Darlington: the English Philadelphia

An address (somewhat abridged) given by Amy E. Wallis at a meeting of the Society held at Friends House on March 1st, 1956.

SUCH was the title given by our local Quaker historian, the late John William Steel, to one of his newspaper articles, written in the '70s of last century, describing the large and prosperous meeting of Darlington and its membership, of whom some were nationally known and whose influence was paramount in town and neighbourhood, in political and civic life, in business and philanthropy. Says John William Steel:

> Till the followers of Fox and Penn settled on Skerneside Darlington was a humdrum country town. Since the opening of the first public railway, it has extended its ancient mills, formed engineering works the most complete between Glasgow and Doncaster and is yearly adding to the branches of its iron industries. Of all this activity Quakers have been the motive power and naturally they have increased in number. They form, however, but a small portion, not a tenth, of the 34,000 persons dwelling in Darlington but they still largely constitute the purse and the governing bodies of the town. And thus have the people delighted to honour the followers of Fox. Since the enfranchisement of South Durham, nearly one half of the members chosen as representatives have been Darlington Quakers: and naturally enough the representative for the borough itself has also been of the like faith. Darlington became a municipal borough some ten years ago and out of nine mayors seven have been Friends. One half of the aldermanic bench is of this way of religious thought; a third of the school board members are of the "meeting house" persuasion; and when a short time ago, a new scheme nominated several members, by virtue of their offices, it was found that these all were Friends".[1]

So is the simile illustrated between the growth and government of an English town (whose football team even today is known as "The Quakers"!) and the city Penn founded, though the one was built in undeveloped country and the other's roots go back into the beginning of history, to the days of Cuthbert and Saxon King, Norman Bishop and Plantagenet wars with Scots, and in less stirring times a market and posting town on the main road from London to Newcastle.

[1] Printed, with some changes, in *"Friendly" Sketches: Essays illustrative of Quakerism*, by J. W. Steel. Darlington: Harrison Penney, Priestgate 1876.

Tradition has it that "Governor Penn" addressed a large gathering of several thousands in Darlington, in the open ground, thought to have been a burial ground, behind an inn, not far from the later meeting house site. This may have been while visiting his sister, Margaret ("Peg Penn" of Pepys' Diary) who married Anthony Lowther and lived at Marske Hall, near Saltburn, on the coast only twenty miles away.

A testimony to the similarity of atmosphere between the Quaker town of Darlington and the "City of Brotherly Love" is given by Hannah Chapman Backhouse (*née* Gurney) during her journey in America in 1830-1835 when she writes in her journal, on coming to Philadelphia, of "being more at home here than at any place in the world that is not really so" and later "This is probably the last Yearly Meeting I shall ever attend in this interesting city, which, if my lot were to be cast in any other part of the world than where it has been, I should prefer for a residence." Some of us who have been welcomed in Philadelphia can echo this out of our own experience a hundred years later, and, as members of London Yearly Meeting, marvel that within only fifty miles radius of Philadelphia there are yet nearly as many Friends as in our whole Yearly Meeting, while Pennsylvania Friends are amazed at British Friends coming up monthly to London from north and south, east and west involving lengthy journeys—some "all through the night".

While this may be said of many other Friendly centres, of Kendal, so closely linked by intermarriage with Darlington families, and Norwich, of Newcastle and Birmingham, yet these were already large cities or centuries-old county towns; while in contrast with some other cities having a strong Quaker history, at the turn of the century in 1800 Darlington's population was only 4,000, and thus the influence was more marked.

The social life of the meeting was increased by the gathering in many Quaker homes in turn of the Essay Meeting and the Philosophical Society. The former was begun in 1830 at the home of Jonathan and Hannah Chapman Backhouse at Polam, and in 1930 the centenary meeting was held there, by invitation of Oswald and Helen Baynes.[1] Descendants came in their ancestors' actual clothes, silk bonnets and

[1] The then Heads of Polam Hall School, first established under the Misses Proctor in the 1850s.

shawls, beaver hats (bought in Philadelphia by Jonathan Backhouse), or coat, fancy waistcoat and carrying a "carpet bag" as in E. Lloyd Pease's case. Original minutes were read and papers describing the growth of the Society, and changes in meeting and town chronicled.

The Darlington Friends Philosophical Society, on the proposal made at an Essay Meeting in 1846, was formed for "the encouragement of scientific research and the mutual improvement of its members in the various branches of science and natural history". In the report at the jubilee meeting in 1896, after a list of many scientific subjects considered, comes the following:

> Other matters which were considered in these early years were, the use and proper placing of lightning rods; the erection of paragreles, in the South of France, for warding off hailstorms, so destructive to the grapes; the passage of Solomon's ships to Ezion-Geber; and the site of the Garden of Eden.

The subjects of the essays were equally serious, discussing all things in heaven and earth, natural, metaphysical, geological, with forecasts of future development. But the essayist allowed himself at times a lighter touch, such as in this version of the Advices, in the '70s:

THE ADVICES

1
Let thy accounts be kept with care,
See that there be no errors there,
Do not defer till thou art ill,
The due completion of thy will.

2
Also throughout thy time of health,
Beware accumulating wealth,
Thy surplus thousands, give away,
To those who lack the means to pay.

3
By acting thus thou wilt ensure
The heart-felt blessings of the poor,
And thou thyself wilt evermore
Be blest in basket and in store.

4
Be strictly honest in thy dealings,
Discouraging all greedy feelings,
And do not speculation choose
Or thou wilt very likely lose.

5
So, therefore, without more preamble,
We recommend thee not to gamble,
Or thou may'st wish when all is spent,
Thou'dst rested safe with 3 per cent.

6
We trust that thou wilt do thy best
That games of chance may be suppress'd,
Nor would the meeting feel annoyed
If Billiard Tables were destroyed.

7
All places of diversion shun
Except the tea and modest bun,
Also avoid inflicting pain
By sports denominated vain.

8

On furniture and dress expend
No more than may become a Friend,
In all thy actions lay aside
Whatever tends to worldly pride.

9

See after friends of modest worth,
Rather than great ones of the earth,
And (if allowed to by thy wife)
Aim ever at the simple life.

10

Let living plain and thinking high
Be the good rule thou livest by,
And, if thou shouldst prepare a feast,
Ask not the greatest but the least.

11

So, when thy earthly course is run,
And all thy work below is done,
By living thus thou yet may'st end
A "tolerably consistent Friend".

Composed by the late James I'Anson, of Darlington

There may be some hidden comment here on the development of Victorian Quakerism, the entry into public life, the leaving off of distinguishing speech and clothing, the taking of titles, till another wrote a poem with the refrain:

"What would George Fox have said
Two hundred years ago?"

In the Darlington meeting of the writer's childhood conditions were much as pictured here. Large numbers gathered, Sunday by Sunday, in happy family groups,[1] the ministers' gallery had seven men and seven women Friends "facing", and "under the gallery" also was filled. The centre was occupied by Polam scholars. There was no children's class, we sat through the hour and twenty minutes of the meeting for worship; only occasionally a special meeting was arranged for younger members. We stayed for Preparative Meeting, attended Thursday morning meeting, and Monthly Meetings when held at Darlington. We observed the order and practice of these meetings—the clerk, who, as was said, "fought for his minutes"—another who looked round for direction being less familiar with our usages, and one of our amusements as children was to "play" at Preparative Meeting. As all became clerks and secretaries to this and that, possibly it was a good grounding!

And with what expectation, awe and reverence did we look forward to Quarterly Meeting! The preceding Monthly Meeting, though with overnight visitors for the Monthly Meeting on Ministry and Oversight, paled before the preparations for this great occasion. The best spare rooms were to be made ready, the sheets, reserved for that occasion, to be aired —of noble size, 130 ins. in length by 108 in width, and larger

[1] Family groups included in the '90s, Peases, Hodgkins and Frys, Backhouses and Mounseys, Kitchings and Cudworthys, I'Ansons and Penneys, and many more.

were known, and of pure linen and fine weave. Biscuit boxes were to be freshly filled for possible "night hunger," while in the kitchens the best shank-end of the home cured ham was to be boiled, the chickens, as large as small turkeys, to be ordered to be ready from the poultry-yard; the creation of rich custard tarts, lemon solid (scalded cream poured from a china teapot from the height of a stance on the kitchen table into the dish on the floor prepared with lemon juice and sugar and left to set), ginger cream, moulds of lemon sponge, and other delicacies, went forward.

The solemn gathering of the Quarterly Meeting on Ministry and Oversight was followed by an evening of interchange of family news among guests from different centres, or matters of import in "our beloved Society", interspersed with songs from a cousin who accompanied herself on the piano. Dawned the day, and, after a "morning reading" of more than usual impressiveness, an energetic uncle, in "top hat" and frock coat, walked in to town for meeting at 10.30 a.m. taking me with him. (One usually drove with the parents in the brougham.)

In the meeting house was a mounting number of "Friends from a distance" until, as one watched by the door, came the well-known figure into view, slowly mounting the steps—the broad-brimmed silk hat, worn a little towards the back of the head, the thick navy blue cloth overcoat, the white comforter crossed at the neck (it was October), the benignant features of Bevan Braithwaite, with his daughters Rachel and Catherine Braithwaite either side of him in modified "Friends' bonnets" and neat plain costume.

This distinguished presence, year by year, was granted us as it was the time of holding the meeting of Thomas Richardson's Trust[1] on the previous day, of which J. Bevan

[1] Thomas Richardson was a cousin of Edward Pease (his father and E.P.'s mother being brother and sister) and the three sons of Edward Pease, John, Joseph and Henry Pease, were appointed Trustees with their heirs and descendants. Also Durham Quarterly Meeting, Yorkshire and London and Middlesex Quarterly Meetings have representatives on the Trust, and the list of former holders has many familiar names. J. Bevan Braithwaite succeeded Robert Forster in 1868 and held the appointment for nearly 40 years, as did his successor, Charles Lawson Smith. The Trust has been largely used for educational bursaries because Thomas Richardson was the founder of Grove House, Tottenham; Brookfield, Wigton; Friends' School, Great Ayton; and interested in the York schools, Ackworth and many others.

Braithwaite was the representative from London and Middlesex Quarterly Meeting for forty years. He sat as "shake hands Friend" on the men's side in the gallery and gave us of his wisdom in characteristic speech.

A hundred and fifty Friends thus met, from Tyneside, Wearside, Teeside and North Yorkshire, from the dales—Wensleydale and Swaledale, Teesdale, the Aucklands and Derwentside—and responsible Friends, even Thomas Pumphrey from Newcastle, modestly took seats in the body of the meeting. Isaac Sharp, the much travelled, who kept his membership in Darlington Monthly Meeting from early life there (and whose testimony in the Quarterly Meeting minute book at a later date occupies over forty manuscript pages) might be in the gallery. Thomas Hodgkin, whose beautiful voice, figure and language remain livingly in memory, was another. Ralph Dixon and his bright-eyed, rosy-cheeked wife, for many years "heads of the family" at Ayton School, were others, as well as many relatives, Jonathan Backhouse and Mary Anna Hodgkin, Elizabeth Barclay Backhouse, Katharine Backhouse, Lucy E. Mounsey, and Thomas William Backhouse (the astronomer and philanthropist) from Sunderland, as well as our parents Edward Backhouse and Rachel Ann (Fryer) Mounsey. An interesting figure in large felt "wide-awake" hat was Thomas Bradley from his beautiful home of Bear Park, near Aysgarth, who used to say he thought he had spent three years of his life on Northallerton station waiting for the main line trains in order to attend these gatherings.

Following the meeting for worship, the men and women sitting separately, business was taken in joint session. Then adjournment to a "sit down" dinner in the big schoolroom upstairs, butlers, footmen and maids from Quaker households helping in waiting. Still further business was taken on return to the meeting house till a certain point was reached, when the shutters descended and men Friends pursued the intricacies of Trust and other matters and women Friends held their own session, often with a speaker to introduce some subject after a little formal business.

At 3.30 or 4.0 were to be seen before the meeting house carriages and many cabs to take guests up to tea at the different homes, some competition taking place to secure this or that Friend. In our home photograph-books and curios had

been put out for the interest of Friends, and then at about 5.0 the festive meal took place at the extended table, with smaller ones to the side to take the overflow, and the plentifully supplied viands were enjoyed. Some anecdotes from Isaac Sharp might follow in the drawing-room before Friends had to leave and the family party could discuss the events of the day.

As one visiting Friend said to me after attending Durham Quarterly Meeting at Darlington of more recent days, "What jolly times these Quarterly Meetings are!" and so we find A. Neave Brayshaw quoting Rufus M. Jones on their function in the Society:[1]

> "The reader who has imagination will easily see the social importance of these gatherings. Friends from widely sundered regions, persons of different social standing, of all stages of education and spiritual experience, thus came together . . . were entertained at the homes in the locality where the meeting was held, interchanged ideas, and formed, almost without knowing it, a 'group consciousness' which played a powerful role in the life of the Society."

and A.N.B. comments:

> There was . . . a *camaraderie*, a "free-masonry" it might be called, born of a common tradition deep rooted in the past and of associations formed by many and complicated relationships.

With regard to the last, a junior has said that rather than be known as the "Society of Friends" it should have been the "Society of Cousins"! We may be glad, nowadays, for many who have come to join us and make the actual name a living reality.

Many conferences have been held in Darlington, one of the largest being the *Friends First-Day School Conference* in *August 1874*, immortalized in *The Friends in Council*.[2] In the second edition of this is the opening rhyme, entitled "The Charge of the Drab Brigade," picturing their entry, from which the following verses are taken:

Broad brimmed their helmets were,
Linen was marked with care,
Collarless coats they wear,
Noble Eight Hundred.
Matrons and maidens there
Some dark and others fair,
Caps worn to keep back hair
Somewhat in subjection. . . .

Sessional Committees too
Guarded this chosen crew,
Apprehending that some few
Might frequent taverns.
Theirs not to reason why,
Useless it were to fly,
From the keen piercing eye
Of the Committee.

[1] A. N. Brayshaw, *The Quakers: Their Story and Message*, p. 216.

[2] *The Friends in Council*, S. T. Richardson, (oblong folio, lithographed), Newcastle, n.d.; 2nd edition, Darlington, 1875, revised and redrawn.

Committees to right of them,
Committees to left of them,
Committees behind them,
Friends' houses thundered.
Elm Ridge took ninety-two,
And Pierremont not a few,
Into Beechwood they flew
Till the world wondered. . . .

With milk and honey blest,
And in fine linen dressed,
Friends always have the best
Of this world's faring.
Carriages at command,
Servants a goodly band,
Footstools on every hand,
This the cross bearing. . . .

The programme is outlined:

8th mo. 1st. Arrival of Friends from all parts . . .

8th mo. 2nd. Meetings in the newly painted Meeting House. Dinner at the Central Hall and at most Friends' Houses, also at the houses of other denominations if way opens. Tea under an oak tree five miles west of Darlington: ministering Friends will lodge in the branches, for whom hen ladders will be provided.

8th mo. 3rd. Conference, subject "Our Society on its last legs and how to undermine the Established Church."

8th mo. 4th. Conference. "How long will the last legs last?" etc.

A map of Darlington sites many of the hospitable homes and places of interest, including Harrison Penney's. A man of business and wide humanitarian interests, his son, Norman Penney, became the first librarian at Devonshire House, to whom we owe so much as the builder-up of the Library, now in these beautiful rooms at Friends House.

Many cartoons illustrate various phases of the Conference, real or imaginary, all from the pen again of Samuel Tuke Richardson, including arrival at the Meeting House, with the banner out, "Hast thou good accounts from home?" to curious sleeping accommodation owing to numbers, and the Picnic to Rokeby where "some Friends sat under mutual umbrellas."[1]

But, as quoted at the opening, the Quaker influence remained strong throughout the 19th century, and the development of industrial concerns, now large companies, had Quaker origin or encouragement. Outstanding is the opening of the Stockton and Darlington Railway. A long considered scheme for a canal from the collieries in West Durham to the ports on the Tees was at last laid aside in favour of a railway. In first expectation this was to make possible, as in collieries near Coalbrookdale and elsewhere, the drawing of a larger number of coal wagons by one horse.

[1] The organiser of this Conference was Jonathan Backhouse Hodgkin, grandson of Jonathan and Hannah C. Backhouse, whose son, the late J. Edward Hodgkin, continued his father's vision of new central buildings for the Society and carried it out in leading the creation of Friends House.

An early share certificate shows an engraving by the noted Quaker engraver, William Miller of Edinburgh, of the town as it was in 1820, with mills on the River Skerne, and a horse drawing three wagons on the railway in the foreground. This certificate is of interest too, as it is in favour of Edward Backhouse of Sunderland, Banker, having moved from Darlington to preside over the Bank there, Robert Barclay of Lombard Street in the City of London, Banker, and Joseph John Gurney of the City of Norwich, Banker, who were all original subscribers to the project. Well known is the incident of George Stephenson and Nicholas Wood arriving at Edward Pease's home—the last house in Northgate at the time, with a garden stretching down to the Skerne, complete with hot houses, and a view across to the Cleveland Hills—as Edward Pease was busy writing. In reply to the message that two men wished to speak to him he said he was too busy to see them, then, left alone, he laid down his pen, felt he should see them, and descended to the kitchen, when George Stephenson announced, "Heard you wants a rail made and I be come to do it." And sitting on the dresser, because as he said afterwards, "There was such an honest sensible look about George Stephenson and he seemed so modest and unpretending and he spoke in the strong Northumberland dialect," Edward Pease realized the importance of the interview and was finally won over to the advantage of the steam engine. The following year he and Thomas Richardson visited Killingworth Colliery and saw Stephenson's engine there at work and were made to mount and try its paces. Edward Pease was at this time over fifty years of age. His span of life was from 1766 to 1857, covering as will be seen momentous years in national and international life, and it says much for his forward-looking mind that he supported this new venture. "He had inserted in the amended Stockton and Darlington Railway Act of 1823 a clause empowering them to work the railway by means of locomotive engines and to employ them to haul passengers as well as merchandise."[1]

The day of the opening, 27th September, 1825, brought a great concourse to the town, and people lined the railway itself all the way. A letter from John Church Backhouse, aged thirteen, to his sisters at school in London, has a careful

[1] *Diaries of Edward Pease.* A. E. Pease, p. 87.

drawing across the top of the sheet, of engine, wagons, the "coach," more wagons and flags, and a description of the event. He begins:

> Perhaps you may not understand what that drawing at the top means, it is meant to represent the opening of the Stockton and Darlington Railway which took place on the 27th of September 1825. . . . I have only drawn 21 wagons but there were 17 more making in all 38. It was a very grand sight to see such a mass of people moving; on the road from D[arlington] to S[tockton] 600 people were said to be in, on and about the waggons and coaches! and the engine drew not less than 90 tons! ! ! ! ! There was an excellent dinner prepared at Stockton for the Railway party, etc. I could tell you a great many more particulars but suppose that you are tired of it by this time![1]

"Locomotive No. 1," also named "Locomotion," still stands on Darlington Station, Bank Top—the original station in North Road, at the other end of the town, is now only used for goods—and was shown to the Duke of Edinburgh on his recent visit to the town. What is not so well known, perhaps, is that at first *horse-drawn* passenger coaches plied between Darlington and Stockton, as private ventures, on the railway, the fare 1s. Six or seven different owners operated these, linking other towns also, till 1833, when the railway company took control, and soon had 1st class coaches (fare 2s. inside and 1s. outside), 2nd class (the former ones renovated) and 3rd class (unglazed, unlined), and also undertook the carriage of minerals, merchandize and passengers.

Many enterprises sprang from this beginning, Stephenson's works and engine-building and allied industries, whose founders were Kitchings, I'Ansons and Fry and others.

The Backhouses Bank was behind all this industrial progress, surviving the failures of others after the Napoleonic wars, and in due course spread all over the north east. Not without incident, however, as when in 1819 a "run" was expected on the Bank, Jonathan Backhouse[2] posted up to London and obtained a large amount of gold. While returning, a wheel of the chaise came off near Croft Bridge. Piling up his bags in the opposite corner, it is said he was driven the remaining distance on three wheels into Darlington and the "run" was prevented. In confirmation of this an entry "To

[1] MS. letter in possession of the author.

[2] His son, Edmund Backhouse, was the first member of Parliament for *Darlington* from 1868-1885. He was still the leading partner in the Bank when in 1896 it was amalgamated with Barclay's, London. He gave a life-time to the interests of the town.

wheel demolished £2.3.0." appeared in the current Bank day-book. Samuel Tuke Richardson, himself a descendant of the Backhouse family, wrote a Ballad with lively illustrations which has achieved notoriety and was used by Barclay's Bank in Canada for a Christmas greeting to their customers some years ago.

Quakers in Darlington took the lead in the establishment of the first "Dispensary," in subscriptions towards the provision of public baths, the foundation of the Peace Society (both national and local). The Temperance Society placed several fountains about the town, one from the Fothergill family, and even organized a "coffee-cart", a van with opening sides which moved to various positions in the town as needed, the traffic problem being then non-existent. The "Mechanics' Institute," schools on the "Lancastrian system," the "Ragged School," the Training College of the British and Foreign School Society, the Bible Society, the Darlington Town Mission, all were promoted and encouraged, and many others.

A Friends' School for boys was under the care of Joseph Sams and later Henry Frederick Smith, and continued from 1810 to 1831 when the York schools had begun. The Diary of Thomas Whitwell of Kendal, when at school there, is printed in part in an early number of the *Journal* of the Friends' Historical Society (Vol. XXIV, pp. 21-30) and is of interest in the persons mentioned and their activities, including going to Stockton in one of the "passenger coaches" to attend Monthly Meeting. He chronicles the appearance of their magazine, "The Phoenix," "every member of the debating society sending a piece—it comes out once a month—the members take it in turn to write it—my piece was on 'Slavery.' " I have the actual copy, very neatly handwritten, with very mature contributions and poems on many subjects.

The *brother* of Edward Pease, Joseph Pease, promoted the "Friends of India," a gesture of interest in the Indian population after the exploitation by the East India Company, and on the centenary of his death, in 1948, a ceremony was held around his grave in the meeting house grave-yard, when a representative of the Indian Government laid there a floral tribute in the shape of the national flag of Free India, in remembrance of his work, in the presence of descendants of the Pease family and others.

Joseph Pease, the *son* of Edward Pease, was a remarkable

man. At 20 he drew up the Act to be presented to Parliament for the Stockton and Darlington Railway. There is also a diary of his first attendance at Yearly Meeting at about the same age, written in the style of one much older with comment here and there of a more youthful sort. He was the first Quaker to become a member of Parliament, standing for South Durham (and elected several times in following contests) in 1832 in the Liberal interest, and was allowed to affirm, after much research by the Clerks of the House, to the amusement of Francis Mewburn, chief Bailiff of Darlington and legal adviser to the Peases, who accompanied Joseph Pease and was fully aware of the privileges of Quakers in affirmation.

In Darlington Joseph Pease and his brother Henry had spoken in favour of the Reform Bill at a large meeting, supporting a petition to the House of Commons for the withholding of Supplies till reform was granted. On the passing of the Bill an immense celebration was held in the town, with bands, and parties walking in groups according to their trades, carrying banners and symbols of their calling, and a great feast for all. Joseph Pease and his son Joseph Whitwell Pease and other members of the family were responsible for the establishment and growth of Middlesbrough from one farmhouse to a hive of industry and a great commercial town. Many younger men Friends were drawn to Darlington, Stockton and Middlesbrough for training in engineering, and it is interesting to find that, among others, several were relatives of our late Friend Elizabeth Cadbury, including her father and uncle, John and Joseph Taylor, who later went to London. Elizabeth Cadbury speaks in her book of her mother's letters entitled "A Dear Memory," of staying in Great Ayton with relations still in the north, and of the beauty of the Cleveland Hills and coast.

Joseph Pease was chairman of the British and Foreign School Society, coming to London for their annual meeting when advanced in years, and was a supporter of all the movements of the day. On his death in 1871, the procession at his funeral stretched from the gates of his home to the meeting house, and the meeting was entirely in the grave-yard, so large was the gathering.

Henry Pease, younger son of Edward Pease, J.P. and M.P. for South Durham, 1857-1865, was a very active

director of the Stockton and Darlington Railway and developed the engineering side, and also the coal companies in which the family had interests. He was head of the firm of Henry Pease & Co. which managed the woollen mills, the original business of the Peases in Darlington, and had many responsibilities besides, as mayor and an alderman of the town. He saw the possibilities of Saltburn as a northern Brighton, and developed the little seaside village with skill; many of the directors of works on Teeside built homes there and it still has a quiet air while its neighbour Redcar has been greatly increased.

In 1853 on the verge of the outbreak of the Crimean War Henry Pease joined Joseph Sturge of Birmingham in a visit to Russia to see the Czar, and though *Punch* had a cartoon at the time with the verse

> Joseph Sturge
> Went to urge
> Peace on the Emperor Nicholas,
> Henry Pease
> Crossed the seas
> On the same errand ridiculous.

they were kindly welcomed by the Czar and were introduced to his family and court. The Czar indicated *his* wish to avoid war, though over-ruled, and almost as they left the country the war broke out.

Henry Pease organized a remarkable celebration for the Railway Jubilee in 1875: a tent was specially erected for the banquet, a statue in memory of Joseph Pease, his brother, was unveiled by public request and subscription, and an exhibition of locomotives and other early railway stock arranged. It became a national and indeed world-wide event as members of the Cabinet and government were invited, and chairmen of all railway companies in the world. Harrison Penney displayed over his business premises, strategically placed near the site of the occasion, the banner "Righteousness exalteth a Nation."

John Pease, the third surviving son of Edward Pease, was a noted minister amongst Friends, and spoken of as "The Silver Trumpet of the North". He visited far and wide in gospel ministry and in America. He retired early from business in order to fulfil this vocation.

Descendants of these pioneers have carried on much of the

business life of Darlington and entered Parliament, and though few now remain in the Quaker fold it is a notable record.

Many clerkships were carried by these Friends also. James Backhouse, the first of the name to settle in Darlington as a "flaxdresser," came from Lancashire with a pass from the Mayor of Kendal in 1745 as "a person well affected to His Majesty."[1] He was clerk of Durham Quarterly Meeting from 1753 to 1779 and had fair copies made of the first minutes to our great convenience, in five volumes. He also, for the use of those travelling in the ministry, had a map printed of the North of England showing where meetings were held, and on what day in mid-week, the market days, and distances from one town to another. For still greater convenience this was also printed on a silk handkerchief, of large size, for the minister's pocket. Many descendants have "held the pen" after him, some became Clerks of Yearly Meeting, the last to do so being our late clerk Redford Crosfield Harris.

These Friends were also Trustees of the meeting house property through many generations, and by the occupations given in the deeds the development into "Bankers" and "Merchants" can be traced. The Meeting House stands on land purchased in 1678, after meetings had been held in private houses, for "£35 of lawful money of England in hand paid." In connection with the collection ordered by Durham Quarterly Meeting towards the purchase and alterations occurs this minute in the Monthly Meeting some five years after:

11.4.1683. "Whereas John Shaw, lately professing truth, during this so professing did contribute with friends of Darlington towards ye building of a meeting house and is now appostate, demanding ye money back he before contributed—Its thought and felt by this meeting that the money be returned so that Friends may be clear, as well of what he calls *his*, as of himself."

But another minute records, 10.5.1683:

"Friends of Darlington returned account that they did collect ye money and proffered ye same to John Shaw, but upon his refusal to sign a Release, they retained ye money until further consideration."

In 1745, when a national collection was called for from London, to help those who suffered from occupation by troops, Darlington Friends are excused "on account of the expense they were put to," for on hearing of the Duke of Cumberland's army going up into Scotland, in wintry weather, it is said

[1] No doubt made advisable by the disturbed state of the north-country on account of the rebellion.

10,000 waistcoats of red flannel were made in a few days and were ready when the men reached Darlington.

The tradition of "travelling with minute" was strong from early days, as well as hospitality shown to those from overseas visiting Britain. In the early nineteenth century Jonathan and Hannah Chapman Backhouse (*née* Gurney) undertook a five-year visit to the States,[1] as well as many in England, Scotland and locally in other years, while James Backhouse (3rd) born in Darlington though in business in York, devoted ten years to a visitation of "Van Diemen's Land" (now Tasmania), South Australia, Mauritius and South Africa,[2] making adventurous journeys in the interior by "Cape Cart" there, and noting conditions of missionary work of all denominations, schools, native problems and government, the state of the prisons, as well as the flora and fauna of all countries visited.

Such devotion is inspiring and has had succession in our day from Darlington in the work abroad of Henry T. Hodgkin and H. Olaf Hodgkin, great-grandchildren of Jonathan and Hannah C. Backhouse, and of John and Sophia (Jowitt) Pease, of Edith M. Backhouse in India, and the late Basil H. Backhouse and others.

Though the large family circles we knew formerly are gone, and across the chasms of two world wars we look sometimes with surprise at the "freedom" Friends of the nineteenth century had in their way of life, yet their faith was simple and strong; they led the way in many social problems of their day, in philanthropy and religious circles as well as business and in Quaker organization.

May we follow them in these and hear the voice of the "Brethren of the North" once more from their paper of 1653,[3] "everyone to bear his burden, the strong with the weak that the weak be not oppressed above his strength, but all drawing on, hand in hand, that the weak and the tired may be refreshed and so all become a joint witness to the everlasting Truth."

[1] *Journal and Letters of H. C. Backhouse*, 1863.

[2] *Narrative of a visit to S. Australia, etc.* and S. Africa. 1844; incorporating earlier *Journal*, 2 vols. published seriatim during his years abroad.

[3] Swarthmore Manuscripts, Friends House, ii. 17. From a group of local leaders in "Bishopricke" (Durham) met to establish a men's Monthly Meeting. MS. docketed in George Fox's own hand:

"The Seting up the menes Meeting in Bishopricke 1653."