

“ Quakerism Past and Present ”

The Quakers Past and Present, by Dorothy M. Richardson (London : Constable, 7½ by 5, pp. viii. + 96, 1s. net). This is a well and freshly-written book. Miss Richardson, though bearing a Friendly name, does not come of Quaker stock; she has only recently become acquainted with Friends and their principles, but the book shows much insight into conditions past and present. Her chapters are entitled : The Birth of Quakerism, The Society of Friends, The Quaker Church, The Retreat of Quakerism, Quakerism in America, Quakerism and Women, The Present Position. The subject is treated from the mystical and conservative point of view. Of J. J. Gurney we read :

“ Coming of old Quaker stock, though religious and pious and full of zeal for the salvation of the world, he never grasped the essentials of Quakerism,” but “ His strong persuasive personality revived the enthusiasm of the imitative mass of the Society and once more the Quakers faced the world. . . . They were a little band, tempered and disciplined by their century of quiet cultivation of the Quaker faith and method, and they were at once available for a share, strikingly disproportionate to their numbers, in the evangelical work of an awakening Christendom ” (pp. 82, 83).

The chapter “ Quakerism and Women ” is timely :

“ Amongst the Quakers the particularized home, with its isolated woman cut off from any responsible share in the life of ‘ the world ’ and associating mainly with other equally isolated women, is unknown. . . . She is in touch with her stake and her responsibility in regard to every single activity of the Meeting of which she is a member. . . . Because amongst the Quakers, in a very true and deep sense, the world is home and home is the world, because, in other words, the inner is able without obstruction to flow out and realize itself in the outer, the sense of family life, of home, and fireside, is particularly sweet and strong ” (pp. 78-80).

It is somewhat surprising to read (p. 56n) that “ Penn attempted to *bribe* the secretaries when the charter was drawn up, to abolish the *Penn* prefixed to *Sylvania*,” but in a letter to Robert Turner, he writes : “ I went to the king to have it altered . . . nor could twenty guineas more to the Under-Secretary vary the name.”¹

There is a slight anachronism on p. 68—the “ walking purchase ” came before not after the Revolution.

¹ Quoted in Webb's *Penns and Peningtons*, 1867, p. 329.

ERRATA.—On p. 4 of last issue, for Nottingham read *Northampton*. On p. 15, n. 2, for Mary (Burlingham) Southall, read Mary (*Prichard*) Southall.