

Friends in Current Literature.

Rhoda M. Coffin, Her Reminiscences, Addresses, Papers and Ancestry, edited by Mary Coffin Johnson (New York: Grafton Press, 8¾ by 6, pp. 291) is a most interesting and stimulating record of a noble life, devoted to the good of all, especially of the low and degraded. Service of many kinds is recorded. Here is how the Whitewater Meeting House (Ind.) was taken in hand for cleaning, c. 1848 :—

“ The old Whitewater Meeting House built many years before [1827], had never been cleaned, though thousands had occupied it. The large gallery used but once a year at the Yearly Meeting was particularly in a bad condition. We decided to clean it. . . . It was very hard work, and many thought our efforts meddlesome. ‘ It has served us thus and why could it not now. It is pride,’ said one. . . . One of the dear Friends walked back and forth before the house wiping away the tears, and when I went to try to comfort him, he said, ‘ Water will rot out all the sills, and there are them windows, they have never been taken out before, and have never let a drop of water in. Rhoda, thee did it, coming here with thy new fangled notions.’ . . . The Church had it cleaned yearly after that ” (pp. 58-61).

The Addresses and Papers, occupying about half the book, deal with work on behalf of prisoners, the insane, Indians, home and foreign missions and “ children of the street.” There is also a sketch of the life of Sarah J. Smith, a well-known Quaker philanthropist, who died in 1885.

R. M. Coffin (1826-1909) was the wife of Charles F. Coffin, now resident in Chicago, Ill.

Here is yet another book to add to the list of Quaker novels—*Sampson Rideout, Quaker*, by Una L. Silberrad (London: Nelson, 7½ by 5¼, pp. 411, 2s.). Miss Silberrad dedicates her work “ To J. H. F., a member of the Society of Friends, and the best man I know ”—this is Joseph Hoyland Fox, of Wellington, Somerset. It is interesting to learn that the author has frequently attended Meeting at Buckhurst Hill, the home of Elizabeth Fox Howard, author of “ Damaris of the Downs,” as two scenes in this volume—a visit to a Friends’ meeting, and a visit to a graveyard in the dead of night—have a general resemblance to portions of “ Damaris.” A warm appreciation of Friends’ principles runs through the narrative (e.g. pp. 180, 201, 230); the principal events cluster round the ruined house and stable at Ashcombe in Dorsetshire, near to which is Ashmore, an old Quaker property, from which John Eliot, the lord of the manor, was committed to prison for non-payment of tithe, c. 1770. “ Darry Leven ” is modelled somewhat after Bampfylde Moore Carew, “ the King of the Gipsies,” who lived in Devonshire in the early eighteenth century, but one is sorry for the touch of fatalism which consigns Darry to “ live out his life his own way, and go to his own place ” (p. 407). Would a Quaker of the early day have accepted freedom as a result of subterfuge ? (chap. xvi.).

The Annual Reports for 1910 of The Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia (founded in 1812) are to hand. Various members of the

Vaux family have for many years taken great interest in this institution—the present treasurer is George Vaux, Jun., who is said to possess one of the largest and best private collections of minerals in America.

The *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, for May, has a four-page article on “A Quaker Post-Bag,” written by (Rev.) Alfred Barraclough, and illustrated by views of Barlbrough Hall, church, and village.

There is an interesting conspectus of the early history of Friends in New York and on Long Island in the *Year Book* of New York Monthly Meeting, 15th Street and Rutherford Place.

The great work upon which Prof. G. Lyon Turner, M.A., has been for some time engaged is now completed, *Original Records of Early Non-conformity under Persecution and Indulgence* (London and Leipzig: Unwin, 2 vols., 10 by 6½, pp. xxii. + 1348, £2 10s.). The documents here reproduced fall into two groups—Episcopal Returns and State Papers. The former are the Returns made by order of Archbishop Sheldon in 1665, 1669, and 1676, of the Conventicles of various sorts in each parish, the number of attendants, their social position, and the Teachers usually present. The State Papers refer to the licences granted under the Declaration of Indulgence of 1672. The value of these volumes can only be fully realised as the books are consulted. The following is a specimen of the many references to Friends:—

Ely Diocese—Conventicles—1669.

Parishes & Conventicles in them.	Sects.	Numbers.	Quality & Abbetors.	Teachers.
St. Trinity in Ely	Quakers	12 or 13	Meanest Mechanicks	Uncertayne & sometime ye meetings are silent
St. Maries in Ely, at Francis Bugge his house, Comber	Quakers	usually inconsiderable; once of late 30 or 40.	Meane condition	John Browne of Norwich a late speaker there
Sutton at the house of Edwd Wright		about 40	Some rich, some very poore. Many of Evill fame, That live in Adultery & Fornication.	John Crooke John Ansley

The last entry is not definitely stated to refer to Friends, but it was probably a Friends' Meeting, ministered to by John Crook, late Justice, of Bedfordshire. The descriptions of those present may refer to the absence of marriage according to established form.

The first volume contains the two-fold text, and the second volume gives a classified summary and also indexes to places, teachers, householders, etc. The names of many Friends appear in the lists of teachers and householders.

A standard biography of Elias Hicks [1748-1830] has been written for the Friends' General Conference Advancement Committee of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (Race Street), by Henry W. Wilbur, and to this Elizabeth Powell Bond, late Dean of Swarthmore College, Pa., has contributed an Introduction. The foundation of this record of a remarkable life is, of course, "The Journal of Elias Hicks," published in 1832, but help has been obtained from printed sermons, and from many private letters previously unpublished, the result bearing evidence of very careful preparation. The home of Elias Hicks for about sixty years was a farm in Jericho on Long Island. At seventeen he was apprenticed to learn carpentry, and later he was a surveyor. At twenty-two he married Jemima Seaman. A list of his descendants forms an appendix to the book. He was "recommended to the Meeting of Ministers and Elders" as a Minister in 1778, and he travelled extensively. There is little in his journals relative to the opposition to his ministry, from which resulted mainly the Separation of 1827-8. "These silences in the Journal are hard to understand. Undoubtedly, the troubles of the period were not pleasant matters of record, yet one wishes that a fuller and more detailed statement regarding the whole matter might be had from him than is contained in the meagre references in his personal correspondence or his published Journal" (p. 46). He was a preacher first and foremost—"it seemed impossible for him to avoid the preacherly function in even his most tender and domestic missives" (p. 76). Of his family of eleven children, the sons, four in number, were of weak constitution and all died before manhood. "It surely seems strange that a man who was the father of eleven children, that his only source of personal 'reproof' concerning them was a little matter of 'wearing their gown sleeves long and pinned at the wrist.' This probably is a fair illustration of what may be called the conservatism of Elias Hicks touching all of the peculiarities of the Society of Friends" (p. 80). Later in this admirably-written biography we read, "During the last ten years of the life of Elias Hicks he was simply overburdened answering questions and explaining his position touching a multitude of views charged against him by his critics and defamers" (p. 114). It might have been better had fewer questions on deep and mysterious themes been asked and "answered"; at any rate the strong and public opposition to his religious pronouncements brought him everywhere multitudes of hearers (see p. 55).

The book bears as title *The Life and Labors of Elias Hicks*. A few chapter headings will reveal something of the contents:—Some Points of Doctrine; First Trouble in Philadelphia; The Braithwaite Controversy; Ann Jones in Dutchess County; Friendly and Unfriendly Critics; After the "Separation"; Recollections, Reminiscences and Testimonies.

The new volume from the pen of Thomas Hodgkin, D.C.L., *The Trial of Our Faith and other Papers* (London: Macmillan, 9 by 6, pp. 344, 7s. 6d. net) contains addresses on George Fox and James Parnell, to which we hope to refer later.

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