

The Presidential Address.

The annual meeting of the Society was held in Manchester as arranged. In the absence of the President, Amelia Mott Gummere (wife of the Professor of English literature at Haverford College, Pa., Francis Barton Gummere, Ph.D., LL.D., Litt.D.), the chair was taken by A. Neave Brayshaw, B.A., LL.B., who introduced to the notice of a somewhat small number of Friends present, in a delightful manner, several of A. M. Gummere's contributions to literature, especially her *Quaker: a Study in Costume*.

The following presidential address was read by Norman Penney, F.S.A.

TO THE FRIENDS' HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON.

The usefulness of an absentee President is open to question, when his only service is to forward a message of greeting across the ocean. But this at least affords me an opportunity to send to the Friends' Historical Society my sincere thanks and appreciation for the honour done me by my appointment, and I greatly regret my inability to be with you in person on the occasion of your Annual Meeting.

We Friends in America are following with interest the excellent work done by your Society. You have set us an example in the publications of your Journal which should serve as a stimulus to our own effort to preserve our Quaker inheritance. For it is an interesting fact that whilst our country and our institutions are new and young by comparison with your own, the history of Quakerism in America follows so closely that of England that less than a decade separates the appearance of George Fox as a preacher and the beginnings of Quakerism on the Western continent.

We are well aware of the need for preserving all of the materials for the fuller study of our Quaker institutions here in America, wherever they may be found, and no doubt exists in my mind that there will yet be discovered in private hands, and perhaps amongst persons as yet unappreciative of their importance, treasures that will be

of great value to the future historian. The Monthly Meetings of the older colonies alone contain, in hundreds of unpublished folios, a complete picture of early Quaker manners and customs. For it was the Monthly Meeting that came in direct contact with the individuals who comprised the Church organization, and the early freedom of speech, and search into personal conduct, have left on the old pages, in the curious handwriting of seventeenth and early eighteenth century clerks, vivid pictures of Quaker life, like photographic negatives which only await development. We desire also to keep before the minds of our young people the service rendered by our great Quakers; an example of this is the effort which we are making to place upon the site of his birthplace a suitable memorial to John Woolman.

The past year has been notable for the publication of the most important contributions yet made to the study of Quaker history. To name but one, the new edition of George Fox's Journal, with its wonderfully painstaking and accurate notes, is enough in itself to mark the year with a red letter. A well "extra-illustrated" copy of this great book would prove a complete picture gallery of early Quakerism.

The development of the modern historic sense has of late been well exemplified in its application to Quaker history. The old Church historian who wrote only from one point of view and only "for edification" has passed away. We note that Quaker historians and antiquarians are becoming more intelligently active, at the same time that solicitude is expressed lest Quakerism to-day be losing some of its influence in the world. One powerful cause is less recognised than it should be by modern Friends. *All* the difference does not lie in themselves or their propaganda. Modern society is no longer concerned, as was the seventeenth century, with the things of the spirit. The growth of commercialism and materialistic tendencies threatens to wreck, not only Religion, but Art as well. The province of historical study—I speak now only of this as applied to Quakerism—is to enable us to solve present problems by the application to them of the lessons of the past. The great currents of life in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries swept Quakerism

into a side eddy. Whether it moves with the tide of reaction which some of us think must eventually come, or continues to pass around in its own smaller circle, will largely depend upon the intellectual aid given to the moral forces at work at the time. To this great end, historical study will be an invaluable ally; for already the facts of our history as laid bare by recent investigation have been, in the past ten years, or even less, a large factor in changing the whole spirit of American Quakerism. We are apt over here to balk at *facts*. Some of these, unpleasant or startling, even, have been accepted, and the tonic of the effect is working into the Quaker social system, albeit slowly, and often unconsciously.

All hail, then, to the patient and well-equipped students, who, in the home of British Quakerism, are so diligently aiding in the diffusion of a better understanding of our cause. To them we look for help in the solution of difficult problems on both sides of the water.

AMELIA MOTT GUMMERE.

The Balance Sheet was read by Stanley J. Forward in the absence of the Treasurer, George Benington. For this and for the list of Officers for 1912-1913, see later pages of this issue of THE JOURNAL.

In conjunction with Eliza H. Varney, an appointed evening meeting in a Union Chapel was about to conclude. John Dillingham knelt in prayer. With much fervency he pleaded for several conditions and several classes, then as if a moment hesitating, his supplication was for "any widow whose husband may still be living." As the meeting concluded, one who sat by the Friend who had arranged the meeting turned to him somewhat sharply with the question, "Why did you tell him that?" In a moment it was evident to the interrogator that no previous knowledge of the condition thus strikingly pictured had been possessed by any of the Friends, and he confessed his amazement at the distinct leading of the Holy Spirit, in what proved in good measure to have been a healing ministration.

John H. Dillingham (1839-1910), by J. Henry Bartlett, 1912, p. 132.

Friday, Feb. 24., Mrs. Dennington, a quaker of 80 years of age at Harefield in Middlesex, was baptized and admitted a member of the church of England.

Newscutting in D., dated 1758.