franciscan, all appeared during the lengthy three-year imprisonment in Rome—a period of rather inhuman treatment. In spite of these horrible experiences and the lack of response to his letters (plus the Catholics' spreading of false report about Perrot, Luffe and Jane Stokes),² Perrot still longed for the salvation of those who belonged to Rome. His only purpose in writing his *Battering Rams Against Rome* was the hope that it might "awaken you from all slumber of supposed security concerning your way, and induce [you] to take heed unto the Light of God in yourselves, that it might lead you out of your own thoughts, words, and wayes, to walk with God in Righteousness all your dayes." To do this, he promised, would make them "Partakers of his Endlesse Everlasting Kingdom of Life, Peace and Joy which will swallow you up in his high Praises, who is worthy of the Glory of his Works in the whole Earth."³

In addition to the various tracts and epistles which have been discussed earlier in this chapter, Perrot also produced (during this period of 1657 to 1661) a number of documents to the Baptists and to various cities in Ireland. These works, already noted in Chapter I, need not be discussed here—for they throw little or no additional light upon the author's outlook or condition. There remain, however, several writings to Friends that need some examination—for they show something of Perrot's physical, mental, and spiritual state after two years of imprisonment.

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

² John Perrot, *John Perrot's Answer to the Pope's feigned nameless Helper; or a Reply to the Tract Entitled, Perrot Against the Pope*, London, 1662. This one page item is at Friends House Library, London (Broadside, vol. B/34).

³ Perrot, *Battering Rams Against Rome*, pp 143-144.

One of these letters, simply entitled "To Friends" in the manuscript copy preserved at Friends House,¹ seems slightly incoherent in one or two places—probably due to the intense suffering, loneliness, and strain which Perrot had been undergoing in the two years he had been a prisoner. Perrot, whose sufferings and persecution were partially known back in England, wrote ". . . thinke not strange neither stagger nor be troubled at my saying none of the prophets nor apostles in ancient & primitive daies before me, drunk a cup so deep as is & hath bin my cup." He states that if Friends really knew what he was experiencing, it would really "mould your hearts daily into the highest thanksgiving & praise of the lord." His own soul has been preserved "in the humbleness & unfeigned thanksgiving." Now he calls upon them to "be humble & low in heart & watch & wait & let nothing move you"; remembering how God did bear with them, they must now—like God—be long suffering. They must not seek martyrdom but should stand "all waies at the Alter a ready sacrifice." He writes,

litle Children learn and grow perfectly in the fathers love be alwayes prepared in your selves for the tribulation for through it you enter the kingdom whom the fullness of the fathers love is laid up in store for all w[h]ich the yoke and in all the Rebukes and chastiments know the fathers love for the Rebucke is a testimony of the love and it is sent to a witnes and therefore the witnes within you for the spirit is the sure witnes . . .

These passages, in which Perrot speaks of his great suffering (and also mentions his own humility in a rather strange way), are much clearer in expression and meaning than a number of other sections of this particular document. The incoherence which marks several parts of the letter raises a question in the reader's own mind. How much had Perrot's mind been affected by the two years of imprisonment and torture in this "Prison of Madmen" in Rome? If such a question were not raised by the already noted incoherence, the reader would certainly be troubled by one peculiar sentence almost two-thirds of the way through the document: ". . . in this kingdome of the tribulation I am one of you dear deare *sisters* & beare no other lovers but of the [?] & that which would doe his will & heares sallvation

¹ Swarthmore MSS 5/39 [Trans vii. 171]. This document is dated May 5, 1660.

reacheth me & I the *damsell* am refreshed, deare *sisters* . . . ”¹ What Perrot had in mind here is not really apparent, but it embodies a figure of speech which he held on to—for in a 1661 epistle (written approximately one full year after this letter) he closed with the strange statement “I am your sister in our Spouse.”²

Several other somewhat strange developments show themselves in Perrot’s writings from prison. One of them is the growing practice of signing his letters and other writings only with the name *John* (a development unparalleled in other early Quaker authors). Was Perrot consciously or unconsciously patterning himself after John of Ephesus, whose Book of Revelation influenced his thought so much? Still another cause of wonderment is the really strange title (in an age of unusual titles) that Perrot gave to one of his writings: *A Wren in the Burning Bush, Waving the Wings of Contraction, to the Congregated clean Fowls of the Heavens, in the Ark of God, holy Host of the Eternal Power, Salutation*.³ One more development in this period, which did not produce any criticism at the time but which provided later snipers with something at which to aim, was the producing of one work which was almost entirely in verse.⁴

Still another factor at work on Perrot in these three “lost” years was the loneliness that he faced—especially after the early death of his fellow prisoner Luffe. The solitary existence which was forced upon him by his imprisonment made him *lonesome* for Friends, so that he greatly yearned for their companionship and especially the gathered meeting for worship. At the same time, however, being deprived of

¹ Italics mine. Perhaps Perrot was overly influenced by the imagery of the Song of Songs where, according to Christian interpretation, Christ was the bridegroom and the Church was his spouse.

² John Perrot, *Two Epistles, Written to All Friends in the Truth: The one touching the Perfection of Humility; Written in Rome—Prison of Madmen. The other, Touching the Righteous Order of Judgement in Israel, Written at Lyons in France*, London, 1661.

³ This document was published in London in 1660. Others of his writings have unusual names; but, given Perrot’s poetic tendencies, one should not think too much about them.

⁴ John Perrot, *A Sea of the Seed’s Suffering, Through which Runs a River of Rich Rejoycing*, London, 1661. This document, which on the frontispiece claims to have been written in Rome in 1659 also claims (p. 46) to have been produced in the Venice Lazaretto. It contains forty-four pages of verse.

this great aid and comfort, Perrot was forced to place increasing emphasis upon the leading of the Spirit—the only guide, aid and comfort which remained with him. There is no wonder that, as great as his appreciation for the body of Friends might be, he came to feel that all things must be done according to the leading of the Spirit as of the moment (rather than according to Friends practices and customs). Both of these attitudes and outlooks need to be examined more fully, for the conflict between the two really led to the “Hat Controversy” and to the schism which developed from it.

Sometime in 1660 Perrot wrote a letter “To all which wander from the true Order,”¹ probably meaning it for the Ranters such as Mildred and Judith (Judy).² These people, when they were not disturbing Friends in their meetings, were drawing aside and either setting up separate gatherings or forsaking meetings completely. James Nayler’s recantation brought him back into the movement, but many others were unwilling to submit to the leadership and judgment of the “pillars” of the movement or of the main body itself. Perrot, having seen some of this unhappy situation while in London in 1657 and probably having heard even more of this development through letters, felt the need to speak out of his own experience and understanding:

God almighty will certainly withdraw himselfe from such as withdraw themselves from the congregations of his Saints, Saying in their hearts God is everywhere, thereby tempting him in their high hearts & proud wills, denying & forsaking the holy assemblings & congregations of the Saints, which mett together in the order of the Gospell, in his pure & living name, among whom God is in the midst, And so the wanderers & forsakers are gone out of the order of the Gospell & departed from the Condition of the promises of the presence of God.

Perrot, who had undergone great spiritual, emotional, and physical suffering during long and lonely imprisonment, knew the danger that lurks in such a position. With all the enthusiasm, feeling, and certainty of an early Apostle, he warned these people:

And now to all such I would put my experience, I am a prisoner in most cruell and severe bonds, & herby doe full well know, how

¹ Swarthmore MSS 5/40 [Trans. vii, 177]. This letter also carries the title “To such as wander from the true Order.”

² These two shadowy figures, once followers of James Nayler, became frequent disturbers of Friends meetings. Cf. Braithwaite, *BQ*, pp. 269-270.

sweet the least word [of] wryting from the least Lamb of God is, and what refreshm^t it brings with it to my Soule, Yet if any such exalted spirit which is carelesse of meetings, & forsake the assemblies of the Saints, should boast & tell of their enjoym^{ts} of Gods presence out of meetings, as having forsaken the congregations, Such I would answer, it is well if thou hast light today, but take heed lest in thy way which is not Gods way, The sunne should swiftly sett, & leave thee in a long & tedious night of obscurity, & darknes; bee not high minded but feare,

Moreover to these I say I know a man which loveth not to boast, yet I beelieve could tell thee (whoever thou art) ten times more of Gods presence than thou canst, how hee hath beene & is with him, though he is or are as it were left without the conversation of any man. Nevertheles doth affirme that the more he enjoyes of his God, the more his spirit thirsts after his Saints assemblies absolutely knowing that except it were soe, the morning light of the Sum^{er} day would become as [a] cloudy beame in the sight of his eye, and cast him backwards into the belly of blacknes. And when thou whomsoever Thou art has drunke but six dayes of his cup, on the seaventh thou shalt know what it is, & then shall thou bee sencible of the worth of one freind of God to vissit thee in prison, And when thou knowest the vallue of the fellowship of one, thou mayst afterwards happily see of what a surprizing price a meeting of the Saints is, And though in the professed enjoym^{ts} in that state & spirit of pryde presumption & devision, talkest but as a dreamer on the soft bed of thy fleshly & selfish pleasure, not in the sensible feeling but alianated from the power of the Crosse of the Lord Jesus where the true enjoym^{ts} are found in the awakened & quickened state, & life witnessed in the spirit of unity with the Saints in their holy assemblies, which is not an absurd example of laziness sluggishness nor slumber, but of diligence watchfullnes faith & obedience, & if I would aske of thee, in what fellowship didst thou first come to know the very true and living God, & see the clearnes of his operation, & find the first sensible & most certaine enjoym^{ts} And now if thou goest from the Assemblies where he was found among his people in whom hee dwelleth, his glorious house temple Tabernacle & heavens, thou goest from where God is, & as I have sayd from the unity, & the love yea & out of the city amongst the dogs, where the iniquity abounds, which will steale upon thee at unawares, & harden thy heart, & though knowest not how, And therefore I say againe, be not high minded but feare. Yet if thou sayest that the meeting & holy congregations of the Saints, is a dispensation which now is to cease; & God will be all in all without them, I answer God is manifesting himselfe to bee all everlastingly in all them, which stand in the unity of his spirit, which draweth together, & rents not assunder making division in the body, which is composed of living & spirituall members & to say that the assemblies of the Saints are to [last] untill tyme ceaseth, & all ends come to their uttmost period (to witt) of dayes, body or

breath & soules, & intelligable faculties in humane bodyes, is as much as to say in effect that the faith & fullnes of God is also a dispensation ceasable, seeing those are the latter dayes in which hee is compleating & fulfilling of the covenant of his faithfullnes, of sons & daughters of men of his e[lec?]tion through the gathering & assembling his owne seed amongst all the families of the earth, into his heavenly order of the spirit, even as the Angels sit, whereunto God assembled in the same spirit, above which thy degenerated eye seeeth nor beholdeth not, And therefore in the spirit where God is knowne to bee all in all, I say that the congregation of the Saints must endure to the end of tyme, to the purpose of salvation to the growth comfort & consolation of one another in the praying, praising in the praises, & giving in the thanksgiving of one another, that being members fitly & compleatly made one body under one head, in one spirit, as one & not many may glorify God in this his excellent & glorious and wonderfull worke, now begun in the earth even from henceforth & for ever & evermore, Amen.

Truly, it is ironic that the author of the above passage (seeing so clearly the necessity and value of the community for the individual and in no uncertain terms warning those who had schismatic tendencies and practices) could soon become the centre of a great storm within the Society of Friends, becoming the greatest schismatic in seventeenth century Quakerism! The same condition which produced this 1660 appreciation of the meeting likewise helped produce the attitude which made Perrot—unknowingly and unwillingly for the most part—the centre of the upheaval when it did appear shortly later.

Month after month of separation, isolation, unspeakable suffering, and temptation had driven Perrot ever more deeply within. In his quiet waiting he found that God spoke to him. Living worship did not depend upon (or even allow!) the "customary and traditional ways of worship." This realization was so alive and so graphic that Perrot was convinced that he had "received by expresse commandment from the lord god of heaven" a command to "beare a sure testimony against the custome and tradition of takeing off the hat by men when they goe to pray to god."¹ This practice, he said, never was commanded by God but had descended from Rome. Perrot therefore sent out a letter, to Friends which proclaimed that,

if any ffreind be moved of the Lord god to pray in the Congregation of god fallne downe with his face to the ground, without

¹ Swarthmore MSS 5/17 [Trans. vii. 85].

takeing of[f] the hatt, or the shoes, let him do so in the feare & name of the Lord, & if the world be Contentious, aske them why take the of[f] your hatt without precept, & not your shoes, being it was a precept which god commanded Moses, saying take of[f] thy shoe from of[f] thy feet.¹

It was this letter, which made its way back to England before Perrot himself was released from his imprisonment, that triggered the explosion which soon took place. A combination of circumstances led up to the eruption—resentment over Fox's treatment of Nayler, Fox's fear that this was "Nayler" all over again, the wild activities of the Ranters, the unresolved Quaker dilemma between the individual's leading and the guidance of the group, and still other forces. Schism, like war, has many causes or contributing factors. And, also like war, it requires some decisive event to set the process in motion. In this case, the trigger action was Perrot's letter advocating leaving on the hat in time of prayer (and not removing one's hat when someone else prayed). Perrot's return to England only accentuated a situation which was already getting out of hand.

¹ Crosse MSS, p. 12. This small bound volume, containing many of Perrot's letters copied by Edmund Crosse (one of Perrot's strongest supporters) is found in Friends House Library, London.

CHAPTER VI
THE GATHERING STORM, 1661-1662

John Perrot's long imprisonment in Rome came to an end almost exactly three years after it began. Perrot, Charles Bayly, and Jane Stokes were all freed in May or early June 1661 and were banished from Rome under the threat of being made permanent galley slaves if they ever returned. The reasons why they were released are uncertain, but there exists the probability that Charles II (it was almost exactly one year since the Restoration) may have been responsible for this development.

It is quite clear that Charles II was aware of Perrot's imprisonment in Rome. In a 4 June 1660 meeting between Richard Hubberthorne and Charles II there was the following exchange:

King: Are any of your friends gone to Rome?

R.H.: Yes, there is one in Prison in Rome.

King: Why did you send him thither?

R.H.: We did not send him thither, but he found something upon his Spirit from the Lord, whereby he was called to go to declare against Superstition and Idolatry, which is contrary to the will of God.

King's Friend said, *there were two of them* at Rome, but one was dead.¹

Sometime in 1660 John Perrot wrote a letter to Charles II which suggests the *possibility* of some acquaintanceship between these two individuals. After four and a half pages of admonishing the King on the proper conducting of his office, Perrot then moved on to things more personal,

And this is of a truth the word of the Lord God unto Thee, to be sutablely fulfilled according to thy obedience or disobedience of his eternal power. I had a sight of thy restauration, (in the light by which all things is made manifest) more than six months before I heard the first report of the working thereof, and now God hath confirmed it unto me, having fulfilled the same.

Finally, as a true and unfeigned lover of thy soul, my heart desireth my Fathers favour, that the good may be thy perpetual

¹ Richard Hubberthorne, *Something that lately passed in Discourse between King and R.H.*, [etc.], London, 1660, p. 6.

lot, that the Throne and Scepter of righteousness may be established unto Thee, and a holy seed everlasting after Thee.¹

Perrot's pre-1655 background is unknown, so that there is no way of ascertaining what, *if any*, connection he may have had with Charles. If, as is very possible, the two were personally unknown to each other, then some other explanation of Charles' interest in the prisoner must be found. Although this interest and awareness may have stemmed from Perrot's letter quoted above, it is quite possible that Charles Bayly may have interceded with the King on Perrot's behalf. Bayly, who later was made first Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, was raised in a family that had been connected with the English Court in the pre-Cromwellian days. In spite of several English imprisonments, there is real evidence of Bayly's influential connections in the 1660s after his return from Rome. He may well have visited Charles II after his arrival in England from Maryland in 1660, before going on to Rome to aid Perrot.

A letter dated 10 May 1664 from Thomas Modyford (Governor of Barbados) to the King mentions that Perrot (now in the West Indies) many times spoke of how willingly he would lay down his life "for the King, *to whose letters when he lay a Prisoner in Rome he affirmed to owe it.*"² Here we have Perrot's own testimony, via a second person three years after the event, that Charles was responsible for his life—and therefore, it would seem, for his release from prison. This is but one of several bits of evidence which could be cited to show that Charles II, specially in the opening years of his reign, was more friendly toward Quakers than is generally known.

Perrot's return to England was already under way when he wrote his letter "from without the gates of Rome" on 2 June 1661.³ Accompanied by Bayly and Jane Stokes, he made his way through Italy into France and then onward

¹ J[ohn] P[errot], *To C.S.K.*, p. 5. This letter accompanies another tract: George Bishop, *To Thee Charles Stuart King of England*, Bristol, 1660. It might be noted that George Fox, in his *Journal*, notes that he likewise foresaw "the Kings comeinge in again."

² State Papers, C. O. I, 18, item 65. This document, found in the Public Records Office, London, contains this passage which does not appear in the printed *Calendar of State Papers*. Italics added.

³ See the end of Chapter iv.

to England. As the three travelled northward through France, Bayly was arrested and imprisoned in Bourg de Ault, "for speaking to a couple of Priests, desiring them that I might have the liberty either in a public Market place, or some convenient place, where the people might hear," so that he might prove that what he had said to them was "the truth of God".¹ This is probably the same episode which is referred to in Joseph Fuce's letter, where he expresses his belief that Bayly's imprisonment "was for speakeing to a Cupell of priests that bowed to an Image as they passed the streets".² Perrot, still suffering from the effects of his long imprisonment and the difficulties of the overland journey, continued on to England. Concerning Perrot's arrival in England, Fuce writes that "I Could relate somewhat more were I with thee, but I heard of him speak of his feet being soare with Travelling yet hee did goe but short Jornies".³

Perrot returned to England in high repute and great favour among his fellow Quakers. Joseph Fuce (-1669), an influential Friend who published several works in 1659 and who was committed to Dover Castle in 1660, spoke of him as "dear John Parrat".⁴ Randall Roper, one of Quakerism's early literary antagonists, said that the Quakers had a very high view of Perrot, for

I have been told of two of his judgment (which I am sure they will own) that he had as great a measure of the Spirit as ever man had, and that he had talked face to face with God, as a man talketh with his friend, and several other things of a like tendency which I have cause to think, nay believe are lies.⁵

Still another indication of Perrot's fame and position is seen in the fact that a series of questions concerning God, the

¹ Charles Baily [Bayly], *A Seasonable Warning and Word of Advice to all Papists, But Most especially to those of the Kingdom of France*, London, 1663, p. 34.

² Swarthmore MSS 4/224 [Trans. ii. 249].

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Besse, *Sufferings*, I, 291-292, 708; Joseph Smith, *A Descriptive Catalogue of Friends Books*, London, 1867, I, 824. Besse gives the date of his death as 1665, but the Surrey & Sussex Quarterly Meeting Digest of Burial Registers places it in 1669. Cf. Swarthmore MSS 4/224 [Trans. ii. 249].

⁵ Randall Roper, *Truth Vindicated Being An Answer To the High Flown Fancies of John Perrot (known by the name of a Quaker) in a Paper with this Inscription, to all Baptists everywhere, [etc.]*, London, 1661. i-ii.

Devil, man (concerning his body, soul, and spirit), heaven, hell, judgment, and other subjects were propounded by "Livinus Theodorus" and "Sabina Neriah" and were directed to George Fox, Samuel Fisher, and John Perrot (and, slightly later, to Edward Burrough).¹ Perrot's inclusion in this company suggests that his stature upon his 1661 return to England was great. His earlier service in England had won him esteem in the eyes of many. Stories of his withstanding intense suffering and persecution which had trickled back from Rome only increased his position of prestige and importance—as had many of Perrot's own writings, whether manuscript or printed.

By the end of July Perrot had crossed the Channel and was back in England, for Fuce reports his presence at a three-day General Meeting near Crambrock [Cranbrook] in Kent at the beginning of August.² Three weeks later, on 22 August, he had made his way to London.³ Within a week Perrot and eight other Friends (including Thomas Everden who later became one of the mainstays of Maryland Quakerism) were arrested at Canterbury where they were taken out of a meeting and imprisoned for several days.⁴ Two months later he was active in East Anglia, for a note in the State Papers for 20 November records "There was one Parr^e [Perrot] a quaker that pretends hee was at Rome that is in these parts and doth much harm."⁵ After a meeting in London with Fox, Howgill, George Whitehead, William Dewsbury, and others at the end of December, Perrot met at the Bull and Mouth to take leave of London Friends on 31 December and left London as of 1 January 1662. After attending meetings at Acton and Gadsen, Perrot was to spend ten days or so with Isaac Penington before going on to Bristol and Ireland. Only his "deare old friend" John Browne was to accompany Perrot on his journey home to Ireland (after

¹ Samuel Fisher, *Αποκρυπτα αποκαλυπτα Veleta Quaedam Revelata: Some Certain, hidden, or vailed Spiritual Verities Revealed*, London, 1661, title page.

² Swarthmore MSS 4/224 [Trans. ii. 249].

³ *JFHS*, xxix (1932), 46. Swarthmore MSS 7/111 [Trans. vi. 417]. Jane Stokes was with Perrot at this time.

⁴ Besse, *Sufferings*, i. 292.

⁵ Norman Penney (ed.), *Extracts from State Papers Relating to Friends 1654-1672*, London, 1913, p. 135.

more than five years of absence from homeland and family).¹ Some months go by before we see Perrot again, this time in London in June 1662, when he was arrested at the Bull and Mouth Meeting and with other Quakers was taken before Richard Brown who,

asking the names of the prisoners, and hearing that of John Perrot, said, "what, you have been at Rome to subvert," but recalling himself, said "to convert the Pope." On which Perrot told him, "He had suffered at Rome for the testimony of Jesus." Whereupon Brown returned, "If you had converted the Pope to your religion, I should have liked him far worse than I do now." To which Perrot replied, "But God would have liked him better." After some more short discourse, Brown then committed them all to Newgate.²

From these isolated episodes scattered over nearly one year, it can be seen that Perrot picked up where he had left off in England in 1657—becoming a travelling Friend in the ministry. Although he was still a man of what Sewel would call "great natural parts" or real ability, there were now other factors at work which would soon cause his rejection by the greater part of Quakerism.

Many people, greatly impressed by his piety, humility, past sufferings for the Truth, and his great natural ability, were attracted to him and his views, so that he drew around him an increasing number of advocates of his position. He appears to have been especially popular with female Friends. On one occasion four of them took a coach as far as they could and then walked six miles just to be with him!³ To some, Perrot was God's "tender lamb".⁴ Many were convinced that "his ministration . . . was of God and the clearest that hath been made manifest to us in our day".⁵ With such a growing and enthusiastic following, with its large core of admiring women, Perrot was bound to bring to mind once more the spectre of Nayler and his fall.

¹ Crosse MSS, 100.

² William Sewel, *History*, 1795 ed. ii. 8.

³ Crosse MSS, 100.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ John Harwood, "The life of innocency vindicated that was manifested in two famous ministers in their day, viz. J.N. & J.P. who are both deceased." This manuscript written in February, 1667, is in the British Museum (bound in Tracts 855f.).

Perrot's 1660 letter from Rome, advocating the rejection of the practise or form of removing the hat in time of prayer, had circulated in England even before his return. George Fox seems to have reacted almost immediately to this epistle, both by writing a letter to Perrot and also issuing statements to the larger Quaker community. Fox sent Perrot a letter, no longer extant, which began with "Great Judgment will come upon you, that have been convinced, yea, sorer than upon the world, for you have known more than them."¹ A second letter was sent to Perrot in Rome in 1661, but he was released from prison before its arrival—so that it was returned to England (where it finally reached Perrot). This one apparently, while perhaps touching upon the "hat controversy", attacked Perrot for his sending what appeared to be extra large credit to the two women Friends imprisoned at Malta.²

The differences and disagreements between Fox and Perrot (and between their respective followings) continued to grow following Perrot's return to England. There was a widespread feeling that Perrot in introducing his *new* views, was setting himself up as superior to Fox and the other "First Publishers of Truth". Many people noticed the strife and dissension which arose because of Perrot's innovation—therefore crediting Perrot with a "divisive and renting spirit". As a result of the ballooning strife, Perrot wrote a letter (from Witham) on 8 November 1661, asking for an open hearing on the whole matter:

All Freinds, which at first scrupled the wearing of my Hatt in prayer; & since that have scrupled a paper which I have written concerning it: & who from thence have secretly accused me to be of a renting and dividing spirit, which neither my labours, doctrine, nor conversation hath shewed: but in every respect very much to the contrary. For yours, & also for the satisfaction of the whole body of Friends that unity may be kept amonge all; I propound, for all of you, to give me a meeting at the chamber at the Bull & Mouth, on the Next third day week from this date, which maybe the 19th of this Instant 9th month about

¹ Henry J. Cadbury (ed.), *Annual Catalogue of George Fox's Papers Compiled in 1694-1697*, Philadelphia, 1939, p. 74, item 52D. This is probably the letter mentioned in Fox, *Camb. Jnl.*, ii. 5.

² Robert Rich, *Hidden things brought to Light, Or the Discord of the Grand Quakers Among themselves*, London, 1678, p. 3. Concerning the Malta prisoners (Evans and Chevers), see Braithwaite, *BQ*, pp. 428-432 and Besse, *Sufferings*, ii. 399-420.

the 10th hour in the morneing, wher I may expect in all moderation & tenderness to make forth myselfe, in the perfect love & feare of god to you all, touching the said matter.¹

George Fox was in London at this time² and participated in the various "select" meetings which did take place at the home of Gerard Roberts (which served as the headquarters for the leaders of the Society when they were in London).³ Apparently there were several meetings which caused Perrot much grief. He recorded that Fox charged him with vast "Expense and Charge" in his voyage and suffering abroad—keeping him up until two o'clock one night and one o'clock the next, going over the same thing again and again. Perrot was troubled by Fox's denunciation of the extent of Perrot's financial help to Katherine Evans and Sarah Chevers, prisoners of the Inquisition in Malta from 1659-1662.⁴ On still another occasion, he states, when he came to Roberts' house, George Fox, Samuel Fisher, and Thomas Rawlinson took him aside into an upper room where Rawlinson then was allowed to "taunt very sharply" at Perrot. This treatment, Perrot claims, he bore "in meekness and patience" until Fox himself began to criticize Perrot once again—this time for writing "verses and hard words," too free use of money, and still other things. In one of these meetings Perrot promised that he would "the Lord willing (when coming to my Wife) speak to her in faithfulness to tender Friends even to the utmost of her Estate, a full satisfaction for all that was expended on me in the time of my Travels and Sufferings". This, he later writes, "was not a hasty nor impatient speech," although Fox later "didst render it so" to many other people.⁵

In one of Fox's confrontations with him concerning the "Hat in Prayer," Perrot reports,

I told thee that it was that which the Lord required it of me; if I should do otherwise, then I should sin: and therefore in as much as the Unity of the Saints, stood not in an Hat, or an

¹ Crosse MSS, 98. The paper which he has written is undoubtedly that found in Swarthmore MSS 5/17 [Trans. vii. 85].

² Fox, *Camb. Jnl.*, ii. 10.

³ Braithwaite, *BQ*, p. 342.

⁴ Besse, *Sufferings*, ii, 399-420; Braithwaite, *BQ*, pp. 428-432.

⁵ Rich, *Hidden things brought to Light*, pp. 3-7.

outward Action with the Hat, but in the Sp[irit] only; every Man walking according to the motions and guidings of it: for me to do a thing contrary to the motion of the Spirit, and thereby to sin against my God; instead of seeking Unity with the Saints in such a manner, I should disunite my Soul from such as stood in the True Unity and Fellowship in the Holy and True Spirit; and therefore I said further to thee, that I desired and entreated both thee and all Friends to bear with me in that particular: for in that, I said also often unto thee, and divers others; that I stood not in opposition to any Man that could say by the Word of the Living God, that he was moved to take off his Hat in Prayer; which I did esteem sufficient to have satisfied any rational Man living, that sought not to make his mind an absolute enforcing Rule, Law, or Tye, for another Mans Conscience; and seeing nothing of this would satisfie thee, I did conclude that thou wert not right in that particular: And by large experience I can say also, that most of all the reputed and eminent Ministers that came freshly to London, whilst I was there, they most usually came to me to have some cer[tain] controverting Discourse with me: some looking with sower Countenances, others demeaning themselves with stately slighting Carriages towards me, which I could not approve of; and they being as I saw much cherished by thee, I also esteemed thee not right in that particular.¹

One of Perrot's real admirers (one of those willing to walk six miles to be with him) has left an account of one of these gatherings at Gerard Roberts' house. Isabel Harker reports that John Perrot, George Fox, Francis Howgill, Richard Hubberthorne, and George Whitehead were present—as well as a number of less important Friends such as Anne Michael, John Osgood, John Pennyman, Mary Booth, and Isabel Harker herself. She reported that

the god of Eternal power wisdome & love did mightily appeare in his tender lambe [*i.e.*, Perrot], whose liveing testimony for god to my understanding (& all who came not with a prejudice against John, or any of them) as Clear as Christiall; and they seemed to be something coole at last, all except R.H. But the German doctor and his wife & some others comeing into the Roome caused a Riseing at present. But they went with JP into an upper Roome, & then R.H. shewed as I heard more bitterness: and spoke harsh things, which I shall forbear to wright: but when thou comes thou will heare the full Relation of the truth of it, but G.F. & F.H. & G.W. parted in love with him & so did deare Will: Dewsberry (who is well) & H. J.²

This meeting at Gerard Roberts', where Francis Howgill parted in love with Perrot, may possibly be the same occasion

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

² Crosse MSS, 100.

about which Perrot wrote at a later date, saying that Howgill called him aside one evening at Roberts' house for some private discourse. But when Perrot heard him out, it proved to be "the wonted Matter" that Fox and others "used to insist and strike upon, *viz.* The Hat, Verses, and hard Words; and writing the secrets of my mind to *Geo. Fox the Younger*".¹ Perrot's defense of his "Hat, Verses and hard Words" must have left Howgill temporarily speechless:

so concerning the Hat, I answered him that it was [a] matter of Conscience to me, and hoped that he would not have me go against that to sin, and so induce me to be a transgressor. Touching Verses, I told him that if they offended any Friend in *England*, when I sent them from *Rome*, if any had (Brother-like) turned the sense of them into Prose, to have taken off the offence from any; I believe that I should have taken it dearly—well. And so likewise concerning hard words, if any had put easier in the place of them; it would have been a brother-like Action to have removed offence, though in me there was no occasion, because I was innocent and unknowing in the matter; but if a fault was in any, it was in them that reproved me for the thing, which could have given the sense of my Writings otherwise, but did not: And therefore such fault-finders, and not (the supposed found) fault-menders, I concluded not to be right in that particular.²

Edward Burrough, who was responsible for Perrot's conviction in Ireland in 1655, met with Perrot at Acton and likewise took occasion to speak with him "touching the Hat, and writting hard words and Verses, &c." After a very frank discussion, in which Perrot's hurt feelings about his treatment by his brethren became very apparent, Perrot once more made an offer to "all Ministers or other Friends in *England*, that had any thing in their minds against me to meet together, and Object whatever they would to my face, and I should be willing to hear all, only desiring the Liberty to make forth my selfe, that my heart might be known unto them touching every particular."³ He continues by saying that "though I might desire also so many Friends with me that had perfect Unity and Fellowship with my Soul (in the Spirit) as should countervail the number of *Objectors* against me, yet for peace sake amongst us all, I should not expect

¹ Rich, *Hidden Things brought to Light*, p. 7.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

nor seek such a thing, only offer my self freely and singly to Answer all, as to what they pretended to have against me, . . .”¹ Burrough turned down this offer, probably sensing that little positive would come out of it. Quite naturally Perrot, feeling himself to be completely open and honest in this offer, thought himself “wronged and grosly abused” by this rejection—troubled “that I should be in many Mouthes accused, and not find that equal Justice to be heard among all, though I desired none other but accusers to hear me; for better Justice than such proceedings, do Friends diverse times find and from the Worlds People, that are our persecutors.”²

During this growing rupture of relationships between Perrot and the main Quaker leaders, there were several other factors that contributed to the breakdown, first in communications and then in fellowship. Perrot reports that his practise of setting up evening meetings in and around London was condemned by Fox and others—meetings which he reports had “a good effect of raising divers, restoring others, and strengthening others in the everlasting Truth of God, which are Seals to me beyond mans judgment.”³ The development of these evening sessions, when coupled with his increasing absence from the evening gatherings at Gerard Roberts’ house where most of the visiting Ministers gathered, raised serious questions in the minds of many Friends about Perrot’s motives. He, however, claims that he found Roberts’ house a place of strife and contention more than of peace and quietness:

I have often come at Evenings here at this House, in expectation of sitting together (as thou remembered we have formerly used to do) to wait upon the Lord; but I have observed, that scarce a time of all the times that I have come to such an end, as in waiting upon the Lord, we might feel each other in the Vertue and Power of the Lord: but mine expectation I have missed, and instead of waiting upon God, I have been called by one or other into one Room or other, to attend unto controverting words and terms; at which I said I was grieved: and in as much as my Spirit was not Contention, I not seeking it, but it so frequently following me in others, and in that I knew True Religion was Peace and Sweetness of Spirit: except I saw some

¹ *Ibid.*

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

amendment of those things, I should seek in avoiding that place of Strife and Contention (experimentally found by me) to find some other place and persons, who in Spirit could sit down with me to wait upon the Living God in peace and quietness, and stillness of mind.¹

As Perrot's stay in London came to an end, for he was about to leave for Bristol and then Ireland, he sought a final meeting with Fox, Howgill, Whitehead, and Hubberthorne—having a desire to leave the city “in Love and Peace with all my Friends and Brethren, and to have their love jointly and unanimously to go along with me.” Perrot says that he intreated, requested, beseeched, and begged for this love and was told that *if he did certain things* their love would go with him. To this offer, he responded that this would be “purchased” love and not a free gift from them as he had requested and sought:

and forasmuch as the things propounded for me to do, were contrary to my Conscience in the sight of God, I therefore should not purchase the love of man by drawing on my self the Displeasure of God; So then we came to discourse the particulars, the chief of which are touching the Hatt, and the two papers² that I had written concerning it, F.H. said if he had known so much of my mind before, he should not have had anything against my practice or my papers concerning it. So after diverse things were much debated, the result was this, given in strict charge by thyself [George Fox], that friends should live in love and unity together, for we had many Enemies abroad, and it was not a time for we to have a contest amongst our selves; and therefore also it was given in Charge by thee . . . that there should be no more scribbling nor writing one against another touching the Hatt &c. But that all should live in peace and love and unity together.³

This meeting at Gerard Roberts' house was followed by another at William Travers' house. At this meeting, Perrot says, such was the “pretended Love” by Fox and Howgill that they and Perrot parted with embraces, “which (the Lord knoweth) was with all my heart, as one that rejoiced in the Love that appeared in such a shew, not concluding it otherwise than real in your hearts also”. In spite of all the love and words, Perrot claims that he was only a few days

¹ *Ibid.*

² Crosse MSS, 12 and Swarthmore MSS 5/17 [Trans. vii. 85].

³ Rich, *Hidden Things brought to Light*, pp. 9-10. This may be the meeting Isabel Harker describes in Crosse MSS, 100.

out of London, having just arrived at Isaac Penington's house, when "there came Letters from one and from another and another, as if Peace or Love had never been thought on; Sheets almost full touching the Hatt, filled with contentious arguments." Other people wrote letters on ahead to Bristol, in order to get to Friends there before Perrot arrived. Fox himself is accused of writing two papers "in which were certain unsound and preposterous words touching the Hatt."¹

One of the two papers which Fox wrote here, late in 1661, is that which is now listed as Epistle 214 in his collected epistles.² Fox attacks Perrot and his spirit, practices, and pretensions in no uncertain terms. Fox leaves no doubt that the Perrotonian position is completely unacceptable:

Friends, the Power of the Lord God is over all them, that keep on their Hats in Prayer, and they do not keep on their Hats in Prayer neither by the Motion, nor the Power of God, nor by the Spirit of God, but (by an earthly, dark Spirit) against it, and them that are in the Power of God: This was the first Ground of it, both in Jo. Perrot and his Company, when he run out, and J.N. when he run out; and this first was done in Opposition to them, that were in the Truth, and in the Power of God; but the Power of God will crush to pieces that fained, dark, earthly Spirit, and to the Earth and Pit it must go, with all its fained and false Pretences; and the Power of the Lord God, and his Truth reigns over it all.

The first, that go up in this Posture of keeping on their Hats in Prayer against Friends, were the Ranters. The next was J.N. [James Nayler] but he quickly, by the Power of the Lord, saw it and judged it; and the next was Jo. Perrot, whose End was according to his Work, and so will those, that continue in it: For the Power of God is over them, and their dark, earthly Spirit; and the Power of God was, before they were, and will remain when that they are gone, and it reigns over them all: And that is the Word of the Lord God to you all. And for my part I had as leive see a Priest to stand up in a Meeting, as one of these dark, earthy Spirits with their Hats on their Heads, when that Friends pray; for they cannot deceive Friends. For I have been more burthened with their dark, subtile and Sophistical Spirit, than with the Priests, which had no more shew of Reverence to God (in that) than to a Horse, whose outward seeming Righteousness hath decieved many; but the Power of God (which destroyeth the Deceiver) undeceiveth and bringeth People to

¹ Rich, *Hidden Things brought to Light*, p. 11.

² George Fox, *A Collection of Many Select and Christian Epistles, Letters and Testimonies. Written on sundry Occasions, by that Ancient, Eminent, Faithful Friend and Minister of Christ Jesus, George Fox*, London, 1698, Epistle 214, pp. 175-177.

that, which did *first Convince* them. And they that kept on their *Hats*, when *Friends prayed*, after a while some of them ran to the *Priests* to be *married*, and some to hear them in their *Steeple-Houses*; then this *dark, earthy Spirit* could bow, and *put off its Hat* to its own; the *dark Spirit*, which kept on the *Hat* in the *Assemblies* of the *Righteous*, in *Opposition* against the *Spirit and Power* of God: And so, this *Spirit* hath led *People* into a *Fainedness of Love and Liberty*, which the *Power and Spirit* of God cannot own, but judge and stand over, and reign over, if they keep their *Habitations* in *Power*, and *Life* and *Truth* of God; which reigneth.

If they, that are and have been in this *dark, earthy Spirit*, had but had a regard to the *Power* of God and his *Truth*, they would have been *Tender*, and afraid of giving any *Occasion of Offence*, both to them that are *within*, and to them that are *without*, to draw out their *Minds* to look at that, which their *earthly Spirit* has promoted; and so to lay *Stumbling-blocks*, and set up an *Idol*, and an *Image* to look at, which draws *Peoples Eyes* from the *Witness of God* in themselves . . . And this *earthly Spirit* judges all, that are gathered together in the *Power*, and that are constrained by the *Power and Love* of God, in a familiar way, to *take one another by the Hand*, through the dearness and nearness of the *Love* of God, and the pure, clean and *holy Life*; and also are moved by the *Power* of the Lord God to *put off their Hats in Prayer*. This *dark Sophistical, earthly Spirit*, thus hath judged these *Practices* of the *People of God* afore-mentioned, to be but a *Form*, which are done in the *Power* of God, it being out of the *Power* itself, and the *Fellowship and Unity* of it. And because they, that are gone (from that which *first convinced* them) into *outward things*, and into their *Form* in the *earthly Spirit*, it judges those that will not follow them, that have *lost the Power* of God. And thus many of them are dark[e]ned with a *cankered, rusty Spirit*, which will corrupt them, and hath destroyed many: And this is *that*, that has brought the *Plague of Hardness of Heart*, through which there has been *Strangeness*, and not *Unity*, nor *Familiarity*, nor *Nighness* in the *Truth*; for how should it, when they are gone from that, which *first Convinced* them? To that all must come, before they have *Fellowship* and true *Unity* in the *Power and Truth* of God; which, if that had been minded, it would have led to follow, *Whatsoever things are Comely, whatsoever things are Decent, whatsoever things are of good Report*, and such things as make for *Peace*: But this *Spirit* has followed the contrary, and therefore the *Power* of the Lord God, and the *Life and Truth*, is against it, and over it is gone, and reigns.

And ye with your *earthly Spirit* and *earthly Form*, have given *Occasion* to the *World* to say, *That the People of God called Quakers, are divided, some with their Hats on, and some with them off, and so they are opposite one to another*. And these are the *Fruits of earthly Spirit*, which would bring *Darkness* and *Earth* over all; but the *Power* of God is over this *dark and earthly*

Spirit, and the *World*, and them that are in it; and looketh upon them, and the *World* as one against the *Truth*, and the *Power* of God. And the People of *God* called *Quakers*, are *One* (and not divided) in the *Power* of God and his *Truth*; and in God's *Power* and *Spirit* they are in *Unity* in the *Truth* and *Power* of an endless *Life*.¹

This epistle, dated 1661 in the collection which appeared at the end of the seventeenth century, must have appeared in 1662 (N.S.)—after Perrot's departure from London on 1 January 1662. It is possible that it may be even later, for the dates to these letters were often supplied by Fox at a later time and often only represent an approximation. Nonetheless, we see here very clearly that the battle lines are drawn quite early and that the struggle between Fox and his supporters and Perrot and his party is already getting under way.

While Perrot looked upon keeping on the "Hat" purely as a matter of the conscience of an individual, Fox injected the question of the *unity* and *fellowship* of the group. Perrot also felt that he and his group alone were correct in attitude, motive, and practice. Fox and many other early Quaker leaders had serious questions about the motives and attitudes of the Perrotonians—as well as feeling that they had initiated *a new form* to replace the practice which the "Hat" party was condemning. In spite of all their talk about not having any "divisive and renting" motives, Perrot and his followers produced "divisive and renting" results. It was just one step from refusing to take off one's hat when one prayed himself to leaving it on when someone else prayed.² Still another step, as can be seen from a careful reading of Epistle 214, was taken by the Perrotonians, who also rejected the *shaking of hands* that had come to be so important in Quakerism. How could another feel that much talked about love and unity when heads remained covered as he prayed and his outstretched hand was ignored or rejected?

Fox was troubled not only by Perrot's attitude toward the hat, but also by the beard which Perrot grew. A number of

¹ Epistle 214, almost completely quoted here, was also reproduced as a Postscript in John Bolton, *A Testimony in that which separates between the pretious and the vile. And is for the friends and brethren who love the lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth*, [London, 1673].

² Sewel, *History*, 1795 ed., i. 533.

his party followed Perrot's example¹ and sprouted beards also—including Charles Bayly and Robert Rich (one of Nayler's disciples, now living in Barbados, who became a strong supporter of Perrot). Where Fox was concerned, the keeping on of the hat must have been like waving one red flag and the wearing of the beard a second. Fox quite naturally must have thought "This is James Nayler all over again!" (Just as Herod Antipas, speaking poetically, said of Jesus "This is John the Baptist whom I beheaded. He is risen from the dead.") James Nayler's refusal to remove his hat² when George Fox prayed had cut Fox to the quick—so much so that he never really seemed to forgive him (as becomes increasingly clear in his rather frequent coupling of Nayler's example with Perrot's behaviour). Fogelklou, one of Nayler's biographers, has said that Nayler's "hat demonstration wounded Fox deeply, and years afterwards the recollection of it roused his indignation. It prejudiced his future policy, magnified the hat ceremonial out of all proportion."³ It should also be remembered that James Nayler wore a beard, and that at the time of his "fall" and arrest one of his followers had a copy of the "Description of our Saviour by Publius Lentulus to the Senate of Rome in writing"—so that some people thought Nayler was attempting to imitate Jesus' appearance.⁴ Had Fox been able to forget Nayler's refusal to remove his hat, Perrot's beard probably would still have been enough to remind him of the terrible crisis of 1656!

Fox must have been aware of still another development which was hardly a coincidence—the winning of Nayler's former supporters to Perrot's position and their enlisting in his "cause" (perhaps even before Perrot was fully aware that there was a "cause"!). Many of these people had never really forgiven Fox for his treatment of Nayler, so that it was easy for them to find a "hero" in Perrot who—in the name of freedom of the Spirit—was challenging Fox's

¹ *Ibid.*

² Concerning this episode, see Fox, *Camb. Jnl.*, i. 244; Mabel Richmond Brailsford, *A Quaker from Cromwell's Army: James Nayler*, London, 1927, p. 111; Emilia Fogelklou, *James Nayler, The Rebel Saint 1618-1660*, London, 1931, pp. 163-164.

³ Fogelklou, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 187; Brailsford, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

leadership of the Quaker movement. This group would have included some of those Ranters who were not as willing as James Nayler to recant and follow Fox's leadership; they must have seen Perrot as a new star to follow. Writing some years later, John Bolton says "most of those that had joynd to *James* [Nayler], fell in with *John Perrot*."¹ Had we not had Bolton's testimony, we would still have guessed this anyhow from the names of those who spoke and wrote in favor of Perrot and his position: Mary Booth, Robert Rich, John Harwood, and a number of others.

Perrot records that as he left London for Ireland by several slow stages, there had been a parting "with embraces". Yet, within a few days, critical letters from various Friends began to follow him. Thomas Briggs was the first to send out such a letter, and then there came other writings "from one and from another and another".² One of these letters, written by George Whitehead (and approved by George Fox, we are told by William Mucklow) came to Perrot at Isaac Penington's.³ Some of these letters reached Bristol ahead of Perrot. Finally, there appeared the two papers by Fox—including the one rather fully quoted above.

What made Fox change his mind and produce several writings (that is, *if Perrot correctly understood and accurately reported Fox's attitude and judgment at the very end of 1661*)? Was this due to further reflection on Fox's part? Did it stem from aggravation caused by some of the more extreme Perrotonians? Might he have heard rumours of Perrot's own talking, in spite of Perrot's denial that he was the first to speak: "Nay George, I concealed thy name in thy ill Dealing by me from the tender Wife of my bosome; and till I returned out of Ireland unto Minehead, I neither wrote nor spake of any of the Contentions to any soul but to such as had uncertain Reports thereof, and so desired the truth of matters from me."⁴

¹ John Bolton, *Judas and His Treachery, Still continued and his Rage doth more increase, [etc.]*, London, 1670, pp. 18-19.

² Rich, *Hidden Things brought to Light*, p. 11.

³ William Mucklow, *Tyranny and Hypocrisy Detected: Or a further Discovery of the Tyrannical-Government, Popish-Principles, and vile Practices of the now-Leading Quakers*, London, 1673, p. 24.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 15. Italics added.

Whatever caused the disappearance of the harmony Perrot thought existed, the whole situation was made much worse by the appearance of Perrot's "Epistle for Amity and Unity" in 1662 (shortly after his return from Ireland to England).¹ In this document Perrot writes:

yet known be it unto you, that there are of the People called Seekers, Baptists, Independents, and others (whose Conversations become the Profession of what they own, and witness (to be of God) in themselves) *whom I as truly own, and with whom I have more Unity, than with divers which are called by the Name of Quakers, whose Name have not changed them from the Nature of the Enmity which works against the heavenly Spirit of Unity, and Power of the Love of God. So be it understood that the Love and Unity that I seek among all (and none other than the upright sincere-hearted to God) stands in none other than the measure of the Spirit and Grace of God, as it is given unto, and manifested in us all, which (as it's improved in our Hearts) will keep our Minds up to God, and stay our Souls in himself, and fashion and frame us in a gracious Life, well-pleasing unto himself.*²

This 1662 publication *Epistle for Unity and Amity*, while somewhat appealing to non-Friends in the various denominations mentioned in the title, soon drew an answer from George Fox, who was scandalized by several implications of this writing and found it unthinkable that Perrot or any Friend would find *more Unity* with Presbyterians, Independents, and others (at whose hands Friends had suffered great persecution) than with his fellow Quakers!³ If the fellowship and unity of the group had not already been sacrificed for the sake of the "Hat" and in the rejection of the handshake, certainly Perrot demolished it with this tract. It is quite

¹ John Perrot, *An Epistle For the most Pure Amity and Unity in the Spirit and Life of God: To all Sincere-Hearted-Souls Whether Called Presbyterians, Independents, Baptists, Seekers, Quakers, or Others, Under any other Denomination whatsoever, that desire that God's Truth and Righteousness in Power, may be Exalted over all, within them and without them (in the whole Earth) for Ever*, London, 1662.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13. The copy of this work in Friends House Library, London (Tract vol. 79/23) has a date written in ink "about the 8th of the 5 mo, [16]62."

³ See [George Fox], *The Spirit of Envy, Lying, and Persecution, Made Manifest, Etc.*, London, 1663, p. 7; John Bolton, *Judas His Thirty Pieces Not Received, But Sent back to him, for his own Bag, Etc.*, London, 1666, p. 201; John Harwood, *To all People that profess the Eternal Truth of the Living God. This is A true and real demonstration of the cause why I have denied, and do deny the Authority of George Fox, which is the original ground of the difference betwixt us, [etc.]*, London, 1663, p. 5.

possible, and perhaps even probable, that Perrot meant it as more of a slap against his Quaker opponents than he did as an appeal to kindred spirits in other groups.

And so the "Hat Controversy" waxed hotly, with each side beginning to flood the countryside with writings as well as attempting to present its views to Friends personally. Sewel, the historian, writes "In the meantime G. Fox laboured both by word and writing, to stop his [Perrot's] progress: and though most of his friends also bore testimony against it, yet there passed several years before this strange fire was altogether extinguished."¹

In the midst of this oral and written exchange which marked the spring of 1662, a new element entered the picture—the arrest of John Perrot in June and his commitment to Newgate.² Other Quakers who shared Perrot's 1662 imprisonment in Newgate were John Crook and Edward Burrough. Crook, some years later, reported that during this period John Perrot

forebore the Wearing his Hat [in prayer], on purpose, as we supposed, to avoid Offence; and also, at that time he writ a Paper which was Satisfactory concerning the Matter of the Hat, and *had he* made it publick at that time, it might have prevented what afterwards befel him: At this very juncture, . . . there was such a Compliance, and Hopes of his Recovery, . . .³

So sure were Burrough and Crook about Perrot's "compliance" and so strong were their "hopes of his recovery" that they allowed a joint statement to go out from Newgate carrying the names of all three and even expressing the feeling of unity which they had with him in this time of their common imprisonment and suffering.⁴ Crook lived long enough to regret this particular development!

During an early imprisonment in Newgate in 1661, Perrot was summoned before Charles II—an episode which,

¹ Sewel, *History*, 1795 ed., i. 533.

² *Ibid.*, ii, 8; Besse, *Sufferings*, i. 368-369, refers to several arrests at the Bull and Mouth in June, 1662, but does not name the Quakers taken. Cf. Besse, *Sufferings*, i. 369-381, for the trial of John Crook and the conditions in Newgate in 1662.

³ William Penn, *Judas and the Jews Combined against Christ and his Followers*, London, 1673, p. 72. The whole statement by John Crook is found on pp. 71-72.

⁴ [Edward Burrough], *To all Dear Friends & Brethren In the Everlasting Truth & Covenant of the Almighty Jehovah Blessed for evermore*, n.p., 1662, contains statements by Burrough, Crook, and Perrot, dated 12 June 1662.

once again, raises the question of the relationship between these two figures. A letter from "J.L." reports that Perrot "was sent for out of prison before the Kinge (whether he had a desire to see him or noe, I know not) & pretty much discourse they had; He was very loveing to John and gave order for his release, & all with him."¹ In this 1662 Newgate stay, however, there is no recorded visit with Charles II. This time Perrot, in order to win his freedom, appears to have promised that he would take himself *into voluntary exile*. This is the testimony of John Whiting, writing from Ivelchester [Ilchester] Prison in 1682 to his "anciently Beloved Friend, J.M.," who was obtaining his freedom from Newgate by promising to leave for Pennsylvania. Whiting wrote:

Remember how thou hast blamed *Jo. Perrot* in times past, for going out of Prison on that Account, when so many suffer'd in *Newgate, London*, in the year 1662; and their Persecutors offer'd them, that if they would accept of their Liberty, and go out of the Nation of their own accord [into voluntary Exile] they should have their Liberty, which he accepted of, and never prosper'd after: And wilt thou do the same?²

¹ Swarthmore MSS 6/60 [Trans. vii. 629]. This letter contains an interesting account of the terrible events which have come upon Rome since Perrot's departure—events which Perrot had "predicted"! The Transcript copy has mistakenly dated the letter 1665, while the original has a 1661 date. Cf. MS Port. 41/85 (Friends House Library, London), a letter from William Brome to John Perrot.

² John Whiting, *Persecution Exposed in Some Memoirs Relating to the Sufferings of John Whiting, And many others of the People called Quakers, etc.*, London, 1714, p. 83.

CHAPTER VII
ON THE AMERICAN SIDE OF THE ATLANTIC
COMMUNITY, 1662-1665

Once Perrot had decided to accept voluntary exile in Barbados as a means of obtaining his freedom from Newgate, it was necessary to let his followers know that he was going "to preach the Gospel" at Barbados.¹ Fox (and the majority of ministers) felt that Perrot must "purify" and redeem himself before leaving for America—so that he called upon Perrot to write a paper to condemn "all he hath spoken, written, and acted, to the grieving of the Children of God." Perrot was also to call in his paper which advocated the keeping on of the hat and condemned those who removed their hat in prayer. In addition to that, he was to condemn a letter which he, while in prison in Rome, had written to Jane Stokes (a paper in which he spoke "of taking a Strumpet, or a Whore, or the Pox").² Perrot always insisted that this last document had been misunderstood. Using the figures or imagery of Hosea, he had simply been trying to say that one must be totally obedient to God.

As great as Fox's grievances were concerning the "Hat" and the letter to Jane Stokes, these were indeed mild compared to the wound which he received from the publication of Perrot's *Epistle for Amity and Unity*. The idea of publishing such a book just before Perrot was to go overseas angered Fox very much—so that he expressed his feelings clearly:

And I do hear up and down a pitiful grief of Friends about a Book that he hath given out lately, numbering Friends with Presbiterians, Independants, Baptists, and Seekers, and others; and that he tells the world in it, That he hath more unity with such, than with many of the Quakers. O what a *Cain's* spirit is this! to go tell the World, the Priests, Presbiterians, Independants, and Baptists, who have prisoned and persecuted many Friends to Death; and ruined many Families; to go and tell such in print that he hath more unity with them than with some of the Quakers. O the foolishness, and ignorance and darkness! How hath a Cloud compassed him; quite out of

¹ Fox, *The Spirit of Envy, Lying, and Persecution, Made Manifest*, p. 13.

² Rich, *Hidden Things brought to Light*, p. 17.

wisdom and quite out of understanding: And now to go away beyond the Seas, as I fear he doth; and to publish such a Book before he goes, and blessed Friends with such as have persecuted them and murdered them. The way of the false Prophets. Surely if he had been wise, or sought for unity and love, which covers a multitude of sins; he would never have gone and told the World, if there had been any weakness amongst Friends. But this manifests his impatency; for this is not the way of one that seeks unity, but a spirit that would give up the children of God to the Persecutor.¹

Fox, who says that his "Love hath ever been to him, to have preserved him, and to keep him in the esteem of Friends," felt that his love have been "wickedly requited" by Perrot. And so Fox requested that his paper (largely quoted just above) be read to Perrot by Joseph Nicholson or some other Friend. He then added "for my part I cannot own his going away any where (for if I should, I should go against the Life of God, which I can never do) who hath made such work."

Perrot, so convinced that he was right and so unable to recant, left England "sorely smitten & wounded with hard dealing". Mary Booth (one of James Nayler's former followers), who had now become one of Perrot's chief advocates, felt that she must comfort him as she had parted with him on shipboard: "I remember, the word came to me, & I spake it to him in much sorrow, feirce hath been their wrath for they have diged down a wall, but the foundation of God standeth sure forever."²

Fox's letter of condemnation and disownment was read to Perrot at Gravesend before the ship left for Barbados. Perrot then, on shipboard, wrote an answer to it and read it to those Quakers who were on board. In his response he judged that George Fox was wrong in many things and also said that if "freinds will not let him alone he will make that persecuting spirit manifest which is amongst them". Nicholson and other Quakers spoke to him about his response but found him "as hard as flint". Nicholson reported to Margaret Fell, on 14 October 1662, shortly after the ship's arrival in Barbados, that "it was very hard to mee and some more abo[a]rd the ship to beare his Darke spirit yet for the

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

² Crosse MSS, 36.

truth sake we did beare it but what wee spoke to him in private about the paper he wrote to g. F."¹

When Perrot, Nicholson, and the other Quaker passengers arrived in Barbados, they found a Quaker community which had been in existence for a half dozen or more years—for Quakerism had first appeared there in 1655. Barbados then became the *cradle* of American Quakerism, with Elizabeth Harris going to Maryland (probably in 1656) and Mary Fisher and Ann Austin appearing in Boston in 1656. These Quakers arriving in Barbados from Gravesend in October 1662 were coming to an area which had already heard of John Perrot and which probably was, to some degree, already aware of the "Hat" controversy. Nicholson reports:

as for John Perrot people enquir much after, he was much kept down in the ship. The power of the lord is much over him, he likes not that but veryly he is a mear inchanter a dark spirited man and seeks not the good of others but to set up himselfe but assuredly the lord will overturn him except he repent in time and come out of his inchantments, how friends heare in the generall will take his sackrifice he offers I cane give thee litle account at present we haveing been so litle a time heare.²

Nicholson then reports that Perrot on the trip across the Atlantic had proved somewhat flexible on the "Hat" and less ascetic than before: "in his prayer about the hat he did desemble aboard the ship for some time he did pray with it of[f] and now he will eat flesh, the[y] say he complys to get any to follow him whereby he might be exalted and get himself a name". This development, plus Nicholson's knowledge that Robert [Malins?] and another person were likely to "be much one with him,"³ promised the spread of the "Hat" controversy to Barbados and then onward to the mainland.

Several weeks after his arrival in Barbados, Perrot sent a letter back to England, to be printed and circulated. There

¹ Swarthmore MSS 4/104 [Trans. ii, 943]. Concerning Perrot's response to the paper Nicholson read to him, see Rich, *Hidden Things brought to Light*, pp. 12-13.

² Swarthmore MSS 4/104 [Trans. ii, 943].

³ *Ibid.* 4/104. A defect in the manuscript makes it impossible to tell who these two sympathetic people were. A letter from "R.M." to "Dear, Dear John" came from Barbados in May 1662, when Malins was on the island. Cf. Rich, *Hidden Things brought to Light*, pp. 1-2.

has been widespread acceptance of him and his message—so different from the reception he had received in England earlier that year. He writes, on 3 November 1662:

And now surely I can say the blessings of God are on Barbados, beholding that abundance of simple and single Love which I see, feel, and enjoy in the hearts of the simple, one towards another, which is a great refreshment unto me after many weary dayes, in that I can also say his own right hand brought me hither in blessing, and put me among pretious Plants of Peace, that we might eat of the Grapes of Gladness, and ripe Clusters of Joy in the Mansions of our Fathers Mercies together; and here I find not the former need of a *Shield* and *Buckler* in my Friends house, for the *sharp Weapons* of War are not *handled* within our joynt Habitations, but are *reserved* for service against the Armies of *Aliens*; and yet also I can say, that God is making the *point* of each mans *Spear*, the *Arrow* in each mans *Quiver*, and *Sword* at each mans *side*, Love to Enemies, which kills the Enmity, and raiseth Life in *Simplicity*, to the honour of him, whose blessed Work it is, who in all his Works is worthy of Glory and everlasting Praise, . . .¹

Before Perrot has reached the above-quoted portion of his letter, he expressed his great love “to the whole Flock in the Fold of our Lord Jesus,” his remembrance of them, and his prayers for them.² He then moved on to give them advice—admonishing them to “Hear . . . therefore the sound of the Spirit’s voice in me, and let it enter into the ballance of the Sanctuary in you, that all may know its full weight in the more full and clear manifestation of the day . . .”³ Perrot then proceeded to warn them against “judging the tender Conscience of any man, lest you should do the thing which displeaseth the mind of God: For the Conscience is that seat which his Glorious Majesty will rule and reign in, even to the end of all Generations.”⁴ He then proceeds to relate a vision which he has seen:

I have seen three Brethren of the house and tribes of *Israel*, of three Judgments concerning one case, and very frequently six of their Families, three of them one Judgment, and three of them of another Judgment touching one case; and because of

¹ John Perrot, *To the Upright in Heart, and Faithful People of God: Being an Epistle Written in Barbados the 3d. of the 9th Month, 1662*, London, 1662, p. 10.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

the oppositeness of their Judgments (both held in a certain strong zeal) have had hard thoughts one of another; and then I have seen a seventh soul that righteously said, that neither of their Judgments were sound in God's Eternal Word; and then the seventh soul uttered words in the Spirit's Life, saying, I see an even plain path between these two, in which is written, (*viz.*) *Patience, Humility, Moderation, and Charity*, can judge the case in equity; and the seventh soul also saw the infirmities of the other six in their hard thoughts of the three against three, yet had the charity to pity them because of their infirmity; so that that soul could not therefore judge and condemn any of them for the cause that their beings were (really of God) in several Dispensations, for which there was a Zeal more in the passionate part, than the pure temperate Love; so that through the simple sentence of the case by each of them might be true in themselves, according to the Dispensations that they were in, whereby they sinned not, but sufforded by the inordinate, or somewhat incompounded Zeal, not being so fully in the Love which gives the soundest knowledge, yet as the case stood in another soul, in another Dispensation, that was weightier, and absolutely true in God the Discoverer of the Good, neither of both the other Judgments could reach unto it righteously to justifie or condemn it, and therefore in such cases I am taught, fear, unless I should err in seeking to wrest others mens Consciences.¹

In this passage Perrot seems to be declaring a person's freedom to what he is led to do [wished to do?]²—a message which was bound to win many converts. Late in 1663 Joseph Nicholson wrote a letter to George Fox bemoaning developments among Barbados Quakers: "indeed here is sad worke and mad work by John P[errot] all upon heaps the like I never saw, the[y] are not the people the[y] were, John[s] blessing is very black surly his end I fere will not be good for this his labor indeed its very hard."³ He also added the bad news that Robert Mealling [Malins] has married "a young lass which never knew what truth was and that Mealling's chief friends of former days now rise up against him in enmity." (Here was one of many who followed Perrot's advice to do what seemed right *to him*, without regard to the view of the Meeting.) And, to make matters worse, Jane Stokes (who may have been in New England just before this time) has just arrived at Barbados. This information is

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

² This is the interpretation placed on Perrot's preaching by Barbados Friends much later (1678). See Port. 23/156, Friends House Library, London.

³ Swarthmore MSS, 4/155 [Trans. iv. 947-948].

followed by a sentence full of sadness: "she [Jane Stokes] is a very bad spirit indeed and this people will heare nothings against Paratt although the[y] are much condemned within themselves for truly ther[e] ar[e] [some] of them can scarce looke one in the truth in the face."¹

During 1663 Perrot appears to have made several visits to Jamaica. Early in 1663, in a letter to "Dear dear seven times endeared Mary,"² he reports that he feels a drawing toward England and Ireland, even though he has had a real service in Jamaica and "a seed is scattered up and down". It is possible, he writes, that he may make a *short* visit to England—arriving perhaps six weeks after his letter would reach England. Perrot's wife apparently has moved from Ireland to England by this time, for John says "If E[lizabeth] P[errot] is in London she is to stay a little while" until he comes for her!³

Three weeks after this initial letter from Perrot to Mary he writes a second one to Mary Booth, saying that he has strengthened the weak, that some have been convinced and a few truly converted. At this time he feels drawn towards Italy and may decide to go there.⁴ Several months later, still writing from Jamaica on 6 June, Perrot sent another letter to his "sister and mother" Mary Booth, telling her that in a few days he and his friends (John Browne, William Fuller, and John Taylor it would seem) were "designed home[?] for vergina in a ship in which I am concerned as to part of her". From Virginia they hoped to go on to London if nothing prevented them.⁵ In another letter also written in June Perrot asked Mary to take care of his wife Elizabeth if she came to London—"for there is few women like her for Chastity to God, & love to a husband." He expressed the hope that Mary would help her bear the griefs that she would meet, "for I would not have her wounded for much."⁶ In all of these letters one senses both the deep love that

¹ *Ibid.*, 4/155 [Trans. iv. 948].

² This is probably Mary Booth of London who received a gift in Perrot's will and who was one of his staunchest supporters.

³ Crosse MSS, 7. This letter, written from Caquay in Jamaica, is dated 3 March 1663.

⁴ Crosse MSS, 30. This letter is dated 26 March 1663.

⁵ Crosse MSS, 14.

⁶ Crosse MSS, 15. This letter from Jamaica is simply dated June, 1663.

Perrot has for his wife and the strong bond of love that exists between Perrot and Mary Booth. There is a great deal of extravagant language expressing this bond between John Perrot and Mary Booth: "Thou hast borne my burthens, & licked my sore wounds, thou hast sought my consolations & Refreshments."¹ One other letter from this 1663 stay in Jamaica might be cited, a letter of 14 June to Edmond Crosse (whose preservation of Perrot's letters from America helps us understand what happened to Perrot after leaving England), Robert Duncan, and Thomas Bayles. In this epistle Perrot reported that the number of convinced people in Jamaica has doubled in the time that he has been in the island. He also reports that the "rage of most of the furious" has moderated, and calls upon these three and their colleagues not to harbour revenge.²

Perrot, his companion John Browne, and probably William Fuller and John Taylor, made their way from the West Indies to the American mainland—going to the Chesapeake Bay area of Maryland and Virginia where Quakerism was already well established. In 1656, or possibly even late in 1655, Elizabeth Harris had proclaimed the Quaker message in Maryland around Rhoad River, South River, Herring Creek, Severn, and Brand Neck on the Western Shore and at Kent Island on the Eastern Shore. A large number of Quaker meetings had sprung up in the seven years or so before Perrot and his colleagues put in their appearance in Maryland in the summer or early autumn of 1663.³ Quakerism was a little later in getting started in Virginia, stemming from the work of Josiah Coale and Thomas Thurston in 1657 and William Robinson, Christopher Holder, and Robert Hodgson in 1658.⁴ By 1661 George Rofe was able to write to

¹ Crosse MSS, 14.

² Crosse MSS, 46. Cf. Crosse MSS, 47, where we find a statement by Crosse on where the "sins" are.

³ Concerning early Maryland Quakerism, see Kenneth L. Carroll, "Maryland Quakers in the Seventeenth Century," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, xlvii (1952), 297-313; "Persecution of Quakers in Early Maryland (1658-1661)," *Quaker History*, lii (1964), 67-80; Rufus M. Jones, *The Quakers in the American Colonies*, London, 1923, pp. 266-280; and J. Reaney Kelly, *Quakers in the Founding of Anne Arundel County, Maryland*, Baltimore, 1963, pp. 1-35.

⁴ Concerning Quakerism in early Virginia, see Jones, *Quakers in the American Colonies*, pp. 268-276; Kenneth L. Carroll, "Quakerism on the Eastern Shore of Virginia," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, lxxiv (1966), 170-189.

Stephen Crisp that "many settled meetings there are in Maryland and Virginia."¹ Perrot, therefore, was not coming into an area where Quakerism was unknown. Rather, he was about to embark on a stormy preaching career in an area where Quakerism was growing rapidly and where a number of influential people had already been won into its fold.

As Perrot made his way through the various Quaker settlements in Tidewater Maryland and Virginia, his differences "made him more captivating and influential with the simple-minded people who were impressed that he exhibited 'greater spirituality' than did the other exponents of Quakerism."²

It seems likely that Perrot first went to Maryland, where he already had some sort of entree. Charles Bayly, who had come to Rome to rescue Perrot from prison, had been convinced by Elizabeth Harris' preaching in Maryland. William Fuller, who was with Perrot in Jamaica earlier in 1663, had also been one of her converts. Both of these had been influential figures in the growing Quaker community in the area around Annapolis.³

The response which Perrot met among Maryland Quakers fell far short of that in Barbados and Jamaica, so that he felt a sense of rejection which was reflected in several of his communications produced in that colony. One statement "given forth in Maryland, 1663, by the there sham[e]fully Intreated servant of the lord," contained a brief passage concerning the way the people of Israel could "scarcely bear Moses".⁴ This new "Moses" in the new "wilderness" found it no easy task to pursue the goal which had brought him to the Chesapeake Bay area. Another letter by Perrot was "given forth in Mariland, where he was evill intreated for his love". This second Maryland epistle, showing something of the response to Perrot and something of his reaction to his rejection, is well worth quoting:⁵

Friends, the lord if it be his pleasure, lay not evill to any of your Charge, in the day that he will secretly plead with Judah,

¹ Letter of George Rofe to Stephen Crisp, quoted in full in *Collectitia*, York, 1824, pp. 27-29, and in part by James Bowden, *The History of The Society of Friends in America*, London, 1850, i. 347.

² Jones, *Quakers in the American Colonies*, p. 276.

³ See the works cited in note 3 on p. 71.

⁴ Crosse MSS, 47-48.

⁵ Crosse MSS, 49.

which was borne the daughter of his love, through the pangs of Chosen Jerusalem; For, indeed, I as Joseph by his brethren for a beloved price of their own glory, have been most Ignominously sould for a prey to the Egyptians of this evill world.

What if my sheaves have stood in a stormy day, or if my branches have spread over walls, yet why, for such a cause should you treat me worse than a Brother; & as if I never had Relation to Jacobs house? or what, if in pharoahs prison I had learned to swear by his life, since I was not overcome by the wooing & alluring Temptations of the spouse of his bed? Why should I be treated as a vagabond, or worse than a soare Enemy, as if I had never allyance to Israels family?

Consider what I have suffered in my spirit at least a yeare & a halfe before I came personally among you, & what I boare in the long suffering of god for a considerable season after my comeing among you, consider my weakness, & the weightiness of my unparralled opposition (in this generation) & then aske the lord in the coole of a cleer day, if I had not a Cause, yea as great a Cause, as Jonah to contend with god, as David to cry unto him, & as Job to Reason with his friends. For the Lord is just & equall in all his wayes, whom my soule loves, Reverences, serves, & obeys with all my heart according to the Measure that I understand of his Righteousness, though divers of you will not, or at least do not see or apprehend it; yet the lord knowes it, & in his mercy you also may be yet given to know that you have peirced one of his little lambs, that suffered & suffereth for him.

Your condition is knowne to me, but I am truely in my spirit forewarned that I tell you it not at this time, but am Internally admonished to leave the Cause to my god to plead it in his time. Yet let not the lord plead it in displeasure but in mercy & everlasting love. Amen, saith the soule of him that hath no joy in your evill, who is your friend, which may yet be knowne to be soe in deed & truth.

This letter from Perrot reflects the struggle that had begun late in 1661 or 1662, as he refers to all that he had undergone *in the year and a half before he came to Maryland*. It also shows that the correspondence from England had preceded Perrot to Maryland so that, in spite of his friendship with Bayly and Fuller, rejection was also his lot here in Maryland because he had been branded a "vagabond" or one who was in "Cain's spirit," rather than one who dwells in God's spirit. Those who were in Cain's spirit were marked by envy, jealousy, murder, wrath, wickedness, etc., and therefore were judged to be "vagabonds". The term could not be applied to such people as Abel, Abraham, and Jesus who (even though they *wandered*) belonged to God's Spirit

and were, therefore, worthy in God's eyes.¹ Perrot's friends accused Fox of having sent "papers of enmity, and . . . his servants" to both Barbados and Virginia [a name often used to include Maryland, when employed to describe all the land opening on the Chesapeake Bay].²

Out of this troubling experience in Maryland, which only seemed to accentuate what had occurred earlier in England (and possibly to a lesser degree in Barbados and Jamaica), Perrot addressed a letter "To all Friends that have entertained hard thoughts of mee"—showing the pathos of Perrot's situation:

Friends, if I am abominable sinful, is it not of charity Rather for you to wrestle with god for me, then to persue & follow with sharp instruments of wrath, so fiercely (as hath appeared) after me?

If I am a foole & but very shallow, why doe you not choose to Edifie me in the pure wisdome of the lambs life?

If you think I have no life, & are persuaded you have fullness Remember that (in a life that is filled all the day long) I tell you this, that a charitable life which gives a true feeling is more certaine, than a faith that is generated & infused by various Reports: for the one will never make ashamed, but the other will.

My day is to suffer, to beare, and to forgive, to be Reviled, & not [to] Revile; I know this day is not the end of all days, but time is destined of god to Manifest all intents.

In faith I have patience & doe waite, not loosing love to any, peace be to all that love the lord.³

Perrot and his party appear to have been at Patuxent in Maryland on 18 October when John Browne felt called to return to London to the Bull and Mouth Meeting to give a "sign" against Friends there. From Maryland Browne and Perrot proceeded to Virginia where their activities lasted some months, continuing through the end of 1663 into early 1664. Mary Tomkins and Alice Abrose, two Friends who suffered greatly both in Virginia and New England, wrote to George Fox from the Clifts in Maryland on 18 January 1664 and reported that they had recently come from Virginia where they "had good servis for the lord [although] our

¹ Concerning this term "vagabond" see George Fox's papers in MS Port. 33/64, 70 (Friends House Library, London), where we see that a vagabond is one who does not walk "in the way of Truth."

² Harwood, *To all People that profess the Eternal Truth of the Living God*, p. 6.

³ Crosse MSS, 49.

sufarings have bin larg amonst them." They report that John Perrot is now in Virginia and that many there are leavened with his unclean spirit. They commented further that Perrot had done "much hurt" which made "our travells hard and our labors sore." The two women also wrote that what they had "boren and sufer^d consarning him" had been "more and heavear" than all that they have received from their enemies (whippings and banishment).¹

Apparently it was during the Virginia period of Perrot's mainland visit (1663-1664) that he "pushed the testimony against form and ceremony to the absurd extreme of 'nihilism'—there were to be no forms, not even the 'form' of holding meetings for worship!"² How successful he was in this endeavour is seen from John Burnyeat's testimony of 1666! This view that meetings should not be held at pre-arranged times, but only when the Spirit led people to gather, actually seems to have originated with Perrot's disciple William Salt rather than with Perrot himself. This radical point of view was expressed by Salt as early as 1662:

And though I have a high esteem as to Meetings, yet I am not to do the thing in my own will or time, nor any other, least it be said who required this at your hands. So that there is no other course to come into, but that which the Spirit of the Lord leads into daily; And not to uphold anything because it hath been done, no farther than the Spirit of the Lord moves, or leads thereunto at the present, Newly, for I am to serve God in Newnesse of Spirit; and so is the Creature kept in a daily Subjection to the Spirit in everything.³

The extent of Perrot's writing while in Virginia is unknown, although Mary Booth reported to Edmond Crosse that she had lately received letters from John Perrot in Virginia.⁴ None of these letters apparently exist today, so that it is impossible to look more deeply at his life and work

¹ Swarthmore MSS 4/239 [Trans. iv. 375].

² Jones, *Quakers in the American Colonies*. p. 276.

³ William Salt, *Some Breathings of Life, From a Naked Heart*, n.p., 1662, p. 4. Cf. Fox, *Camb. Jnl.*, i. 437, note which quotes from Swarthmore MSS 4/95 (1663) "Will Salt hath publisht in print a Book against first daye meetings, and that none should meet but as they are Immediately moved."

⁴ Crosse MSS, 36. Perhaps she used the term "Virginia" for the whole Chesapeake Bay area (including Maryland), as was sometimes done in the 1660s.

in these several months that he was active in Virginia. Although his "To the Simple in heart" is undated, it seems quite likely (from its location in the Crosse Collection and from the thought expressed within the document) that it may have been written at this juncture. In his poetic style, which stands out in this writing, Perrot is at his best:

Children this is not a day to warr, but waite in weeping for peace
in Israel. This is not a day to be merry in heart but mourne
because of the sines of Israel.

I am not bound to any appearance, to which Israel hath sought
to bind God: but in perfect freedome am bound to the Spirit
to be in apperance what it pleaseth.

I am a derision of many, A Reproach of many mouthes, yea, &
a wonder of sundry minds; But that which is wonderful to
me is this, that I yet live, glory, glory to the lord god in life
forever. Amen.

Children if you turne to fight with those that seeke to force you
to battles; if any of the just should be shame, you will be
guilty of their blood.

Through sufferings & sorrows I am dayly taught of the lambes
life, which is an Incomprehensible deepe of holyness, & an
Irreacheable height of wisdom.

Children stand still, and let the lord goe on in you, give your
spirits to him, when he will beare you further.¹

After a number of other bits of advice, Perrot ends this document by saying that his hope is not withered nor his faith faded—but that he remains zealous for the name of God ("though not in the method of formall Israel"). He feels that he will outlive contention, persecution, and cruelty. Even though "men may fly from me whilst I live, & if all should deserte me when through death I shall seale my Testimony of life: yet I believe in my god, all of these things will not move mee."²

Early in 1664, Perrot, accompanied by John Browne, left Virginia for Barbados. It was here that the two separated—with Browne going on to London to make his spectacular 20 May appearance at the Bull and Mouth.³ Perrot, however, stayed in the West Indies (for a while in Barbados, and then returning once again to Jamaica). Sometime after his arrival Perrot met and impressed Thomas Modyford, Governor of Barbados, with his "great Cunning, searching and indus-

¹ Crosse MSS, 50.

² *Ibid.*

³ Crosse MSS, 55-57.

trious Spirit" as well as with "his good Temper Skill and knowledge in Merchant affaires". Perrot's many avowals that he would lay down his life for King Charles ("to whose letters when he lay a Prisoner in Rome he affirmed to owe it") also helped to remove or allay any doubts or questions about Perrot which might have lingered in the Governor's mind. The Governor reported (on 10 May) to King Charles that all of these factors led him to appoint Perrot a Captain—as well as another reason which he records without being able to hide his glee: "And really Sir it may take off much of the rude roughness of that Sects temper, when they shall find in the Newes bookes that John Perrott an eminent preachinge Quaker was Content for his Ma^{ties} Service to appeare in a Sattin Sute with a Sword and Belt and to be Called Captaine."¹

Not only did Perrot become a Captain, but he was also appointed a diplomat or negotiator! With Colonel Theodore Cary, Perrot was dispatched to Santo Domingo "in Hispaniola" to negotiate with the President General of that island on "good correspondence and commerce" between Jamaica and the "Catholic islands".² In return for these various duties and performances Perrot received more than a Captaincy and a satin suit, a sword, and a belt. The Governor gave him a three hundred ton ship for himself and a contract to transport between three and four hundred passengers to Jamaica—promising to pay him in sugar in Barbados for transporting these immigrants!³ The Governor also reported that Perrot had sent for his wife and children from England.

On 25 June 1664 (the first time Perrot used the name of the month rather than the number, according to Quaker usage), he wrote a letter which had much news as well as what appears to be an attack on Fox. He reports that his wife Elizabeth and his children are in London seeking passage to him, that Jane Stokes (who probably has just come from New England) is now in Jamaica but on the opposite side of the island from him, and that "I have yet had success in all things amongst English and Spanyards." He seems to

¹ State Papers, Colonial Office, CO I, 18, item number 65 [Public Records Office, London].

² State Papers, CO I, 18, item 65.II.

³ State Papers, CO I, 18, item 65.

have Fox in mind when he writes, "There is presumption in Israel in Resepct of his holliness, he hath boasted too much of his integrity & faithfullness, whilst pride of spirit, & Revenge of heart was within him, once the glory of his spirit was stained".¹

Toward the end of 1664 Perrot still stood firm against all attempts to get him to testify against his outgoing and to condemn his many papers: "the Lord in me [is] more worthy of audience and obedience than the voyce of any messenger to me; and therefore till I hear the voice of God in me, though I have heard the voice of a trumpet without me. I am to stand still and wait for a certain knowledge of the ecchoings through the valley of my soul, as found answerings of God's minde in me."² At the same time that Perrot was totally unwilling to see anything wrong in his position and the strife resulting from it, he warned his followers to be peaceful and forgiving in spirit: "yet are my Brethren to convince me of sine, if they know such error in me, else by Imagination they Condemne mee. I should be glad if all that profess peace [*i.e.* his followers], would in the Tryall keep quiet, & suffer like lambs, my heart is with all such."³

Perrot, who once was such a strong Quaker in attitude, practice, and loyalty, now felt that his fellowship was not with any one group but with something much larger:

I am in an ilimitable fellowship with the seed of God in all men, but bound to no opinion, so the union which is of opinion I am not of, and if no man this day should see my fellowship with any man, yet seeing another mans apprehension of me is not my life it is enough; for me that I know my fellowship with the seed in all as God had fellowship with it in me long before I knew it. I stand this day sensibly reconciled to God in a measure of his love, which is not willing to grieve his tender spirit by presumption, and in this Spirit do find a Reconciliation of my soul to all my fathers seed and household, whose family is not only of one bare denominated people, as among all there are many various sorts of denominations, but is this day most mysteriously made up of some, of the most of all peoples which I would have none be offended at, because they see it not, nor can tell how it

¹ Crosse MSS, 59.

² John Perrot, *To all Simple, Honest-intending, and Innocent People, without respect to Sects, Opinions, or distinguishing Names; who desire to walk with God in the pure Spirit of Life and true Understanding*, London, 1664, p. 6.

³ Crosse MSS, 71. This letter is from Jamaica, December 6, 1664.

should possibly be, for as much as God hath done it to whom all things are possible.¹

Here at the end of 1664, after nearly three years of controversy with Fox and the majority of other English Quaker leaders, Perrot says that he is a man of peace and forgiveness—even though he has been disowned and “made war against.” His spirit of peace and forgiveness, more clearly discerned by himself than by his opponents, did not keep him from publishing things which could only make the situation worse (no matter how much one talked about peace and a forgiving spirit):

I have seen a Cloud over the earth which was of eternal appointment and destination, that may man be yet abased, and that by his abasement God may be most gloriously glorified; wherefore I am glad for the Lords sake, and my poor souls sake, that I am expeld of the house of *Levi*, and driven out of the Tent of *Simon*, lest it should have hapned to me to have been of their secret Counsel, since I know instruments of cruelty was in their house, &c.

Now if any man will continue his ancient war after I have signified my life of peace and forgiveness, or will make a new warr upon the account of these revivings of the springs of love and life for peace, he will act dishonourably in striking that which he knoweth before-hand will not strike him again, and will shew a Cowardly nature by a cruel action, altogether unchristian like, and unman like.²

These various statements of view and expressions of position must have stemmed from the constant attacks upon Perrot from England. Fox himself produced a number of such documents including a 1663 epistle which began “Jno. Perrot, the power of God is turned against thee, and all thy vain prophecies and fained shews and Carriages and fained love which is . . .”³ and several more in 1664.⁴ Other early Quakers, as will be seen in the next chapter, joined in the attack.

Perrot, who keenly felt his alienation from Friends and who seemed to long for reconciliation and re-acceptance

¹ Perrot, *To all Simple, Honest-intending, and Innocent People*, p. 7.

² *Ibid.*, p. 8.

³ Cadbury, *Annual Catalogue of George Fox's Papers*, p. 82 [item 11, 20E]: this item was in the lost book N (GF's Epistles in Mst folio).

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 83, 85 [items 13, 3E and 13, 64E]: the first of these items was in the lost book N, the second was not listed in the original MS Annual Catalogue.

(*but only on his own terms*), struck back time after time—even to the very end of his life—in spite of his stated position of love, forgiveness, reconciliation, and turning the other cheek. One of his strongest attacks was produced shortly before his death in 1665 and published later by some of his friends:

Woe! Woe! unto the Sanctuary of the Lord, for it is Polluted! Woe to the Mountain of the Lord for it is at Ease! The Habitation where the God of Jacob should Dwell, is become the Habitation of Devils. The Day is coming that it shall be Plowed like a Field: And the Families of the Mountain shall Worship apart, yea everyone apart, and their Wives apart. Behold a Desolation is coming from the Four Winds, which shall Scatter the Inhabitants of the Mountain, because they Trusted in Themselves, and not in the Lord. They thought that their Mountain should be their Safety in the Day of Trouble: But, Lying Vanities shall not Deliver in that Day, neither shall taking the Lords Name in Vaine be a Refuge; For they have gone astray from the Ways of the Lord, every one walkes in, and Loves his own Way, and is gone a Whoring after other Gods . . .

The time was when there was a Small People, and Little in Thine own Eyes, thou didst Walk in Simplicity, Innocency was thy Covering, and Lowliness of Mind became thy Habitation: Truth in the Inward Parts was thy Delight, and the Lord rejoiced to do his Plant good, and to bless it, and increase it, that it might flourish and bring forth good Fruit; but when the time came that he expected Fruit, behold nothing but Barrenness and Deadness, and wild Grapes. What shall the Lord do to this Plant? He will Prune it, and Dress it, and Cut off all the dead and barren Branches, and those that bring forth wild Grapes, and Graft other Branches in. A Day of Vengeance from the Lord is coming, which shall try all Flesh, and it shall begin at the Lord's Sanctuary first. Woe! Woe! unto those who have known the Way of Truth, and have not walked answerable to it, but have made Deceit their covering, and have walked like careless Daughters, at ease in the Flesh.¹

Here we see Perrot, only a few months before his death in Jamaica, proclaiming his view that Israel [Quakerism] has failed the Lord and will be judged. Likewise, as has been seen, he was still grieved over the treatment he had received from Fox and other Quaker leaders. Somehow the rejection and condemnation he received in the spiritual field of endeavour must have turned his energies and interests almost completely in the direction of the material world (for his work as a Minister appears to have been completely

¹ John Perrot, *The Vision of John Perrot, Wherein is Contained the Future State of Europe, Etc.*, London, 1682, pp. 1-2.

put aside).¹ His "interest" or part-ownership of a vessel has already been noted—as has been the contract to bring in immigrants for a fee. Soon he became a lawyer and also accepted an appointment as clerk of the court, which empowered him to exact oaths from people! John Taylor, who had once been quite friendly with Perrot, wrote from the West Indies in 1665:

One of the judges of this place told me, that he never had seen one who so severely exacted an oath from people as John Perrot did: for he saith, that if they will go to hell, he will dispatch them quickly. And another judge that was also present, said that Perrot had altogether renounced his faith, and aimed at nothing but his profit.²

Still another reason why Perrot may have been strengthening his financial standing and worldly position in 1664 and 1665 was the imminent arrival of his wife and children. After nine years of almost total separation (other than during his brief 1662 visit to Ireland) Perrot felt the need to have them with him. On 6 December 1664 he wrote to Mary Booth that he expected "my dearest E.P." to arrive "everyday, if not mett with disaster".³ By 27 February 1665⁴ he was able to report that "my deare E.P. is now with me to my refreshment," and that his friend John Browne was also present in Jamaica.⁵

Even at the time of his "refreshment" thoughts of death were on Perrot's mind—as well as of family and material possessions. At the end of February, 1665, he wrote to Mary Booth: "If it were the will of god, I could be contented that thou shouldest see me Burried, or I thee, that the last hour of thee or me might be known to the survivors." In these dark days he was comforted by Mary also, even though she was far off in London: "Thou hast ministered much service, & much love to mee, which I forget not; & now the earthly & spirituall things that I enjoy are thine as myne from the lord, & of his goodness."⁶

¹ Cf. Richard Farnsworth *et al.*, *Truth Vindicated*, pp. 14-15.

² Sewell, *History*, 1795 ed., i. 535. Sewel continues, "Such a one was John Perrot, though even some wise men admired him for a time; but he became a man of a rough behaviour. Whether he ever repented sincerely, I cannot tell."

³ Crosse MSS, 71.

⁴ His letter is dated 1664, since the new year began in March.

⁵ Crosse MSS, 71.

⁶ *Ibid.*

Perrot, who early in 1665 was thinking of death, drew up his will on 30 August 1665. By 7 September the will had been proved, so that Perrot's death can be dated within that seven-day period.¹ He provided gifts to Mary Booth and Jane Stokes, both of whom have been mentioned frequently in this study. Martha Malins [probably the wife of Robert Malins, a supporter of Perrot in the West Indies] also was included in this will. He then left his earthly estate to his "dear wife Elizabeth" and also mentioned his two minor children Blessing and Thank[ful?].²

Even in death Perrot was the centre of controversy—with some Friends expressing views similar to those of John Taylor who wrote, "He ended his days miserably. For soon after he was dead and buried in an old Popish mass-house, all that he had left, which was not much, was seized on for debt; yea the bed that was under his wife, when she lay sick upon it."³ Someone more friendly, however, was able to pen these lines:

In Memoriam Johannis Perrot:

Sweet was thy Voice, and ravishing thy Strain
 Thy Silver Trumpet sounded not in vain;
 In vain did Zion's Enemies we see
 Labour by cruelties, to conquer thee;
 Patience and holy Zeal did overcome
 The Cruelties of Antichristian Rome;
 Thy Sufferings there for Truth, what Tongue can tell?
 The Zeal God gave thee, few do parallel;
 In Shilo's holy Ink, thy learned Pen
 Was dipp'd, which ravished the Sons of Men:
 When thy fair Fabricks fall'n, if e're I come,
 I'll drop some Tears upon thy honoured Tomb;
 Thou Heaven-born Seed, blest let thy Memory be,
 The Love of Men, and Angels honour thee.⁴

¹ [Henry J. Cadbury], "The End of a Schismatic" [Letter from the Past—151], *Friends Intelligencer*, cxii (1955), p. 297.

² *Ibid.*, p. 297.

³ John Taylor, *A Loving & Friendly Invitation to All Sinners to Repent, and a Warning to all Backsliders to Return unto the Lord, while they have Time and Space given them, With a Brief Account of the Latter Part of the Life of John Perrot, And his End, [etc.]*, London, 1683, p. 9.

⁴ Henry Pickworth, *A Charge of Error, Heresy, Incharity, Falshood, Evasion, Inconsistency, Innovation, Imposition, Infidelity, [Etc.] . . . Most justly exhibited, and offered to be proved against the most noted Leaders, &c of the People called Quakers [etc.]*, London, 1716, p. 208. Pickworth says these lines were written by Robert Rich in 1676. No name is attached to these lines in Rich, *Hidden Things brought to Light*.

CHAPTER VIII
IN PERROT'S WAKE: ENGLAND

The "Hat Controversy" shook the Quaker movement to its very roots, so that it could never again be just what it had been before Perrot's return from Rome to England in 1661. Some of the elements of the controversy were already present—stemming in part from the very nature of primitive Quakerism and in part from the earlier Nayler episode. To a great degree, therefore, Perrot was only a catalytic agent. Yet, at the same time, he was also a causative force introducing new elements and forces into the situation.

Many people were drawn to Perrot and his outlook for various reasons. Some thought that he was a highly spiritual man—a worthy successor to the poet-mystic Nayler who had just recently died. John Harwood (who had earlier been one of Nayler's followers) shifted allegiance to Perrot and became one of the chief spokesmen for the schismatic party which developed rather naturally around Perrot, who does not appear to have had any conscious desire to set up a rival movement. Harwood, like many others, felt that "it is well Knowne that J[ames] N[ayler] & J[ohn] P[errot] in their Day was as Amiable & beautiful in the Eye of the chast[e] virgins in Israel as David was when he conquered Goliath & deserved as much honour for they had many combats with Israell's Enemies & Came off victorious Conquerours."¹

How strong the Nayler "spell" on people was can be seen in the "Preface to the Reader" published with Nayler's *Milk for Babes*. This preface was written by Mary Booth, who soon became one of Perrot's strongest supporters and comforters. Concerning Nayler, Mary Booth was able to write,

But he hath finished the work his Father gave him to do, and hath run the Race that was set before Him, and is come to the End of all things; the Antient of Dayes, the Judge of all; although the outward Tabernacle be gone to its place, yet he

¹ John Harwood, "The life of innocency vindicated that was manifested in two famous ministers in their day, viz. J.N. & J.P., who are both deceased" (12th month, 1666/7). This *manuscript* is found in the British Museum bound with printed tracts relating to the Society of Friends (855f.7).

lives, and shall never dye; and the Resurrection of his most holy Life is risen, and shall arise in many; a Name he hath among the living, which can never be blotted out, and the blessing of the Lord is upon the Seed that hath been raised by his preaching the Word of Reconciliation and Peace, and his Off-spring shall declare his Generation forever; for the Seed is still multiplying, his Childrens Children are ready to bring forth, still raising up Seed to the Elder Brother, the true Husband in the Resurrection; but now none can add to him, or take from him; for Immortal is his Crown, and endless is his Glory; and in all that was done unto him, the Lord never smote him, as he hath, and will smite them that smote him; for he hath broken them with great breach, and so shall it be with all Zions Enemies.¹

Not only did Perrot's manner and message, with the emphasis upon full obedience to the leading of the Spirit, remind people of Nayler, but so, it seems quite likely, did his physical appearance. Perrot, like Nayler, grew a beard—a rather unusual practice among early Friends and found only with Nayler, Perrot, and some of Perrot's followers such as Charles Bayly and Robert Rich (the latter also famous for his loyalty to Nayler!).

As the gulf between Fox and Perrot grew wider, Perrot's followers (many of whom continued to feel that Fox had been unjust to Nayler several years earlier) began to attack George Fox in various ways. One of their frequent charges was that Fox was jealous of Perrot (as he had been of Nayler, according to one school of thought):

G.F. hath turned his hand against, and struck at the most glorious appearance of the life of God these several years, in the dearest of God's people; and it is not only the Hat, and the other things reported amongst friends, which caused *G.F.* to turn against *J.P.* but because of that beautiful life God hath manifest in him, which to the simple and innocent-hearted in *Israel*, did appear more amiable and glorious then his Ministration; & because that the virtue and sweetness of the clear life of God manifest in *J.P.* drew the Virgins of *Israel* after it, therefore *G.F.* hath sought, and doth seek with violence to destroy that which is most excellent and glorious, that he may have the honour and the glory to himself, which many in *Israel* in the Light of truth have seen and do see; and since the spirit of *Saul* entered *G.F.* behold how he hath lost his strength, and how his glory hath faded . . . And mark furthermore, he doth not only pursue and seek to destroy the life of God in *J.P.* and to hinder

¹ James Nayler, *Milk for Babes; And Meat for Strong Men. A Feast of Fat Things: Etc.*, London, 1661, pp. 3-4. This preface, by Mary Booth, accompanies later editions also.

the testimony thereof from going forth in Israel, but also in all such as own, love, and affect his innocent life; which manifests clearly to the impartial understanding in Israel, That he seeks to destroy the Son and Heir, to make the inheritance his own: so seeks to exalt himself, and after his own glory, and not to exalt the Lord and his alone glory.¹

The early Perrot-inspired practice of not removing the hat in time of prayer drew unto itself several related testimonies which came to mark the schismatics. We have already mentioned the rejection of the handshake (both in greeting and at the end of meeting for worship). Under the inspiration of William Salt some of the Perrotonians [and even Perrot himself during his Virginia stay, it would seem] came to reject the practice or *form* of meeting at a pre-arranged or specified time, believing that one should enter into group worship only when led by the Spirit. Perhaps the most extreme position taken by some of the "fringe" elements among Perrot's followers was their rejection of the Bible as a guide, saying that the leading of the Spirit was sufficient. Among those whom the Foxian party charged with taking this position and giving a tangible expression to their view *by burning their Bibles*, was John Pennyman (who also burned some Quaker writings).² Elizabeth Barnes is said to have torn the scriptures and "in a height of Rage . . . [did] offer to burn them."³

The divisive and destructive outlook and practices of the Perrot party sometimes led them to withdraw from regular meetings (although often showing up to harangue those who had not yet seen the "true light"). These exclusive groups appear to have been strongest in the London area, where Mary Booth must have been one of their strongest leaders, and around both Colchester and Woodbridge where Edmond Crosse was the chief figure in the schism. Crosse⁴

¹ John Harwood, *To all People That profess the Eternal Truth of the Living God, This is A true and real demonstration of the cause why I have denied, and do deny the Authority of George Fox, which is the original ground of the difference betwixt us, whatsoever may be pretended or deceitfully alledged against me; [etc.]*, London, 1663, p. 8. Cf. pp. 3, 5.

² William Penn, *Judas and the Jews Combined against Christ and his Followers*, n.p., 1673, p. 40.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 40, 51-52. Elizabeth Barnes called the Bible "the Pope's Idol, the Professors Idol, and the Quakers Idol" (p. 52).

⁴ Concerning Crosse, see Stanley Henry Glass Fitch, *Colchester Quakers*, Colchester, 1962, pp. 50, 55, 137. Crosse died in 1667.

was aided and abetted by John Danks,¹ Benjamin Furly (who soon removed to Holland), John Swinton,² and others. So strong was the movement around Colchester that this city must have seemed to be a real "vipers' nest" to Fox and other mainstream Quakers. Even Martha Simmonds (who played a prominent part in the Nayler 1656 catastrophe and who appears to have become a follower of Perrot) had some connection with Colchester.³ George Whitehead, who reports that he has "heard as if some [of] them who are gotten into *the hat business* have taken advan[tage] at my being weake as it being a Judgment or the like, before [I was?] Raysed up," described the situation rather fully in a 9 November 1663 letter to George Fox:

That spirit of discord which hath made the hatt its chief Cloake against us [is] not soe much work as it hath bin as to that; although some are hurt by it especially near Woodbridge side in Suff[olk] E. Cross being the Chiefe Instrument in it; but the power of the Lord is over it all and Friends (many of them) sees what it tends to; and I have pretty well discharged my selfe to him (viz EC) and others. B[enjamin] Furly hath writt very perversly & Revileingly against mee (especially) and partly against thee, and sent his letter by London open⁴; and I fully Answered him and Returned his Absurdities and falshoods upon him and sent my Answer by London in a like manner for such to see as had seen his, but I have not heard from him since. There is a Company of them I see that (when anything comes out from such perverse spirits against us) are lifted up at it at the present, but it falls againe and that spirit that hath bin at worke among them is more and more manifest. I think that this Country⁵ is as cleare of it as the most and Friends as true and reall hearted.⁶

The Perrot party in the English schism was strengthened from time to time by epistles from Perrot across the Atlantic and by occasional writings by such people as John Harwood

¹ See Manuscripts, Port. 14/53, Friends House Library, London, for a letter from J.D. [John Danks] attacking Fox.

² Fitch, *Colchester Quakers*, p. 55.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 55. Martha Simmonds died going to Maryland ca. 1664/1665—Swarthmore MSS 1/45 [Trans. ii. 427].

⁴ This is probably the letter found on pp. 67–71 in William Mucklow, *Tyranny and Hypocrisy Detected: Or A further Discovery of the Tyranical-Government. Popish-Principles, and vile Practices of the now-Leading Quakers*, London, 1673.

⁵ Whitehead is writing from Stoake in Norfolk.

⁶ Swarthmore MSS 4/95 [Trans. iv. 12].

and William Salt. Edmond Crosse, Benjamin Furly (when back in England on visits from Holland), Mary Booth, Michael and Francis Stancliffe, John Danks, and others also appear to have provided a great deal of spoken support for Perrot and his views.

"Mainstream" or "orthodox" Quakerism did not become quiet or passive with Perrot's departure for America in 1662. It seemed to mount an even greater offensive—both by tract and talk. A listing of those who took Fox's side (although some jumped into the fray earlier than others and some were more extreme in their judgments and denunciations than others) and attacked the "Hat" party reads like a Quaker's *Who's Who*. It includes such people as William Baily¹ (who married Mary Fisher), John Bolton,² Edward Burrough³ (who had been responsible for Perrot's conviction in Ireland in 1655 and who had been condemned by Perrot in a letter addressed both to Fox and Burrough), Benjamin Cole (who later was drawn off in the Wilkinson-Story controversy and schism),⁴ Josiah Coale (who travelled widely in England, Holland, and America in the 1650s and early 1660s),⁵ Richard Farnworth (who became, next to Fox,

¹ William Baily, *The Lambs Government: To be Exalted over all in Israel, Etc.*, London 1663, p. 4. William Baily [Bailey], (—1675) was a Shipmaster who married Mary Fisher in 1662. He was convinced by Fox in 1655 or 1656 and died at sea 1 June 1675 returning from Barbados.

² John Bolton (1599?–1679) was a goldsmith residing in Aldersgate parish. Bolton was convinced early in the Quaker work in London and by 1658 was one of a small group of Friends entrusted with the care of Quaker funds. Cf. John Bolton, *Judas His Thirty Pieces Not Received, But Sent back to him, for his own Bag, Etc.*, n.p., 1666?, pp. 9–11, and *A Testimony in that which separates between the pretious and the vile. And is for the friends and brethren who love the lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and Truth*, n.p., n.d., pp. 6–10.

³ Edward Burrough, *Two General Epistles; Or, the Breathings of Love, uttered from the pure Life, to the whole Flock of God in England, Scotland and Ireland, and all other places whersoever this shall come, Greeting*, London, 1663, pp. 5–6, 18–21. Burrough (1634–1663), convinced by Fox in 1652, rendered great service in London for over eight years, was active in England, Scotland, and Ireland, and rose to take a "foremost place" among early Friends.

⁴ Manuscripts, Port. 23/139, Friends House Library, London. Benjamin Cole [Coale] (—1715) lived in Reading where he was very active.

⁵ Josiah Coale, *A Salutation to the Suffering-Seed of God, Wherein the Things are declared and signified before-hand that must shortly come to pass*, London, 1663, pp. 7–8 in Postscript. A letter from Edward Burrough is found on pp. 8–9. This writer is at present working on the life and thought of Josiah Coale.

the chief Quaker leader in the North of England),¹ William Dewsbury (who spent nearly twenty years in prison because of his Quaker beliefs and who was largely instrumental in restoring James Nayler to unity with Friends),² Gerard Roberts (who was a London wine-cooper, a sort of "treasurer" for the early Quaker movement, but apparently not a preacher),³ William Penn,⁴ John Whitehead (who was a Puritan soldier of Scarborough Castle when convinced by Dewsbury in 1652),⁵ George Whitehead (one of the really outstanding early Quaker leaders about whom Geoffrey Nuttall has written "It is almost impossible to overestimate Whitehead's share in the foundation of the Society of Friends, or his influence on the development of national religious liberty"),⁶ Rebeckah Travers (sister of Mary Booth),⁷ and Stephen Crisp (of Colchester, who frequently

¹ Richard Farnworth *et al.*, *Truth Vindicated. Or an Answer to a Letter sent from John Perrot out of Jamaica into England*, London, 1665, pp. 3-16, Farnworth (-1666), of Tick Hill, Yorkshire, "had reached the Quaker experience" before Fox came to him in 1651. He travelled widely in England and died in London.

² William Dewsbury, *The Breathings of Life to God's Spiritual Israel, Through A faithful Follower of the Lamb, in the regeneration and kingdom of patience and tribulations, [etc.]*, London, 1663, *passim*. Dewsbury (1621-1688) was convinced by Fox in 1651, began to preach in 1652, and travelled widely in England, Scotland, and Wales.

³ [Gerard] Roberts, *Impudency and Ranterism Rebuked; and the Quakers Sincerely Vindicated From a most unjust imputation of Prevarication, cast upon them by Robert Rich and R. Bacon*, n.p., 1670, pp. 3, 8, 10. Roberts (1621?-1703) shows up frequently in the Swarthmore MSS and elsewhere in early Quaker records.

⁴ Penn, *Judas and the Jews Combined against Christ and his Followers*, n.p., 1673, *passim*.

⁵ See Whitehead's letter in William Dewsbury, *The breathings of Life.*, p. 8. Whitehead (1630-1696) came from Holderness, Yorkshire, and later resided near Lincoln.

⁶ Manuscripts, Port. 6/3, 23/140, Friends House Library, London. Cf. George Whitehead, *The Apostate Incendiary Rebuked, and the People called Quakers vindicated from Romish Hirarchy and Imposition, [etc.]*, n.p., 1673, *passim*; and Swarthmore MSS 4/95 [Trans. iii, 839] 4/98 [Trans. iii, 849]. George Whitehead (1636?-1723) was one of the most prolific writers produced by early Quakerism.

⁷ Rebeckah Travers, *A Testimony Concerning the Light and Life of Jesus (the True Foundation) As it was laid down and delivered to us, and received of us from the beginning, [etc.]*, London, 1663, pp. 16-17. Rebeckah Travers (1609-1688), who was convinced by James Nayler, was one of the more prolific women writers produced by Quakerism. She was the wife of William Travers. George Fox was a frequent visitor in her house as were many other Quaker leaders while in London.

travelled in England and Holland).¹ A number of other names might be added to this list if one wanted to make it more complete.²

These various writers, participating in the "orthodox" Quaker counter-attack, attempted to overcome Perrot's views in a number of ways beyond simply attacking his ideas. One of the more obvious ways was to attack the man himself. And so Perrot's past Roman sufferings (which had brought so much renown to him) were called into question—with the suggestion that he had either invented or magnified them and that he had not remained faithful to his beliefs but co-operated with the desires of the Inquisition, *thereby escaping John Luffe's fate!* These views are expressed by both William Penn and John Bolton, among others:

John Perrot (who if he had been as faithful as his Companion, might with him have been hanged at Rome (as we have been informed) to his own Comfort, the Truth's Honour, and the Churches Peace) came home filled with Conceit, as he *pretended* his Body had been oppressed with Sufferings, Which kindling so great a Love in the Hearts of some Tender Friends, as they unwarily became Incouragers of his Ambition in their too high exalting and lamenting his Sufferings, Which having rendered him Master of their Affections, they most of them easily became Embracers of his Invention.³

. . . whereas when he came from Rome, where he *pretended* he had been a Prisoner, but how he scaped from suffering, as he that went with him [*i.e.*, John Luffe] might be enquired into? because his fellow that went with him, and very like was more faithful than himself, and so came to suffer for it, for he was (as is reported) hanged for his testimony against that persecuting generation; But J:P. had more favour, and its supposed in the ground of compliance with them.⁴

Not only was Perrot accused of pride and cupidity, both of which led him to "pretension" and "invention," but he was also accused of returning to a love of the World and Mammon: "the Sect-Master returned with the Dog to the Vomit, to Swearing [*i.e.* exacting oaths], Fighting, fine

¹ Stephen Crisp, *An Epistle to Friends Concerning the Present and Succeeding Times*, London, 1666, pp. 12-15. Stephen Crisp (1628-1692), his wife, and parents all became Quakers at the same time.

² A fuller list would include William Caton, John Dando, William Gibson, Patrick Livingstone, Thomas Salthouse, and Humphrey Woolrich.

³ Penn, *Judas and the Jews*, p. 17.

⁴ Bolton, *Judas and His Treachery*, p. 18.

Cloathes, Cap and Knee to Men [while he] could sit on his B— with hat on his Head, when he prayed to the most high God.”¹ Still another theme, hit upon rather heavily in many writings and talks by George Fox and others, was the similarity between the old Ranters and the Perrotonians. Frequently any distinction which might have existed was blacked out, so that Perrot and his followers were called Ranters—a charge which both hurt and angered Perrot very much. Still other charges, stemming from the behaviour of the more libertine of the schismatics, centred around various forms of immorality.²

These various attacks upon Perrot, his views, and his movement, when coupled with the constant appeal to “come back to that in which you were first convinced,” caused a number of Perrot’s followers, after greater or lesser times of acceptance of or flirtation with his position, to renounce their schismatic practices and seek readmission into the main body of Friends. Among such people was Richard Davies who later wrote:

I went to London, and I found some there separated from the Love and Unity, which I formerly saw them in; joining in that Spirit with John Perrot, who was newly come from Prison at Rome, to London, as it was said, with much seeming Humility and Lowliness of Mind; a considerable Company joined together where they had me among them for a little time. The tendency of that Spirit was, to speak Evil of Friends, that bore the Burden and Heat of the Day, and so to cry out against Friends as dead and formal; and they expected a more Glorious Dispensation, than had been yet known among Friends; and they kept on their Hats in time of Prayer. I was but a little while among them, till a Vail of Darkness came over me; and under that Vail, I came to have a light Esteem for my dear and ancient Friend G[eorge] F[ox] and some others, who had been near and dear to me. But it pleased the Lord to rent that Vail of Darkness, and caused the Light of his Countenance to shine againe upon me; whereby I came to see the doleful Place I was led into, by a Spirit that tended to nothing else but Self-exaltation, and (under a Pretence of Humility and Self-denial) Breach of Unity, Love and Fellowship, that formerly we had together; and the good Esteem we had one of another in the Lord; Children we were of one Father, esteeming one another above ourselves in the Lord.³

¹ Penn, *Judas and the Jews*, p. 19. One should remember Perrot’s growing interest in worldly affairs in Barbados and Jamaica in 1664 and 1665.

² *Ibid.*, p. 19; Roberts, *Impudency and Ranterism Rebuked*, p. 3.

³ Richard Davies, *Account of the convincement of Richard Davies*, London, 1710, pp. 136–137.

The same sort of testimony comes from Thomas Ellwood who, for a time, was reader or secretary to John Milton. Ellwood tells us that, although he had not known Perrot or talked to him (actually even having a dislike for Perrot's appearance, preaching, and way of writing), he was drawn toward Perrot's views when he was living in London and was yet new in the Quaker faith:

I, amongst the many who were catch't in that Snare, was taken with the Notion, as what then seemed, to my weak Understanding, suitable to the Doctrine of a Spiritual Dispensation. And the matter coming to warm Debates, both in Words and Writing, I, in a misguided Zeal, was ready to have entered the Lists of Contention about it: not then seeing what Spirit it proceeded from, and was managed by; nor foreseeing the Disorder and Confusion in Worship, which must naturally attend it.

But as I had no Evil Intention, or sinister End in engaging in it; but was simply betrayed by the specious Pretence and Shew of greater Spirituality: the Lord, in tender Compassion to my Soul, was graciously pleased to open my Understanding, and gave me a clear sight of the Enemies Design in this Work, and drew me off from the Practice of it, and to bear Testimony against it, as Occasion offered.¹

In the summer and autumn of 1666 there were three developments which stemmed from the Perrotonian schism and which helped destroy the movement in England. These (in order of their occurrence) were the famous 1666 letter of ministers, Fox's open meeting in London shortly after his release from Prison in Scarborough, and his setting up of monthly and quarterly meetings throughout England.

There was a specially convened gathering of ministers in London in May 1666, which issued one of the most important documents of early Quakerism. This epistle had behind it the full support of the ministers present: Richard Farnworth [Farnworth], Alexander Parker, George Whitehead, Thomas Loe, Josiah Cole [Coale], John Whitehead, Stephen Crisp, Thomas Green, John Moon, Thomas Briggs, and James Parke. Among its arguments were these: those crying down man and forms were really "crying down ministry and meetings" and thereby destroying the work of God; those who followed *that* spirit should be allowed no office or

¹ Thomas Ellwood, *The History of Thomas Ellwood's Life*, London 1714, p. 243.

rule in the Church of Christ; those who would not submit to be judged by the Church were to be rejected as having fallen from the Truth; ministers should forbear travelling abroad until they are reconciled with Friends; and they should not handle any books which led to division or scandal. It can be clearly seen what the effects of this letter were—for "Individual guidance is subordinated to the corporate sense of the Church, which is treated as finding authoritative expression through the elders who are sound in the faith. The fellowship is still grounded in a common experience of spiritual life; but agreement with the approved practices and principles which have sprung from that experience is also essential."¹

Braithwaite, fully aware that the appearance of this letter "obviously marks an important stage in Quaker history," says that at this point "Quakerism has narrowed itself into a religious Society."² Was this simply a "failure of nerve" on the part of Quakerism? Or was it something which was bound to happen and was already begun? Did the Perrotonian controversy (coming at a time when there was "a need for a clear witness in times of persecution and for combating spiritual vagaries that were disintegrating in tendency")³ simply bring matters to a head? These are questions that need to be re-opened once more—to be looked at in the light of Quaker origins, the Nayler-Fox confrontation, the Perrot controversy, the establishment of Church Government and/or Discipline, and the resulting Wilkinson-Story separation of the 1670s.

Still a second development, following upon this first by several months, took place in 1666. The "Hat Controversy" had raged for four years, and some who had been followers of Perrot began to return to the Quaker fold. George Fox decided—shortly after his release from prison—to hold a meeting in London "for a Travel [Travail] in Spirit on behalf of those who had thus gone out, that they might return, and be sensibly received into the Unity of the Body again."⁴ Fox himself reports that this special meeting was accompanied by some success:

¹ William C. Braithwaite, *SPQ*, p. 248.

² *Ibid.*, p. 248.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 248.

⁴ Ellwood, *The History of Thomas Ellwood's Life*, pp. 243-244.

severall that had runn out with Jo: Parrott & others came in: & condemned that spiritt that Ledde them to keepe on ther hats when frendes prayed [& said it was of the Devill]: & said that frends were more righteous then they: & that if friends had not stooede they had beene gonne & fallen Into perdition: & thus the Lords power came over all.¹

Thomas Ellwood, looking back in later years upon Fox's meeting as the opening of the door to a new life, gives a somewhat fuller picture of this special gathering. He himself went to it with a rejoicing spirit and with gladness of heart—as did many more from both London and the countryside. He records that it was with “great Simplicity, and Humility of Mind” that he and many others “did honestly and openly Acknowledge our Outgoing, and take Condemnation and Shame to ourselves.” Many people who lived too remote (in England and “beyond the Seas”) to attend, upon learning of this meeting and its special purpose, sent in letters “directed to, and openly read in the Meeting, which for that purpose was continued many Days.”²

Not all of Perrot's followers recanted and sought acceptance and readmission. Both Ellwood and Davies mention meeting those who continued as followers of Perrot, and Ellwood reports his own efforts to help one of these people turn from his error just as he himself earlier had done.³ John Danks (who later wrote an anti-Quaker document under the pen name of Christodulus Eccleston) was still corresponding with Fox in 1667–1668 and rejecting all of Fox's “putting off your hatts & your times at [pray]er & your orders” as not coming from the Light.⁴ It was not until 1680 that John Danks and his wife Elizabeth testified against their outgoing.⁵

Shortly after Fox appointed this protracted meeting in London, he began to travel throughout England encouraging Friends to set up a system of monthly and quarterly meetings in order to deal more effectively with the affairs and problems of the Quaker movement. Although the functions of these

¹ Fox, *Camb. Jnl.*, ii. 111. Abbreviations expanded.

² Ellwood, *History of Thomas Ellwood's Life*, p. 244.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 245–247; Davies, *op. cit.*, pp. 146–149.

⁴ MS Port. 14/53 (Friends House Library, London).

⁵ John Furly, *The Captives Returne, Or The Testimony of John Danks, of Colchester, and Elizabeth Danks, his wife, to the mercy and goodness of God, in calling them back to his Everlasting truth, after their out-runnings and Separation from the same*, n.p., 1680.

meetings would include aid to the poor and supervision of marriages, it should be noted that a prominent place was given to "Exercising a true Gospel-Discipline, for a due Dealing with any that might walk disorderly under our Name."¹ The influence of the 1666 Epistle and the damage done by the Perrotonian separation can both be seen at work in this development of church government. While Perrot was not directly and completely responsible for this move, certainly it can only be understood in light of the controversy we have been examining. And the Wilkinson-Story separation of a few years later represents one last effort to undo some of these developments.

¹ Ellwood, *History of Thomas Ellwood's Life*, p. 245.

CHAPTER IX
IN PERROT'S WAKE: AMERICA AND HOLLAND

A. MARYLAND

The first place Perrot visited on the American mainland was Maryland, where Quakerism had already been planted by Elizabeth Harris in 1656. A long list of other Quaker missionaries came to Maryland between 1658 and 1663 (the time of Perrot's arrival). A whole chain of Quaker communities had made their appearance in Anne Arundel and Calvert Counties on the Western Shore and in Talbot and Somerset Counties on the Eastern Shore before the "Hat Controversy" made itself felt in Maryland and in other American colonies.

It has already been seen that Perrot met with a number of rebuffs in Maryland, in spite of his friendship with and the support of such Maryland Quakers as Charles Bayly and William Fuller, and *possibly* even Elizabeth Harris,¹ the founder of Maryland Quakerism. Perrot, having been rejected by the great mass of Friends in this colony (who had probably already received some communications about him before his arrival in the summer of 1663), felt "ill-treated" and "shamefully entreated" in Maryland and eventually left Maryland for Virginia.

Perrot's departure from Maryland did not bring about the complete disappearance of his ideas, practices, and "leaven" there. Somehow he had cast a spell over Thomas Thurston (1622-1692) who had been active in Maryland, Virginia, and New England at several different periods between 1657 and 1661. Thurston returned to Maryland as an immigrant in 1663, bringing his wife Bridget and his daughters Elizabeth and Ann (as well as twenty servants, for whose transport he received land rights). Thus began thirty years of trouble for Maryland Quakers, for Thurston was a

¹ The travels of Elizabeth Harris after her 1655/1656 trip to Maryland and her 1657 visit to Venice are unknown but she may have returned across the Atlantic for a second visit. John Harwood says Fox wrote to Barbados and Virginia, and "set his servants to work" against Perrot, Jane Stokes, and Elizabeth Harris! Cf. Harwood, *To all People That profess Eternal Truth*, p. 6.

stumbling block to Maryland Quakers the remainder of his life.¹

It must have been almost immediately upon his arrival that Thurston, who had been a highly respected Quaker leader, came under the influence of Perrot—for he *appears* to have left England with a “clean bill of health.”² Shortly after his arrival in Maryland, however, he became the chief leader of the Perrotonian schism. Josiah Coale, who had also been in Maryland several times and who had accompanied Thurston there in 1658, wrote to Maryland Friends in September 1664 saying,

And what is the cause of the Strife, and Divisions, and Contentions, that of late hath been amongst you? Hath not the Evil One stepped in, and drawn you into Reasonings and Consultations about Differences which hath been occasion'd by Dissenting-spirits, and thereby vail'd the Understandings of some of you, and so brought Night upon them; and in the Night season sown the seed of Sdition amongst them.

Well, My Heart is griev'd within me for your sakes; and I am oft-times afflicted in spirit because of these things which have happened amongst you: for indeed, some there be, that have made the Hearts of others sad, whom God never made sad, because of their unsoundness, and unsteadfastness in the Truth, which in much simplicity, fear, and reverence was made known unto you by us, who labour'd amongst you in Word and Doctrine.³

Although Josiah Coale does not name the “Dissenting-spirits” who have caused this 1664 strife and contention, the Crosse Manuscripts and other materials tell us that Perrot, William Fuller and John Browne were active there in 1663–1664. John Burnyeat, who was active in Maryland in the summer of 1665, makes it clear that Thomas Thurston was one of the chief culprits:

But a sore Exercise I had with one *Tho. Thurston*, and a Party he drew after him for a while, so that both I and faithful Friends were greatly grieved, not only with his Wickedness, but also his Opposition that he made against us, and the Disturbance that he brought upon us in our Meetings; and great was the exercise and travel [travail] that was upon my Spirit both Day and

¹ Kenneth L. Carroll, “Thomas Thurston: Renegade Maryland Quaker,” *Maryland Historical Magazine*, lxxiii (1967), 170–192.

² [George Fox], *The Spirit of Envy, Lying, and Persecution, Made Manifest, [etc.]*. London, 1663, p. 9.

³ Josiah Coale, *The Books and Epistles of the Faithful Servant of the Lord Josiah Coale*, n.p., 1671, pp. 58–59.

Night, both upon the Truth's account, that suffered by him, and also for the People that were betrayed by him to their hurt, who were under a great mistake. But through much labour and travel in the Lord's Wisdom and Power, that both I and other faithful Friends of that Province had to search things out, and to clear things to their Understandings, both as to what related to Truth, and also Matter of Fact, which he was guilty of, it pleased the Lord so to assist us, and bless our endeavours, in manifesting the Wickedness and Wrongness of the Heart and Spirit of the Man, that most of the People came to see him, and in the love of God to be restored, into the Unity of the Truth again, to our great comfort, Truth's honour, and their Everlasting happiness. But he himself was lost to the Truth, and became a Vagabond and Fugitive as to his Spiritual Condition; and little otherwise as to the outward.¹

Burnyeat's view that Thurston was the chief culprit was apparently shared by George Fox who was both shocked and grieved that Thurston, one of the first "Publishers of Truth," should have adopted the Perrotonian position and disrupted Maryland Quakerism. In a 1666 letter no longer extant, Fox wrote to Thurston, "O Tho. Thurston, I am grieved, that ever thou shouldst fall into such . . . [grave errors and evil practices?]."² On 1 September 1667 Fox wrote an epistle which shows his awareness of what has happened in the Maryland Quaker community: "For Friends in Maryland were a pretty People: and Friends, you have had a large Experience of that Spirit that ran into the *Hat*, that it was not of God, which scatters to the World (and begot none to God) which is to be bruised by the Seed of God, Christ Jesus, which gathers to God."³

George Fox made his great religious journey to America in 1672 and 1673—travelling in Maryland on several different occasions. Early in April 1673, after labouring on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, Fox and his party crossed over the Chesapeake Bay to the Western Shore. On 9 April Fox sent for Thomas Thurston—"to bring the Truth over his actions"—and had several meetings with him.⁴ Fox un-

¹ John Burnyeat, *The Truth Exalted in the Writings of that Eminent and Faithful Servant of Christ John Burnyeat*, London, 1691, pp. 33-34.

² Cadbury, *Annual Catalogue of George Fox's Papers*, p. 86 [item 18, 5E]: the item is marked "laid aside".

³ George Fox, *A Collection of Many Select and Christian Epistles, Letters and Testimonies. Written on sundry Occasions, by that Ancient, Eminent, Faithful Friend and Minister of Christ Jesus, George Fox*, London, 1698, p. 255 [Epistle number 252].

⁴ Fox, *Camb. Jnl.*, ii. 245.

doubtedly attempted to draw Thurston away from his disruptive influences on Maryland Quakers, as well as to get him to condemn his "vagabond ways" and his slip into immorality—all of which had scandalized Maryland Quakers. That George Fox was successful to some degree is shown by the following condemnation which, for some unknown reason, came to be lodged in the records of Virginia Quakers:

I doe in the freedome of the lord & in the knowledg of his Righteous Judgements Confesse my fault & Error as touching Sarah Fuller of Maryland & whatsoever Els may Justly bee layd unto my Charge. The lord by his Righteous Judgments hath overtaken mee & hath passed by my transgressions & hath forgiven mee my sins & my desire is that all honest frends will doe the same for the lord knows my hart whoo hath throughly searched itt & what I doe here write is whitout deciett or defraud but in uprightenes unto the lord & his people that the Scandall may bee taken of[f] from them for in [. . . ? . . .] I have suffered the vengeance of the Everlasting God for all that ever I have done Contrary to his holy power & Spiritt & although there is a Gapp open at this time that many are taken their liberty to oppose the holy order & Government of the Churches the lord hath sett me the more Earnestly that this difference bee putt to the End although noe question I might have sheltered for A tyme Amongst them with this spirit butt itt was never in my hart to Oppose the lord & frends in that blessed way which is now Revealled although I have had many opportunityes And so I hope this will bee sattisfaction to all the upright in heart with whom I desire to dwell & walke while I have a day to live upon the earth.¹

This condemnation by Thurston, dated First Month 25th, 1675,² carries George Fox's notation that "Tho Thurston

¹ Minute Book of Lower Virginia Monthly Meeting, p. 38. This manuscript volume is at Homewood Friends Meeting House, Baltimore, Maryland. A microfilm copy (M814) is on deposit at the Hall of Records, Annapolis, Maryland.

Thurston's relations with Sarah Fuller (wife of William Fuller) probably provided the basis for the strong attack upon Thurston by Francis Bugg, *The Pilgrim's Progress from Quakerism to Christinity* [Etc.], London, 1698, p. 139, and [?], *Saul's Errand to Damascus: Or the Quakers Turned Persecutors*, London, 1728, p. 31. It should be noted that these two scandalous attacks upon Thurston, appearing in highly partisan anti-Quaker documents, make the same basic charges against him—although the first of these two writings places the event in America and the second in England!

² It would seem that this 1675 date is the time the testimony was entered in Virginia records—probably when Thurston left Maryland for a time. A 1673 date, corresponding with Fox's efforts to bring Thurston into line, appears more probable.

in tendernes & brokenness of heart Gave mee this Testimony of Condemnation & Repentance Agt himselfe."

Thurston's "tenderness and brokenness of heart" did not last, for Maryland Friends throughout the 1680s (when he returned to that colony after several years of absence) complained about his "vagabond" spirit and his evil behaviour. Thurston also appears to have joined Margaret Lynam in the controversy and separation which stemmed from her attitude and activities in the 1680s.¹ Although still calling himself a Quaker in 1688, when elected to the Assembly and refusing to take an oath to qualify, he became the principal military officer of Baltimore County and was known as "Colonel Thomas Thurston" at the time of his death in 1692.²

If the records were available, probably a number of other Maryland Quakers (in addition to Fuller, Thurston, and Bayly) would be seen as having been caught up in the Perrotonian party. Undoubtedly the effects of this movement and its ideas made themselves felt along the shores of the Chesapeake Bay for a long time after Perrot's death. The greatest effect of the schism, although somewhat delayed in coming, was the creation of the Yearly or General Meeting (actually meeting twice a year) which grew out of Burnyeat's specially called meeting of 1672 which was attended by Fox.³

B. VIRGINIA

From Maryland John Perrot, John Browne, and William Fuller moved on to Virginia where they were active for some months before returning to the West Indies. Mary Tomkins and Alice Ambrose, who were present in Virginia during Perrot's activity there at the end of 1663, testified that "many there are levened with his unclen spiarit, he hath don much hurt."⁴ How much "hurt" Perrot did do in his stay in Virginia at the end of 1663 and the beginning of 1664 is seen rather clearly from the *Journal* of John Burnyeat who

¹ Kenneth L. Carroll, "The Anatomy of a Separation: The Lynam Controversy," *Quaker History*, lv (1966), 67-78.

² Accounts, Box 1, Folder 15, Hall of Records, Annapolis, Maryland.

³ Burnyeat, *The Truth Exalted*, pp. 43-44.

⁴ Swarthmore MSS 4/239 [Trans. iv. 375].

visited Virginia in 1665. The following that Perrot attracted was larger and his effect was much greater here in Virginia than in Maryland, so that it took more effort and time for the Perrotonian practices to be rooted out.

Burnyeat, who spent a considerable period of time in Virginia in the winter of 1665 and returned again (after another visit to Maryland) in the spring of 1666, has left an account of the state of things in Virginia which is graphic:

So in the Winter following I went down to *Virginia*, and when I came there, Friends there, the greatest part of them, were led aside by *John Parrot*, who had led them into his Notions, as before related; and they had quite forsaken their Meetings, and did not meet together once in a Year, and had lost the very *form* and *language* of the *Truth* many of them, and were become loose and careless, and much *one* with the *World* in many things: so that the *Cross* of *Christ*, for which they had suffered, was *shunned* by them, and so Sufferings escaped, and they got into outward ease. For they had endured very great Sufferings for their Meetings, and did stand faithful therein, till he came among them, and preached up this Notion of his, by which he judged Friends Practice and Testimony in the Truth, and for the Truth, to be but *forms*: and so pretending to live above such things, drew them from their Zeal for the Truth, and their Testimony therein so far, that they avoided everything that might occasion Sufferings. And thus they being seduced or bewitched, as the *Galatians* were, into a *fleshly Liberty*, the *Offence* of the *Cross* ceased and the Power was lost: and when I came there it was hard to get a Meeting among them. And much Discourse I had with some of the chief of them, and through much labour and travel with them, and among them, to maintain the Principles of Truth and our Testimony and Practice therein, I obtained a Meeting, and the Lord's Power was with us and amongst us, and several were revived, and refreshed, and through the Lord's goodness, and his renewed Visitations, raised up into a Service of Life, and in time came to see over the *wiles* of the Enemy.¹

It can be truthfully said that nowhere else in the Quaker world was the schism of John Perrot so strong as it was in Virginia. Although Burnyeat's 1665-1666 visit helped stem the tide, some years would go by before the situation could be viewed hopefully by Fox and his followers. Burnyeat's return, a visit by George Fox, and by many other Quaker leaders would be necessary to redeem Virginia Quakerism.

George Fox wrote letters "To Friends in Barbadoes, Virginia, Maryland, New England, and elsewhere" and "For

¹ Burnyeat, *The Truth Exalted*, pp. 34-35.

Friends in the Ministry, scattered abroad in Virginia, Maryland, New England, Barbadoes, and other Plantations beyond the Sea" in 1666.¹ Both of these seem designed to counteract the "leaven" of John Perrot still very much at work in these areas. George Fox's imprisonment at Scarborough, where he was "as a Man buried alive"² had kept him from writing earlier. Other letters about Perrot had come from Fox earlier, especially those which he had asked Ann Clayton to circulate in America in 1664.³

John Burnyeat returned to Virginia again in 1671 accompanied by Daniel Gould, and they laboured hard to overcome the separation and defection. Gould records that in this 1671 religious visit to Virginia "many who had, a few years before, been involved in the defection of John Perrot, were favored with ability to retrace their steps."⁴ Burnyeat, when discussing this trip into Virginia, reports that he "found a freshness amongst them, and they were many of them restored, and grown up to a degree of their former Zeal and Tenderness, and a great Openness I found in the Country, and had several blessed Meetings."⁵ Burnyeat then advised them "to have a Men's Meeting, and so to meet together, to settle things in good order amongst them, that they might be Instrumental to the gathering of such as were yet scattered, and stirring up of such as were cold and careless; and so to the keeping of things in order, sweet, and well amongst them."⁶

This meeting which Burnyeat advised Virginia Quakers to set up did not develop into a Yearly Meeting as did the one called together in Maryland in 1672 by Burnyeat (and attended by Fox and many other Quakers from England).⁷

¹ Fox, *Epistles*, numbers 244 and 252 [pp. 226-228].

² *Ibid.*, p. 227.

³ Rich, *Hidden Things*, p. 26; Cadbury, *Annual Catalogue of George Fox's Papers*, p. 85 [13, 64E].

⁴ William Hodgson, *Selections from the Letters of Thomas B. Gould, a Minister of the Gospel in the Society of Friends; with Memoirs of his Life*, Philadelphia, 1860, p. 26.

⁵ Burnyeat, *The Truth Exalted*, p. 43.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ It must have been the group that developed into the Lower Virginia Monthly Meeting (see footnote 1, p. 98). This Monthly Meeting really arose out of the efforts of George Fox who probably built upon what Burnyeat had done earlier.

Yet some sort of organization came into being, and order gradually appeared out of chaos. Throughout the 1670s, following Burnyeat's 1671 visit and Fox's 1672 presence, many of the "backsliders" condemned their outgoing and asked to be received back into unity and fellowship by Friends.

The records of Lower Virginia Monthly Meeting contain a number of such "confessions of guilt" by former followers of Perrot (both English and Virginian). A number of leading Virginia Friends made such acknowledgments in 1678, including Thomas Jordan, Edmond Belson, Edward Perkins, and William Garratt. As Henry J. Cadbury has pointed out, it is only the one by William Garratt which add to our knowledge of events. For that reason, and as a sample of such documents, it is worth including.

Being one of the first that went on borde the ship that brought the said Perrott into James River I did see the first John Browne & William fuller came into the Round howse whare I was & sometime after came in John Perrott in the habit outwardly as one of the seruants of the Lord, but the witness of God in me was not Refreshed at his company Neither by what I heard from him but Rather burthened, for Returning to my outward being soon after I & another ware taken Prisoners for having a meeting in my howse which meeting was before the said Perrott came in & we were committed Prisoners to the Sheriffs howse of the Islle of Weight county soon after the said Perrott & John Browne having business to James Towne: & hearing that we ware in Prison, came into the prison & did declare som words in the prison & we having Liberty from the Shriff went to Edward Jones his howse which was my fellow Prisoner and had more words declared their and the next morning Upon the sands againe the Lord was good Unto me & did shew me that it was one as Saull that forced himselfe to doe sacrificise when the profett was wanting it is the Lord that make the barren wilder-ness to becom a fruitfull fielde & Through disobedience he can turn it to a barren Place, John being Received Amongst most of friends heare & being a Reporte that he was Received amongst frends in the barbadoes generally I did reson with the weake fleshly parte that it would be better for me to Receve two into my house that was not in the power of the Lord than to denigh one that was in the power of the Lord soe weakness came over me and I pleaded that ware an Indifferent thinge to me whether the hatt ware put on or off in time of prayer but the Lord did shew me soone after that whare the Inward Reverant is the outward would follow.¹

¹ Henry J. Cadbury, "John Perrot in Virginia," *JFHS*, xxxi (1934), 37.

C. NEW ENGLAND

John Perrot never made an appearance in New England, although Joseph Nicholson reported in 1663 to George Fox that Friends there "have much expected him to come."¹ Although Perrot himself never made it there, some of his followers (such as Jane Stokes) and his ideas appeared there none the less. Jane Stokes is said to have visited Nantucket in 1664 and is thought to have been the first Quaker on that island.²

Quakerism in New England, like that in Maryland and Virginia, had been in existence for more than half a dozen years by the time that Perrot's ideas and influence reached those Quaker centres. Here, too, a number of Quakers were won over to Perrot's position—including several well-known Friends. Among the more prominent ones to take their stand with Perrot were Samuel Shattuck (who in 1661 had brought the "King's Missive" to bring an end to the hanging of Quakers in Boston),³ Josiah Southwick,⁴ and John Chamberlain (who had become convinced at the gallows when William Robinson and Marmaduke Stephenson were hanged).⁵

Elizabeth Hooton, Ann Richardson, and Jane Nicholson in 1664 had a rather bitter encounter with Samuel Shattuck. Elizabeth Hooton was at Salem and attempted to have read one of George Fox's papers concerning John Perrot. Shattuck refused to have the paper read, and, when spoken to about it by Jane Nicholson [wife of Joseph], Shattuck said that hers was a "Ranter's Spirit" and then told Ann Richardson that she was a "Suttell Serpent". As a result, Ann Richardson produced a testimony against Samuel Shattuck, just as she and Jane Nicholson did against Josiah Southwick at the same time.⁶ Some time later Robert Hodgson (an early Quaker leader active in Maryland,

¹ Swarthmore MSS 4/155 [Trans. iv. 947].

² Fox, *Camb. Jnl.*, ii. 434. Cf. Hinchman, *Early Settlers of Nantucket*, 1901, pp. 130-137.

³ Rufus M. Jones, *The Quakers in the American Colonies*, London, 1923, pp. 97-99. Cf. Swarthmore MSS 3/101 [Trans. iii. 189].

⁴ Jones, *op. cit.*, pp. 77, 90, 102; Swarthmore MSS 3/104 [Trans. iii. 187].

⁵ Jones, *op. cit.*, pp. 99, 102; A. R. Barclay MSS/153 printed in *JFHS*, 1 (1962-1964), 171-172.

⁶ For these two testimonies see Swarthmore MSS 3/104 [Trans. iii. 187].

Virginia, and New England from 1658 onwards) met Ann Richardson at the house of Nicholas Eason [Easton], later Governor of Rhode Island, and told her that he did not have unity with her papers for "they were to[o] hard".¹

John Burnyeat, who had combated the Perrotonian party in both Maryland and Virginia in 1665, was in New England in both 1666 and 1671 but makes no mention of the pro-Perrot forces in either the Boston area (where Southwick Shattuck, and Chamberlain were) or around Newport in Rhode Island.² Upon still another visit in 1672, Burnyeat and his companions met a number of Perrot's followers around Salem:

there we met with some, that were gone into that foolish Notion of *John Parrots*, *keeping on their Hats*, when Friends prayed, &c. So after Meeting was over, where many People was in a *Barn*, we had a Meeting with several of the Chief of Friends, and such as were gone after that Spirit; and a great Discourse we had with them, in which we laboured to bring them to an understanding of that Notion they were gone into, and so laboured to open and settle the Minds of Friends in the antient Truth, and blessed Power which they had believed in, and received from Heaven.³

When this meeting at Salem ended, Burnyeat and his travelling companions appointed another meeting at Salem in one week and set out to visit other towns in the intervening period. When the second meeting was held at Salem, it was disappointing and disheartening to John Burnyeat and George Pattison who attempted to get them to settle "Meetings to look after the Affairs of the Church." There was a resistance to setting up Men's and Women's Meetings—for some of them "pretended to be against *Forms*." Burnyeat challenged their consciences and called them to repentance and to condemn "that Spirit which had deceived". He reported that some of them, since that meeting, "have seen it, and Condemned that Spirit, and given a *Testimony in writing* against it".⁴ In New England then, as in Maryland and Virginia, the

¹ Swarthmore MSS 3/101 [Trans. iii. 189]. This letter is dated early in 1665. Nicholas Easton's wife was formerly Ann Clayton.

² Cf. *JFHS*, 1 (1962-1964), 171-172 with mention of Perrot's ideas being prevalent in Rhode Island. See also Burnyeat, *The Truth Exalted*, pp. 35, 40-41.

³ Burnyeat, *The Truth Exalted*, p. 50.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 52-53.

process of getting Perrotonians back into unity was long, drawn out, and only partially successful.

D. NEW YORK

New York, like New England, had escaped John Perrot's presence. But Perrot's ideas and movement soon drew together a following there also. The migration of Friends and of Quaker books guaranteed that it was only a question of time before this development took place. Just how and when some of these people imbibed John Perrot's notions is uncertain, but it is clear that a number of people on Long Island had come to accept Perrot's views and practices by 1671.¹

Although John Burnyeat (who had experienced so much contact with the followers of John Perrot elsewhere on the American continent in 1665 and 1671) does not identify the group by name or by the characteristic Perrotonian views, it probably was a group of Perrot's followers at Oyster Bay Half-Years Meeting who opposed the "blessed Order of the Truth". Three of these people even produced a "book" of their own to counter George Fox's *Wholsome Advice*. Burnyeat, however, was able to frustrate their plans and persuaded the Oyster Bay Meeting to proceed in an orderly way.² George Fox himself attended this Half-Years Meeting at Oyster Bay in 1672 and found a number of contentious people present. By setting up a special meeting for those who objected "against the Order of Truth," Fox drew many of them together and broke the back of the movement.³

E. BARBADOS AND JAMAICA

Perrot's acceptance in Barbados and Jamaica must have rivalled that which he received in Virginia. His total stay in the West Indies was well over two years (as compared to several months each in Maryland and Virginia), so that the

¹ Bowden, *The History of the Society of Friends in America*, i. 329; Allen C. Thomas, *A History of the Friends in America* [6th edition], Philadelphia, 1930, p. 74.

² Burnyeat, *The Truth Exalted*, pp. 41-42.

³ Fox, *Camb. Jnl.*, ii. 167-168.

result of his presence and activity was great and had an ongoing effect which lasted for many years beyond Perrot's death.

The success which Perrot met with in the West Indies has already been pointed out in Chapter VII and has been underlined by William Garratt's account of the reports which had reached Virginia from Barbados. Perrot's demise in 1665 took some of the energy and enthusiasm out of the schism, but it still continued.

John Burnyeat, so active in combating the Perrotonian influence in continental American Quaker centres, spent the winter of 1664-1665 in Barbados. He reports that the "prevalency of [Perrot's] spirit" caused him great "travel and exercise among Friends in that Island, . . . both in withstanding such as were high and hard, and also to gather back and preserve such, as had in some measure been betrayed, and yet were more innocent and tender."¹ Although Burnyeat does not give the date of this development, he says "many began to see him [Perrot] and what his Spirit led to; and so came to see their own loss, and returned to their *first love*, and the Power of the Lord went over that dark Spirit, with all the vain Imaginations they had been led into thereby."² He may have had in mind both his 1664 and 1667 trips to Barbados (and possibly reports of a later year) when he wrote the above passage. Yet it is clear that Burnyeat here in Barbados, as on the American continent, helped turn the tide. Joseph Nicholson, writing on 26 March 1666 to Margaret Fell, said things in Barbados were better than formerly—although "much of Johns ould leaven remains not easily p[luck]ed out".³

George Fox, accompanied by twelve Friends, arrived in Barbados in 1671 and spent about three months there. Nowhere in his Journal is there any mention of any followers of Perrot or any Perrotonian flavoured controversy. The meetings on the Island are all reported to have been quiet, except for some disturbance by Baptists. From Barbados Fox went on to Jamaica where he spent a number of weeks in religious service before setting out for Maryland. It was

¹ Burnyeat, *The Truth Exalted*, p. 33.

² *Ibid.*

³ Swarthmore MSS 4/105 [Trans. iv. 945].

during this Jamaican mission that Fox reports that "Jane Stokes is come in finely and hath given a paper of Condemnation."¹ Her husband likewise appears to have made his peace with Fox and been received back into unity.

Although Burnyeat's visit in 1664, Perrot's death in 1665, Nicholson's journey in 1666, Burnyeat's return in 1667, and Fox's labour of 1671-1672 did much to root out the Perrotonian movement in Barbados (and Jamaica), the plant did not dry up and wither away for many years. Although Jane Stokes recanted and confessed, Robert Rich did not!

Robert Rich, the well-to-do merchant who had lived in splendour before becoming a Friend and who had continued to wear expensive dress after his convincement, had been one of James Nayler's most loyal followers—for Nayler had won his heart during the early months of his 1655 London ministry. Unlike the women who surrounded Nayler, Robert Rich, it would seem, took no part in the extravagances that marked Nayler's followers. Yet he was just as loyal a friend and never did forsake Nayler. He "took up the unpopular role of Nayler's champion, and flung himself into his defence with the generosity which was the most striking trait of his character."² Nayler received three hundred and ten lashes and then, in spite of all of Rich's efforts, had a hole burned through his tongue and, after that, was then branded. We are told that "Rich licked the same, as did the Dogs the wounds of Lazarus."³ Such was the depth of Rich's loyalty and friendship for Nayler! There is no wonder, then, that he never forgave George Fox for what he considered to have been too harsh a treatment of Nayler. Rich's every writing is coloured by this hatred and lack of forgiveness. Fox, he believed, had persecuted an innocent man!

It was in 1659, the year that Nayler was released from prison, that Robert Rich went to Barbados and remained there twenty years—returning to London in 1679 shortly before his death. In Barbados Rich was active in the various Quaker meetings and also spent much time visiting those Quakers in prison. When Perrot arrived in Barbados in 1662 Robert Rich undoubtedly saw him as another "innocent

¹ Fox, *Camb. Jnl.*, ii. 207.

² Brailsford, *A Quaker from Cromwell's Army*, p. 146.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 155.

man" who was persecuted by George Fox. This appears quite clear from Rich's inclusion and arrangement of letters of R.M. [Robert Malins?], James Nayler, and John Perrot in his *Hidden Things brought to Light*. Had there been any question of Rich's view, the doubt would have been removed by Rich's letter to Fox accompanying these documents in *Hidden Things*.¹

This sense of injustice and belief that Fox had persecuted the innocent rankled in Rich's bosom and was brought out in the open once again under the excitement of the Wilkinson-Story separation and its writings which reached Barbados in 1678. Concerning his *Hidden Things*, Barbados Friends wrote on 20 November 1678,

Robert Rich, an old Ranter & opposer, he ran out with James Naylor, & John Perrot, & who has remained in the destroying Ranting opposing spirit since; & he has kept severall of James Naylor's papers, which he wrote in the time of his temptation, & John Perrot's papers ever since, & hath late put them into print against the Lords people & spread them over this Island.²

Barbados Friends at this time expressed their view of John Perrot, long since dead—saying did not he "also talk of liberty for his disorderly & Confused practise, & would have everyone left to their liberty, that all might do what they like [?] And did it not bring all them that followed John in this spirit into Confusion, & into bondage to the world & filth of it."³

Eventually Robert Rich returned to England in 1679 and made himself quite conspicuous around Friends, frequenting the Bull and Mouth and other meeting places. He enjoyed referring to himself as "one of the dogs that licked Lazarus his sores".⁴ He must have been quite a disturbing sight to many London Friends, who had turned down his "offer" to donate money to help Friends who had lost everything in the Great Fire of 1666.⁵

¹ Rich, *Hidden Things brought to Light*, pp. 22-40.

² MS Port. 23/156 (Friends House Library, London).

³ MS Port. 23/156 (Friends House Library, London).

⁴ Brailsford, *A Quaker from Cromwell's Army*, p. 189.

⁵ John Bolton, *Judas His Thirty Pieces Not Received*, p. 11, has a real condemnation of Rich for his past behaviour. There was a serious question about the terms and spirit in which the gift was given.

F. HOLLAND

The "Hat Controversy" appears to have been introduced into Holland by Benjamin Furly of Colchester, who lived for a time in Amsterdam before removing his business to Rotterdam about the end of 1659. Furly, who became a very prosperous business man and owner of one of the greatest private libraries in seventeenth century Europe, became the most influential figure in Dutch Quakerism. And, after his adoption of the Perrotonian position, he also became its most disruptive force.

Benjamin Furly made a number of trips back to England, some for business and others on Quaker service. On one of these, in 1661, he came under the influence of John Perrot and soon entered the controversy on Perrot's side. A 1662 Dutch publication (appearing in English in 1663), entitled *De Eere des Werelds ontdeckt*,¹ was his first contribution. Before long he was also producing letters to Friends in which his chief weapons were turned against George Whitehead, although some darts were reserved for George Fox—as he attacked the traditional Quaker position on the hat and other outward ceremonies.²

George Fox in 1662 wrote Benjamin Furly a letter attacking his position and calling upon him to condemn his activities:

B. Furley:

Thy latter end is worse then thy beginning O that thou shouldest lift up thy heel against the righteous & seeke occation, & wraist & pervert things against the innocent, & draw thy weapons & bend thy bow against the righteous to smite & shoot at the innocent, and alsoe thy words which thou and others of you have spoken against him which may be some of you would have hid, but the Lord brings all things to Light & some may receive them in for a while, but the wittnesse of god will vomitt them out & the founder of them soe Ben: turn to the first thing that did convince the & all the rest of you, and turn not your sword backwards against the righteous, but turn it against this which hath wrought all this in your selves, that it may be cut downe & slaine, and that then you may see what it is to cut down without, for there's worke enough that you may answer

¹ Benjamin Furly, *De Eere des Werelds ontdeckt*, Rotterdam, 1662 and *The World's Honour Detected, And, for the unprofitableness thereof Rejected*, London, 1663.

² Crosse MSS, 22-25; Swarthmore MSS 4/95 [Trans. iii. 839]; William Mucklow, *Tyranny and Hypocrisy Detected*, pp. 68-69.

the wittnesse of God in others, & not smite at the righteous, for it is to be marked, that the devill makes use of some of all professions, (or would doe) to be his servants & to draw them into outward things & deceive them, for dust is his meate, for upon his belly he goes creeping to throue his envy about, to bring people out of peace Love & unitie, but truth is over his head, by which he is judged & his workemen, & therefore this consider & repent & doe soe noe more, leas a worse thing come upon you & prize your time & spend it not in such worke of envy & strife, for it will eate you out if you doe & lead you into the earth from whence you came.¹

William Caton and Stephen Crisp, two English Friends who were very active in the Quaker mission in Holland attempted to use their influence with both Furly and Dutch Friends in 1662 and 1663, but to no avail. John Higgins met the same failure in the autumn of 1663.² Josiah Coale, well-known to Dutch Friends and highly respected by them also made a visit to Holland and attempted to get Furly and his followers to come into unity on the "Hat" and other practices.

Finally, in 1669, Benjamin Furly came to feel that he had been wrong and, therefore, submitted his letter condemning his former practices:

To all Friends every where, in Germany, the Netherlands, and divers parts in England, where any papers by me given forth, against any of the Servants of the Lord, about wearing the hat in Prayer, have come.

Whereas about six years since several papers were by me given forth about the hat in prayer, reflecting upon the practice in which the servants of the Lord *were* and *are* found, and upon them for it, and for some papers given forth by me about it, and in particular upon George Fox and George Whitehead; to the grieving of the innocent and strengthening the perverse spirit in many; begetting prejudice in their minds against the faithful servants of the Lord, to the weakening their hands in the work of the Lord, and hindering their testimony so far as such things in the hands of evil minded men could:—I have therefore, for the frustrating the end of such, and preventing their making use of any of the said papers any more, or at least that they may not prevail with any innocent tender ones, given forth this, disowning the said papers, as given forth in the reasoning part, and from

¹ Swarthmore MSS 7/107 [Trans. vi. 409]. This letter in the Swarthmore Collection bears a 1662 date, although the letter is assigned to 1661 in the *Annual Catalogue*.

² William T. Hull, *Benjamin Furly and Quakerism in Rotterdam* (*Swarthmore College Monographs on Quaker History*, 5), Swarthmore, 1941, pp. 18–19.

the ground whence all divisions and dissensions from truth and love do arise, and are fomented. And therefore I do desire any in whose hands any of the said papers may be, to look upon them as such, and accordingly to suppress and stop them from being any more seen; and if any shall not so do, but continue to make use of them, to uphold any work of strife and contention, or to the reproach or slighting of the servants of the Lord, or their testimony and work upon earth, their iniquities will be upon themselves, and I shall be clean of their condemnation; having thus warned them in love, being desirous of the preservation of all, and restoration of every one that hath gone astray.
Given forth in Rott. [Rotterdam].¹

Furly's recantation led William Welch and some others in Holland to follow his example in 1669, thereby bringing about the end of the Perrotonian controversy there.²

¹ William Alexander (ed.), *Collectitia: Or, Pieces, Religious, Moral, & Miscellaneous, Adapted to the Society of Friends*, York, 1824, pp. 149-150.

² Hull, *Benjamin Furly and Quakerism in Rotterdam*, pp. 217-219.

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