

Two Quotations in the London Yearly Meeting's Epistle, 1903.¹

1. *Seeing too much for denial, and too little for assurance, I am in a piteous plight.—PASCAL.*

Blaise Pascal was born in the Auvergne, France, in 1623. He early exhibited very considerable talent, and became as years went on a great mathematician and philosopher. He allied himself with the followers of Jansenius, a sect of much piety and earnest purpose, and was frequently resident at Port Royal, the head-quarters of Jansenism, but his exact position with regard to religion has been the subject of much dispute. The quotation in the Epistle, given thus in the original—“*Mais, voyant trop pour nier et trop peu pour m'assurer, je suis dans un état à plaindre,*” is from Pascal's *Pensées*,² a collection of fragments from his pen, issued eight years after his death in 1662.

2. *Christ crucified is the library which triumphant souls will be studying in to all eternity. STILLINGFLEET.*

Edward Stillingfleet was born in Dorsetshire, 1635, and after a college course in Cambridge, he received the living of Sutton, Bedfordshire. Here, in 1662, he wrote his *Origines Sacrae* in defence of the divine authority of the Scriptures. This learned treatise, from which the above quotation is taken, went through several editions, and may still be obtained. Stillingfleet became Archdeacon of London, Dean of St. Paul's, and finally, at the Restoration in 1689, Bishop of Worcester. He died in 1699.

When Dean of St. Paul's, in the year 1680, he preached a Sermon at Guildhall Chapel, entitled *The Mischief of Separation*,³ in which he urges the need of union against a

¹ For 223 years in unbroken succession these Epistles of loving greeting and counsel have been sent down from London Yearly Meeting to its members in Great Britain and elsewhere.

² See *Les Pensées de Blaise Pascal*, par M. Léon Brunschvicg, 2me. édition, revue, Hachette et Cie. 1900, section iii, 229, page 433. English editions of these *Thoughts* may be obtained, as also readable lives of their author.

³ D. 7.1.

common danger. He intreats his hearers and readers, even if “not yet ripe for so great a mercy as perfect union,” at least “not to condemn others for that which themselves have practised and think to be lawful in their own cases.” In proof of this statement the author cites the case of the persecutions of Anabaptists and Quakers in New England, and adds as a further proof, “Nay, even these [Quakers], notwithstanding the single Independency of every man’s light within, have found it necessary to make rules and orders among themselves to govern their Societies, to which they expect a uniform obedience, and allow no liberty out of the power and the truth as they love to speak” (pp. 55-6).⁴ He refers to *The Spirit of the Hat* (p. 12) in confirmation of this. Echoes of the current Quaker controversy between the opponents of law and order and George Fox and his friends had evidently reached the Deanery.

It is an interesting fact, and an evidence of an improved condition of things, that an author who finds a place in Joseph Smith’s *Bibliotheca Anti=Quakeriana* should be quoted with approval in a Yearly Meeting’s Epistle.

EDITORS.

The Quaker Family of Owen.

This family of Owen, of Manchester, Stockport, Seven-oaks, Coulsdon, Reigate, London, etc., deduces its descent from Hwfa ap Cynddelw, Lord of Llys Llifon, in Anglesey, contemporary with Owen Gwynedd, Prince of North Wales, to whom he was steward. This Hwfa was living circa 1150. The Owens of Orielton, baronets, are the present representatives; their arms which are “Gules, a chevron, between three lions rampant, or,” and the crest, “a lion rampant,” are those borne apparently by the Quaker family of which we treat, the crest at any rate appearing on old family plate.

One Thomas Owyne mar. at the parish church (now the Cathedral), Manchester, 2 May, 1601, Elizabeth Shelmerdyne, and there are earlier entries of the family spelt Awyne in 1578, etc.

Thomas Owen, of Manchester, perhaps son of the above Thomas and Elizabeth Owyne, mar. before 1628 Elizabeth

⁴ In the copy of the Tract in D Morris Birkbeck describes the statement, in a pencil note, as “a false surmise.”