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OF THE
FRIENDS' HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Editorial

AT a well-attended meeting of the Society held at Friends House on 5th December, under the Chairmanship of Alfred W. Braithwaite, the presidential address was given by John L. Nickalls on "Some Quaker Portraits, certain and uncertain." Illustrations, some of which were in colour, were projected during the address. Many of them were made by George Edwards who also very kindly lent and operated the projector.

By way of introduction, the speaker dealt briefly with the limitations imposed by early Quaker simplicity on any interest in portraits, and he touched upon the change towards greater freedom in the matter which took place gradually in the first half of the nineteenth century. The main part of the address was devoted to an examination of various traditional portraits which have been claimed to represent James Nayler, George Fox and William Penn. Some assessment of each supposed portrait was attempted, calling in evidence of authenticity and date provided by the portrait itself, documentary record of the history of the portrait and its descent, and verbal descriptions by contemporaries of the subject's personal appearance.

Three portraits of James Nayler, three or four of George Fox, and a larger number of William Penn were considered, and some tentative judgments were suggested in the light of evidence discovered up to the present. The possibility of publication with the necessary illustrations is being considered.

The meeting was preceded by a tea and presentation in the Library at Friends House to mark the retirement of

John Nickalls as Librarian to the Society of Friends in London.

John Nickalls, editor of the current standard edition of George Fox's *Journal*, editor since 1933 and this year's president of the Friends' Historical Society, and for the past thirty years Librarian to the Society of Friends, is the first to have held that post wholly during the period when the London headquarters of the Society have been at Friends House. John Nickalls has continued the now traditional link between the Library and the Historical Society. Without the Library and the continuous service which the staff there give to Quaker studies in all sorts of fields, the Society of Friends, and the Historical Society in particular would be infinitely the poorer.

We welcome the new Librarian, Edward H. Milligan, as the fourth friend of Quaker historians in succession to Norman Penney, Ethel Crawshaw and John Nickalls.

We are glad to print below a minute received from the Friends Historical Association of Philadelphia on the retirement of John Nickalls.

R.S.M.

Copy of minute recorded by the Friends Historical Association of Philadelphia, held 4th mo. 4th, 1957.

"The retirement in the Autumn of this year, of John L. Nickalls, Librarian of the Society of Friends of London Yearly Meeting, marks the conclusion of a long term of service, of which all interested in Quaker history have been beneficiaries. He began work in Friends Library in 1921, and was appointed Librarian at the beginning of 1927. In 1933 he also succeeded Norman Penney in the naturally associated capacity of Editor of the *Journal of the Friends Historical Society*. In 1952 his painstaking and experienced editing ability was illustrated by the *Journal of George Fox* as published in that tercentenary year. The routine work of the Library and correspondence have prevented his own capacities for authorship having much chance for display. But he has delighted to help others. The acknowledgment of his help in prefaces of dozens of the important publications on Quaker subjects in recent decades are a genuine tribute to his substantial, if modest, contribution to Quaker historiography, and in this tribute, this Association gladly joins."

NOTE

This volume will run to six issues instead of four as previously stated.