

Extracts from the President's Address,

DEVONSHIRE HOUSE, 20 v. 1909.

The Friends' Historical Society supplies, I think, in an attractive form, much that is likely to unite its members, and Friends generally who may peruse THE JOURNAL, in a greater interest in the general welfare of the Society of Friends at the present day, which is reaping the heritage and inestimable benefits won for us through the faithful and strenuous lives of a long line of Quaker forbears.

I think we may congratulate ourselves upon the progress made by the Society, which has now a membership of between four and five hundred, considerably larger, I believe, than the Congregational Historical Society, which is also doing such excellent work. To that Society, to the Wesley Historical Society, and to the newly-formed Baptist Historical Society I should like to offer our cordial good wishes.

I am sure we shall all agree that already a great deal of permanent interest and instruction has been published, notably that most valuable volume, printed as a Supplement to THE JOURNAL, *viz.*, "*The First Publishers of Truth*," which illustrates and supplements in the most interesting and striking manner *The Journal of George Fox*, Besse's *Sufferings of the Quakers*, and other old standard Quaker publications.

I understand that it is proposed to print as a Supplement, transcripts from the Public Record Office (from the fine series of State Papers, Domestic series), relating to Friends up to the time of the Restoration; these should prove of special interest.

We shall all admit that our Quaker records, both of a public and private character, whether preserved at Devonshire House, in the safes of the various Quarterly and Monthly Meetings, at Somerset House, in public libraries, or in private hands, are so extensive, and the contributions made by members of our Society, I presume, so numerous, that the Editors must find considerable difficulty in dealing with such an *embarras de richesses*.

Dismissing the present, however, for the moment, it may be interesting to recall a few bygone Quaker worthies, who have in their day and generation, and in their private capacity, accomplished what are some of the present objects of our Society, *viz.*, the issue of publications relating to the history, bibliography, biography, and the more private family history of the Society of Friends.

In the seventeenth century we have notably the founder of Quakerism himself, whose Swarthmore papers, many of which are preserved in the strong-rooms on these premises, were by him arranged and docketed, and his *Journal* (although, as Carlyle says, it is so innocent of exact dates) is a remarkable instance of diligent, careful, painstaking, and, broadly speaking, accurate history of extraordinary value.

Then we have Theodor Eccleston, a foremost London Friend and Minister, to whom the historian Sewel expresses in his celebrated *History of the Quakers* his hearty acknowledgments for the vast amount of material he so diligently collected and provided for the book.

Amongst bibliographers we have the foremost name of honest John Whiting,¹ whose catalogue of Friends' books, printed in 1708, was the basis of the manuscript compiled by Morris Birkbeck and Thomas Thompson, preserved in two volumes at Devonshire House, and carried down to 1820.

Then comes the celebrated *Catalogue* by our late diligent friend, Joseph Smith, of Whitechapel, whose two volumes, later supplemented in 1893, were published in 1867, and earned the thanks of Mr. Gladstone; and whose name, I understand, finds a place in every volume of that indispensable work, *The Dictionary of National Biography*. To Joseph Smith we are also indebted for *A Catalogue of Books Adverse to the Society of Friends*, printed in 1873; and, in passing, I may remark that we sadly need another supplement to Smith's *Catalogue*, which would now form a bulky volume.

Other distinguished bibliographers were Francis Fry, F.S.A., of Bristol, whose noble collection of early printed Bibles and Testaments is amongst the treasures of the Bible House; also Henry Bradshaw, M.A., Fellow

¹ For a sketch of the life of John Whiting see *THE JOURNAL*, iv. 7-16.



Friends' Historical Society

FRESH LIGHT UPON
ANCIENT QUAKERISM

For some time past Charlotte Fell Smith, author of "Steven Crisp and his Correspondents," "Mary Rich, Countess of Warwick," "James Parnel," etc., has been engaged in transcribing from the State Papers preserved in the Public Record Office in London, all the original documents containing reference to Friends. This work has resulted in the discovery of many matters of interest¹ which will prove of great value to students of early Quaker history. Among these may be noted (1) the suggestion, made to the Government in 1656, that several Friends, who are named, should be appointed Justices of the Peace in the place of other persons, also named, who were accounted unworthy of appointment;

¹ The printed Calendars of the State Papers contain only brief abstracts of all documents, including those specially relating to Friends.

(2) numerous appeals from Friends suffering imprisonment; (3) correspondence intercepted in the post; (4) returns from gaol-keepers of prisoners at various dates; (5) experiences of Friends in the Navy; a convinced master-gunner and other seamen; (6) reports of the travelling preachers in many counties, the reception they met with, etc.; (7) interviews with Cromwell and his ministers; and (8) minutes of the Council of State respecting Friends.

It has been decided to print, as Journal Supplement No. 8—"Extracts from State Papers"—a first series of these State Papers, from 1654, the year in which occurs the first reference to Friends, to 1658, the year of the death of Oliver Cromwell. This, with Notes, Index, etc., will make a pamphlet of about 100 pages, of the size of *The Journal*, but in slightly smaller type, the subscription price of which will be three shillings, or seventy-five cents, net. (See Order Form attached.)

Prison Doors Closed and Opened.

We come next to a letter from Captain Henry Hatsell, a Navy Commissioner stationed at Plymouth, to Robert Blackborne, Secretary to the Admiralty Commissioners in London, in which he reports the arrival of three Quakers from Bristol. We give only an extract from the letter, but sufficient to shew how entirely the mission of these three preachers was misunderstood.

25 May, 1655. Plymouth.

. . . here came to this place About five Dayes since, 3 quakers ffrom Bristoll,¹ & y^c last Lord's Day they gathered people together in A house at y^c out skirte of this Corporation, & there made discoveries of new Lights, and two Dayes since they heard that y^c Mayo^r would send for them. Came to him to knowe his pleasure, with A salute, "What wilte thou haue of us?" & wth their hats on, w^{ch} much Amazed y^c people, one of them when they came to be Examined was somewhat Ingeneous & Acknowledged y^c cause of his comming into these parts, & promised to Returne into his owne home: the other two stood stiffe in their hardned folly. y^c first is att Liberty, the other two are Committed, where they have been two Dayes, & as an honest man told me just now, that since they have been in the prison they have neither sought God by prayer, nor Craved A blessinge on what they have Receyved, nor Returned thanks,² the More I behold y^c workings of Satan in this Manner, the More Cause I have to Acknowledge the mercie of the Most high.³ . . .

On 28th May, Hatsell wrote again to the Admiralty Secretary and shewed himself no hard man after all. He alluded with much sympathy to "the unheard of cruelties practised against the professors of the Truths of Christ, whose blood the Lord will no doubt avenge," meaning the Waldenses, and added as postscript:—

The Quakers are still in prison, being very stiffe & are Like to be sent to y^c Common Gaole, our quiet west country people doe judge them to be men of A strange humo^r.⁴

¹ We know from the tract, *The Wounds of an Enemy*, 1656, that two of the travellers were Thomas Salthouse, from Lancashire, and Miles Halhead, from Westmorland. The other is described as "a friend of Bristoll born at Exeter, who spake not to the people," and so "was set free, with charge to be gone home."

The First-day meeting was held at the house of John Harris, and among those present was "George Brooks, then Priest of the Nightingale Friggot," a man of notoriously bad character, to whom some plain questions were put, and who was the cause of the commitment of Salthouse and Halhead. These two Friends suffered imprisonment for more than a year in Plymouth and Exeter. See also *F.P.T.*; *Besse*.

² The same complaint is made in *The Character of a Quaker*, 1671, p. 10. But when Friends were moved to express a few words before a meal, they were, at times, apprehended for preaching at a Conventicle! See *Journal of George Fox*, ii. 133; *Besse's Sufferings*, i. 764; *F.P.T.* 240.

³ S.P.D. xcvi. 83. *Cal.* 1655, p. 183.

⁴ S.P.D. xcvi. 87. *Cal.* 1655, p. 184.

FRIENDS' HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

JOURNAL SUPPLEMENT No. 8. EXTRACTS FROM STATE PAPERS.

Please send me cop of the above-named Supplement, when ready,
for which I enclose, being Three Shillings (Seventy-five Cents) per copy.

Signed

Date

TO NORMAN PENNEY, F.S.A., Devonshire House, 12, Bishopsgate Without, London, E.C.;
to HERMAN NEWMAN, 1010 Arch Street, Philadelphia, Pa.; or to DAVID S. TABER,
144 East 20th Street, New York, N.Y.

of King's College, and University Librarian at Cambridge, the son of a Friend, and one of the most distinguished of scholars and bibliographers, whose name is kept before us by the "Henry Bradshaw Society."

Amongst diligent collectors of Quaker books and manuscripts, in the early days of our Society, was Steven Crisp, of Colchester, whose collections, made known to us by our friend, Charlotte Fell Smith, in her *Steven Crisp*, are still preserved at Colchester, and also upon these premises.

Thomas Marche, of Sandwich, was another indefatigable collector, and his admirably arranged Kent Records are amongst the treasures at Devonshire House, his excellent caligraphy being especially noticeable.

To Richard Hawkins we are indebted for a fine series of rare early Quaker pamphlets, many of them originally the property of George Fox, and formerly preserved in the Library of Westminster Meeting House, now here.

Thomas Ellwood, the editor of Fox's *Journal*, was another early Friend, many of whose manuscripts are still preserved; and amongst others was a precious collection of State papers and letters, formerly belonging to his immortal "Master John Milton," which afterwards came into the possession of John Nickolls, F.S.A., the Quaker publisher, who printed them in 1743.

Then we have Benjamin Furly, of Colchester, and Amsterdam, one of the compilers of George Fox's "*Battle-door*," friend of Locke, Algernon Sydney, and other distinguished men, whose most interesting catalogue of books and curiosities, published in 1714, deserves more attention than it has at present received.

In later times, we have John Kendall, of Colchester, whose fine collection of books, left in trust, was unhappily dispersed some forty years ago; it contained, amongst other treasures, Benjamin Furly's family Bible.

Other collectors were James Dix, of Bristol, John Thompson, of Hitchin, Francis Fry, of Bristol, Richard Day, of Saffron Walden, Thomas Thompson, of Liverpool, Paul Bevan, of Tottenham, Arthur John Naish, of Birmingham, James Midgley, of Rochdale, Thomas Mounsey and Edward and Thomas James Backhouse, of Sunderland,

Thomas Robson, of Liverpool, and others, all diligent collectors of Quaker books, manuscripts, and other Quakeriana.

Then amongst antiquaries we have the distinguished name of Dr. Thomas Young, the Egyptologist, and amongst other well-known names were Benjamin Bartlett, F.S.A., the topographer and antiquary, who used to write in the famous summerhouse belonging to his Newton ancestors at Hartshill, where George Fox himself is said to have been similarly engaged. Others were Thomas Birch, Peter Collinson, the naturalist and antiquary, Dr. Richard Mead (whose wife, Ruth Marsh, was a Friend), Dr. Lettsom, Hudson Gurney, Anna Gurney, Joseph Sams, Henry Ecroyd Smith, Nathaniel Sams, and others.

Amongst historians we may mention William Sewel, Joseph Besse, Robert Proud, Samuel M. Janney, John Gough, Thomas Wight, John Ruddy, James Bowden, Charles Tylor, Dr. Hodgkin, John Stephenson Rowntree, John Wilhelm Rowntree, William Beck, Charlotte Fell Smith, and others.

Quaker genealogists and family historians have also been much to the fore, especially of late, and we may name in this connection Daniel Gurney, George Griffin, Joseph Foster, James Backhouse, George Richardson, Anne Ogden Boyce, George Baker, Charlotte Sturge, Samuel Lloyd, Francis Corder Clayton, Josiah Newman, Percival Lucas, William Ernest Marsh, Sir Alfred E. Pease, Norman Penney, and Henry Ecroyd Smith.

Our friend, Frederick Goodall Cash, whom I have had the privilege of knowing for over forty years, and who will, I hope, succeed me in the presidential chair, is also well known to us for his accurate knowledge of London topography.

To conclude, perhaps I may be just allowed to mention my earliest association with the records at Devonshire House.

Some thirty years ago I applied to Devonshire House Monthly Meeting for leave to make extracts from the Minute Books of that Meeting, and I possess a copy of a

minute, dated 18 xi., 1880, signed by the Clerk, our able and indispensable friend, William Frederic Wells, granting me this privilege, and I was committed to the paternal care of the late Edward Marsh, manager of Friends' Book and Tract Depository, whose brother, James Marsh, was my father's partner in business.

I may add that I made very full use of that minute, and I was allowed to rummage amongst the then somewhat neglected and musty treasures of the Lower Strong-room, and made extracts from the ponderous tomes containing Quaker Sufferings, from which Besse compiled his famous folios. I recollect that my curiosity inclined me to "go up higher" in the room, and Edward Marsh and Charles Hoyland caught me in the act of examining, upon a top shelf, the contents of one of a series of small square deal boxes, which contained ancient Yearly Meeting papers.

Many years after, Isaac Sharp gave me permission again to examine the contents of this box, which, to our delight, produced papers in the handwriting of George Fox, and amongst them was no other than his original Testimony concerning Ann Whitehead, which was later reproduced by William Beck in his valuable *George Whitehead*, so that my curiosity was well repaid.

From 1880 to the present time I have given much attention to Quaker history and records, more particularly perhaps to family history, my own people having remained Friends since 1652; and I have formed a very large and carefully arranged collection of books, papers, and relics, relating to hundreds of Quaker and other families, of which I have recently compiled a general catalogue of two folio volumes of some 600 pages.

Tunbridge Wells.

JOSEPH JOSHUA GREEN.

Though thousands should be convinced in their understanding of all the truths we maintain, yet if they were not sensible of inward life and their souls not changed from unrighteousness to righteousness, they could add nothing to us.—ROBERT BARCLAY, *Apology*, xi. 7, quoted in R. M. Jones's *Little Book of Selections*.