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THE BEGINNINGS
OF
QUAKERISM

BY

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WITH INTRODUCTION BY

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EXTRACT FROM THE PREFACE

THE standard *History of the Rise, Increase, and Progress of the Christian People called Quakers*, by William Sewel of Amsterdam, was published in Dutch in 1717, in English in 1722, and in German in 1742. It had been preceded by a much inferior work, Gerard Croese's *Historia Quakeriana*, printed in Latin in 1695, and in German and English in 1696, and was succeeded in 1789-1790 by John Gough's *History*, which in the earlier period is a mere compilation. Sewel's book is a conscientious and well-written piece of work for its day, but necessarily falls far short of present needs. Of shorter histories, *The Rise of the Quakers*, by T. Edmund Harvey (1905), *The Story of Quakerism*, by Elizabeth Braithwaite Emmott (1908), and the article on "Friends, Society of," by A. Neave Brayshaw, in the new edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, may be consulted with advantage.

My friend the late John Wilhelm Rowntree planned a History which should adequately exhibit Quakerism as a great experiment in spiritual religion, and should be abreast of the requirements of modern research, and he was gathering materials for the work during the last year of his life. To us who knew him intimately he seemed admirably qualified for the task, alike by his acuteness of intellect and width of outlook, his clear understanding of the genius of Quakerism, and his brilliance of style; and the lectures on "The Rise of Quakerism in Yorkshire," in his *Essays and Addresses*, give a taste of what he might have accomplished had he lived.

The execution of his plan has fallen to friends who shared his conception of the significance of the Quaker movement in its bearing upon spiritual religion; and Dr. Rufus M. Jones, the editor of the series, has already published two volumes, *Studies in Mystical Religion* and *The Quakers in the American Colonies*.

In writing the present history of the Beginnings of Quakerism, I have endeavoured to make good use of the unique treasury of MS. and printed materials in the Library of the Society of Friends at Devonshire House, Bishopsgate, E.C.; and I also owe much to the publications of the Friends' Historical Society, which are continually making fresh portions of this material readily available.

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