

Humphry Smith and his Volume of Tracts, 1658

JN the 10th month 1658 Humphry Smith, of Herefordshire, caused to be bound together a collection of fifty Quaker pamphlets published during that year. At the beginning of this volume, now before us, are seven pages in manuscript, the first four of which are addressed to his son Humphry. He writes :

“ And for thy further derectin in the narrow way of Life, haue J with Care Causid this booke to be bownde vp for thee, in it to reade the eternel truths of God writen by his saruants and faithful suffringe ministers.”

The concluding paragraph of this letter runs :

“ This writen in tendornies of Love the 23 of the 12^{mo} 58 bing a prisnor of Jesus Christ in this litle stinkinge Lowsy smoke hole at winchister Calid the Comun goale & house of Coretion, where for the truth of my father J haue suffrid bonds this 12 months, who am thy father in the flesh

“ Calid HUMPHRY SMITH.”

A postscript is added : “ And see that this booke be kept safe & not spylid any way that in years to Come, agis may read and see my Loue to the seed.”¹

Humphry Smith's injunction to safe-keeping has been so well regarded that after 256 years the pamphlets are in an excellent state of preservation ; the volume has been sent up to D. for inspection by its owner, Gilbert Gilkes, of Kendal.

Other MS. additions appear in the volume, in contemporary handwriting ; and on the last page is a recipe “ To make Jnke ”—

“ Take one quart of wort, y^e first runn, neere $\frac{1}{2}$ a pound of Galls, cut y^e galls in peeces & put them into y^e wort, and let it stand 2 or 3 dayes & stir it together and then straine it, & then put 2 oz^s of gum arabacke, and 2 q^{rs} of Green Coppris into it, & stir it together, and Let it stand 2 or 3 dayes Longer.”

In pencil on the fly-leaf are the words “ Peter Bedford presented by B. G. Gilkes.” The following explanation is kindly supplied by Gilbert Gilkes :—“ The book never went out of our family, but had no doubt come into the possession of my grandfather, Benjamin Gilbert Gilkes, through his having married Marion Bedford, who was Peter Bedford's sister. Peter Bedford was my great uncle. He was the son of Isaac Bedford, who married Mary Smith, the daughter of the Smiths of Felsted and Bardfield. It is through my grandmother, Marion Bedford, that I trace descent from Humphry Smith.”

¹ In Humphrey Smith's Testimony to his father, printed in *A Collection of . . . Writings and Faithful Testimonies . . . Humphrey Smith*, 1683, he refers to “ words he wrote to me in a Volume of Books he caused to be bound for me, ‘ That I should keep that Book safe, and not spoiled any way, that in years to come, Ages may read and see my love to the Seed.’ ”