

QUAKER QUOTATIONS

on

FAITH AND PRACTICE

by

Leonard S. Kenworthy

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PREFACE

This small volume of *Quaker Quotations on Faith and Practice* has been assembled to provide readers with a brief compilation of perceptive, pertinent, and provocative comments on many aspects of the Religious Society of Friends.

It is intended for study, meditation, and worship by individuals and/or groups — First Day School or Sunday School classes, membership groups, Young Friends Fellowships, and the faculties of Quaker schools and colleges. Pastors and editors of Meeting newsletters should also find it of value.

This anthology is patterned after the splendid collection of statements which London Yearly Meeting printed in 1960, with the title *Christian Faith and Practice in the Experience of the Society of Friends*.

This volume, however, differs from that book in several respects. It is much more recent and therefore reflects better the current concerns and attitudes of present-day Friends. It is much shorter and therefore less expensive. It includes many statements made by Quakers and Quaker groups in the past, but it concentrates on comments from the recent past or present. It includes quotations from Friends in England and from other parts of the globe, but emphasizes those by Quakers in the United States. And the dimensions of this

compendium were decided upon so that it could be tucked into a pocket, pocketbook, or rucksack, and read almost anywhere and at almost any time.

This anthology was assembled over a period of several months, but behind that task lay many years of reading and the underlining of what I felt were significant sentences and paragraphs in a wide range of publications — books, pamphlets, and articles. The arrangement of quotations within each section is sometimes chronological; at other times the citations are grouped topically, as in an essay, to develop a theme.

The compiler is especially indebted to Pendle Hill for the use of many quotations from their series of nearly 250 pamphlets. Other quotations are taken from such sources as the Swarthmore, Rufus M. Jones, Indiana Yearly Meeting, Western Yearly Meeting, Guilford College, and Australia Yearly Meeting lectures. In a few instances it was not possible to trace the source from which a quotation was originally taken. In some places the year of the quotation or some other identification is made at the end of the quotation.

The authors here do not always agree but a variety of points of view have been included because the Society of Friends is often diverse in its leadings in the Light, and because it was felt that a wide range of quotations might speak to the condition of various readers. The capitalization follows that of the original citations and is therefore not consistent throughout this volume.

As the author of this anthology I would welcome suggestions of quotations which might well be included in another edition, as well as suggestions

as to those which might be deleted. If readers can help me identify the source of several quotations, I would be grateful.

I am deeply grateful to the Publications Committee of the Friends General Conference for issuing this book as one of its publications. Special thanks go to Sally Comport for the cover design and wheel.

It is my hope that this volume will prove enriching and empowering to many readers and assist in the advancement of the Religious Society of Friends in our day.

Leonard S. Kenworthy

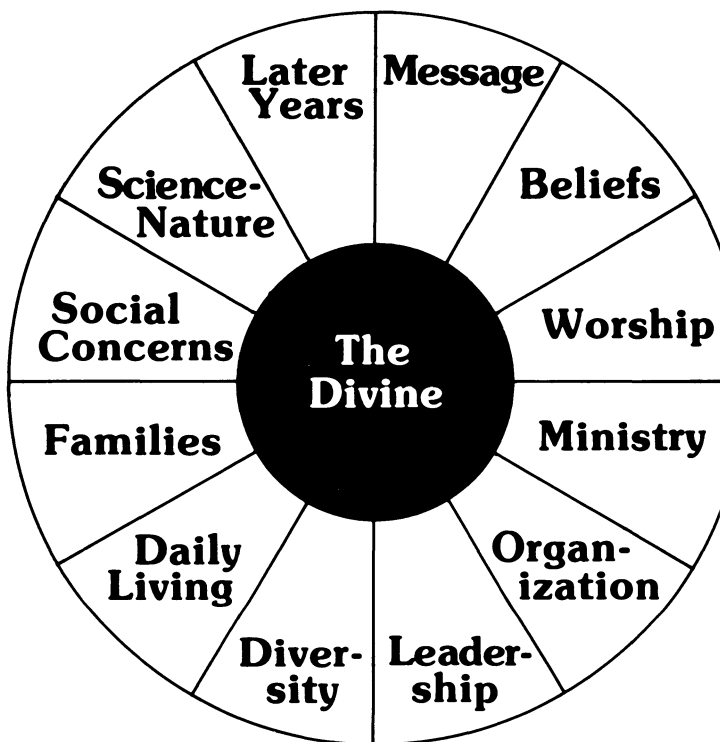


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ON THE MANY-FACETED MESSAGE OF FRIENDS

A. A Variety of Interpretations

Some Interpretations by Friends in the Past

Walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in everyone. George Fox's *Journal*.

Let us try what Love will do, for if men did once see we love them, we should soon find that they would not harm us. Force may subdue, but Love gains; and he that forgives first, wins the laurel. William Penn in *Some Fruits of Solitude*.

They (early Friends) longed to bring all men not to Quakerism, but to the feet of Christ. For they knew in whom they believed and were persuaded that the Witness of Him in their own hearts was more valued than all sacrifices. God is a spirit, they were convinced, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. They refused to accept the sufficiency of mere words. Formal ceremonies and professions of faith led them to express religion realistically as a way of life. That is what Quakerism is: a way of life. William W. Comfort in *The Quaker Way of Life*.

. . . to turn all we possess into the channel of universal love becomes the business of our lives. John Woolman's *Journal*.

Theirs (early Friends) was a many-sided message, including the Historic Christ and the Inner Christ, simplicity, equality, social concern, the Bible, rationalism and education, and evangelism and missions. Leonard S. Kenworthy in *Quakerism: A Study Guide on the Religious Society of Friends*.

Some More Recent Interpretations

Quakerism is the religion of direct access to God. Gerald K. Hibbert in *Friends and the Sacraments*.

The Society of Friends is about nothing else but personal experience of the power and presence of God, and what arises spontaneously from that personal experience. All the testimonies, all the relief work, arise from that . . . Bernard Canter in *Nothing But This Present*.

Faith in the purpose of God in and through human history; faith in the supremacy of personal values; faith in the ultimate supremacy of love — these are the foundations that cannot be shaken. Alexander C. Purdy in *Foundations That Cannot Be Shaken*.

The witness of the Society of Friends has always been in the fact that the apostolic period of the Christian witness has never stopped; that the epoch of the Holy Spirit is upon us; and that the revelation of the power of the Spirit, which the book of Acts records, is in full surge. It is class-blind and color-blind and age-blind, and it comes to the plain man as well as to the genius. Given a yielding, it will pour through the lives of ordinary lay men and women and through its power will release them for hallowed service in the fabric of this world. Douglas V. Steere in *The Hardest Journey*.

If we consider the spiritual message of the Society of Friends apart from its social message, we must realize that "spiritual" and "social" are as intimately related as the two sides of a door; you can't have one without the other. However, as in the case of a door, it is possible to concentrate on one side or the other. We can think of "spiritual" as primarily concerned with our relation to God and the "social" as primarily concerned with our relation to our fellow man. Each is dependent on the other. In Quaker writings the phrase "joined to the Lord" seldom appears without the corresponding phrase "and to one another." To be joined to the Lord results in being joined to one another, and being joined to one another results in being "joined to the Lord." Howard H. Brinton in *Friends and Their Spiritual Message*.

What is the Quaker faith? It is not a tidy package of words which you can capture at any given time and then repeat weekly at a worship service. It is an experience of discovery which starts the discoverer on a journey which is life-long. The discovery in itself is not uniquely a property of Quakerism. It is as old as Christianity, and considerably older if you share the belief that many have known Christ who have not known His name. What is unique to the Religious Society of Friends is its insistence that the discovery must be made by each man for himself.

No one is allowed to get it second-hand by accepting a ready-made creed. Furthermore, the discovery points a path and demands a journey, and gives you the power to make the journey. Elise Boulding in *The Quaker Journey*.

This is a list of negatives — no priests, no creeds, no sacraments, no service — yet at the same time each negative rejects a limitation; no one priest, for all are open to the word of God; no defined creed, for each must find his own way of expressing his own experience; no sacramental rites, for all of life is sacramental; no prearranged service, so that our Meeting is open to God's message, however it is expressed. It is this openness, shown in these more obvious and easily identified aspects of Quakerism, that give it particular significance for our time, an ability to speak to those whom other, more formalized religions, cannot reach. Geoffrey Hubbard in *Quaker By Convincement*.

. . . we must beware of making the Quaker system of life and thought too tidy. It is intrinsically open-ended because Quakers believe that they live in an open-ended universe. D. Elton Trueblood in *The People Called Quakers*.

Some Central Concepts of Quakerism

Experience, then, is the Quaker's starting point. This light must be *my* light, this truth *my* truth, this faith . . . *my* very faith. The key that unlocks the door to the spiritual life belongs not to Peter or to some other person as an official. It belongs to the individual soul that finds the light, that discovers the truth, that sees the revelation of God and goes on living in the demonstration and power of it. For this there is no substitute. One can be saved with but very little theology, but no one can be saved who does not personally *want* to be saved, who does not himself *intend* to be saved and who does not

meet the grace of God with an inward swing of *affirmation*. Rufus M. Jones in *Faith and Practice of the Quakers*.

The corporate search is the unique gift of Quakerism to the religious life of Western culture. Quakerism is group-centered. George Fox made a discovery three hundred years ago which is in complete agreement with today's advanced findings of psychology and sociology. Edmund P. Hillpern in *The Minimum Quaker*.

It is customary when describing the events of 1652 to start with the vision of Pendle Hill. A closer study of the words of George Fox's Journal suggests a different starting point; "I was moved of the Lord." Elfrida Vipont Foulds in *Let Your Lives Speak*.

Quakers (also) have in their tradition a passion for social righteousness. We believe that all of God's creation and the world in which we live, come within the province of God's love and care and his divine judgement. Therefore, as Christians we believe that this world is also within the realm of our concern and that our witness to the need for peace and social justice constitutes a highly important aspect of our message. Wilmer A. Cooper in *Redefining Our Quaker Message and Purpose*.

And last, I think it's extremely important that we learn to listen. Listening is a lost art. And when I say learn to listen I mean listen to our spouses, listen to our children, listen to our fellow believers in our communities of faith. But I also want us to learn to listen to God. I know from personal experi-

ence that God speaks through the Scriptures. He speaks through preaching. He speaks through friends. But He also speaks directly. We can know that but we must make time and space and silence in our lives if we are to learn this in real ways and be the beneficiaries of His leading and His guidance directly. We are told in the 46th Psalm, "Be still and know that I am God." In another translation it says, "Stop fighting and know that I am God." Let's take time to listen to God. Kara Cole in *Things Important to Friends Today — Evangelical Friend* (February, 1982).

It (Quakerism) is not a creed. It is not a scheme. It is not an organization. It is a life. Rufus M. Jones in *The Life and Message of George Fox*.

Incorrigible Idealists — and Realists

You see in what position the Quakers find themselves. They are stymied in arranging a world as they would like to see it, because others are in control who are practicing another philosophy. But no one can keep them from practicing the good will they preach toward their brethren on both sides of the lines. Their religion knows no frontiers. They have made of relief work a specialty; it is their affirmative testimony for peace. They cannot make people stop fighting, but they can show that there are a few people who are still capable of showing good will. They have rendered a service of love in war-time. William W. Comfort in *The Quaker Way of Life*.

There has never been any serious charge made that Quakers were cowards or that they were poor

citizens. The charge has been made that they were incorrigible idealists — as one Englishman said, the confoundest people to deal with — living with their heads in the sand of a world that was hell. The Friends admit, indeed, that the world has some infernal aspects, but they claim to be the genuine realists. William W. Comfort in *The Quaker Way of Life*.

Some Remarkable People — But No Saints

The lives and conversations of Friends did preach. George Fox's *Journal*.

Equally erroneous are some of the more favorable opinions about Quakers. They are not saints wearing their halos or broad-brimmed hats. They are not supermen able to heal all man-made disasters. They are men and women of like feelings and failings with the rest of mankind. In fact, they are very varied among themselves. They are not standardized by any theological creed. They are regimented by no hierarchy. They attempt to be Christians and earnestly revert to the gospels for their ideals. Incurably independent, they represent the left wing of religious democracy. Among them may be found many different qualities like the statesmanship of John Bright, the poetic ardor of J.G. Whittier, or the native humor of Rufus Jones. Henry T. Cadbury in *What Makes a Good Quaker?*

B. Some Thoughts on Quakerism in the Future

An Indian jailer stamped a copy of the New Testament which a prisoner had requested, *Not Dangerous*. The Society of Friends and the Chris-

tian Church as a whole in its present condition of softness would be stamped *Not Dangerous* by the rival national, racial, and class religions that have sprung up in our day. Douglas V. Steere in *Community and Worship*.

Perhaps the Society of Friends is like a banked fire, with warm ashes, but in need of stirring and new kindling. Leonard S. Kenworthy in *Quakerism: A Study Guide to the Religious Society of Friends*.

Reclaiming Our Historic Message and Mission

The Quaker vision once inspired hope in men and can do so again. But the recovery of the Quaker vision will not come in the ordinary course of events. Renewal in the prophetic tradition does not come by an easy evolutionary process, but begins with an experience of the judgement of God which evokes a response of repentance and a resolution to turn and face a new direction. Lewis Benson in *Seek, Find, Share*.

To be true to its founders, it (the Society of Friends) must reproduce not only his (George Fox's) seeking, but his finding; not only his visions, but his way of life and downright honesty; not only his steadfastness in suffering, but his loyalty in loving; and, above all, his triumph in the face of death. Elfrida Vipont Foulds in *The Story of Quakerism*.

Eschewing Evangelicalism and Living Creatively with Our Diversities

If a religion is based not on experience but solely on argument from historic proof, that religion will

become untenable when those proofs are undermined. Quakerism cannot, therefore, hope to retreat into dogmatic evangelicalism, for evangelicalism's fundamentalist foundation is fading away. Gerald Heard in *The Quaker Mutation*.

Our diversities, following the several separations, became great and, as some of us view them, have gone into extremes, both as to faith and practices. I hope the day of arguments between these diversities has gone, never to return. We do not need arguments, for they tend both to the superficial and to the externals. Though we do not need arguments, we do need dialogue — in depth. Errol T. Elliott in *Seek, Find, Share*.

In Christ there is no more, "I am first an American," "I am first a Mexican," "I am first an FGC'er," "I am first a follower of Elton Trueblood," or "I am first a follower of Douglas Steere." Divisiveness must be in the past. In the new day, in the new Quakerism, we must be first, foremost, and only, followers of the Light. Christ must be the Source; Christ must be the place. If you are not ready to pay your way into the unified Religious Society of Friends, I question if you are ready to be all that God intends you to be. This is your challenge. Are ye able? If not, wear your divisions as long as you can. Dwight Spann-Wilson in *A Place to Stand* (1976).

Living Up to Challenging Possibilities

I see the Society of Friends as important not only for what it is but also for what it could be-

come I see Quakerism as having greater opportunity at the present time of speaking to the condition of contemporary men and women than it has ever had since the seventeenth century. Geoffrey Hubbard in *Quaker By Convincement*.

Not only is there “no time but the present,” there is no task God has called us to as Friends that is more exciting and challenging than being made inwardly ready to be present where we are. Douglas V. Steere in *On Being Present Where You Are*.

I am now saying that the central, essential question at issue in this world is the question, “What does it mean to be human?” And I am going to claim that, if we are genuinely heirs of the Quaker experience and name, this is precisely the question to which we ought to have something to say. For, beneath and despite differences in language, thought forms, and presuppositions, this is the very same question to which original Quakerism was giving an answer when it made its great central affirmation that “every man is enlightened by the divine light of Christ.” Maurice Creasey in *Prospect for Quakerism*.

Quakerism has a latent empirical psychology — not an academic theory of the mind, but a power of developing the whole psyche. The Friends, through an understanding use and development of their scientific technique, could, with trained members, produce a contemporary and developing religion — perhaps . . . the only really contemporary religion, the only religion with a future. Quakerism would then become once again not a sect but the reissue of

religion today. Gerald Heard in *The Quaker Mutation*.

The Society of Friends at its best has a balanced perspective — there is emancipation from theological rigidity, and, therefore, an openness to the whole Gospel. In the richest of Quaker tradition there is a fusion of faith and works — a recognition of man's dual nature and of God's immanent transcendency as well as His love and judgement. It is to this wholeness of the Gospel that we must hold fast if we are to be effective interpreters in our time. Lorton Heusel in *Friends Search for Wholeness*.

It is time that twentieth century Friends realized that we do not live in a world with problems; we live in a problem world. The pursuit of Truth must not be thought of as faddish; the pursuit of Truth is a lifestyle. The full cost of Quakerism is the surrender of the past and the selection of the future. Twentieth century Quakers must live as twenty-first century Quakers, on the cutting edge of Truth revealed.

It is my fervent hope that we will not continue deteriorating into the "society of acquaintances," complete with plastic Quaker credit cards to charge our good works on a supposed pre-paid account alleging that George, Mary, Elizabeth, John, or Elias already paid. Let us pay for our beliefs today and become once more the Friends of Light, because we do what Christ commands.

Friends, catch fire or be consumed by earth's fire. Realize that while we sit idly at breakfast, we should have completed the preparation of lunch and be mentally planning dinner's menu.

Take the sacredness testimony and protect life of all kinds; the world's resources must be considered beyond your death. Take the peace testimony and ban all violence; psychological scars also kill. Take the simplicity testimony and limit all embellishments; unobstructed light is brighter than that hidden under decorations. Take the community testimony — support your own young and struggling, and embrace all people; our earthly family is fast rushing headlong toward destruction. As a last request I beg you to throw away your old vest of cheap Quakerism and put on a new overcoat of expensive Truth. Believe me, you'll look much better, and as a somewhat biased member of this family, let me include, you and your Truth overcoat will go together like beans and corn-bread . . . peanut butter and jelly . . . cheese and crackers . . . **FAITH AND PRACTICE.** Dwight Spann-Wilson in a talk at New England Yearly Meeting on The Cost of Quakerism (1976).

I believe that the evolutionary potential of the Quaker mutation is very far from exhausted, and indeed has hardly begun to show its full effects. I believe, furthermore, that the Society of Friends has a vital role to play in the future development of mankind, — small perhaps in quantity but of enormous importance in quality, and that to refuse to take on this role or to run away from the burden which it may imply would be a betrayal of trust and a tragedy not only for the Society of Friends but for mankind as a whole I think Quakerism is an example of a mutation which was in a sense premature and before its time . . . it is precisely in religious experience that one finds the evolutionary

potential that looks forward to the ultimate future of man. Kenneth Boulding in *The Evolutionary Potential of Quakerism* (1964).

Proclaiming a Many-Sided Message

The best type of religion is one in which the mystical, the evangelical, the rational, and the social are so related that each exercises a restraint on the others. Too exclusive an emphasis on mysticism results in a religion which is individualistic, subjective, and vague; too dominant an evangelicalism results in a religion which is authoritarian, creedal, and external; too great an emphasis on rationalism results in a cold intellectual religion which appeals to the few; too engrossing a devotion to the social gospel results in a religion which, in improving the outer environment, ignores defects of the inner life which cause the outer disorder. In Quakerism the optimum is not equality in rank of the four elements. The mystical is basic. The Light Within occasions the acceptance or rejection of a particular authority, reason, or service. Howard H. Brinton in *Friends for 300 Years*.

If the Quaker movement has any power to gather people in the future, I believe it will be through its capacity to be a knowing community, a loving community, and an acting community. It will be found increasingly in large urban centers and will need to adapt itself to the pressures of fragmentation and anonymity. Paul A. Lacey in *Break the New Ground*.

In the future the Religious Society of Friends

should certainly be increasingly:

- . . . a religious society with a many-sided message.
- . . . an inclusive society.
- . . . a united society.
- . . . a world-wide society.
- . . . an articulate society.
- . . . an adventurous society with spiritually-motivated concerns.

Leonard S. Kenworthy in *Quakerism: A Study Guide to the Religious Society of Friends*.

How, then, are Friends to rise to the future? What truths can we proclaim that may bring hope to those who will inherit an increasingly troubled world?

- We Friends need to reaffirm vigorously the joy of living fully in the present, as we seek to do in meeting for worship, but to hold steadfastly to a vision of the future that could be.

- We Friends need to be more persuasive models of how to live more harmoniously with our environment.

- We Friends must continue to reaffirm the essentially corporate assumption about healthy growth that is intrinsic to our meeting for worship. Such a reaffirmation provides us with the means to relate to an emerging planetary universalism.

- We Friends need to affirm that wholeness for human beings is always a process of becoming in our relationships with *this* world

- We Friends need to transcend any vestige of moral parochialism to search for more universalistic imminent criteria of goodness

- We Friends need to reexamine how the tradition out of which Quakerism emerged may be

limiting the search for a more commonly shared religious value life for all peoples.

What is the hope that Quakerism can offer? Its hope is its vision of a potential for growing wholeness that can be shared by *all* persons, regardless of their current religious or individual allegiances.

We . . . could be approaching a time of greatness for our Society. I see communications spreading across the lines of old divisions; our community life being enriched and deepened: and our potential for witness increasing. At some point these forces could reach a kind of critical mass, a breakthrough into a new era for American Quakerism. Chuck Fager in *A Friendly Letter* (1980).

Earning Our Vision

One inescapable conclusion is that a vision has to be earned. Who knows on what far mountain of the spirit the vision of our own day awaits us? It may be there, even now, in place, in space, in time, but to behold it the seeker, or group of seekers, must accept the same challenge, the same inspired madness. Elfrida Vipont Foulds in *Let Your Lives Speak*.

ON SOME BELIEFS OR VIEWPOINTS

A. Quakerism and Christianity

And when all my hopes in them and all men were gone . . . I heard a voice which said "There is one, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition," and when I heard it, my heart did leap for joy . . . and this I knew experimentally. George Fox's *Journal*.

For early Friends, Quakerism was primitive Christianity revived. They felt they were performing in their own lives the great music the gospels record, whereas the other churches were merely handing out the score. Kenneth Boulding.

The Quaker faith in the minds of its major interpreters has always been "Christianity writ plain." D. Elton Trueblood in *The People Called Quakers*.

Quakerism is at its best when it is passionately loyal to the Church Universal, yet fully aware that it is not by any means identical with that grand totality. It functions best, not as another denomination, but as an *order* in the great Church which is coming into being. D. Elton Trueblood in *The People Called Quakers*.

You don't have to choose between being a Christian and a Quaker. You can be both. I believe that it is

possible to be loyal to both Quakerism and Christianity. Henry J. Cadbury in *Quakerism and/or Christianity*.

Historically our Society stands in the Christian tradition; . . . we unite in the desire that everyone should share in the life and fellowship of the wider Christian community and cooperate as fully as possible in its work No one can measure the debt we owe to the influence and inspiration and leadership of many of our fellow Christians, to the stimulus and fellowship some of us have known in inter-church groups and inter-denominational movements. And there is, too, the valuable service rendered by Christian scholars and thinkers for which we are profoundly thankful. . . . On the other hand we have realized how far short we ourselves fall of what we ought to be, and yet we believe our Society has something of value to contribute to the life and thought of the (ecumenical) movement. Our witness to the non-necessity of the outward forms, to the essentially inward nature of communion, and to our peace testimony are examples. Friends World Conference (1952). Oxford, England.

I think I feel more acutely aware than I ever have before that Quakers are really a third-force. That they are not Roman Catholics nor classical Protestants, nor simply left-wing Puritans. Historically they have, and still do when they are in the life, witness to an underground stream of life and power that was in Christ and has been known in every succeeding generation. Douglas V. Steere in *No Time But This Present*.

I think that the Religious Society of Friends will meet the religious needs of its present and its future members only when it lives in the Christian stream and when it crosses the Society's accent upon the personal experience of the Inward Teacher and upon the guidance of our lives that is each instant available to us, with an equally important accent upon what is going on in the universe in terms of the costly redemptive process of God's love as winnowed definitely in Jesus Christ's life and death. Douglas V. Steere in a talk at Philadelphia Yearly Meeting.

There are two answers to the question of where Friends fit into the spectrum of the church One position holds that Friends are the logical conclusion of the Protestant Reformation The other position maintains that Friends are neither Protestant nor Catholic, but are a group that got back into the life and power of the church of the first century before there were any divisions among the Lord's people I personally believe that there is some truth in each of them and am perfectly happy to live with them side by side. George Fox was not a systematic theologian but more of a free verse poet in the power of the Lord. Jack Kirk in *The Church in Quaker Thought and Practice*.

To me, being a Christian is a particular way of life, not the unquestioning acceptance of a particular system of theology, — not belief in the literal truth of the Virgin birth, but being the kind of person Jesus wanted his followers to be and doing the things he told them to do. Kathleen Lonsdale in

Quaker Talks to Sixth Formers.

There are some to whom the use of familiar Christian vocabulary, the association of organized Christianity, and the lack of Christian practice are hindrances in their approach to Christ. We shall need to put ourselves alongside our hearers, to use active imagination in the use of words. . . . We must always be willing to learn from others; particularly from the experience of God that is being revealed in Asia and Africa, and elsewhere; in trusting always the Spirit of God, in the belief He is still speaking both to ourselves and to those whom we would reach. Friends World Committee for Consultation Minutes (1959).

B. Jesus, or Jesus Christ

Jesus lived life in its wholeness. He essayed the heights. He did not shrink from the depths. Three years they say He lived among men, yet in that time He managed to let eternity break through, and lifted man's horizon to infinity. He took all that came to Him and turned it to the purpose of His Mission. W.E. Orchard.

George Fox's Views

Dear hearts, hearken to it, to be guided by it; for if ye love Light, ye love Christ; if ye hate that, ye hate Christ. Therefore in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ consider of it; and the Lord open your understanding to know him! George Fox's *Journal*.

It was judged that there were above a thousand people, amongst whom I declared God's everlasting

truth and word of life freely . . . directing all to the Spirit of God in themselves that they . . . might all come to know Christ to be their teacher to instruct them, their counsellor to direct them, their shepherd to oversee them; and might know their bodies to be prepared, sanctified, and made fit temples for God and Christ to dwell in. George Fox's *Journal*.

Fox's message was a *gospel message*. It was a message about Jesus Christ. His critics called it a "new gospel." It was new to them. They had not heard it before. Fox says that "the gospel hath been lost . . . for many generations. But *that* gospel again is to be preached (*italics mine*)."¹ He repeatedly asserts that *now* the gospel is being preached again. When he travelled the length and breadth of England proclaiming that "Christ has come to teach his people himself," he believed that he was preaching the gospel. He was calling people to receive Christ as their "teacher and savior, their rock and foundation." Lewis Benson in *Fox's Message is Relevant Today*.

Some More Recent Interpretations

The greatest single fact of history is the breaking through of the Life of God through this unique life. Here at last the Love of God found complete expression. Rufus M. Jones in *A Call to What Is Vital*.

Jesus is for me the meeting-point of the human and the divine — of men and of God. His value to me is not merely what he tells of the divine in men, but that in Himself he reveals to us . . . the human side

of the character of God. John Wilhelm Rowntree.

The New Testament clearly sets out Christ as fully human and as fully divine. The writers are conscious of no difficulty or contradiction in this position. It seemed to them the most natural thing in the world . . . (But) we have set divinity over against humanity on the assumption that so much added to one must be subtracted from the other. Some have so emphasized Christ's divinity as to leave no room for His humanity, while others have done just the reverse. It seems so easy to solve the problem by cutting the knot; either say that Christ was absolute god or that He was ordinary man. But this does not solve the problem, for either solution fails to take account of many of the facts — of one who was the Incarnate Son of God. . . . It is a pity that we insist on using the terms "humanity" and "divinity" as though they imply opposition. May we not rather say that Jesus shows us the divine life humanly lived or the human life divinely lived? We are standing before the greatest character in history and we may well hesitate before trying to express Him in a formula. Yorkshire (England) Quarterly Meeting (1919).

The Society of Friends as such has never departed from its claim to be within the Christian tradition, nor from its assent to the Lordship of Christ. But the Society, adjuring doctrinal notions and creedal statements, has not felt it necessary to depart from this practice in regard to the person of Christ. We thus have within our membership men and women with differing conceptions of this subject, held together . . . in a common loyalty to the ever-living

Christ, known to us in the Jesus of history. Edgar C. Dunston (1955).

It must have been obvious in all that I have said so far that the character of Jesus Christ, the tone of his voice over the centuries, so to speak, has made a tremendous appeal to me. I think it very likely that a great deal of legend has gathered round the story of his life; and yet many of his sayings ring so true today that they — to use an old-fashioned Quaker phrase — “speak to my condition.” Kathleen Lonsdale in *A Scientist Tries to Answer Some Questions About Religion*.

My view of Jesus also differs from that of many Quakers. Jesus is to me a human being, not the son of God, specially sent by Him to save mankind. If Jesus had not been fully human, but a kind of semi-god, I doubt whether his life and teaching would have meant so much to me. At least, he would not have been the example he is of human life at its best. Sigrid Lund — (Norwegian Friend).

Jesus is too great to be understood or to be represented on earth by any clique, or school of thought, or nation or class. God works his purpose out through many differences of men, and not in spite of them. Henry T. Hodgkin.

Only a few in any generation have comprehended the possibilities of release that there are in commitment, and in the whole of history perhaps only Jesus realized this release completely Even John Woolman, even all the saints, have been able only to approach from a long way off the supreme example of the Cross. We cannot stand near, but we

can stand ever in sight of this unique example where once in history, once for all, and for us all, Jesus took upon himself the whole burden of hope; and laid on us, to bear in our degree also, the burden of hope for humanity. Mildred Young in *Inured by Hope*.

What an enormous enrichment it is to the whole Quaker company to have another race and another cultural background come into touch with Jesus Christ and to find them accenting facets of His life and power which we in the West had entirely missed For if He is the universal man, He can for the first time draw out the full stature of each, gather up the full creative elements in the existing culture and religion, and reject those that are alien to His being This calls for greater flexibility, for greater imaginative capacity to give up implicit Western presuppositions and expectations than has been in the Quaker Mission enterprise in the past. Douglas V. Steere in *Friends Work in Africa*.

We have now and I predict we shall have increasingly . . . many men and women in our ranks who treasure our tenderness with those who, out of inner honesty, dare not formulate the cosmic redemptive scene in even as rigid a way as I may seem to have done I should be the last one who would want to crowd or compel (them) to go beyond what their integrity or their experience up to now has disclosed to them as valid. But I would not want (them) to be deprived of facing the fact that the Quaker experience of the centuries has found this winnowing of God's own nature of Jesus Christ of compelling significance. Douglas V. Steere

Beyond everything I think we need to reflect upon the meaning of Jesus for each personal one of us, to share our discoveries, our perplexities, our ignorance, with one another, in the setting of study and worship. We need to know the source of living water that has sustained the Christian vision down the centuries, however the vision has been corrupted, distorted, slept over, neglected, by some or all of those who claimed to be followers. I do not believe that Jesus means the same to each person; we all have different patterns of need. I am rather convinced that he can mean something personal to each of us, not because he is all things to all persons, but because he is so rich a person in offering us guidance to the meaning of God that each of us can find through his life, teaching, death, and resurrection — whatever form resurrection may have taken — our own personal pathway when we are ready to look for it. It is, I believe, through a steady and serious but not necessarily solemn shared exercise of listening with and to one another for what Jesus means to each of us -- or even in the first instance of what he does not mean — that we shall find the mutually supportive and positive faith that will keep us upright and facing forward, able to enter into the agonies of the world without being overcome by them. Roger Wilson at the celebration in Burlington, New Jersey in 1981 of the Tercentenary of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting.

But I believe that the Society of Friends has no real future in God's plan for men, no future in the Church Universal, and no future in human history, unless it maintains its position within the Christian

faith. Edwin B. Bronner in *Quakerism and Christianity*.

C. The Inward Christ, The Inner Light, The Seed

Christ, who had enlightened me, gave me His light to believe in George Fox's *Journal*.

John bore witness to the light of Christ; the great heavenly prophet hath enlightened every man who cometh into the world withal; that they may believe in it, become the children of the light, and so have the light. George Fox's *Journal*.

. . . a divine, spiritual, and supernatural light is in all men . . . as it is received and closed within the heart, Christ comes to be formed and brought forth. Robert Barclay's *Apology*.

This which God hath placed in man, to witness for himself and to guide man from evil into good . . . is the seed which is freely bestowed on man, to spring up and remain in him, and to gather him out of himself unto itself. Isaac Penington.

The Lord . . . gave me such an inward demonstration and feeling of the seed of life that I cried out in my spirit, "This is he, this is he; there is not another, there never was another. He was always near me, though I knew him not." Isaac Penington.

Words of doctrine I do not pretent to understand or enter into; one thing I do know, — that Christ is in me, or that ever blessed power I have felt, do feel, and I trust ever may feel until the end of time . . . is my only hope of glory. Elizabeth Fry.

. . . seeking for the divine presence, I was favored

to find in me what I had so long sought for *without* me. Stephen Grellet.

There is a principle which is pure, placed in the human mind, which in different places and ages has different names. It is, however, pure, and proceeds from God. It is deep and inward, confined to no forms of religion nor excluded from any, where the heart stands in perfect sincerity. In whomsoever this takes root and grows, of what nation soever, they become brethren in the best sense of the expression. John Woolman's *Journal*.

He whose tender mercies are over all His works hath placed that in the human mind which incites to exercise goodness towards every living creature, and this being singly attended to, people become tender-hearted and sympathizing. John Woolman's *Journal*.

To wait for the direction of this light in all temporal as well as spiritual concerns appears necessary; for if in any case we enter lightly into temporal affairs without feeling this spirit of truth to open our way therein, and through the love of this world proceed on and seek for gain . . . we fail in our testimony to the purity and peace of His government. John Woolman's *Journal*.

If God ever spoke, He is still speaking. If He has ever been in mutual and reciprocal communication with the persons He has made, He is still a communicating God, as eager as ever to have listening and receptive souls. If there is something of His image and superscription in our inmost structure and being, we ought to expect a continuous revela-

tion of His will and purpose throughout the ages, He is the *Great I Am*, not a *Great He was*. Rufus M. Jones.

The Inner Light, the Inward Christ, is no mere doctrine, belonging peculiarly to a small religious fellowship, to be accepted or rejected as a mere belief. It is the living Center of Reference for all Christian souls and Christian groups — yes, and of non-Christian groups as well — who seriously mean to dwell in the secret place of the Most High. He is the center and source of action, not the end-point of thought. He is the locus of commitment, not a problem for debate A practicing Christian must above all be one who practices the perpetual return of the soul into the inner sanctuary Thomas R. Kelly in *A Testament of Devotion*.

What is here urged are inward practices of mind at deepest levels, letting it swing like the needle, to the polestar of the soul. And like the needle, the Inward Light becomes the truest guide of life, showing us new and unsuspected defects in ourselves and our fellows, showing us new and unsuspected possibilities in the power and life of goodwill among men. Thomas R. Kelly in *A Testament of Devotion*.

The basic response of the soul to the Light is internal adoration and joy, thanksgiving and worship, self-surrendering and listening. The secret places of the heart cease to be our noisy workshop. They become a holy sanctuary of adoration and self-oblation, where we are kept in perfect peace if our minds be stayed on Him who has found us in the inward springs of our life. Thomas R. Kelly in a *A Testament of Devotion*.

We are owned men, ready to run and not be weary and to walk and not be faint. Thomas R. Kelly in *A Testament of Devotion*.

The Light Within is not to be identified with conscience, which is the human faculty, imperfect because human, through which the Light shines Growth in the Light, both for the individual and the corporate Society, increases awareness of permanent values and ability to resolve problems according to the divine will as revealed in the precepts of Jesus. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's *Faith and Practice*.

D. The Bible

As Early Friends Considered It

I told him that all Christendom possessed the Scriptures but wanted the power and Spirit that they had who gave forth the Scriptures. George Fox's *Journal*.

I saw how people read the Scriptures without a right sense of them, and without duly applying them to their own states . . . they read these things and applied them to others, but they did not turn in to find the truth of these things in themselves George Fox's *Journal*.

Because they are only a declaration of the fountain and not the fountain itself, therefore they are not to be esteemed the principal ground of all truth and knowledge They are and may be esteemed a secondary rule, subordinate to the Spirit, from which they have all their excellency and certainty. . . . The Spirit is the first and principal leader. Robert Barclay's *Apology*.

Yet, like so many of their contemporaries, the early Friends were well acquainted with the Scriptures, and encouraged like knowledge in their children, and to this day have cherished both a simple and a more advanced study in this field. Henry J. Cadbury in *A Quaker Approach to the Bible*.

Not the Primary Source

The words of the Bible are good words, but they are not superior to the Eternal Word, from which they came. The best way to use the Scriptures is to employ them as a means by which we are led into the same spirit which impelled them who first gave them forth. Elton Trueblood in *The People Called Quakers*.

Thus there awoke in George Fox the knowledge that this book, created by a divine spirit through the hands of men, can only be understood in the spirit in which it was written. He called upon mankind to understand it under the guidance of this spirit and thereby to gain dignity in life. Emil Fuchs in *No Time But the Present* (German Quaker and theologian).

Within himself he found the law of right,
He walked by faith and not the letter's sight,
And read his Bible by the Inward Light.
John Greenleaf Whittier in *Pennsylvania Pilgrim*.

Not Contradictory to Science

A deeper and truer conception of Scriptures has been growing up in religious circles that has given us back the Bible as an inspired book of religion, as

the great literature of the Spirit of God, and not a literal transcript of history and science; and we can, in the light of that spiritual advance, face any verified facts of nature and any discovered truths without being put to confusion by their contact with revelation. Rufus M. Jones.

When the “liberal” attitude to the Bible came to be developed three quarters of a century ago, it was natural that this basic insight of Friends should open the way for acceptance of a liberal rather than literal understanding, and the great majority of Friends today would accept the Bible in this way. L. Hugh Doncaster in *The Quaker Message: A Personal Affirmation*.

Loyalty to the Bible involved loyalty to its evidence of growth and change. It is a mirror of what is to be our own maturing experience. Covering more than a thousand years, it bears witness to what may be called God’s continuing revelation to man or man’s progressive discovery of God. Henry J. Cadbury in *Friends and the Bible*.

The Uniqueness of the Bible

It is, however, definitely the world’s greatest literature of revelation. There is a uniqueness about this Book which research has only heightened and it will still be read with awe and wonder as the sifted spiritual literature of the ages. It contains almost every type of literature — epic, lyric, exhortative. It has furnished models and suggested material for hosts of writers. It is woven into the seamless structure of the world’s greatest poetry, and, what is even more important, it has gone into the moral

and spiritual fiber of countless lives. . . . It (also) contains the best story material by which the minds of children have ever been trained, and it is the greatest revelation that has come out of the far past of the race. . . . It is bound to recover its place of influence in the race and be once again *the* Book of the family, the church, and the educator. But this will happen only if it is seen and read in the new light that has been flooded upon it, and if it is interpreted so as no longer to be ipse dixit out of line and harmony with the established truths of science and the known facts of history. . . . I have a profound faith that this literature of the ages, which has been passing through an eclipse in this scientific period, will come back into full sunlight splendor as readers with highly trained minds come to see it for what it really is rather than viewing it in terms of a traditional theory. Rufus M. Jones in *A Call to What Is Vital*.

I think of each book (of the Bible) as like a huge treasure chest, inside which is a glittering variety of riches. These studies (in his pamphlet) attempt to lift the lid on each chest and make the top layers of their wealth accessible; from there interested readers can go on to delve among the treasures as long and as deeply as they wish. Chuck Fager in *Three Quaker Bible Studies*.

The Bible's Importance to Contemporary Friends

It (the Bible) is important as a unique record of religious experience, showing the development over more than a thousand years of insights . . . it tells us of the way in which the first two generations of

his (Jesus') followers understood and misunderstood him and how they organized the group life of the early church To cut ourselves off from the biblical roots of our own faith would be to open the way for airy-fairy speculations and hunches, unchecked by the objective reality of an historical person in a developing culture, and giving birth to a new faith. L. Hugh Doncaster in *The Quaker Message: A Personal Affirmation*.

While Quakerism has always insisted that we can interpret the Bible adequately only when we are brought into the same spirit out of which the Scriptures came, and while Quakers have always applauded the statement that the only material in which the Bible can be properly bound is in human hide, this has never implied that the record of the personal disclosure of the love which this book contains is not required reading or that the continual confrontation with it is not a source of searching and challenging that we dare not be without. Douglas V. Steere in *Break the New Ground*.

Since all members are potential ministers, it is essential that all Friends know the Bible well. It is the experience of generations of devoted Christians that the deepest meaning of the Bible can be ascertained not through reading isolated texts but by viewing it as a whole. Spiritual insight as well as modern scholarship is needed to discover its teaching, to understand their application to our lives, and to enable us to teach them to our children. *Faith and Practice* of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting.

E. The Sacraments

. . . to know a Fellowship with Christ in His Death and Suffering is above the fellowship of bread and wine which will have an end George Fox's *Journal*.

I told him the one baptism by the one Spirit into the body, we owned, but to throw a little water on a baby's face and say that was baptism and christening it, there was no Scripture for that. George Fox's *Journal*.

It has been popularly assumed by many that Friends are the Christian group that does not believe in baptism and communion. Nothing could be further from the truth. On the contrary, Friends believe in them so much that they cannot be limited to brief symbolic acts. Early Friends experienced Christ as a living presence in such an overwhelming way that they did not need the outward ceremonies of the sacraments to make Him more real. Jack Kirk in *Quaker Life* (1980).

The word "sacramental" has been defined as meaning "the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace," and according to Quaker belief, that "outward and visible" sign is a life lived in absolute obedience to God, a revelation of His indwelling Spirit in the heart. This, of course, is an integral part of the Christian faith, the eternal truth behind all symbols and observances. But every section of the Christian Church has some special witness to uphold, and for over three hundred years the Society of Friends has testified to this sacramental conception of the whole of life. Elfrida Vipont Foulds in *A Faith to Live By*.

The Quaker insistence is that the miracle of the recognized presence can occur in connection with the common bread and in the midst of common life. D. Elton Trueblood in *The People Called Quakers*.

F. Prayer

Prayer is neither magic nor a substitute for good sense, no matter how men try to use it as both. It is, like poetry, at once the most primitive and the most sophisticated response man makes to his situation. It is his first initiative in his search for meaning and his fullest affirmation of the message he finds. If indeed the gospel calls men to come of age, to put away childish things and become mature, the key to that maturation may well be in the disciples' request to Jesus, "Lord, teach us to pray." Paul A. Lacey in *Break the New Ground*.

"To come near to God is to change," is a cryptic Christian statement of a great truth. And the most open and vulnerable way at man's disposal to "come near to God" is prayer. Douglas V. Steere.

The habit of turning instinctively to God at any moment of life is of immeasurable benefit to the mind and spirit. The entreaty of the moment may be for one's own strength, forgiveness, courage, or power to endure. It may be a petition for the well-being of another. It may be an involuntary expression of gratitude for joy or peace in one's own or another's life. Whatever the need, longing, or aspiration, this instinctive prayer may take the form of silent communion, of petition in words, (or) something akin to intimate conversation. Agnes L. Tierney in *Effective Prayer*.

To give up the cultivation of prayer would mean in the long run the loss of the central thing in religion; it would involve the surrender of the priceless jewel of the soul. Rufus M. Jones in *Pathways to the Reality of God*.

Prayer releases energy as certainly as the closing of an electric circuit does. It heightens all human capacities. It refreshes and quickens life. It unlocks reservoirs of power. It opens invisible doors into new storehouses of spiritual force for the person to live by, and, as I believe, for others to live by as well. It is effective and operative as surely as are the forces of steam and gravitation. Rufus M. Jones in *The World Within*.

I have recently been placed on the automatic telephone system. I am ashamed to say that I have no idea how it works. I never use it without a feeling of amazement at the unerring accuracy with which it singles out any of the many thousand subscribers in the district with whom I may desire to speak. Prayer is the automatic telephone which connects us directly to God. Multitudes of simple people use it and find that thereby life is enriched, transformed, glorified. William Littleboy in *The Meaning and Practice of Prayer*.

Each person we meet during the course of the day, every new activity we take up, every event that occurs to us, can be a source of prayer. When it is something good, we can praise God; when it is something difficult, we can ask God's help; when it is an experience of evil, we can ask God's grace to transform those who have done the evil; and when it is a mistake or a wrong that we do ourselves, we

can ask God's forgiveness and the strength to be changed. Francis B. Hall in *Friends Search for Wholeness*.

This practice of continuous prayer in the presence of God involves developing the habit of carrying on the mental life at two levels. At one level we are immersed in this world of time, of daily affairs. At the same time, at a deeper level of our minds, we are in active relation with the Eternal Life. Thomas R. Kelly in *The Reality of the Spiritual World*.

Our first thought in the morning and the last at night should be of God, whether we express it as the psalmist goes on to recommend "upon a loud instrument" or in the secret recesses of our hearts, in the sensitive twilight period between sleeping and waking. Elizabeth Gray Vining in *The World in Tune*.

My sunrise meditation means more to me now than ever. At dawn it is easier to feel the universe is one organic whole, held together by that Radiating Power of Love which flows through everything — including thee and me. Rachel Davis DuBois.

Obviously, then, all the activities of a meeting — the prayer of worship, the vocal prayer of a gathered meeting, the prayer which sustains and nourishes its cells or prayer groups, family prayer, the ministry of love which expresses itself in counselling, the impact of a meeting on the outside community — all of these should be grounded in the prayer life of the individual. If prayer has not been a reality throughout the week for at least a core of its members, participants in the Sunday

meeting cannot reach high levels of worship. Vocal prayer flows when the cup is already full before we come to meeting. Activity which is meaningful results from insights gained in prayer. Counselling which is helpful comes from the bringing of divine perspective to human confusion. Prayer, then, is a necessity in our lives. It must be at the center of them. Helen G. Hole in *Prayer: The Cornerstone*.

There is a spirit which I feel that delights to do no evil, nor to revenge any wrong, but delights to endure all things, in hope to enjoy its own in the end. Its hope is to outlive all wrath and contention, and to weary out all exaltation and cruelty, or whatsoever is of a nature contrary to itself. It sees no evil in itself, so it conceives none in thoughts to any other. If it be betrayed, it bears it, for its ground and spring is the mercies and forgiveness of God. Its crown is meekness, its life is everlasting love unfeigned; it takes its kingdom with entreaty and not with contention, and keeps it by lowliness of mind. In God alone it can rejoice, though none else regard it, or can own its life. It's conceived in sorrow and brought forth without any to pity it, nor doth it murmur at grief and oppression. It never rejoiceth but through sufferings; for with the world's joy it is murdered. I found it alone, being forsaken. I have fellowship therein with them who lived in dens and desolate places in the earth, who through death obtained the resurrection and eternal holy life. James Nayler's prayer.

My belief is that outward circumstances are not often (I will not say never) directly altered as the result of prayer. That is to say, God is not always

interfering with the working of the natural order. But, indirectly, by the working of mind upon mind, great changes can be wrought. William Littleboy in *The Meaning and Practice of Prayer*.

Eternal, grant me the possibility of revising, understanding, and weighing everything anew, truly and freely, without violence. Grant me not to be fossilized against your Spirit and your call. Pierre Ceresole. (Swiss Friend.)

Eternal God, take my life in your hands and lead me through these blind alleys with a heart free of meanness. I will be satisfied to furnish a little mud for the Great Construction. Pierre Ceresole.

Lord, deliver me from fanaticism, from the conviction that we alone have a message from Thee. Pierre Ceresole.

Lis (his wife) frees the butterfly which flings itself desperately against my window. She helps it gently to find its way out and the joy of seeing it fly away into the blue sky, so clear and beautiful and infinite. Eternal, grant me the same grace. Enable me to find the right way again when I am entangled in contradictory evidence. Take me delicately by the wing and grant me to find the right way in simple and true obedience, in prayer (contrary to, and against, and beyond all reason). Pierre Ceresole.

Dear Lord and Father of Mankind

Dear Lord and Father of mankind,
Forgive our foolish ways;
Reclothe us in our rightful mind,
In purer lives thy service find,
In deeper reverence, praise.

In simple trust like theirs who heard,
Beside the Syrian sea,
The gracious calling of the Lord,
Let us, like them, without a word
Rise up and follow thee.

Drop thy still dews of quietness,
Till all our strivings cease;
Take from our souls the strain and stress,
And let our ordered lives confess
The beauty of thy peace.

Breathe thro' the heats of our desire
Thy coolness and thy balm;
Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
Speak thro' the earthquake, wind, and fire,
O still, small voice of calm.

John Greenleaf Whittier

Open Thou my life,
Guide my thoughts where I dare not let them do.
But Thou darest.
Thy will be done.

Thomas R. Kelly

G. Relations with Other Faiths

The humble, meek, merciful, just, pious and devout souls are everywhere of one religion; and when death has taken off the mask, they will know one another, though the diverse liveries they wear here make them strangers. William Penn.

Stripped to the limit, what all religions have in common is a sense of need, an uneasiness, a sense that there is something wrong about us, and a sense that our need may be met, that we can be saved

from the wrongness by a proper connection with a power beyond ourselves, a "higher" power or powers. We recognize goodness (even when we cannot define it and do not all agree on its manifestations) as something desirable, and we apply to any religion the pragmatic test; does it produce good men and women. Kathleen Lonsdale in *I Believe*.

Three types of relationship can be thought of as existing between Christianity in general and the non-Christian religions. According to one of those views Christianity possesses a monopoly of religious truth and "pagan" or "heathen" religions are in error. Nothing is to be learned from them. Another opinion puts all the great world religions on more or less the same level. All are thought to possess equally valid insights into truth, though all have been corrupted by priest-craft and the survival of primitive customs. According to this view a selection should be made from each of the great religions of whatever is highest in them. These insights should be combined into one true religion. A particular form of this view is the belief that all religions are identical as far as their basic elements are concerned and that they differ mainly in the symbols — material, verbal, and human by which the foundation principles are expressed. A third emphasis accepts Christianity, if properly interpreted, as the truest religion, but adds that other religions possess a large measure of truth, adding that they have something important to teach Christians. According to this view all honest and sincere men of every religion have access in their

hearts to the same Divine Source of religious truth and power. But Christians have a peculiar advantage because the revelation of God through Christ in history is the highest revelation of God Himself in human terms. All three of these positions have been held by some members of the Society of Friends. The majority have adhered to some form of the third position. Howard H. Brinton in *Quakerism and Other Religions*.

We can define "ecumenical" as simply world-embracing. But deeper meanings have been distilling themselves into this word until now we can fairly say that an ecumenical encounter points toward an attempt to understand; an attempt at shaking off the stereotype with which we have approached one another's religion, and moving from the shadow to the substance; of opening ourselves to the truth in another's religious approach; and becoming vulnerable to the point where we may not return to our own faith in the same condition that we set out. Douglas V. Steere in *No Time But the Present*.

. . . a true ecumenism creates a situation where each religious group feels concern for the outcome of its fellow religionist's situation and can rejoice and find itself enriched when it produces an unmistakable saint or a groundswell of holiness, and can feel as equally involved in its misfortunes and say, not "There but for the grace of God go I," but rather "There go I." As for coexistence within Christianity, all but the darkest corners of the Christian scene today are moving to acknowledge it today. Douglas V. Steere in *Mutual Irradiation*.

My own notion of the current implementing of this vision is a functional ecumenism that begins with all of us encouraging each other to practice our own religious tradition to the hilt and to share our experiences with each other in every creative way we can devise. Douglas V. Steere in *Mutual Irradiation*.

If we should regard the great world religions as a row of summits in a common chain of mountains, we might be able to counter the proverb that "mountains never meet" by the observation that "men do meet," and when they do meet on the deepest levels, they confirm in each other the deepest things that each knows, and lift for each other a further curtain into the ultimate truths. Douglas V. Steere in *Mutual Irradiation*.

This daring kind of ecumenical approach requires a climate of confidence that is highly exacting and that will make costly demands of us on the devotional, intellectual, and institutional levels, and perhaps in just that order. Douglas V. Steere in *Mutual Irradiation*.

For those of us who suffer from hardening of the categories, the message to be found in this vast ecumenical movement will cause much pain. For those of us who love to be tickled by the new, this message may well be a warning that it will not be as easy as it seems. Douglas V. Steere in *Mutual Irradiation*.

Finally, we have enjoined those who would venture into a deeper dialogue between the religions to explore the ways to enlightenment, be loyal each to

his religion's revelatory center, be open to that of faith in every religion, and to worship together in that which is eternal. The way together will be fought with much inner struggle, for we are but human. Lord, we believe; help thou our unbelief. Carol R. Murphy in *Many Religions: One God: Toward Deeper Dialogue*.

ON WORSHIP AND QUAKER WORSHIP

A. Worship

Worship is a hunger of the human soul for God. When it really occurs, it is as compelling as the hunger for food. It is as spontaneous as the love of boy for girl. If we feel it, no one needs to tell us we should worship. No one has to try to make us do it. If we do not feel it, or have no desire to feel it, no amount of urging or forcing will do any good. We simply cannot be forced from the outside to worship. Only the power within us, the life within, can move us to it. N. Jean Toomer in *An Interpretation of Friends Worship*.

B. The Quaker Meeting for Worship

What's so amazing about Quaker worship? It is that for over 300 years groups of ordinary people have met together in silence, without the aids of a trained leader, or of liturgy, ritual, or outward sacraments. Week by week they have shared in a corporate experiment of silent, yet open worship. In it they have felt the sense of the grandeur and tragedy of life, its defeats and triumphs. They have been aware of something overwhelming: a presence, a sense of transcendence, of truth, of the love of God. By this awareness they have been held and at the same time invigorated and re-created. So they have been drawn to make a tremendous affirmation

about life's essential goodness and purpose, for they have become real people. George H. Gorman in *The Amazing Fact of Quaker Worship*.

During the 300 years of existence, the Society of Friends has, in its own way, made a small contribution to this area of exploration by its continued emphasis on the need for man to be aware of the still center deep in human personality. This Quakers have known primarily in actual experience rather than through a process of reasoning. For Quakers, the cultivation of the interior life through regular practice of periods of silence, has been an essential part of living. They know it as a way into that quiet place which is the vital core of man's being: the deep focus of self-consciousness. It is from this center that all creative energy radiates and to which men must constantly return for renewal in the necessary ebb and flow of life. George H. Gorman in *The Amazing Fact of Quaker Worship*.

. . . in a real sense it is impossible to write in any adequate way about Quaker worship, just as it is impossible to describe fully the inner meaning of a loving relationship, or the impact of listening to great music. The only way of entering into a meaningful understanding of such deep human experiences is actually to experience them. George H. Gorman in *The Amazing Fact of Quaker Worship*.

Our way of worship is not just an historical accident; it is a corollary from our conviction concerning the universal Light of Christ. Believing that in every worshipper, regardless of age, learning, sex, or any other human label, the promptings of God's

spirit are at work, Friends meet together in entirely unprogrammed silent prayer, opening themselves to him. It is our experience that in such corporate worship . . . we are led into a depth of communion with God and with one another that is deeply meaningful and spiritually refreshing. It is a fundamental part of the Quaker message that where two or three are gathered together in the name of God, there he is in the midst of them At any time and in any place they may enter into the deepest communion with God and with one another. L. Hugh Doncaster.

As Catholic worship is centered in the altar and Protestant worship in the sermon, worship in the Society of Friends attempts to realize as its center the Divine Presence revealed within. Howard Brinton in *Friends for 300 Years*.

I believe that the group mysticism of the gathered meeting rests upon the Real Presence in our midst. Quakers generally hold to a belief in the Real Presence, as firm and solid as the belief of Roman Catholics in the Real Presence in the Host, in the Bread and Wine of the Mass. Thomas R. Kelly in *The Gathered Meeting*.

In the Quaker practice of group worship on the basis of silence come special times when an electric hush and solemnity and depth of power steals over the worshippers. A blanket of divine covering comes over the room, and a quickening Presence pervades us, breaking down some part of the special privacy and isolation of our individual lives and blending our spirits with a super-individual Life and Power — an objective, dynamic Presence which

enfolds us all, nourishes our souls, speaks glad, unutterable comfort within us, and quickens in us depths that had before been slumbering. The Burning Bush has been kindled in our midst and we stand on holy ground. Thomas R. Kelly in *The Gathered Meeting*.

. . . the basis of our form of worship is the belief that if we sit in holy expectancy, we will receive messages from God directly. How miraculous this is! Dorothy Hutchinson in *Unless One Is Born Anew*.

The late Rufus M. Jones . . . once described what can happen in such a period of silent waiting. He used the figure of a ship in a lock, shut in by gates before and behind it, its great engines idling, its speed reduced to nought. The ship is no longer going anywhere. Yet all the time the water is rising underneath and when at length the gates are opened, the ship sails forth at a higher level than before. Frederick B. Tolles in *Quaker Testimonies in Daily Life*.

As an individual meditates and prays, it should be remembered that worship is the meeting of the Divine and the human and it should be a dialogue rather than a monologue. In the silence one discovers that God, too, speaks, if we are still and listen When one has had the experience of hearing God speak, the worshipper has pushed aside the curtain and entered into the Holy of Holies. This is the height of spiritual experience, but a height everyone can attain. Leonard S. Kenworthy in *Quakerism: A Study Guide to the Religious Society of Friends*.

Such worship is not silent worship; it is
worship on the basis of expectant waiting.
Such worship is unplanned, unhurried, and
spontaneous.

Such worship is entering the Holy of Holies
to listen as well as talk with God.

Such worship is a Quaker confessional, with
God, rather than a priest, hearing our
sins and shortcomings.

Such worship is authentic communion, not
just the symbolic act of the bread and
wine It combines the rational and the
mystical, thinking and feeling.

Leonard S. Kenworthy in *Quakerism: A Study
Guide to the Religious Society of Friends*.

In calm and cool and silence, once again
I find my old accustomed place among
My brethren, where, perchance no human
tongue

Shall utter words; where never hymn is
sung.

Nor deep-toned organ blown, nor censer
swung;

Nor dim light falling through the pictured
pane!

There, syllabled by silence, let me hear
The still small voice which reached the
prophet's ear;

Read in my heart a still diviner law
Than Israel's leader on his tables saw!

There let me strive with each besetting sin,
Recall my wandering fancies, and restrain
The sore disquiet of a restless brain;

And, as the path of duty is made plain,
May grace be given that I may walk therein,
Not like the hireling, for his selfish
gain,
With backward glance and reluctant tread,
Making a merit of the coward dread,
But cheerful, in the light around me
thrown,
Walking as one to pleasant service led;
Doing God's will as if it were my own,
Yet trusting not in mine, but in His
strength alone!

John Greenleaf Whittier in *First-Day Thoughts*.

C. Quaker Worship is for Anyone, Anywhere

Unfortunately there is a widespread idea outside the Society of Friends that participation in Quaker worship is confined to members of the Society. I cannot say too forcefully that this is an erroneous view. Quaker meetings for worship are open to anyone who desires to share in them. George H. Gorman in *The Amazing Fact of Quaker Worship*.

A service of corporate worship is for those who are weary and heavy laden. It is for sinners, for apprentices, and journeymen, as well as master workmen, and where we begin does not matter. What matters is, are we brought to such a focus of attention that our claimful cares are made aware of being petty chatterers in the presence of the patient Listener? What matters is, does this awareness of the Listener change the course, reorder them, drop them into the background, and finally reduce them to silence as the worshipper becomes still enough to

hear God speak. Douglas V. Steere.

“Centering” in Worship

Some individuals need already, upon entering the meeting, to be gathered deep in the spirit of worship. There must be some kindled hearts when the meeting begins. In them and from them begins the *work* of worship. The spiritual devotion of a few persons, silently deep in active adoration, is needed to kindle the rest, to help those others who enter the service with tangled, harried, distraught thoughts to be melted and quieted and released and made pliant, ready for the work of God and His Real Presence. Thomas R. Kelly in *The Gathered Meeting*.

Worshipping Corporately

As many candles lighted and placed in one place do augment the light and make it more to shine forth, so when many are gathered together in the same life, there is more of the glory of God. Robert Barclay's *Apology*.

. . . as the many small springs and streams descending into a proper place and forming a river become more deep and weighty, even so is the meeting with a people gathered of the living God into a sense of the enjoyment of his divine and living presence. Thomas Story.

. . . for the warmth of Life in each vessel doth not only warm the particular, but they are like a heap of fresh and living coals, warming each other. Isaac Penington.

The Importance and Centrality of Quaker Worship

Unless the meeting for worship is the center of the Quaker community — and that means of the child's as well as the father's and mother's, as well as the older people's community — community is non-existent, the Meeting is peripheral, and the Society of Friends just an organization with a membership list. Mildred Young in *Another Will Gird You*.

Preparation for Worship

That preparation for worship and for effective ministry is necessary can hardly be said too often and too strongly. Though the meeting for worship is indeed the workshop of the ministry, the worker cannot be a good craftsman if he has not already provided himself with materials from which to make his finished product. The thoughts that come in the hour of worship are often new creations, but novelty requires background. D. Elton Trueblood.

Some Results of Quaker Worship

And finally, does the service of worship, having silenced the worshipper's cares, searched out and purified his frailties, encouraged the enjoyment and adoration of God, does it bring the worshipper to listen with his whole being for the word that may speak out the meaning of his present experience, for the divine accent or the holding back on his inward leading, for the sense of quickened responsibility for his fellows and for "thy kingdom come on earth?" Douglas V. Steere.

The regular participation in corporate worship nurtures the tender insight of private prayer and helps to give it stalk, a stem, a root, and soil in which to grow. Douglas V. Steere.

ON THE MINISTRY

A. The Ministry of Silence

Every member of a Meeting, whatever his formal status . . . contributes to the Meeting. Sometimes this contribution is spoken; generally it is silent. Geoffrey Hubbard in *Quaker By Convincement*.

B. Every Friend a Minister

Of all the mistaken notions about Quakers, the most extreme is the supposition that they have no ministers In the beginning of the Movement the fact that a large proportion of the members, of both sexes, were clearly engaged in the ministry, was perhaps, from the point of view of the outside observer, the most striking single feature of Quakerism. Not only were the rank and file of the members ministers in the sense that they performed humble services to their fellow men in daily life; many of them were also ministers in the sense they preached wherever and whenever they could. D. Elton Trueblood in *The People Called Quakers*.

It has been said that Friends have not so much abolished the clergy as they have abolished the laity. Rachel R. Cadbury in *The Choice Before Us*.

The expression "the gift of the ministry" may slide into an excuse for shirking if one forgets that it is a

gift for which search is to be made, yea, coveted earnestly. Have you ever coveted it earnestly or is it a gift which you fervently trust will never be bestowed on you? *Memoir of Neave Brayshaw*.

C. Speaking in Meeting

The most satisfactory ministry in the Quaker meeting of today arises out of a flash of insight, felt in the silence and delivered with brevity and a deep sense of concern. Howard H. Brinton in *Prophetic Ministry*.

When one rises to speak in such a (gathered) meeting, one has a sense of *being used*, of being played upon, of being spoken through. Thomas R. Kelly in *A Testament of Devotion*.

Brevity, earnestness, sincerity, and frequently a lack of polish — characterize the best Quaker speaking. Thomas R. Kelly in *The Gathered Meeting*.

If there is One who gathers the meeting inwardly and who is communicating and drawing at our lives unceasingly, and if vocal ministry in such a meeting is focused and irradiated from a level below the surface mind, it should not surprise us if several persons . . . were at the same time moved to minister on roughly the same theme. Douglas V. Steere in *Speaking Out of the Silence*.

Ministry from the diffident and shy who seldom speak is often most helpful to the meeting, and the very simple prayer or message may be of great value when it has the authentic ring of deep personal experience. Vocal ministry should not be lightly

undertaken. It is not the utterance of careless surface thoughts that flit through the mind, not even the sharing of merely intellectual level of riches won from reading and reflection; it is the offering of experience won in thought and in life which through prayer and obedience has led to a deeper vision of God and his ways of dealing with men. London Yearly Meeting's *Church Government*.

D. Vocal Prayer

The highest vocal exercise in a Meeting for Worship is spoken prayer. Howard H. Brinton.

Vocal prayer, poured from an humble heart, frequently shifts a meeting from a heady level of discussion to the deeps of worship. Thomas R. Kelly in *The Gathered Meeting*.

Underlying and undergirding the unprogrammed worship of Friends is prayer; the prayerful corporate waiting which takes place in any meeting when it has centered down. As we go deeper and deeper, prayer is our task as individuals and as a group Another form which prayer may take . . . is vocal prayer in meeting. As those present are stirred and uplifted as a result of the silence or the ministry which comes from it, vocal prayer may provide a focusing point which witnesses to the spirit at work in the meeting. At other times a prayer may instill life into a silence which has previously appeared dead, or bring unity to a meeting whose ministry has seemed scattered and discordant, or gather up and bring into focus a number of fragmentary messages. Helen G. Hole in *Prayer: The Cornerstone*.

Even though the words of vocal prayer may sometimes barely be audible, the whole meeting may enter into its spirit, simply and humbly, in thanksgiving, adoration, intercession, petition, or dedication. London Yearly Meeting (1959).

E. Messages Which Disturb Us

The attender at a Friends meeting must accustom himself to hearing much that he feels is unprofitable, at least to himself. His forbearance in respect to speakers who are struggling, perhaps blindly, toward the Light and missing the way, is in itself a valuable exercise. Howard H. Brinton.

When we are inclined to "pass judgment on the ministry," or feel out of unity with what is said, let us ask ourselves whether the reason may not be that we are listening to a truth to which our own psychological make-up has made us blind and which therefore has a special value for us. W. Russell Brain.

A Friends meeting for worship finds no room for debate or for answering (still less for contradicting) one another; if this is desirable, it will be left for another occasion. And if anything should seem to be spoken amiss, the spiritually-minded worshipper will have the wit to get at the heart of the message, overlooking crudity and lack of skill in its presentation, and so far from giving way to irritation at what seems unprofitable, he will be deeply concerned for his own share in creating the right spiritual atmosphere in which the harm will fade and the good grow. A. Neave Brayshaw.

Occasionally a message will come like a bolt of lightning out of the blue. It may be delivered in a burst of anger or with a deep sense of frustration. Worshipers should try to think of such a message as a cry for help, a plea for a lifeline. Someone should feel moved to offer a prayer for Divine Guidance or to utter words of compassion, understanding, or helpful advice. Moreover, one or two Friends should also feel called upon to sit down quietly after Meeting with such a disturbed person and counsel with him or her. Leonard S. Kenworthy in *Quakerism: A Study Guide to the Religious Society of Friends*.

F. Preparation for the Ministry

. . . the deduction that there can be no call during the week, and no right preparation of the message, is wholly inadmissible. God works in many ways and Friends living in the freedom of the Spirit should be the last to maintain such an artificial limitation. John Wilhelm Rowntree.

One never brings anything to meeting with the certainty of giving it there, but one tries not to come empty. Douglas V. Steere in *A Quaker Meeting for Worship*.

I never go to meeting with an "itch" to speak, though it sometimes happens to me, as to others, that I am moved to speak before entering the meeting house. Even so, I usually restrain myself at least a short period of waiting before God. One is vain indeed if he thinks his words are more important than this waiting If the message be a genuine one, the longer I restrain it, the better

shaped it becomes . . . and the stronger the impulse to express it. N. Jean Toomer in *An Interpretation of Friends Worship*.

The value of what we say will depend on the richness of the cultivated mind and spirit behind the words. Rufus M. Jones was always a welcome visitor in any meeting because his mind was stored with a wealth of observations and ideas, the results of wide reading and meditation. The wells of the spirit can be kept filled by extensive reading of the best things men have thought and done. The results of personal observation and experience always come with a freshness which gives validity to what we say. Jesus drew lessons from nature and from home and village life; Paul, from the arena, foot races, and . . . combats. Bliss Forbush in *The Spoken Word*.

G. The Need for a More Effective Vocal Ministry and for Vocal Prayer

Perhaps the greatest need of the Society of Friends in all its various groups is for a new outpouring of the ministry. How urgently we need men and women who can speak powerfully and convincingly to the disillusionment and despair, the longing and seeking of millions of our contemporaries, bringing them a message of the availability of the transforming power of God through direct and daily contact with the Divine. That was, is, and will be the central message of Friends. Leonard S. Kenworthy in *Quakerism: A Study Guide to the Religious Society of Friends*.

We need to ask quite seriously whether there is something lacking in a Meeting which seldom or never has vocal prayer. Alexander C. Purdy in *Vocal Prayer and the Meeting for Worship. Friends Intelligencer* (1943).

But the actual truth of the matter is that meetings that have turned completely silent almost invariably wither away. Something is missing in the corporate relationship This does not mean that an occasional silent meeting may not be one in which great things have happened within the hearts of those who attended. But the practical experience of the Society of Friends, historically, knows the fate of a meeting which is habitually mute. Douglas V. Steere in *On Speaking Out of the Silence*.

What are some of the reasons for this state of things? One obvious reason is a distrust of emotionalism. We have seen so many unhealthy reactions after the great mass revivals of the past, or we know so many individual cases of overwrought feelings in the religious circles in which we move, that we hesitate to make the emotional appeal at all. This is a quite understandable reason and sound up to a point. Surely, however, we are not going to neglect the emotional element entirely, and flee to the other extreme. The mere fact that the appeal to the emotions has been overdone does not prove that it is in essence wrong. Rather it would be true to say that until a man is touched in his feelings, until his interest is aroused, no amount of reasoning or logic will do much to move him. We Friends are all too reserved and unwilling to "let ourselves go" when the right time comes. There is a right time, though

some may doubt it, and he who walks close to God will recognize when it does. The chief reason, however, is probably the low level of our spiritual life. Gerald K. Hibbert in *A Plea for a Deeper Ministry*.

Equally important is the raising of the question of whether ministry in our time has not tended to neglect the great existential questions: From where did I come? Why am I here? Whence am I bound? The nature of Friends ministry is such that speaking to these great issues must come from the depths of the meeting's inward exercise and be experientially grounded. Douglas V. Steere in *On Speaking Out of the Silence*.

The present deficiencies cannot be overcome by reserving for the ministry the lees of our energy . . . and our time. John Wilhelm Rowntree.

I believe the time has come when some, perhaps many, must be prepared to recognize the ministry as a "first charge" upon their lives. I am not pleading for a separated professional class. Far from it. But I am convinced that we need a fuller acknowledgment of the claims of the ministry and a more complete consecration to them. John Henry Barlow in *The Vocal Ministry in Our Meetings for Worship*.

ON QUAKER MEETINGS FOR BUSINESS AND RELATED ACTIVITIES

A. Quaker Meetings for Business

The Meeting for Business is another of the unique contributions of Quakerism to the world. In fact it may even be more unprecedented than the Meeting for Worship. It is a rare form of democracy especially suited to a religious fellowship, based on the belief that Divine Guidance is as available in transacting group business as it is in conducting group worship. It is a way of doing business in which the collective wisdom of the group is illuminated by The Light. It is a Meeting for Worship with a concern to do business. Nothing like it exists anywhere in Christendom or in any of the other world religions. It is uncommon, unusual, unparalleled, unique Most of the sects which rose in 17th century England died; the Society of Friends survived because it had a special method of transacting business, as well as a special message. Leonard S. Kenworthy in *Quakerism: A Study Guide to the Religious Society of Friends*.

Friends are not to meet like a company of people about town or parish business . . . but to wait upon the Lord. George Fox's *Journal*.

The basis upon which we hold our Meetings for Business — be they committee, Monthly, Quarter-

ly, or Yearly Meetings — is that this is God's world, that He has unfinished business for us to do, and that it is possible for us to ascertain His will for us in this world. The Meeting for Business is, in essence, the Meeting for Worship focused upon specific matters, and there well may be a significant correlation between the depth and power of the Meeting for Business and that of the Meeting for Worship. Thomas S. Brown in *When Friends Attend to Business*.

Quakerism has always had within it a strong centrifugal force of individualism, but likewise . . . a centripetal force of corporate life in tension with it; and from the fruitful interaction of these two have come the decisions of the Society. The visions and concerns of individuals prevent the Society from being over-traditional and static; the insights of a gathered group prevent it from moving over-hastily in unconsidered enthusiasm. George A. Selleck in *Principles of the Quaker Business Meeting*.

The synthesis of a variety of elements is often obtained by a kind of cross-fertilization, and the final result is not, therefore, or at least ought not to be, a compromise. Given time and the proper conditions, a group idea, which is not the arithmetical sum of individual contributions or their common divisor, but a new creation or mutation, finally evolves. Howard H. Brinton in *Friends for Three Hundred Years*.

The motto of Quaker procedure is "When in doubt, wait." William Wistar Comfort in *The Quaker Way of Life*.

It is almost impossible to overstate the importance of the clerk or clerks in Quaker Meetings for Business. Much of the success or failure of such sessions depends upon their deftness, their sensitivity, their particular or "peculiar" qualifications. At their best they are wonderful to behold, a tribute to the possibilities in human beings. Fortunately there are many of them . . . and now might be a good time to praise such Quaker clerks. Leonard S. Kenworthy in *Quakerism: A Study Guide to the Religious Society of Friends*.

B. The Queries, Advices, and the State of the Society Reports

. . . few Quakers and far fewer non-Quakers are aware of the significance of the Queries, the Advices, and the State of the Society reports in the life of the Religious Society of Friends. Taken collectively this cluster of practices are intended to encourage Friends, individually and as groups, to hold up their lives to the Light. They are meant to prick our consciences, to prod us in our day-to-day practices, and to promote the kind of God-directed lives worth living. Leonard S. Kenworthy in *Quakerism: A Study Guide*.

The Queries, in particular, are suited to the searching mood of Friends at their best, as they are broad, open-ended questions to promote self-examination under the leadership of the Spirit. They are non-dogmatic, non-hortatory, and non-threatening. They are not intended to discourage but to encourage, not meant to put down individuals or groups, but to lift them to new levels

of living. They are primarily positive rather than negative in tone. Leonard S. Kenworthy in *Quakerism: A Study Guide*.

As they stand today, the Queries are the lineal descendents of many earlier ones which show the concern from early times for two things: the purity of the spiritual source and the faithfulness with which the leadings of the Spirit are carried into the business of life here and now. William Wistar Comfort in *Quakers in the Modern World*.

The Queries as they have developed in the Society of Friends are, I believe, a stroke of divine wisdom. At their best they are a regular occasion for self-examination and renewal of the heart in the way of Truth. They are the healthiest system of confession that the Protestant Church has devised. Gilbert Kilpack in the *Friends Intelligencer* (1944).

The Queries as a form of questionnaire were almost congenital to Quakerism I believe students of social controls would find in this Quaker practice a rather interesting phenomenon, as they have in other practices characteristic of the Society. Henry J. Cadbury in *The Character of a Quaker*.

We were leaving a denomination with a creed as a basis of membership. We liked the do-it-yourself nature of Quakerism, that we could experience God directly, that we were to search and struggle constantly to bring our lives into conformity with that measure of truth and beauty revealed to us from moment to moment, from year to year, and from generation to generation. We were asked to test our beliefs, verify them, amplify them, enlarge them

out of our growing experience. Quakerism has a special way of helping Friends to do this — the Queries. Unlike catechisms with which we were familiar, the answers to the Queries could not be memorized; they must be lived. Elizabeth Watson in *Asking the Right Questions* (Western Yearly Meeting Lecture, 1976).

The Advices place a spiritual road map in front of Friends; the Queries urge them to find their own way by consulting it. The Advices say, “We say,” whereas the Queries ask, “What say you?” Harold Loukes in *Seeking and Finding in the Society of Friends*.

C. Membership

The test for membership should not be doctrinal agreement nor adherence to certain testimonies but evidence of sincere seeking and striving for the Truth, together with an understanding of the lines along which Friends are seeking Truth. Friends World Conference (1952).

Our membership in this or any other Christian fellowship is never based on worthiness We none of us are members because we have attained a certain amount of goodness, but rather because in this matter we still are all humble learners in the school of Christ. Our membership is of no importance whatever unless it signifies that we are committed to something of far greater and more lasting significance than can be adequately conveyed by the closest association with any movement or organization. Our membership in the Society of

Friends should commit us to the discipleship of the Living Christ. When we have made that choice and come under that compulsion, our membership will have endorsed it. Edgar Dunstan.

The reader need not rely on the evidence I have given to know that a Quaker Meeting (or any other congregation of Christians) is not a community of saints; he has only to look around his own Meeting. But then, are we not wrong in supposing that it was intended to be? Ormerod Greenwood in *No Time But the Present*.

In so far as we have occasion to think of such matters at all, the good Friend is not only a good citizen and a good Christian; he has also an intelligent understanding of why it is worthwhile to be a Friend. He recognizes the classical significance of this particular section of society and sees the importance of maintaining its fabric — its machinery, if you like — its inner harmony and fellowship, and its adaptability to the needs of our time. He attends its worship and business meetings — and up to his share — its innumerable committees with no blind loyalty or sense of duty, but because he wishes to promote its corporate witness and its appropriate service. Instead of being critical of its weakness and perfunctory routine . . . he will attempt to contribute life and strength and wisdom. He will not despair of the Society. He is alert to its unrecognized opportunities at various levels. Henry J. Cadbury in *The Character of a Quaker*.

The applicant for membership himself takes the initiative. In the first instance, then, it is he and not the Meeting that attempts to decide. By reading, by

attending Friends worship, by near or remote contact with Friends, he tries to form a judgement as to what it means to be a Quaker. His image is often too favorable, so favorable that he regards himself as unworthy, or else, if he does join, is destined to suffer disillusion. But his judgement of the suitability of the Society to his needs and aspirations is the initial and frequently the decisive factor. Needless to say, the applicants vary extraordinarily. A study of fifty letters of application to a single Meeting, if collected or read by the overseers over a period of time, shows how diverse and partial, and sometimes idealized, are the grounds of attraction to the Society of Friends. Henry J. Cadbury in *The Character of a Quaker*.

It may be that for continuity and for legal purposes we have to retain formal membership; and it has the great advantage that it represents a step of commitment which many need and are strengthened by. But let us make as little of membership as possible and keep our Society as an "open-ended" community . . . counting as Quakers all who journey with us. Ormerod Greenwood in *No Time But the Present*.

In a discussion about Quakers, a non-Friend said, "Quakers enjoy complete freedom; they have no dogma, no creed, no ordained ministers, no bishop. Quakers can believe anything." In this context "anything" means "nothing." In trying to clarify concepts, I am asking: What is the minimum a Friend ought to accept? What is so essential that a person who does not approve it, should not be admitted to the Religious Society of Friends? The

following four principles constitute (for me) the minimum: (1) The Inner Light, (2) The Corporate Search, (3) The Living Witness, and (4) The Joyful Hope. Edmund P. Hillpern in *The Minimum Quaker*.

As we talk with applicants for membership we would do well to explore with them these topics:

- commitment to an individual and a corporate spiritual search.

- attendance at Meetings for Worship and an appreciation of this type of worship.

- familiarity with the testimonies of Friends and support of most of them.

- willingness to give and to receive support as a part of a caring community.

- acceptance of the broad spectrum of religious beliefs in our fellowship.

- attendance at several Meetings for Business and an understanding of the spirit in which they are held.

- familiarity with the history and practices of Friends as set forth in the yearly meeting's Faith and Practice.

- willingness to participate actively in the life of the Meeting in regard to (a) the Meeting for Worship, (b) the Meeting for Business, (c) committee work, and (d) financial support.

A Minute of the Committee on Ministry and Oversight of the Brooklyn (N.Y.) Monthly Meeting.

One of the major problems in the church today is that too little is expected of those who have committed themselves to membership. Where little is expected, little will be given in return. Moreover,

the demands that are made often seem to be busy work, rather than involvement in really important things In conclusion a few minimal disciplines may be suggested as the basis of meaningful membership. These need to be worked out and applied with some flexibility according to particular needs and situations. Even though such disciplines should not be a burden, they ought to be significant enough to require something of the members. At the same time they should liberate persons to participate in a new life of freedom rather than make them feel restricted and circumscribed. The Christian life should be understood as the disciplined life, for no one can be either a mature person or a committed Christian without dedicating himself to such a life. These disciplines should begin with one's own personal life and move out to his participation in the total life and work of the meeting. Such a list of disciplines might include:

- (1) Personal prayer, devotional reading and meditation for at least thirty minutes each day.
- (2) Where family is involved, establish a pattern of family prayer and worship.
- (3) Participate in small prayer-study fellowship group. Some time should be spent in Bible study.
- (4) Regular attendance and participation in the life and work of the meeting.
- (5) Commitment to at least one major area of service and mission on behalf of the meeting.
- (6) Commitment of financial resources on a sacrificial basis in support of the meeting.

Wilmer A. Cooper in *No Time But This Present*.

ON OUR LOCAL MEETINGS AND SHARED LEADERSHIP

A. Local Meetings as Vital Calls

The laboratory of our faith, then, is not in our occasional public meetings scattered across the country It is in these vital cells that our life really centers It is here that the life-stream of our faith is fed — or fails to find its true supplies. These little islands of ours, surrounded by a secular world of drive and grind, are the real experimental stations of the spiritual life where it is being settled whether we are to be the purveyors of the light and love and truth, or whether we are to end in sterility. Rufus M. Jones in *The Vital Cell*.

Some Marks of a Vital Friends Meeting Are:

1. A place of spiritual growth and impact.
2. With the Meeting for Worship central.
3. Composed of a diversity of seekers, but with some shared values.
4. Cultivating pride in its Quaker past, but fostering a pioneering spirit.
5. Providing a broad and diversified program for people of all ages.
6. Promoting fun and fellowship.
7. Serving as a launching pad for spiritually-motivated social action.
8. Fostering broad participation and shared

leadership.

9. Reaching out to other groups locally and in wider geographical areas.

10. Adequately housed and financed.

How does your Meeting rate on a ten-point-scale for each item? Leonard S. Kenworthy in *Quakerism: A Study Guide to the Religious Society of Friends*.

B. The Quest for Community in Our Meetings

We need to find the courage to assert and act upon the hope, however naive, that community can be found, because only by acting “as if” can we create a future fit for human habitation. . . . So the way to self, and to self-health, is the way of community. We have lost a true sense of self in our time because we have lost community Community means more than the comfort of souls. It means, and has always meant, the survival of the species True communities will take the form of covenant. They will experience both God’s mercy and God’s judgement in their lives. Community comes as a by-product of commitment and struggle. It comes when we step forward to right some wrong, to heal some hurt, to give some service. (It) always means the collision of egos. It is less like Utopia than like a crucible or a refiner’s fire Clearly community is a process. But it is also a place We need to help each other to build community where we are rather than encouraging dreams which turn to despair over a community which for many of us will never be The core of the Quaker tradition is a way of inward seeking which leads to outward acts of integrity and service. Friends are most in the

Spirit when they stand at the crossing point of the inward and outward life. And that is the intersection at which we find community. Parker J. Palmer in *A Place Called Community*.

Fellowship in Our Meetings

The spiritual welfare of a meeting is greatly helped if its social life is vigorous and its members take a warm personal interest in one another's welfare. The pastoral work of the Society is especially committed to the overseers, but our members generally should not allow themselves to feel that they are relieved of the responsibility. In the greater events of life, such as marriage, the birth of a child, illness or death, it is our duty and our privilege to share in one another's joys and sorrows; and sympathy thus shown is a potent means of binding us in a closer fellowship. London Yearly Meeting (1925).

I can think with thankfulness of Friends who have brought light into my darkness — perhaps a single sentence, a friendly letter, a walk on the downs; their help was perhaps given unconsciously, but it was because they were sensitive to God's leadings that they were able to do it. Do we seek to be the channels of God's love and caring? Caring matters most. Edward H. Milligan.

The Ministry of Visiting

Members of the meeting should visit one another in the spirit of that fellowship which they have felt in the meeting for worship. There is no more convincing way of showing affectionate concern than visiting others in this spirit. In religious bodies

where this visiting is done by professional workers, the lay members lose a precious privilege that might be theirs, for the visitor nearly always receives more than he gives In our Society visiting is a ministry in which many should share. It should not be restricted to any official body in the meeting. It cannot be neglected if inner fellowship is to flourish. Douglas V. Steere in *Community and Worship*.

Simple, Shared Meals

The revival of Christian hospitality in which the members of the meeting partake of food with one another is essential. Visitors to the meeting and new members are especially grateful for this open hand of friendship. The increasingly elaborate meals which many consider it necessary to set before guests have made this hospitality difficult for persons in moderate circumstances, but a return to simplicity would help in bringing about the revival of this precious sacrament. Douglas V. Steere in *Community and Worship*.

Cooperation Among Families

A Quaker Meeting . . . is a fine place (in which) to bring up children when families do many things together — worship, play, and share the ups and downs of life. There was a group of about six families in our Meeting that shared so much that in a sense we all raised each other's children and to this day we are one huge extended family, traveling any distance to be together for special life events like the next generation's marriages, Elise Boulding in *Born Remembering*.

Small Fellowship Groups

It is not easy to describe the place of little fellowship groups within the meeting, for they are scarcely organized groups at all, and the least hint of formally "promoting" them would almost destroy their genius. Out of this hospitality and visiting, however, there may quite naturally grow up a desire on the part of several members to gather in one another's homes, perhaps for a meal and a quiet evening of conversation about their deepest concerns. These little fellowship groups begin with five or six persons and may never grow to be larger than eight or ten. They must not be a burden but should come to pass only when members of a meeting feel a desire to have fellowship on common concerns further than is possible in the meeting for worship. Douglas V. Steere in *Community and Worship*.

C. Shared Leadership

If there is a reluctance to accept the leadership concept, we can be assured that from the beginning, George Fox saw no incompatibility between the concept of a priesthood of all believers, a shared ministry, and the development of leaders. Sumner A. Mills in *Developing Leadership for the Society of Friends*.

One of the universal responsibilities, especially of Elders, but also of all members, is to be sensitive to the latent, but awakening spiritual gifts of others, and to offer encouragement for their increased service to the meeting. A kindly word of appreciation, counsel, or guidance may render a

welcome service to one who is very much aware of a strange stirring within, yet somewhat bewildered by it. *The Life of the Meeting*, a study booklet of the 1953 Friends World Conference.

We have some consecrated and alert leaders who march in front of us and present us to the world in a good light. They are too few for the work we load on them and we wear them out, unless they are too wise to be used by other's indolence. If some of our members show great gifts while they are still young, we sometimes push them beyond what they are ready for in their inward life, and some of these may break and fall to the rear. Oftener, they will plod on, working on the momentum of an exhausted inspiration; they may be efficient and faithful, but if their burning bush is extinguished, how can they lead us out of Egypt? Mildred Young in *Another Will Gird You*.

A New Reservoir of Leadership

We have stressed the involvement of young people and the role of our ministry in leadership without mentioning a potential new source — retired Friends who often have years of active service which may be devoted to good causes. Some such men and women are finding places of leadership to fill, but we are not doing enough to encourage middle-aged people to look forward . . . to these opportunities. Empty years may, indeed, become full, rich years for many older Friends if we utilize their maturity fully. This should be a concern for every ministry and counsel body. Sumner A. Mills in *Developing Leadership for the Society of Friends*.

Pastoral Leadership

A functional ministry seeks to work itself out of a job, and theoretically the most successful pastor would be one who has discovered, developed, trained, and nurtured the various ministries of a congregation to the point where he is no longer needed. Thomas J. Mullen in *The Renewal of the Ministry*.

The good pastor conducts himself in the worship service so that everyone present feels a sense of responsibility and a sense of freedom. Vocal participation is encouraged. The atmosphere of reverent worship is cultivated and everyone is encouraged to be faithful to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. The "program" itself . . . is sufficiently flexible to allow for any immediate Divine Leading. Sometimes it may happen that the pastor does not speak at all, or speaks very differently than he had planned. The operation of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of dedicated people is not hampered by a pastor who is himself under the guidance of the same Spirit. The pastor in a Friends Meeting must follow the difficult and exacting way of worshipping with people rather than preaching to them. The Committee on Ministry and Counsel of North Carolina Yearly Meeting (F.U.M.).

ON DIVERSITY IN THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

A. Fragmentation

I saw with some clarity that every one of the four prevailing types of Quakerism at that period had managed to seize and carry on some vital aspects of the movement which George Fox inaugurated in the middle of the seventeenth century, but I saw equally clearly that no one of the four types in its isolation was an adequate continuation of the spiritual life-stream which took its historical direction from that remarkable man. Rufus M. Jones in *The Trail of Life in the Middle Years*.

From the first quarter of the nineteenth century well into the 1900s, the history of Friends in America has been a history of fragmentation into various splinter groups. Each group has thought that it carried the full Quaker banner, while in actuality each has tightly clasped only a tattered shred of the rich tapestry that was the original Quaker movement. Jack Kirk in *Friends Search for Wholeness*.

Our own African Friends can't understand our different Quaker branches. A few years ago when we attempted to explain the different American strands of Quakerism, an African Friend wrote back observing that it appeared that we were having

“tribal difficulties.” Lorton G. Heusel in *Beyond Half a Gospel in Friends Search for Wholeness*.

My vision for the Society of Friends is that we can take seriously a common, corporate effort to bridge our differences and publish abroad the truth which we have found so life-giving and life-changing. As I think about the future I see a new movement among Friends which I call, to coin a word, conevanhickodoxy. Conevenhickodoxy combines the best of the four “standard brands” of Quakerism without looking for a least common denominator which could eventually destroy the vitality of the Society. . . . If conevanhickodoxy is to be vital we must beware of institutionalizing its expression. (It) is a vision for a new common search among Friends, leading to adventures in faithfulness for all branches of the Society. Each Friend must discover for her/himself what God is speaking inwardly and live that word faithfully. Institutionalizing would only destroy the possibility Maybe no one will want to use my word conevanhickodoxy, but I do hope that its spirit will prevail. Dan Whitley in *Quaker Life* (January, 1979).

There are three aspects of the Quaker understanding of life in the early days of the Society which are still the best starting points for a discussion of the basis of unity among Friends — and in saying they are the best starting points I do not mean to imply that the principles of the early Society are, ipso facto, normative for us. The first is that religion must be experimental and experiential The second . . . is the sense that true religion has implications for the whole of one’s

life The final starting point is the dedication to certain means as the most valuable and truest approaches to God There is a basis for true unity . . . and that is the determination to testify honestly and fully to whatever is most deeply meaningful to each of us and to engage in dialogue with all others who are equally willing to be known by what matters most in life to them. Paul Lacey in *Friends Journal* (1963).

B. Fostering Understanding and Appreciation

We love the poor; we love the person who has never heard the Christian message; we love minority groups; we love the people of other religious groups — Catholics, Jews, Moslems, — but do we really love our fellow Quakers? Edwin B. Bronner in *What Future for Friends?*

For the Society of Friends might be thought of as a prism through which the Divine Light passes, to become visible in a spectrum of colors London Yearly Meeting.

Somehow we need to learn that differences are not necessarily threatening and may indeed become the occasion for discovering new truth. Joe Havens in the *Friends Journal*, 1978.

Friends frequently find themselves in sharp disagreement about particular attitudes and actions. Such disagreement is not necessarily to be deplored; it may help to clarify issues and contribute to a deeper unity than results from easy agreement.

It is important that all who disagree continue to strive together to find more information about the

problem and more insight as to right ways of meeting it. Meanwhile, all concerned should maintain respect, courtesy, and affection toward one another, refraining from every effort to impose decision.

Friends who disagree about specific policies may at the same time find themselves united in concern. When each is prayerfully seeking light, all may attain to fuller understanding of the right course. They may even find their understanding is increased by the variety of insights and emphases brought to bear on the problem. *Faith and Practice* of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting.

This is the true ground of love and unity, not that such a man walks and does just as I do, but that I feel the same spirit and life in him. Isaac Penington.

By using the power of mature, redemptive love we can show each individual that we need his or her uniqueness to make us whole. We will then see that we have something to give others and that others have something to give us. Rachel DuBois in *Friends and Democracy*.

It just may be that the most loving thing we could do for each other would be to set each other free to be himself. Everett L. Cattell in *What Future for Friends?*

C. Some Movement Towards Better Understanding

Many Friends from all branches of the Society share the concern . . . that Friends should be brought together to work and worship in closer harmony. Today the pastoral system is becoming

less of a barrier between Friends than it was. On the one hand, Friends whose Meetings have remained unprogrammed are beginning to realize the value of "liberating" certain Friends to serve as meeting secretary or for some other special assignment. On the other hand, Friends in the programmed Meetings have come to realize that they have sometimes depended too much on their pastors both in worship and in good works and are re-emphasizing the belief that every man is called to some sort of ministry, whether it be of words or deeds In addition, we are finding that it is possible for both programmed and unprogrammed Meetings to work together in the same Yearly Meetings As Friends of all groups are gaining a new vision of what kinds of service are required of them, they are also gaining a new insight into the nature of worship. They are finding that in spite of differences in forms and words, the same Inward Christ speaks to the individual condition of all who listen to his Inward Voice. Elise Boulding in *My Part in the Quaker Adventure*.

ON LIVING LIFE ABUNDANTLY

A. Frustrations and Vulnerabilities

Suddenly one night I saw myself as a small frog in the bottom of a deep well, leaping/leaping to get up and over the side. All my life I had been leaping. I knew where the sun was. I knew which way to jump. I knew there was an outside — another place to be. Yet I was falling back into the bottom of the well. Elise Boulding in *Born Remembering*.

To be alive is to be vulnerable. From birth on, none is exempt from pain; nor can we go through life without losing some that we love; and ultimately coming to terms with our own death. These are big wounds we all share. And there are the little wounds; frustrations, put-downs, loneliness, boredom, injustice, betrayals, neglect — or are they such small wounds. They eat away at us like cancer. Elizabeth Watson in *Only the Wounded Can Heal*.

B. Sorrows

Sorrow cannot be fought and overcome; it cannot be evaded or escaped; it must be lived with. Whether it be sorrow for our own loss, or sorrow for the world's pain, we must learn to shoulder the burden of it, to carry it so that it does not break our stride or sap the strength of those about us through pity or woe. Death of the young and vigorous when

they have much to experience and much to give, loss of the rare and precious person in mid-stream, is comparatively unusual in good times, but in times like these it becomes tragically frequent. Somehow we must learn not only to meet it with courage, which is comparatively easy, but to bear it with serenity, which is more difficult, being not a single act but a way of living. Elizabeth Gray Vining in *World In Tune*.

C. Fears

Fear, the principal enemy, especially fear of oneself; fear of being inadequate, of repeating the same mistakes indefinitely. The greatest danger is compromise with the enemy within oneself:

Fear of letting go of one's money

Fear of stepping out of one's environment.

Fear of changing jobs.

Fear of seeing things as they are.

Fear of names, systems, words.

Fear of Death.

Pierre Ceresole in *For Peace and Truth*.

Fear, then is the absence of faith. And what does that mean? It means fear is a sin — not just a misfortune, but a sin. And Jesus condemned it. Over and over He condemned it. Dorothy Hutchinson in *Unless One Is Born Anew*.

What Jesus was saying is that there is a difference between ordinary prudence and the fear that paralyzes and alienates one from his fellow men. Rufus Jones said about those very words of Jesus, "Christ's major point in the Sermon on the Mount is to get rid of fears and anxieties." It might also be

said that the substance of His mission as a teacher was to set men free from the slavery of fears. Dorothy Hutchinson in *Unless One Is Born Anew*.

D. On Accepting Sorrow and Growing Through Grief

Gradually I learned one more thing, quite simple and obvious to many, but hidden from me at first; that grief is something not to overcome or to escape, but to live with. It is always there, as perceptible as a person who will not go away in spite of hints or plain speaking, but one can make room for it; one can continue one's work, one's occupation, even one's joys, in its presence. Elizabeth Gray Vining in *Quiet Pilgrimage*.

I have learned that the dark experiences of our lives can be the preparation and prelude for growth and enlightenment. It may even be that without the dark experiences we do not grow at all. Howard Alexander in *A Living Witness*.

We are free to learn, if we will. We can use the chronic disability, the unsought pain, the "thorn in the flesh," the incurable ailment, to heighten our awareness of beauty and our sensitivity to the suffering in others. We can use it as a challenge to our ingenuity to transcend our limitations. We can grow in depth through it as we seek ways to help God in the continuing process of creating a universe that is always breaking down In time we come to learn that we are not alone. We remember passages from the Bible. We find poetry, music, sculpture speaking to us across time and space. In

time we may feel within us the continuing love, may sense the presence of the one we love, not in any supernatural way, but as warmth, sunlight. Knowing the fragility of life, each day becomes a gift to be fully experienced. We are aware of the beauty in simple everyday things, and we find how precious are other members of our family still with us, other friends, — strangers. We give thanks for the vitality, the grace, the hope, the courage of those who are young. And we find that deep, quiet joy has indeed begun to lubricate our frozen hearts. We grow through grief. Elizabeth Watson in *Only the Wounded Can Heal*.

We have talked about how a dark room is often a developing room. Baltimore Yearly Meeting (1940).

E. The Need for Times of Renewal

We need to turn off the television or radio and find some time and space to be alone — no easy thing these days. By contemplation, meditation, introspection, keeping a journal, by prayer, we need to take off our masks, step out of our roles, and stand before God — open, simple, vulnerable. We need to ask: Who am I? — that unique, never-to-be duplicated product of heredity, environment, experience, and inner growth; that part of the universe with something to contribute that no other human being can provide; that child of God, an original and no one's copy. How far short do I fall from the person God intended me to be? How can I become that person? Elizabeth Watson in *Fruit of the Vine*.

. . . contemplation is not meant to be the posses-

sion of a gifted few or a favored few, but it is a potential dimension in all human experience, and until this dimension is in some fashion present, the experience is likely to be thin indeed Curiously enough, each of us has a philosopher, a contemplator if you like, within us. It is a gift that is not optional, but that is built-in equipment There is a strange power buried deep in a man that enables him to carry on an inward dialogue between layers of his own being. It sorts over the raw experiences that come to him and permits him, if he gives it a chance, to stand aside, to look over his shoulder, and to scan his life-plans. It goads him to relate to his consciousness the mysterious wraith of mystery and wonder that hovers over them all. This power in man is the rudimentary stub of what might be called contemplation. Douglas V. Steere in *Contemplation and Leisure*.

F. The Importance of Hope

But in this time of question and decision, the only stance that Friends can take is a radical stance; we have to shoulder the burden of hope. We believe that history is in the hand of God, but with the Hand, man is given freedom and commission to act. We believe that mankind is at once an indivisible whole and inseparable from God. Christ was sent to act for God in history; each of us is also sent to act, according to our measure, for God and with our fellow men. "Discouragement," as Amiel said, "is an act of unbelief." Full in the face of unheard of cause for discouragement, we are called to make our lives an act of belief. Mildred Young in *Another Will Gird You*.

Hope seems to me to be the most important thing. It keeps you optimistic. It lets you live with a light touch No matter how bad things get . . . you can always go right forward, day after hum-drum day, if you have hope. Elizabeth Watson in *Let Their Lives Speak*.

G. Great Moments and Dim Stretches

Great moments we shall have, with their blinding light of revelation, but they will be comparatively rare. There will be more stretches of dimness and dusk when we plod along in faith and determination. Minor ecstasies will light these gray stretches like faint but unmistakable stars if we but look for them. Elizabeth Gray Vining in *The World in Tune*.

Growth in the life of the spirit is slow and uneven; there are dreary patches, dark hours as well as short flashes of insight and inspiration. For its progression we need prayer, we need the inspiration of beauty in books, in music, in nature and art, and in the fellowship of kindred spirits Anything that is worth having is costly; problems are involved and creative solutions come slowly, and are delayed. Patience, persistence, and prayer have solved insoluble problems, and narrow strained lives have burgeoned into great beauty. "With God, all things are possible," and we may exclaim with joy and wonder the miracle of Grace in changed lives. Rachel R. Cadbury in *The Choice Before Us*.

H. The Eternal Now — Living Abundantly Today

It is a gross error to suppose that the Christian cause goes forward solely or chiefly on weekends. What happens on the regular weekdays may be far more important, so far as the Christian faith is concerned, than what happens on Sundays. D. Elton Trueblood in *The Common Ventures of Life*.

Now is where we live, *now* is where the past must be overcome, *now* is where we meet others, *now* is where we must find the presence of God. Carol R. Murphy in *Holy Morality: A Religious Approach to Ethics*.

5 a.m. Something is happening around me: the dark is less dark, the silence is less deep. Even the air is changing. It is damper, sweeter. Morning is at hand. Light will soon come flowing over the edge of the world, bringing with it the day. What a gift! Whether wrapped in streamers of color or folded in tissues of mist, it will be mine to use in ways that I can foresee and in those that are unexpected. The day will make its own revelation, bring its own challenge; my part will be to respond with joy and gladness. Elizabeth Yates in *A Book of Hours*.

9 a.m. We know some of the events and people that can be counted on to come through the open door of our day, but we do not know all. It is good to be ready to receive a blessing or to be a blessing, welcoming to house and heart the usual, the unexpected, the difficult, the dear. Elizabeth Yates in *A Book of Hours*.

Life from the Center is a life of unhurried peace and power. It is simple. It is serene. It is amazing. It is

triumphant. It is radiant. It takes no time, but it occupies all our time. And it makes our life programs new and overcoming. We need not get frahtic. He is at the helm. And when our little day is done, we lie down quietly in peace, for all is well. Thomas R. Kelly in *A Testament of Devotion*.

In the matter of persons, then, if we are to attempt to characterize this further dimension of "presence" that goes beyond locatability, we should have to speak of its posture as a readiness to respect and to stand in wonder and openness before the mysterious life and influence of the other. It means, to be sure, a power to influence, to penetrate, to engage with the other; but it means equally a willingness to be vulnerable enough to be influenced by, to be penetrated by, and even to be changed by this experience. If this is an accurate account of what actually takes place on the deepest levels of love and friendship, it also means that out of the long loneliness of life there are possible some luminous moments of profound communion, of truly coming into the presence of the other. And when they do come, all efforts to measure their worth seem superfluous. Douglas V. Steere in *On Being Present Where You Are*.

The peak experiences we treasure come, if at all, from the hard-to-attain heightened awareness of the present. Carol R. Murphy in *The Available Mind*.

Are we thankful for each day as an opportunity for a new adventure with God? New York Yearly Meeting's *Faith and Practice*.

Give us this day our daily discovery. Rendel Harris.

I. Joy in Living

Christians who don't know an inner pentecostal joy are living contradictions of Christianity. Thomas R. Kelly in *The Reality of the Spiritual World*.

The spirit of the early days of Quakerism will not be fully renewed . . . until the full secret of that joy is rediscovered and expressed anew, and until we are indeed fully convinced that nothing, "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus." Elfrida Vipont Foulds in *Let Our Lives Speak*.

Joy . . . joy . . . the oh so joyful cry of the swallows tracing the great curves of their flight, at top speed, in front of the prison windows Do you know anything more admirable, more expressive of freedom, courage, enthusiasm, the intoxication of energy, of the progress which does not come of itself but by the effort of the beast flinging itself against the air, in full flight, and of the muscles, securely tied to a bone built according to the calculations of the Eternal! Pierre Ceresole in *For Peace and Truth*.

I have been learning . . . that when we accept our finiteness realistically and without bitterness, each day is a gift to be cherished and savored. Each day becomes a miracle. I am learning to offer to God my days and nights, my joy, my work, my pain, and my grief. I am trying to keep my house in order and my relationships intact. I am learning to use the

time I have more wisely And I am learning to forget at times my puritan conscience which prods me to work without ceasing, and instead, to take time for joy. Elizabeth Watson in *Guests of My Life*.

I'd rather be jolly St. Francis hymning his canticle to the sun than a dour sobersides Quaker whose diet would appear to have been spiritual persimmons. Thomas R. Kelly in *A Testament of Devotion*.

But why don't we speak more of the fun of living? It's fun to think, to read, to doze, to play music, to walk It's fun to drive a car, write a check, eat a meal, duck in and out of the rain, run into a friend on the street, open a letter or write one, . . . make a pun, mow the lawn, . . . clean up the desk after a good day's work. What, in fact, isn't fun?" Well, I could answer that. But most of the things I do are fun. Happy man! . . . once you have faced the fact that you yourself are mortal, today's dawn, since it may be the last, comes with all the force and newness of the first, and so eternity is bent within the arc of personal experience. So time, though it threatens the great erasure, is itself erased. Bradford Smith in *Dear Gift of Life*.

Though the traditional picture of Jesus is that of a stern and sorrowful figure, sympathetic but solemn and austere, there is another side to His character. He is not only a "Man of Sorrows" and acquainted with grief, but also a "Man of Joys" and acquainted with laughter. This laughter of Jesus springs not merely from His keen sense of humor aroused by the whimsicalities of human conventions and institutions . . . but also from His

sheer joy in life. His delight in nature and His love of human fellowship His Gospel is really “good news” — “good tidings of great joy.” A. Barratt Brown in *Man of Joys*.

ON SEX, MARRIAGE, CHILDREN AND FAMILY LIFE

A. Love and Sex

We assume that sex is a part of life — only a part, but a part not to be denied. We assume that the power of sex for good and for evil is so great that we must make every effort to see that it is exercised responsibly. We assume that to act responsibly a person needs all the relevant knowledge that he can understand. Mistakes are made, not because of too much knowledge, but because of too little. But the fact can be understood only in a framework of values; the family, faithfulness, consideration of others, and appreciation of their differences, religion, and love. Eric W. Johnson in *Love and Sex in Plain Language* (for young people).

. . . as we learn the true facts about sex, a new world seems to open up to us. It is as if energies formerly tied up by fear of and ignorance about human sexuality were being at last released for constructive use. Mary S. Calderone in *Human Sexuality and the Quaker Conscience*.

The mystery of sex continues to be greater than our capacity to comprehend it, no matter how much we learn about it. We engage in it, in often too frantic efforts to enjoy it, but, more subtly, also to try to fathom its ever recurring power over us. Surely this

power and its mystery relate to the mystery of God's relationship to us. The mistake we have made throughout the ages has been to load onto sex the incubus of success or failure in marriage, to look upon sex as *resolution*, an *ending*. In reality it offers us, if we could only see it, a fresh *beginning* every time in that relationship of which it is a part. Mary S. Calderone in *Human Sexuality and the Quaker Conscience*.

In the end, what is left to us as Friends, except our faith — in ourselves, in others, in Truth, in God? Friends are being tested as never before with opportunities to know what it is to be a Friend. The unmarried young couple, and perhaps even the unmarried older couple, the homosexual, whether man or woman — we can reach out to that of God in them even though they are different from us, confident that if our reaching be true and loving, then that of God in them will respond in turn to that of Him in us. There may always be a chasm between us, one that might appear unbridgeable because it may never be possible for us to be like each other, to understand each other's differences, or even to establish a friendship. But we can and should make common cause of being human, if only in sharing that lovely aspect of our being, our sexuality, and its enjoyment, which is part of being human. Love, that of God within us that we also share, is the bridge that is eternally there, across any chasm between human beings. "Feed thou my sheep" was not said about earthly food alone. Mary S. Calderone in *Human Sexuality and the Quaker Conscience*.

B. Marriages

In our Meetings we are constantly seeking to develop deeper potential for human relationship, with all its creative implications. Since marriage is the central adult human relationship and based on mutual love, should it not be our prime proving ground? Do we not have, in marriage, a powerful opportunity to demonstrate in one nuclear human relationship all we stand for and all we seek to proclaim to the world? David R. Mace in *Marriage as Vocation*.

There is nothing wrong with the idealism that hopes to find in marriage a rich and satisfying relationship. But a relationship of this quality is only likely to be attained by those who accept *marriage as a vocation*, and work intelligently and persistently to achieve a relationship in depth. David R. Mace in *Marriage as Vocation*.

We ask all our Monthly Meetings very seriously to consider whether everything possible is being done to give timely, wise, sensitive, and continuing help and guidance both before and throughout marriage, not only to prevent breakdowns, but to build up and maintain the unity and happiness of enduring marriage. London Yearly Meeting.

Contemplating Marriage — Clearness Committees

In the “old days,” clearness meant being sure that neither partner was still married to anyone else nor had any “offspring,” legitimate or illegitimate, to whom there may be legal or financial obligations “that have not been properly discharged”

Without discounting the significance of those impediments, I would like to suggest several other impediments . . . that are more likely to be encountered and that deserve careful exploration with the couple. A first set of criteria have to do with whether this particular couple are sufficiently well-matched that their marriage has a reasonable likelihood of success Psychological compatibility is more subtle and more difficult to assess . . . how well do the values of the two partners mesh? . . . The attitudes of both sets of parents toward the marriage is important Finally there are a series of questions which have to do with the readiness of the couple for marriage at this time: Maturity . . . Independence . . . Length of acquaintance More clearness committees err on the side of excessive tact than of excessive vigor. Abbreviated from "Clearness for Quaker Weddings," by Bob Blood in the *Friends Journal*, April 1, 1973.

We also know . . . that it is easy to underestimate the realities of life, so we offer some questions for you to consider thoughtfully. Your intentions may be clarified and reaffirmed by examining these matters, and you may find it helpful to return to them later in your life together:

1. Why do you want to get married?
2. Why do you want a Quaker wedding?
3. How well do you know yourself?
4. How well do you know each other?
5. Are you willing to put abundant effort into adjusting to married life?
6. Are you prepared for outside pressures

intruding on your relationship?

The headings are from the booklet on *Marriage at the Wellesley (Massachusetts) Friends Meeting*; the sub-topics have been deleted.

The Quaker Wedding Vow

In the presence of God and these our friends, I take thee . . . to be my wife (husband), promising with Divine assistance to be a loving and faithful wife (husband) as long as we both shall live.

Sonnet for a Quaker Wedding

Put off the garb of woe, let mourning cease:
Today we celebrate with solemn mirth,
The planting in the ravaged waste of earth
Of one more small plot of heaven, a home of peace.
Where love unfeigned shall rule, and bring increase.
And pure eternal joy shall come to birth
And grow and flower, that neither drought nor
dearth
Shall wither, till the Reaper brings release.
Guard the ground well, for it belongs to God:
Root out the hateful and the bitter weed,
And from the harvest of thy Heart's good seed
The hungry shall be fed, the naked clad,
And love's infection, leaven-like, shall spread
Till all creation feeds from heavenly bread.

Kenneth Boulding

Nurturing Marriages

Marriage is to be taken seriously, but not always in grim earnest; its problems take perspective from

fun, adventure, and fulfilment; and joy and sorrow are mixed together. We rejoice in success, but we must also be glad that we can console each other in failure While some find physical relationship easily, others reach it the hard way, and it is not less precious for that. It is wonderful never to quarrel, but it means missing the dear delight of making up. . . . Children bring joy and grief; some will have none and will miss both the grief and the joy. In *Faith and Practice* of the London Yearly Meeting.

In the true marriage relationship the independence of husband and wife is *equal*; their dependence *mutual*, and their obligations *reciprocal*. Lucretia Mott as cited by Margaret Bacon's *Valiant Friend*.

Meetings have an important role in nurturing, supporting, and celebrating the marriages under their care. Among persons of similar values and priorities, marriage partners can be sustained and guided in their efforts to build an enduring relationship. Communication among the members of the Meeting is vital, however, and cannot be properly fostered if members only meet together for worship on First Day mornings and for business meetings. Celebrations, workshops, and supportive discussion groups are all important within the life of the Meeting. *Living With Oneself and Others*, New England Yearly Meeting (1978).

(Another) implication of relationship depth is the creative use of conflict. In my experience as a marriage counsellor . . . I have found it of great importance to explain to married couples that conflict is of the essence of marriage and not a hostile and external force that threatens it. . . . What I am

saying is that conflict and quarreling between married couples, while it may be barren and destructive, can be creatively used to facilitate the process of mutual accommodation. And it is far better to do this than to preserve a spurious peace that is equivalent to brushing the dirt under the rug. David R. Mace in *Marriage as a Vocation*.

Do you recognize marriage as a sacred, loving, and permanent relationship requiring mutual consideration and adjustment? Are you an example to your children in your loyalty to the ideals you profess? Do you practice the daily reading of the Scriptures in your family, giving time for reverent meditation? Do you make your home a place of hospitality, friendliness, and peace, where God becomes more real to all who visit there? Query 8, New England Yearly Meeting.

C. Divorces

The decision to seek the legal dissolution of a marriage is a weighty one. A specific desire for some regular means of approaching the Meeting with a request for help has been expressed by people in trouble One possible way that Meetings might respond to such requests for help is through a special committee appointed by the Ministry and Counsel committee of the Monthly Meeting, in conjunction with, and at the request of the parties seeking help in this decision. The committee is to listen without prejudice, facilitate communication, mediate but *not* prescribe, and provide as much emotional support as possible. It is a time of seeking together for divine guidance in working

through one of the most difficult and painful times individuals can face. It is essential that an aura of love and concern surrounds those involved in their search for clarity. If dissolution of the marriage is the decision *of the couple*, the committee may be in a position to help minimize the traumatic effects on all concerned. From *Living With Oneself and Others: Working Papers on Aspects of Family Life*. New England Yearly Meeting.

In individual cases we cannot judge what is right and wrong for a person to do. Friends must be careful to avoid judging or blaming one another. No one except the individuals involved knows all the circumstances. The final decision of what is right must be left to the individual conscience. There may be cases in which separation or divorce is the best action that can be taken in that situation. There are always, in each of our lives, duties and commitments which call us to take the path which is not easy. We affirm marriage and the commitments to which it calls us, but to suppose that divine will puts regard for the “institution” of marriage above concern for persons and the human need for fulfillment seems to many neither psychologically or spiritually sound. Balancing compassion and conviction is a puzzle for many of us. We must try to offer guidance and help to each person, to be open to the Light, and to grow in our understanding of God’s will. From *Living With Oneself and Others: Working Papers on Aspects of Family Life*. New England Yearly Meeting.

D. Our Homes and Parenting

I was not “christened” in a church, but I was

sprinkled from morning till night with the dew of religion. Rufus M. Jones in *Finding the Trail of Life*.

The attitude of the parents toward each other is probably the most important single factor in the development of the child. Rachel R. Cadbury in *The Choice Before Us*.

What makes the household a family is that each member will care about each other member and be available in time of need with no expiration on that availability. This includes a commitment to sharing the experience of death, — something we do not talk about enough as a family commitment. In the case of divorced or remarried combinations the concept of continued availability to past spouses and children living in other families, to meet the crises of life and death still holds in principle. While the bitterness surrounding divorce sometimes makes this impossible, in fact most divorced persons do continue in some way to be helpful to one another. Elise Boulding in *The Family As a Way Into the Future*.

Sometimes the atmosphere of the home, that subtle something which characterizes it as unique, is never more vividly evident than in its expression towards guests or helpers who may live in it or serve it Every new personality injected into the circle, whether transient or less permanent, is an adventure in relationship. The influence exerted from both sides may be of lasting importance. Rachel R. Cadbury in *The Choice Before Us*.

We did endeavor to make our home a center of

tranquility and peace, that all who entered might find refreshment therein, according to the old Quaker advice. It was always a community center, and when the children came, it was a children's center, too. Elise Boulding in *Born Remembering*.

On Accepting the "Dark Side"

. . . we must recognize that the dark, primitive side exists in children; we must accept it as a plain fact and . . . not deplore it as though it ought not to be there Today we can accept this side of human nature in a child — cruelty, temper, selfishness — not as the work of the Devil, but in a scientific way, simply as the nature of the material we are dealing with. If you think of that violent row in the nursery, ending in one child hitting another and yells all around, you may deplore it because you are tired and don't want to have to cope with it, but you must recognize that it is normal for children to grow up through that sort of thing; indeed it is necessary. Kenneth C. Barnes in *Discipline in the Quaker Home*.

Making Decisions

Every home which is built on love and understanding works out certain ways of coming to decisions and of dealing with apparently conflicting desires on the part of different members. In some families, such matters are handled in relatively formal family councils; in others, there is a more informal approach. The chief value of a more formal type of family council is that it puts each person . . . in a setting where he must give very careful consideration to the particular views and needs of others. It

helps to correct perspective when individual wants get too far out of line with what the family as a group can do for its members. Elise Boulding in *Friends Testimonies in the Home*.

Parents Who Are Growing, Too.

More will depend on what kind of a home we provide than on what we say. We are less likely to have our boys and girls spending long hours away from home with companions we have never seen if our homes are full of liveliness and interest, exciting places to grow up in We must continue to be adventurous and experimental ourselves, in ideas, hobbies, artistic and literary interests, in decoration and furnishing. It ought to be fun and a matter of pride, not a duty, for our children to bring their friends to see us. Kenneth C. Barnes in *Discipline in the Quaker Home*.

Religion in the Home

The religion of infancy is not concerned with God but with the figure of a parent who seems to make and sustain the child's world. Whether we like it or not, we are our children's deity, and they have to make the most of what we are. Harold Loukes in *Friends and Their Children*.

It makes me sad when I hear discussions about not introducing children to "God" until they are old enough to understand. I *grew* into the Lord's Prayer and I am still growing into it. All religious language, all devotional books, and particularly the Bible, provide growing room for young minds and spirits. Because they have sometimes been used as

straightjackets by adults who did not understand, does not mean that they are straightjackets. Elise Boulding in *Born Remembering*.

This leads us directly into a consideration of the lack of worship in the home. If we accept the act of worship as having a central significance in our lives, then we cannot be content with a weekly experience of corporate worship. Elise Boulding in *Friends Testimonies in the Home*.

The act of holding up the events of the day in prayer before the Heavenly Father as well as for the earthly parents enables the children to go to sleep with a sense of release and security. Elise Boulding in *Friends Testimonies in the Home*.

. . . It is helpful for us to hold our own shortcomings up to God in prayer, too, in the presence of children. If they understand that we, too, need forgiveness and guidance, they will find it natural to seek for themselves. Elise Boulding in *Friends Testimonies in the Home*.

Non-Conformity

Since non-conformity does bring with it real burdens, particularly to young children who are least able to bear them, it is very important for Friends to consider prayerfully their testimonies and to make sure that they are always testifying to essentials, to things that really matter. Children who have been compelled to conform to certain observances which had little meaning to them have frequently been known to revolt against all the values associated with those observances. Elise

Boulding in *Friends Testimonies in the Home*.

For the great majority of people, the geographical community is the community of identification, For non-conformists it often is not. The community to which the nonformist looks for support is a community of like-minded people who may be scattered all over the face of the earth. Thus the Quaker community is the Society of Friends; the pacifist community is for some the Fellowship of Reconciliation (and) for others the War Resister's League, and so on For this reason the Quaker family with small children will do well to consider seriously the importance of living in a community where there is a Friends Meeting, preferably with young children in it, so that the child can have the support of others his own age in his "differences." Elise Boulding in *Friends Testimonies in the Home*.

The Need for Solitude

Solitude. Is it not a beautiful word? If we snatch it from our children, what use can they make of their inner riches and outward experiences? . . . There have to be large chunks of uninterrupted time available for creative activities It is in these chunks of time that the great interior machinery of the brain has the opportunity to work . . . with all the impressions from the outside world. It sorts them out, rearranges them, makes new patterns; in short, creates. . . . All the saints, Godlovers, creative spirits through the ages, will testify there are some things which can only be found alone. . . . These, then, are the fruits of solitude for children; a sense of who and what they are, whence they came,

their place in God's world. And out of this positive and secure relationship with the universe comes the freedom to "play" with creation in the best sense of that word. The things which they see and hear can tumble around inside their finely-tuned minds, interweaving with their inward store of knowledge to produce further creation. Elise Boulding in *Children and Solitude*.

Some Suggestions to Parents

One of the best aspects of our family life during those years was the regular setting aside of a family night. D. Elton Trueblood in *While It Is Day*.

I pray I may let my children lead their own lives and not the ones I wish I had lived. . . . Help me to see today's missteps in perspective against the long road they must travel, and grant me the grace of patience with their slow pace I pray that I may raise my voice more in joy at what they are than in vexation at what they have done, so that each day they may grow in sureness of themselves. M.B. Durfee in *Religious Education in the Home*.

Selfish parents fall into the class of those

- . . . who have too many interests outside the home.
- . . . who keep children tied to their apron strings.
- . . . who expect too much of a child: i.e. trying to make the child fit into a mold of the parent's making.

From M.B. Durfee's *Religious Education in the Home*.

To read aloud regularly increases knowledge and

appreciation of the world, trains the child in a discriminating, accurate use of language and delight in its beauty, and lays the foundation for a continuing joy in reading to himself. Furthermore, this habit establishes the natural framework in which intimate conversation may take place. Josephine Benton in *Reading Aloud in the Home*.

We are always so concerned with how we can help our children that we sometimes fail to realize how much our children are helping us. Elise Boulding in *Friends Testimonies in the Home*.

ON SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND POLITICAL CONCERNS AND SERVICE

A. Some Needs, the Preparation Needed for Service, and Some Cautions

I saw also there was an ocean of darkness and death, but an infinite ocean of light and love which flowed over the ocean of darkness. In that I saw the infinite love of God. George Fox's *Journal*.

True religion does not draw men out of the world but enables them to live better in it and excites their endeavors to mend it. William Penn.

Friends are advised to work toward removing the causes of misery and suffering. They are urged to support efforts to overcome racial, economic, and educational discrimination; to bear testimony against all forms of oppression; to exert influence for such treatment of prisoners as may help reconstruct their lives, and to work for the elimination of the death penalty. The Advices of New York Yearly Meeting.

A major task of our time is to help create a new economic order. Friends principles in the past have given a social direction to economic development, a direction encouraging people to govern their own lives independently in the context of the larger community. These principles can be applied today to the

bureaucracy of big corporations and the military state. Severyn T. Bruyn in *Quaker Testimonies and Economic Alternatives*.

We can now see that the economic order is not a peripheral concern, but central to the whole relationship between faith and practice. This is not a claim that, say, the interest in peace and international relations ought now to take a secondary place in our thoughts and prayers. Still less is it a demand that the Society should cease to be first and foremost a religious body, or to say that it should in any way neglect its spiritual foundations in favor of good citizenship. It is rather that economic affairs are now so central to our whole existence that no other aspect of personal relationships or individual life styles can now be looked at without first understanding what it means in terms of national wealth, income, and their distribution. Social Responsibility Council of London Yearly Meeting in *Public Resources and Private Lives*. (1974).

(Another) responsibility of Friends is our social witness to the world. Quakers have in their tradition a passion for social righteousness. We believe that all of God's creation and the world in which we live come within the province of God's love and care and his divine judgement. Therefore, as Christians we believe that this world is also within the realm of our concern and that our witness to the need for peace and social justice constitutes a highly important aspect of our message. Such a message not only calls for a personal commitment to Christ and his teachings; it also calls for a changed social order where the structures of government and social insti-

tutions make possible the free operation of God's love and justice in human relationships. Wilmer Cooper in *Redefining Our Quaker Message and Purpose*.

Thou, O Christ, convince us by thy spirit, thrill us with thy divine passion, drown our selfishness in thy invading love, lay upon us the burden of the world's suffering. John Wilhelm Rowntree.

Quaker "Concerns"

Against this cosmic suffering and cosmic responsibility we must set the special responsibility experienced in a concern. For a Quaker concern particularizes this cosmic tenderness. It brings to a definite and effective focus in some concrete task all that experience of love and responsibility which might evaporate, in its broad generality, into vague yearnings for a golden Paradise. . . . But it is a particularization of *my* responsibility also, in a world too vast and a lifetime too short for me to carry all responsibilities The loving Presence does not burden us equally with all things, but considerately puts upon each of us just a few central tasks, as emphatic responsibilities. For each of us these special undertakings are our share in the joyous burdens of love. Thomas R. Kelly in *A Testament of Devotion*.

The word "concern" is often used too lightly today. Friends may refer to any whim or fancy of an individual to do some act or to champion some cause as that person's "concern." In its truest form a concern refers to a costly inner leading to some act that in the course of its fulfillment may take over

the very life of the one it engages. At this level it can be said that in a genuine concern a person has been drawn into the living inward linkage of man and God, of man and man, and of man and creation. Douglas V. Steere in *On Listening to Another*.

God's Work is Varied and Inclusive

God's work, the doing of His will, is extraordinarily inclusive — raising food on the land, ordering a nurturing home, taking care of a child with loving insight, speaking simple truth, spreading love abroad in any spot of the world, praying and working for the Kingdom of God, being heroic in quiet ways, saying the right word when others do not dare, walking straight forward in the path of duty — those are some of the ways of doing God's will. Rufus M. Jones.

Part of the discipline of daily life is to organize one's activities so as to be able to devote a good share of one's time and energy to public service in the community. That service cannot begin too early or be carried on too consistently Many services that are now performing inadequately either because the budget does not provide for them or because they are in the hands of a remote officialdom, should be performed mainly on a volunteer basis by the people of a local community. Lewis Mumford in *The Conduct of Life*.

Every Person and Meeting Has a Part to Play

To discover a truth involves the apostolic task of going out and doing it. Rufus M. Jones.

No Quaker life is complete, nor does it attain its proper ends if it does not reach out to share in the problems and to help bear the burdens of society. William Wistar Comfort in *Quakers in the Modern World*.

There is some way for each of us to stand up and be counted against the madness that has already all but brought the final disaster to mankind; stand up and be counted for a world in which all men can live as brothers, the sons of one Father. Wilmer J. Young in *Visible Witness: A Testimony for Radical Peace Action*.

Would that we could love the whole world! But a special fragment is placed before us in the temporal now, which puts a special responsibility for our present upon us. Thomas R. Kelly in *A Testament of Devotion*.

It is better to do the little that we can do than to wear ourselves out in frustrated efforts which have no conceivable chance of effectiveness. D. Elton Trueblood in *The Common Ventures of Life*.

Certainly I am convinced that unless a Meeting does have some form of outgoing service, it is all too easy to become, and seem to the outsider to be, a society for the propagation of a peculiar esoteric form of mass contemplation. Harold Loukes in *No Time But This Present*.

It may well be that the greatest contribution our Committee (the American Friends Service Committee) has made lies in its having afforded opportunities for people to give of self and substance to

meet others' needs. Clarence E. Pickett in Daisy Newman's *A Procession of Friends*.

Beginning With Ourselves

Those who would mend the world must first mend themselves. William Penn.

Our first responsibility is to deal with the evil in ourselves. This life-long struggle, though, does not exempt us from the social problems that surround us and of which we are a part. And the attempt to eliminate the evils in our society is far more complex than our struggle with ourselves, difficult as the combatting of our own selfishness and pride must always be. Cecil E. Hinshaw in *Nonviolent Resistance: A Nation's Way to Peace*.

The Motivation for Helping Others

It seems to me that the moving force behind the Quaker social witness has got to be some vision, however faint and tantalizing, of what the world would be like if we were really obedient to God. Deborah Haines in *Friends Seek Wholeness*.

Love was the first motion and then a concern arose to spend some time with the Indians, that I might feel and understand their life and the spirit they live in, if haply I might receive some instruction from them, or they might in any degree be helped forward by my following the leadings of truth among them. John Woolman's *Journal*.

Woolman's universal concern for people extended to the rich as well as to the poor. There was never a trace of hostility or bitterness in his speech or

writings. His main purpose in his life, he said, sprang from "a desire to take hold of every opportunity to lessen the distress of creation." Severyn T. Bruyn in *Quaker Testimonies and Economic Alternatives*.

The whole atmosphere of service must be pervaded by a calm mind, by a spirit of reconciliation, by clear insight, by undeviating fidelity and by respect for the views of life which are precious to those whom you are serving. Rufus M. Jones.

Skills as Well as Spirit Needed

A.F.S.C. projects call for a great variety of skills (only the best is good enough), but skill and understanding must go hand in hand. Julia E. Branson in the *Friends Journal* (1967).

It was always a grievous experience to have young people come . . . saying, "I would love to work for the United Nations and for refugees — have you a job for me." In all but the rarest cases, I had to say there was no opening for a young person without any special skill Hence, my first piece of advice to the young person who wants to get into international work: get yourself a skill, in addition to the college degree which is a prerequisite. James M. Read in *Responsibility of a Quaker College to Train World Leadership*.

Their (the American Friends Service Committee workers in post-World War I Europe) formula was no mystery. They all possessed two great qualities. The first was competence — competence to analyze and understand intractable problems, competence

to grasp language and social organization, competence to know where to begin and what buttons to push. Competence was essential, but it wasn't enough. A second ingredient had to go along with it; and that was a special kind of faith, which insisted that human beings *can* rise above their baser natures, that they can respond to stimuli other than fear and threat and naked power; and a conviction that this faith, expressed with vast enthusiasm, and persistence, and courage, and humor, and backed with competence, had the power to confront evil, to reconcile, and to change. They lived as if this was true, and it became true. This I know, as Friends say, experimentally. I have seen this combination at work and I believe to the depth of my being that those who possess it are the last best hope of the world, and that we'd better find a way to turn that kind of person out into society if we're going to keep from blowing ourselves back to the Stone Age. The human spirit against the Atomic Bomb? Yes, there is no other way. Stephen G. Cary in *A Vision of Friends Education — Germantown Friends School Studies in Education*.

Some Questions and Cautions About Our Work

Any group, like the Society of Friends, that is composed almost altogether of the fortunate, must ask itself as John Woolman did, what its own responsibility is toward any form of misfortune that is caused by society's indifference to, if not exploitation of, certain of its elements. Mildred B. Young in *What Does the Lord Require of Thee?*

. . . liberals like myself should be warned that while our minds and reading-matter are filled with theoretical debates or with agonizing over Cambodia, Harlem, and migrant labor, most people are praying for help with their mortgage payments, their arthritis, their mother-in-law's temper (or their own) or how to live with a retarded child. If religious guidance can't deal with such down-home problems, it will have little to say to these people. Carol R. Murphy in *The Available Mind*.

Painting a slum house adds no pressure which might force a landlord to change or a municipal government to act. Nor does it help the victim of the slum to learn how to organize for effective action. At its worst the workcamp lets the landlord believe someone else will keep things up, while it perpetuates attitudes of dependency in those who should be taking direct action. Paul A. Lacey in *Break the New Ground*.

Social service is an essential symptom of a living religion, but it is a by-product. When it is made a religious society's justification, that is invariably a sign that the basic energy — the power to explore the spiritual world — is failing. Gerald Heard in *A Quaker Mutation*.

Mystic insight and prophetic action are the systole-diastole movements of a single human heart; together they preserve the balance between the inwardness of religious experience and the passion for social reform to which we referred as the genius of the Society. John Yungblut in *Seek, Find, Share*.

Friends At Work in the Past and Today

Quakers were radical Christians who did not separate their religious convictions from the rest of their life and conduct. Their spiritual life tended to take precedence over the way they lived in the larger society, and their individual testimonies have remained a guide to others over the years. They represent an original fire, a revelation of truth which each generation has sought to find again in their own lives. Severyn T. Bruyn in *Quaker Testimonies and Economic Alternatives*.

But let us not forget the thousands whose names have slipped from sight — the ordinary men and women who lived out their Quaker testimonies in the fields and their kitchens, on roadsides and vessels, in town meetings and country schoolhouses, in federal penitentiaries and Civilian Public Service Camps — wherever it was the Inner Light impelled them to state their beliefs. Daisy Newman in *A Procession of Friends*.

The better I get to know American Quakers, the more Friends I come across who are doing valuable, religiously-motivated work, individually or in small groups, usually with little fanfare and less personal notice. I am coming to think that such work is most characteristic of Quaker convictions faithfully applied. After all, the emphases of our theology and practice are profoundly individualistic: the light of Christ shines through the individual soul above all; structures are for testing, correcting, and supporting the Light and its Leadings, never a substitute for it. Chuck Fager in *A Friendly Letter* (1982).

Some Rewards of Service

Those who go forth ministering to the wants and necessities of their fellow beings, experience a rich return — their souls being as a watered garden and a spring that faileth not. Lucretia Mott as quoted in Margaret Hope Bacon's *Valiant Friend, The Life of Lucretia Mott*.

B. Equality

For more than 300 years the idea of equality has remained a central concern of Quakers, taking various forms at different times and in different places. For example, it was the basis of the concern of British Friends over a long period of time about widening the franchise. It was the basis of the concern of American Friends about slavery. It was the basis of the concern of Friends in Germany and in other places about the plight of Jews under Hitler and his cohorts. It was the basis of the concern of American Friends for the Japanese-Americans who were placed in detainment camps during World War II. And it was and is the basis of the concern of Australian Quakers for the aborigines of that continent and of Southern African Friends regarding apartheid. Leonard S. Kenworthy in *Quakerism: A Study Guide to the Religious Society of Friends*.

Equality was the earliest Quaker social testimony. Even before the Quakers became pacifists, Quaker soldiers were dismissed from the army because they refused to treat their officers as superiors Advices concerning the treatment of servants appeared as early as 1656 Friends refused the

use of titles of honor and salutations which implied that one person was superior to the other Howard H. Brinton in *Friends for 300 Years*.

Equality, expressed as a Quaker social testimony means that all men have equal worth in the sight of God and that their personalities must be held equally inviolate It means that distinctions arising from sex, race, economic status, nationality, and education are unimportant in comparison with the fact that all men are temples of the Holy Ghost and equally worthy of reverence. Howard H. Brinton.

If God played no favorites, then neither would Friends. They insisted on treating everyone of their fellow men with the same respect and courtesy, whether he were king or beggar. Certainly Friends did not originate the principle of equality, but the fact that it is written into our American Constitution is due, at least in part, to the fact that it was adopted in the constitution for the colony of Pennsylvania. Elise Boulding in *My Part in the Quaker Adventure*.

The abolition of slavery, of course, is the greatest moral and social change in which Friends have pioneered. Kenneth Boulding in John Kavanaugh's *The Quaker Approach*.

During this same period (the late 19th century) Quakers made what might be called their most singular and significant contribution to the resolution of the problems of the American Indians. Ira D.A. Reid in John Kavanaugh's *The Quaker Approach*.

One of the things that I encounter often is our testimony about equality — equality with women, equality with the poor, equality with those of different ethnic origin. I find as I look over our congregations that it's something we believe in our heads, but somehow it's something we're not doing. Kara Cole in *The Evangelical Friend* (1982).

As Quakers, we have been nurtured in the blessed community. We have been led to love God in ourselves, in our neighbors, and as we perceive Him in all living things. This love of God in ourselves and in all living things is the basic ingredient of our religious experience and is at the root of our peace testimony. In our religious life within the society, Friends practice living in the presence of God — in our loving relations to one another, in our meetings for worship and business. Have not Friends the obligation and responsibility for sharing what we have experienced in the blessed community with the larger Society, especially with those who through oppression have not experienced the love of God or their fellowmen? Are not Friends obligated to reach out to the Black community, encouraging them in their efforts to throw off the yoke of oppression, and to grow in the awareness of God's presence in themselves, their neighbors, and the world around them? Barrington Dunbar in *The Three M's of Quakerism: Meeting, Message, Mission* (1971).

The first unmistakable fact about many present-day members of the Society of Friends . . . is the degree to which some Friends have accepted the conventional attitudes and social practices of a segregated society. As a consequence of their saying "yes" to a

segregated society, Friends must share with all white Americans the very deep distrust that most Black Americans have of them. I have perceived that one of the greatest dangers Friends must face in their concern for better race relations is that of being only partially committed to the task. Richard Stenhouse in *No Time But This Present* (Friends World Conference, 1967).

(I find myself) in the odd position of a black man seeking desperately to relate to a religious community that seems to reflect so much of the immorality of a racist society . . . Black people living in ghettos in American cities . . . cannot hear Friends who profess the way of love and non-violence but yet maintain a destructive silence in obvious situations of social injustice. Barrington Dunbar in Daisy Newman's *A Procession of Friends*.

A revolution of great magnitude is in progress in the United States. What has been the response of the Society of Friends to this revolution? For the most part the members of the Society of Friends have been content to be "white liberals." Though they have advocated marginal reforms, they have accepted the American system, the legitimacy of its basic values and institutions. They have accommodated to the poor housing, inadequate schools, and squalor and ghettos adjacent to their suburban communities. But they have not been able to act forcefully for civil rights for fear of losing social status and incurring the disfavor of their neighbors. Conformity has become a dead weight around their necks. Barrington Dunbar in *Break the New Ground*.

I have a vision that someday, maybe a hundred years from now, in this country 30 or 40 percent of the Quakers will be black. And one day, one young black brother will say to another, "Hey, man, I was checking out this book and I came across this dude's name — Dwight Spann-Wilson — and man, you know he was executive of FGC?" The other dude says, "No, man, ain't no way in the world!" He says, "Yeah, man, and the book say he did a pretty good job, too." The other dude says, "Did it say anything else?" "No, but it said that. Proud of that brother because they tell me in them days less than 1/10th of 1% of us was black." "I don't believe that. Thirty percent of us be black now, man!" That's what I have a vision of. And I know it's possible. Dwight Spann-Wilson in *Quaker and Black: Answering the Call of My Twin Roots*.

What are you doing:

to insure equal opportunities in social and economic life for those who suffer discrimination because of race, creed, or social class?

to create a social and economic system which will so function as to sustain and enrich life for all?

Query 7 of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting.

C. Simplicity

Simplicity Among Friends in the Past

Simplicity for early Friends meant that they did not spend much money on fancy furniture or special food, or on having a good time. They were strict about keeping most forms of art — painting, music, dancing, theater, and "worldly" literature — out of their lives. They regarded those things as distrac-

tions, devices that would lead them astray from the life of love and service to which they felt called. Today many Friends feel that God can speak through art and music as well as in times of prayer. But it is easy to see how these things might lure people away from God when they are badly used, and the attitude of early Friends is a good reminder to us to use them rightly. Although Quaker homes of two or three hundred years ago had no paintings on the walls and although tunes were rarely sung and there was no dancing, life was not dull. Clarkson, an historian who lived in the nineteenth century and described the Quakers in detail, said that they had the happiest family life of any group in England. When people seek simplicity for its own sake, it becomes severity and leads to dull, ugly lives. But simplicity, beauty, and happiness go together if they are a by-product of a concern for something more important than ourselves. Elise Boulding in *My Part in the Quaker Adventure*.

I saw that a humble man, with the blessing of the Lord, might live on a little, and that where the heart was set on greatness, success in business did not satisfy the craving; but that commonly with an increase of wealth, the desire for wealth increased. There was a care of my mind so to pass my time as to things outward that nothing might hinder me from the most steady attention to the voice of the true Shepherd. John Woolman's *Journal*.

Some Principles Concerning Simplicity

I want to list ten controlling principles for the outward expression of simplicity. They should not

be viewed as laws but as one attempt to flesh out the meaning of simplicity into twentieth-century life. First, buy things for their usefulness, rather than their status Second, reject anything that is producing an addiction in you Third, develop a habit of giving things away. De-accumulate Fourth, refuse to be propagandized by the custodians of modern gadgetry Fifth, learn to enjoy things without owning them Sixth, develop a deeper appreciation for the creation Seventh, look with a healthy scepticism at all “buy now, pay later” schemes Eighth, obey Jesus’ injunction about plain, honest speech Ninth, reject anything that will breed the oppression of others. Tenth, shun whatever would distract you from your main goal. Richard J. Foster in *Quaker Life* (July-August, 1979).

Simplicity Today

A life centered in God will be characterized by integrity, sincerity, and simplicity. Simplicity is best approached through a right ordering of priorities. Simplicity consists not in the use of particular forms but in avoiding self-indulgence, in maintaining humility of spirit, and in keeping the material surroundings of our lives directly serviceable to necessary ends. This does not mean that life need be poor or bare, or destitute of joy and beauty. *Faith and Practice* of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting.

If we are to have time and the right disposition for inward retirement and silent worship, it is essential that we simplify our lives. Now this testimony of simplicity runs counter to one of the dominant

drives in our civilization — the drive towards the multiplication of things. It says plainly that we have more important concerns in this life than the acquisition of material things. So Friends endeavor to simplify their wants and tastes in clothing, in the furnishing of their homes, in creature comforts, and means of recreation. Frederick B. Tolles in *Quaker Testimonies in Daily Life*.

Simplification means purity of intention. To discover the center of life and to keep in that direction is the secret of intentional living. We will eventually achieve what we most desire. We discover this ruling passion, this deep intention, is an imperative task. If it is to be found worthy, it must be pursued; if not, surely it must be gradually purged away if we would grow in grace and in that spirit of joyous participation with all that is beautiful, gay, and good. Rachel R. Cadbury in *The Choice Before Us*.

We have a testimony about simplicity and we need to think about what that means in the world we're living in right now. What does it mean to be lean and disciplined and not dependent upon our things? Kara Cole in *The Evangelical Friend* (1982).

I wish I might emphasize how a life becomes simplified when dominated by faithfulness to a few concerns. Too many of us have too many irons in the fire. We get distracted by the intellectual claim to our interest in a thousand and one good things, and before we know it, we are pulled and hauled breathlessly along by an overburdened program of good committees and good undertakings. I am

persuaded that this feverish life of church workers is not wholesome. Undertakings get plastered on from the outside because we can't turn down a friend. Acceptance of service on a weighty committee should really depend upon an answering imperative within us, not merely upon a rational calculation of the factors involved. The concern-oriented life is ordered and organized from within. And we learn to say *No* as well as *Yes* by attending to the guidance of inner responsibilities. Quaker simplicity needs to be expressed not merely in dress and architecture and the height of tombstones but also in the structure of a relatively simplified life-program of social responsibilities. And I am persuaded that concerns introduce that simplification, and along with it that intensification which we need in opposition to the hurried, superficial tendencies of our age. Thomas R. Kelly in *A Testament of Devotion*.

Friends have been able to keep luxuries at a near reasonable minimum, but the simplicity testimony has cost less than some others because we obey it less. Dwight Spann-Wilson in a talk at the New England Yearly Meeting on *The Cost of Quakerism*.

A New Movement for Simple Living

Simplicity is coming back, Friends. A new simple living movement is stirring, and Friends are starting to dust off their ancient testimony. It may be an economic necessity before long for many of us, but there is also a deeply felt need to remove the frantic clutter of modern life and to live more in tune with

inner imperatives. We yearn for a life-style that is fulfilling as well as just To our educated minds talk of simplicity sounds naive, irresponsible, or unrealistic until we let the perspective of our faith provide direction Simplifying used to mean "giving up," "sacrificing," and felt threatening. Now I equate simplifying with "streamlining," and feel encouraged. Berit Lakey in the *Friends General Conference Quarterly* (1975).

D. Women

The story of the role of women in the Religious Society of Friends over a period of nearly 400 years is a remarkable one and one on which very little has been written or said until quite recently. This aspect of the Quaker movement deserves to be better known, cherished, and cultivated as one of the distinguishing features of the Society of Friends . . . few other religious groups have accorded women the place that Friends have given them or, in turn, been so enriched by their talents. But Quaker women have been important far beyond the boundaries of the Society of Friends providing many of the leaders and a large proportion of the rank and file support of such movements as women's rights, the abolition of slavery, education, and peace. Leonard S. Kenworthy in *Quakerism: A Study Guide to the Religious Society of Friends*.

No doubt the single fact that leaps most swiftly to mind when one thinks of women and Quakerism is that in the meeting for worship women are equally free to take part in the ministry. This is, of course, a

vital and essential element of Quaker thought and practice, but it does not proceed from a formulated or even an unconscious declaration of equality. It is the outcome of a principle that is deeper, more inclusive, more creative. Friends believe that the light of Christ shines within all human hearts without the necessity of mediation by priests or a priestly caste. They believe that the word of God may be read not only in the Bible but in the inner chambers of the individual soul. It follows, then, that men and women alike are children of God. The degree to which they are illuminated by His light depends not upon their sex but upon their openness to the Source, on their attention to it, and on their obedience to its commands. Elizabeth Gray Vining in *Women in the Society of Friends*.

What the Society of Friends has done from its earliest days has been to accept women as individual human beings, as valid disciples as men, as competent as they for spiritual leadership. Elizabeth Gray Vining in *Women in the Society of Friends*.

Margaret Fell gave stability to the Quaker movement before it was organized into the Society of Friends. Her home was a place where Friends could meet; it functioned as a center for the scattered group. As mistress of a large estate she was much respected and Friends turned to her for advice, prayers, and help. She received correspondence and reports from the traveling preachers. She collected money and established funds for those Friends in prison or on long preaching trips. With George Fox she was instrumental in

establishing an organization where previously no visible bond other than a strong sense of fellowship, existed. Robert J. Leach in *Women Ministers: A Quaker Contribution*.

By 1671 George Fox had written all the Meetings in England, urging them to establish women's meeting for the transaction of business. Today such an arrangement might seem like an act of discrimination. In that time, however, it was felt that in joint sessions the men would dominate or even monopolize such sessions. Therefore it was important for the women to meet separately, thus giving them experience in speaking, clerking, and decision-making It was in such separate sessions that Quaker women came into their own Such experiences gave many of them opportunities for leadership training in various movements outside the Society of Friends, as well as within it. Leonard S. Kenworthy in *Quakerism: A Study Guide to the Religious Society of Friends*.

As Lucretia Mott once explained, they (the separate business meetings) were kindergartens in power And it appears to many contemporary students that the separate women's meetings provided Quaker women with a support group Margaret H. Bacon in *The Quaker Struggle for the Rights of Women*.

It is indicative of how unorthodox Fox's position was, that apparently more people left the radical new religion because of their disagreement over the issue of female participation than for any other cause. Hope Elizabeth Luder in *Women and Quakerism*.

The Quaker contribution to the Women's Rights Movement is remarkable. Of the four outstanding early leaders in the Movement, Lucretia Mott was a Friend, Susan B. Anthony was brought up as one, Elizabeth Cady Stanton was influenced by Quaker Lucretia Mott, and Lucy Stone was inspired by the examples of the Grimke sisters and Abby Kelley. Most of the women who organized the Seneca Falls Convention were members of the Society of Friends. Hope Elizabeth Luder in *Women and Quakerism*.

Not all women speak in meeting, or travel in the ministry, or chair committees, or become leaders of their sex. Home and family life are central in Quakerism. When a religious group puts aside in its worship services all dependence upon ritual, sacraments, prepared sermons, hymns, and Bible readings, it is essential that the minds of worshipers be stored before the meeting hour with religious knowledge on which to draw. In the early days — indeed until recently, this was supported largely by family worship and daily Bible reading. Elizabeth Gray Vining in *Women in the Society of Friends*.

To the names of those who have been mentioned . . . thousands of others could be added. They are the inconspicuous rather than the conspicuous — the Quaker women who have helped to raise fine families, served on a wide variety of committees locally and in larger bodies of Friends, taught Sunday School or First Day School classes, sewed for the American Friends Service Committee, or served in other ways. Their name is legion. Leonard

S. Kenworthy in *Quakerism: A Study Guide to the Religious Society of Friends*.

Quaker Women Today

. . . if you look more closely, you will see that women are still playing a major role in articulating the spiritual message of Friends. In fact I believe that Elfrida Vipont Foulds, Louise Brown, Helen Hole, Jean Zaru, Dorothy Craven, and Elizabeth Wilson must be considered among the most formidable interpreters of the Quaker understanding of Christ's Truth and the Quaker mission in our day. Our spiritual heartbeat would not be healthy without them. Jack Kirk in *Quaker Life*.

As Quaker women become aware of the sexism in the society in which we live, and which they have for so long taken for granted as natural and normal, they are turning to their history to find out where they started and what has gone wrong, and they are joining together and preparing themselves to take their rightful place as sisters in the new movement (feminism), contributing their own unique gifts of spiritual sensitivity to a movement that needs spiritual dimensions. They have caught the vision of the formation of a new society, once men and women alike escape the stereotyped roles of sex, — a society where man need not prove his manhood by war and by acquisition, where he is free to be tender as women are free to be strong. They will be ready, perhaps soon, to join hands and walk cheerfully over the land, answering that of God in everyone. Margaret H. Bacon in *The Quaker Struggle for the Rights of Women*.

Current consciousness raising by and for women and an increased recognition of the masculine-feminine attributes of Deity in other cultures are causing Christian ecumenical groups to reexamine the idea of women in the ministry. To such groups Friends can contribute two original testimonies: equality of the sexes and the acceptance of all lay members as participants in the ministry. These testimonies, along with equal opportunities for education, have been potent factors in developing the lives of Quaker women for three centuries. Robert J. Leach in *Women Ministers: A Quaker Contribution*.

Certainly knowledge of the inspiring examples of Quaker women of the past is useful, particularly for children, who sometimes do not get enough examples of the courageous achievement of women. Hope Elizabeth Luder in *Women and Quakerism*.

I do believe women have something special to contribute to solving the world's colossal problems. One way is in the area of finding peaceful ways of settling conflicts. Women know experientially how long it takes to bring a human being to birth and how much longer to maturity. They are nurturers and cherishers. And the world must learn to nurture, to cherish, and to affirm human life and dignity. We must learn reverence for life and dignity or we will not likely survive our costly arms race. Elizabeth Watson in *The Somewhat Strangely Better*.

I am for human liberation, not just women's liberation. Elizabeth Watson in *The Somewhat Strangely Better*.

E. Education

I advised the setting up of a school . . . for teaching children; and also a women's school . . . for instructing young lassies and maidens in whatsoever things were civil and useful in the creation. George Fox's *Journal*.

The world is certainly a great and stately volume of natural things But, alas! how very few leaves of it do we seriously turn over. This ought to be the subject of the education of our youth We are in pain to make them scholars but not men! To talk rather than to know We press their memory too soon . . . and load them with words and rules; to know grammar and rhetoric, and a strange tongue or two that it is ten to one may never be useful to them, leaving their natural genius to mechanical and physical or natural knowledge uncultivated and neglected, which would be of exceeding use and pleasure to them through the whole course of their lives. William Penn.

Some Aims of Quaker Schools

The goal of Quaker education has been . . . perpetuation of the Quaker way of life. Howard H. Brinton in *Quaker Education*.

They (Quaker schools) have resulted in definite educational policies: *A-Community*: Development of a sense of belonging to the Quaker community, a religiously-guarded education, and dedicated and concerned teachers; *B-Pacifism*: Non-violent discipline and methods, appeal to the inward sense of rightness; *C-Equality*: Equal education of both

sexes and equality in education of races and classes; *D-Simplicity*: Moderation in dress, speech and deportment, scholastic integrity, and emphasis upon practical subjects. Howard H. Brinton in *Quaker Education*.

Throughout, I have seen certain common features: a distinctive form of community, a special nurture of the individual student, a simplicity of life style, an evolving concept of the equality of the sexes, a genuine respect for the training of the mind, a concern to minister to all the levels of the student's psyche, a unique method of decision making, and especially an emphasis on the religious life as part of the texture of daily living. Helen G. Hole in *Things Civil and Useful: A Personal View of Quaker Education*.

(Quaker education) should be devoted not so much to analysis as to synthesis, not so much to specialization as to integration, not so much to absorbing facts as to sensing the meaning and goal of life, not so much to thought and research as to insight and meditation. Howard H. Brinton in *Quaker Education*.

The "peculiar mission" of a Friends school is to empower its members — faculty, staff, and students — to live more fully in Truth. For Friends, to "empower" is to enable a person to be his or her own minister in seeking the Truth. "To live more fully" is to witness in all one's acts that measure of the Truth one has experienced. Douglas H. Heath in *The Peculiar Mission of a Quaker School*.

What needs to grow clear in the minds of all who

are responsible for the training of youth, whether within or entirely outside the Church, is the fact that all genuine education must have a spiritual quality to it, — that is, it must have to do with the formation of personality, the building of character, the enlargement of life, the transmission of the supreme experiences of the race, and with setting free the higher potential powers of the individual. Rufus M. Jones.

Difficult as Quaker education is to define, I feel very sure that a pervasive characteristic of living Quaker education will be a passionate insistence that there be continuing risk, continuing openness, continuing commitment, a love affair with truth, if you will, an ultimate concern for truth. It will permeate the community and surround the individual with invitation and reassurance. Thomas S. Brown in *Strange Fire*.

I am convinced, however, that good education is not enough. The central issue is not the accumulation and manipulation and transmission of facts and knowledge, but the discovery and communication of meaning. Thomas S. Brown in *Strange Fire*.

Worship Is Central

It will be suggested here that the greatest needs for Friends education in the future are institutions whose center is worship —; (places) which provide patterns of life style and education which favor the development of spiritual growth Helen G. Hole in *All Things Civil and Useful*.

Worship is an educable attitude; the skills . . . can

be cultivated. How seriously have we . . . thought about how to lead young people into meditative use of silence? Douglas H. Heath in *Why a Friends School?*

We need to provide not only unprogrammed meetings . . . but also prepared, carefully structured religious services. We need to provide opportunities with music, art, drama, dance, and discussion . . . for solitary, small group and large group experiences. We need to do everything we can to help students feel the reality of the presence of God. Thomas S. Brown in *A Theology of Quaker Education*.

The Importance of Teachers

It is easy to envisage a good college with poor buildings, but it is not possible to envisage a good college with poor teachers. D. Elton Trueblood in *The Idea of a College*.

Members of their staffs must themselves be deeply searching people of spiritual integrity, so that young people may be exposed, day by day, week by week, to working models of religiously motivated people. Thomas S. Brown in *A Theology of Quaker Education*.

The Future of Friends Schools and Colleges

Is there anything uniquely Quaker, or Quaker at all, about concentrating upon those young people who are most capable of success? Mildred Young in *What Doth the Lord Require of Thee?*

But if we continue educating an elite, in the elitist

fashion and with the elitest attitudes which at present mark so much quality education, we will be contributing to the further decay of public education while we are educating a class of students who will be incapable of understanding the life situation of ninety percent of the people they must work with the rest of their lives. What is our responsibility, as a religious group which has always emphasized the value of education, to the schools of the larger society? What have we to share for their benefit? What might we look for to our own benefit? Paul A. Lacey in *The Three M's of Quakerism*.

In the ruthless struggle for survival in the face of all the financial and other pressures which confront all private institutions and even to some extent public ones, survival will not come to those who soft-pedal the peculiarities of their particular brand of education, but to those who develop them with freshness and vigor — those who know what they want to do and what they stand for. Helen G. Hole in *All Things Civil and Useful*.

The school must again become a training ground for a specialized community which lives according to a way of life different from that of the world, but serving as a goal or model which indicates the direction of advance. Such a school will probably not be of the conventional type of today. Howard H. Brinton in *Quaker Education*.

A Friends school should be divinely discontented Should not a Friends school be a restlessly searching, experimenting, risking place, ceaselessly seeking to attain new levels of perfec-

tion? Douglas H. Heath in *The Peculiar Mission of a Quaker School*.

Can they (Friends schools) be shaped so that they help to build in each student a restless uneasiness about the status quo, a faith that he or she can do something to change it, and a commitment to be about the business of doing it, whatever career they choose? My belief is that they can.

First, I think our communities must be places where our yea is yea and our nay, nay. Integrity is in short supply in the world

And the second quality, closely akin to the first, is trust. I think Quaker schools and colleges should be places where the first thing a person does when he meets another is to trust him. That's a daring idea

Thirdly, I think those who make up a Quaker educational community should resolve to get along together

Fourthly, I want our communities to be joyful, where we revel in the astonishing abilities of those around us

Finally, may we learn in these years the value of self-examination and quiet reflection and how to measure our lives against the plumb-line of our faith. Stephen G. Cary in *Germantown Friends School Studies in Education*.

F. Government and Politics

Throughout three centuries Friends have never been able to ignore government. Many times we have been unable to conform to government's demands and have had to disobey. Also, from time to time

we have felt we must express our disapproval of acts of government which seemed to us bad public policy. But often there are creative forces at work in government in which we can participate. And here, I believe, we feel an increasing sense of responsibility at the present time. Clarence E. Pickett in *For More Than Bread*.

The translation of ideals into institutional and organizational form is an extraordinarily difficult task. The struggle to apply ethical principles in the political and socio-economic areas of life is destined always to be a perplexing, frustrating, and incomplete experience The complexity of modern society consequently forces upon us compromises of our principles to a degree that tortures any sensitive soul. Cecil E. Hinshaw in *Toward Political Responsibility*.

In spite of the "moral ambiguities" in . . . political endeavors . . . there has been a succession of men and women throughout the history of Quakerism who have felt called to enter public life even though it meant at times very difficult tensions in a government predominantly non-pacifist and committed to military defense, sometimes even to imperialistic conquest. Generally the Society has supported these attempts to witness to its principles in the political arena, though it has ever kept a watchful eye on such individuals lest they overstep the proper bounds of the Quaker testimonies and way of life. Some of these men, notably John Bright, achieved some considerable degree of success in influencing their times. Cecil E. Hinshaw in *Toward Political Responsibility*.

William Penn and John Bright

There we lay a foundation for after ages to understand their liberty as men and Christians, that they may not be brought in bondage but by their own consent; for we put the power in people. William Penn on the *Constitution for the West Jersey Colony*.

The outstanding feature of Pennsylvania's first constitution lay in the free spirit which Penn introduced. For he gave this seventeenth century colony a broad basis of religious freedom in an age when toleration was the limit that liberal thinkers demanded. Carl Heath in *Religion and Public Life*.

No other Friend since William Penn has put the Quaker peace position to such a public test and no other Friend has succeeded to the extent he (John Bright) did in carrying Quaker ideals into practice as the sound and stable basis of national policy. Rufus Jones.

Some Dimensions of Work in Government and Politics

If we seek to be politically realistic, we must set a realistic goal. We must attempt no guarantee of success, nor even any assurance of possible success, and certainly no promises of cheap, easy deliverance ought to be made. Like the military, ours is a calculated risk. Cecil E. Hinshaw in *Toward Political Responsibility*.

It is the place of the Christian citizen, whether in the legislatures or in municipal bodies, to try to appeal to the best in all men, to the best in their colleagues,

not only in his own party, but in other parties, and in that way he may sometimes be able to bring about an agreement which would otherwise never have been achieved. T. Edmund Harvey — an outstanding Quaker member of Parliament.

As the state becomes more and more responsible for advancing human welfare, members of the Society increasingly face civic duties, especially in those areas that have long been among their chief concerns. Through the ballot, by public witness, and in many other ways, Friends may contribute to an enlightened and vigorous public opinion, thus helping to direct public policy toward the fulfillment of Christian principles Men and women of intelligence, high principle, and courage are needed to combat the ignorance, self-interest, and cowardice that impede the wise solution of national and international problems. *Faith and Practice* of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting.

A political awareness has been growing among us in recent years. This yearly meeting has seen it taking form as a fresh testimony. We have once again been bidden to seek first the kingdom, but now a social, economic, and political, as well as a spiritual kingdom. We have been reminded of the revolutionary nature of the message of Jesus and of the radical social action of early Friends. Without such action now, our Religious Society will become a religious irrelevance. London Yearly Meeting Minutes (1972).

That better world of tomorrow will not come just by wishing it. (It) will take an inordinate amount of persistent and intelligent effort . . . individually

and in concert with others to try to be effective. E. Raymond Wilson in *Uphill for Peace*.

***Lobbying and the Friends Committee
on National Legislation***

Quakers have been engaged in lobbying — that is to say in seeking to influence legislators by personal visits — ever since 1659 . . . The weightiest Friends in England, including George Fox and William Penn, busied themselves buttonholing members of Parliament and appearing at committee hearings. The yearly meeting even rented a room in a coffee house hard by the Houses of Parliament for a headquarters — a kind of Friends Committee on National Legislation office Frederick B. Tolles in *Quakerism and Politics*.

An important opportunity in our democracy is that there are so many places where the concerned citizen can share in the democratic process — citizen discussion and action at the precinct and county level, participation in political party activities, and voting at election time after studying the records of the candidates. The individual citizen or organized group can send letters and wires to members of Congress or to the President or to those in administrative positions. He can visit members of Congress in their district or in Washington. He can testify before Congressional Committees and can participate actively in public interest lobbies like the Friends Committee on National Legislation. But if democracy is to work satisfactorily, citizens must pay the price to make it function. E. Raymond Wilson in *Uphill for Peace*.

In a nation whose government puts undue emphasis on national interest, a religious legislative organization must champion what it believes is the real public interest. Congress is besieged all the time with pleas for special interests. Some of these interests are quite legitimate, but someone should be viewing them with a concern for humanity as a whole. Such a lobby can seek to be a spokesman for those who have no representatives in Congress — the starving millions of people around the world, the refugees, and the victims of war. Government should be challenged to view humanity as one human family under God At its best a religious lobby can cultivate a kind of pastoral relationship with members of Congress that includes warm friendship and encouragement and loving criticism. E. Raymond Wilson in *Uphill for Peace*.

G. Civil Liberties, Oaths, Prisons, and the Death Penalty

Quakers have always been in the forefront in the advancement of civil liberties. Harrop A. Freeman in *The Quaker Approach*.

At no point has the Society of Friends more openly and consistently challenged the nation's interference with individual liberty than in conscientious objection to war service and all contributions to the war effort. Harrop A. Freeman in *The Quaker Approach*.

Despite what must have been strong temptations to flout the law, early Friends were not anarchists. From its beginnings the Society of Friends has enjoined upon its members strict obedience to the

laws of the state, but at the same time a higher allegiance to the leadings of individual conscience has always been recognized Nowhere are the twin influences of history and belief more apparent than in the outspoken opposition to loyalty oaths. Alan R. Hunt in *Liberty in the Truth: Quaker Testimonies on Civil Liberties*.

There are many things to protect civil liberties that Quakers can and will continue to do. They have continued to allow to participate in foreign affairs conferences some of those attacked but not proven guilty. They have not withdrawn their support of liberal organizations, such as branches of the American Civil Liberties Union, when they have been branded as subversive. They have opposed the creation and the continuance of the (congressional) committees and their methods The task will be long; the victory will not come tomorrow. Harrop E. Freeman in *The Quaker Approach*.

Oaths

Out of the Quaker regard for truth arose another "Testimony" . . . they would not take an oath. In the first place Christ said expressly in the Sermon on the Mount, "Swear not at all." In the second place, they believed it was misleading for people who habitually had a tender regard for the truth to swear on special occasions that they were speaking truth; it made a distinction between truth for every day and truth for special occasions that seemed to them wrong. Elizabeth Gray Vining in *Contributions of the Quakers*.

Friends regard the custom of taking oaths as not

only contrary to the teachings of Jesus but as implying the existence of a double standard of truth. Thus, on all occasions when special statements are required, it is recommended that Friends take the opportunity to make simple affirmations, thus emphasizing that their statements are only a part of their usual integrity of speech. *Faith and Practice* of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting.

Prisons

It was less than two centuries ago that Englishmen scoffed at the notion that if prisoners were to be reformed, they had to be treated with respect and accorded the same inalienable rights that belong to all men. Prisoners of any sort were offenders against society, and society was entitled to its revenge. Every realist knew that unless prison conditions were kept distasteful and punishment made sufficiently cruel and severe, men could not be deterred from lawbreaking Friends and others insisted that kindness and a justice tempered with mercy would prove more effective than harsh and violent methods in treating the evildoer. Their religious faith insisted that all men, even prisoners, were children of God, and should be treated as such. Moreover, their own experience in prison supported their faith and they could testify that the popular notion of the deterring effect of brutality was false Various practical demonstrations eventually led to revolutionary changes in the theory of penology, with reform and rehabilitation replacing punishment as the purpose of imprisonment. Unfortunately, in many prisons these concepts have been accepted only in

theory Our failure to practice what we know to be valid, however, does not detract from the demonstration and practical acceptance of the insights of non-violence in a real and complex situation. American Friends Service Committee's *Speak Truth to Power*.

We submit that it is the religious duty of Friends today as yesterday to take up the cause of abolition, this time of penal slavery. To the query of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of 1776, "Are Friends clear of . . . holding mankind as slaves?" we must still reply with sorrow: Friends are still not clear. As long as we support prisons, leave unexamined the legitimacy of prisons, pay for prisons with our taxes, reap the benefits of prison slave labor, do not demand constitutional and all rights for prisoners — we are slaveholders still. Such a statement will come as a shock to many Friends, and even ring of extremism; for like the Society of Friends of John Woolman's day, we as a group have little clarity about the true nature of the prison system. Lacking clarity, we have not applied to prisons the searching light of our Quaker witness against violence and oppression For us, primarily white and middle class, prisons remain but a metaphor, distant and strange — evil, to be sure, but somehow "necessary." Fay Honey Knopp and Janet Lugo in *Quaker Life* (April, 1977).

Modern Quakers and Their Prison Experiences

It may seem paradoxical for me to say that I would not have missed the experiences of those two years of my life in a Nazi prison for anything. But it is so.

When one's existence, which has seemed quite secure, suddenly melts away, when one is cut off . . . from the circle of one's family and friends, and must rely entirely on one's self in an indifferent, hostile world; when the ground is taken from under one's feet and the air one breathes is taken away, when every security fails and every support gives way, — then one stands face to face with the Eternal, and confronts Him without protection and with fearful directness. Eva Hermann (a German Friend) in *In Prison — Yet Free*.

I view prison as the university of life. Many things which cannot be learned at school or in society are discovered there. This is because the teacher is not someone external to oneself, but rather is the true teacher within each man. My experiences in prison are many, always because I insisted only on remaining true to my convictions. . . . Here I continued my study of the Buddhist Scriptures and read more of Laotzu and Chuang-tzu. Moreover I gained something of an experience of the mystical, and reached the conviction that all religions, in the final analysis, are one. . . . My impression upon being released from prison was that I was entering yet another prison cell, the only difference being that it was a little larger (Korea). Sok Hon Ham (A Korean Friend) in *Kicked by God*.

The Death Penalty

We feel that we should at this time declare once again our unwavering opposition to capital punishment. The sanctity of human life is one of the

fundamentals of a Christian society and can in no circumstances be set aside. Our concern, therefore, is for all victims of violence, not only the murderer, but also those who suffer by his act. The sanctioning by the State of the taking of human life has a debasing effect on the community and tends to produce the very brutality which it seeks to prevent. We realize that many are sincerely afraid of the consequences if the death penalty is abolished, but we are convinced that their fears are unjustifiable. London Yearly Meeting *Minutes* (1956).

The testimony of Friends has consistently opposed the capital punishment of criminals. This attitude is based on the belief that capital punishment is the ultimate violation of human personality, that it gives no opportunity for the reform and rehabilitation of the offender, that it rejects the quality of forgiveness, and that, in some cases, it has legally destroyed innocent men. New York Yearly Meeting's *Faith and Practice* (1968 edition).

As a Christian, I am opposed to capital punishment because it violates the sacredness of all human life and the life-affirming message of the New Testament. All taking of human life is wrong, whether it be legitimated by State sanctions through the institution of capital punishment and war, or whether it is committed by individuals in our society. To state that some forms of killing are acceptable and even sanctified is hypocrisy. The life-affirming ministry of Christ demands of those who choose to follow him both allegiance to God and active concern for the conditions of their fellow man. There exists an element of God, of goodness,

in all men and this must be respected and spoken to, regardless of one's actions. As Christ so adequately put it, "What you do unto the least of my brethren, you do unto me." Mark Umbreit in *Quaker Life* (April, 1977).

H. War and Peace and Non-Violence

One of the broadest, most powerful, and most revolutionary testimonies of the Religious Society of Friends has been — and is — its peace testimony, combining conscientious objections to war and other forms of violence, with conscientious affirmations of peace. This testimony has been — and is — a central and primarily a spiritually-based belief In every generation and in every part of the world where Friends have lived, individual Quakers and groups of Quakers have wrestled with the implications and applications of the peace testimony for their time and their locality. Leonard S. Kenworthy in *The Friends Peace Testimony*.

Early Friends and the Peace Testimony

We utterly deny all outward wars and strife, and fightings with outward weapons, for any end, or under any pretense whatever; this is our testimony to the whole world. The Spirit of Christ by which we are guided is not changeable so as once to command us from a thing as evil and again to move us into it and we certainly know and testify to the world that the Spirit of Christ which leads us unto all truth will never move us to fight and war against any man nor for the kingdoms of this world Therefore we cannot learn war any more. George Fox and early Friends to Charles II, 1660.

I told them . . . that I lived in the virtue of that life and power that took away the occasion for all wars. George Fox's *Journal*.

They (early Friends) knew that during the first two or three centuries of its existence, the Church officially opposed Christian participation in war. Howard H. Brinton in *The Peace Testimony of the Society of Friends*.

The beginning of the peace testimony for the early Friends was not, as so many people assume today, "that of God in every man." On the contrary, the origin is in the simple belief that man is called to a way of life that leaves no room for conscious sin and that a true follower of Christ cannot accept anything less than this. Because it was widely accepted then, as now, that war involved passions and hatreds and actions that clearly were not harmonious with a life of purity, and because early Friends believed they could and did live a life of purity, they renounced war, even as they renounced luxurious living, oaths, and all honors. The emphasis was not so much on the refusal to take life as on the fact that taking life involved attitudes that were contrary to the spirit of Christ. The belief that the living Christ dwells within man, that God has planted a divine seed in all men, later brought Friends to a recognition of the sacredness of life. Cecil E. Hinshaw in *Toward Political Responsibility*.

Two sayings of Jesus: "I come not to bring peace but a sword," and "He that hath no sword, let him sell his cloak and buy one," seemed to Friends, if

taken literally, so strikingly out of accord with the whole tenor of the gospel that they explained them as having a figurative meaning. Howard H. Brinton in *The Peace Testimony of the Society of Friends*.

The Peace Testimony — and Other Testimonies

The peace testimony of the Society of Friends cannot be fully understood apart from their other social testimonies. These doctrines form a unit derived from a common source, but in a certain sense they also generate one another. For instance, the testimony for race, class, and sex equality itself works against violence. In the same way the testimony for simplicity tends to remove the superfluities and privileges in which are found so many seeds of war. It is impossible to separate one aspect of this way of life from another. Unlike modern Quakerism, the older Quakerism was undepartmentalized. Howard H. Brinton in *The Peace Testimony of the Society of Friends*.

O that we who declare against wars and acknowledge our trust to be in God alone, may . . . examine our foundation and motives in holding great estates. May we look upon our treasures and the furniture of our houses, and the garments in which we array ourselves, and try whether the seeds of war have any nourishment in these possessions or not. John Woolman's *Journal*.

Some Inconsistencies of Christians and Quakers on Peace

Mr. X observes that the Church has given its

sanction to war. You think that sanctions war? I feel it dishonors the Church. Pierre Ceresole.

We have a law against the slaughter of cattle according to the Jewish faith; we might have one against the slaughter of man according to Christian nations. Pierre Ceresole.

We cannot see that you believe in God; the sword you wear blocks our view. Pierre Ceresole.

Non-Violence As a Way of Life Requiring Discipline

It is now realized that pacific resistance cannot be successful or make an effective moral appeal if it is only passive. Non-violence is a bold way of life. It must express itself in constructive action. Not only among youth but among all morally healthy and vigorous people there is, in relation to any great conflict, an imperative need for deeds. Richard R. Gregg in *A Discipline for Non-Violence*.

To the extent that we find constructive channels for the steady social expression of our stores of inner energy, we greatly reduce the likelihood of outbursts of anger. We generally have self-control enough to handle the new resentments called forth by any particular new frustration of humiliation. It is that huge reservoir of unconscious, suppressed energy or resentments of long ago which is so unmanageable and takes us off our guard. A wise discipline will find ways to drain off that energy into creative channels. By so doing, it will enable its followers to develop more poise and equanimity. Richard B. Gregg in *A Discipline for Non-Violence*.

A Warless World — Difficult But Possible to Achieve

. . . world disarmament has proven to be about the most difficult step which the human race has ever undertaken. E. Raymond Wilson in *Thus Far On My Journey: An Autobiography*.

It is possible to imagine a world in which people are still wicked, in which there are still conflicts, but in which there is no war. . . . Poverty, disease, death, heartache, conflicts, hatreds, we shall have with us for many a generation. But the particular evil of war we may root out, as a hundred years ago we rooted out the particular evil of slavery It may seem preposterous to hope that war is in like manner tottering to its destruction. But the forces that destroyed slavery are at work on war. . . . These changes have increased both its economic unprofitability and its moral foulness to the point where the whole institution . . . is ripe for destruction. (The eradication of war) rests on the observation that the evil institutions of human society are most likely to be reformed when two conditions are fulfilled. The first is that the institution should be economically unprofitable. The second is that it should be morally intolerable. Kenneth Boulding in *New Nations for Old*.

Working for a Warless World

The content of a national non-violent policy: (1) There would be revolutionary changes within the United States (such as overcoming racial discrimination and religious intolerance). (2) The United

States would give its support to the great social revolutions which are both a major problem and a major hope of our time. (3) The United States would evoke its skills and resources to great problems of technical and economic assistance, carried on under the United Nations auspices and with full participation in planning and administration by the receiving peoples. (4) The United States would get rid of its military establishment. American Friends Service Committee's *Speak Truth to Power: A Quaker Search for An Alternative to International Conflict*. (1955).

Urgently needed is a large scale program of research and planning to examine the genuine alternatives to military defense. If this is not done, the outlook for the nation and for mankind is dim. On the other hand, to set our course towards the eventual abandonment of the nuclear arms race in favor of nonviolent national defense would bring new insight and released energies here and abroad which could radically improve our national life and relieve the whole world situation. Phillips P. Moulton in *Violence — Or Aggressive Nonviolent Resistance*.

There are four imperatives, among others, for the elimination of war. One is effective world organization. If the United Nations is weak, the United States has helped to make it weak. What we need is a strengthened United Nations and a whole web of international organizations to carry on the intellectual, political, social and economic and other aspects of cooperation in solving conflicts before they break down into war.

Second is drastic world disarmament. The United States spends more on armaments than the entire income of the continent of Africa. The world spends on an unresolved arms race just about the equivalent of the entire income of the underdeveloped one-half of the human race. That is one measure of the cost of the failure of humanity to learn to live together.

A third imperative of peace is world development. The resources of the world ought to be used to abolish world hunger, to narrow the gap between rich and poor, and to slow down and stop population growth. We should try to see that every child that is born, is wanted, is loved, and has an opportunity for food, for shelter, for employment, and for a decent and dignified life.

Fourth is world reconciliation. Understanding must be built between East and West, between Communist and non-Communist, between rich and poor, between Arab and Jew, between North and South, so that the whole world moves forward to use the resources with which the world is abundantly supplied.

. . . You can make a significant contribution as individuals. But as individuals we can only do a little bit compared to what needs to be done. You can't change the world without effective organization of people around the interests and achievements that need to be made. So I hope you will be movers and shakers, not only as individuals but as members of organizations like the Friends Committee on National Legislation. E. Raymond Wilson speech quoted in *Thus Far On My Journey*.

Reconciliation and Reconcilers

. . . reconciliation is not the same as compromise. A compromise between two positions is sometimes a good thing . . . but it may be worse than either alternative The reconciler . . . is one who feels deeply the reality of a controversial situation, but he feels on both sides as one. His bridge between the parties is one of comprehension and certainty, not one of exclusion. Above all, he is one who cares. . . . The reconciler is held in creative imagination, trying to think of new ways in which tension may not be neglected, but rather transcended. We are convinced that this is God's world . . . and that if the right way could be found, this planet could become a glorious place We have the privilege of becoming partners with God in trying to make this dream come true. Friends World Conference, 1952, in Oxford, England.

Many experiences in the post-war period gave me ever-increasing certainty that hostility can at least be modified, even if not dissolved, in spite of the greatest conflicts in men's ideas, interests, even moral principles. There is an approachability in people, even in individuals in power, which in our weaker moments fear often prevents us from believing in. I repeatedly found confirmation of this during the Occupation, and often also still later, in transactions between East and West. The Soviet officers were of an age to have grown up in the thought-world of communism, so that there were no points of contact in Christian terms. But it was my experience again and again that when one approached them honestly, naturally, without

aggression or fear, they reacted no differently than people brought up as Christians. It confirmed my faith that God is at work in every human being, as Quakerism teaches, even in a person who outwardly shows no hesitation in being hard and doing evil. Margarethe Lachmund (a German Friend) in *With Thine Adversary in the Way*.

From where we are today, the journey to a peaceful world looks incredibly long, about as long as the thousands of miles to Mexico when compared to the tiny body of a butterfly. I believe that it is no longer than the journey each of us is called upon to make, on our own pilgrimage to maturity and fulfillment as human beings. The requirement for us, as for the Monarch butterfly, is to be willing to place all our lives in the hand of God, in an act of simple trust, and to venture out where we have never ventured before. It may require that we must be changed as radically as the butterfly is changed, so that we can say with George Fox, "All things were new and all the creation hath another smell unto me than before, beyond what words can utter." It may mean going through darkness and storm with little assurance that we are making headway. The love that sustains and guides us through the darkness is what I have called the shalom process, which is always at work in the very depth of our being. When we gather together and "sink down to within," as Edward Burrough put it, we are getting in touch with the shalom process and letting it take charge of our lives. Howard Alexander in *A Living Witness* (Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting, 1982).

Building for peace is a job in which every man, woman, and child everywhere should want to help. It is clear now to everyone, soldier and pacifist alike, that little but evil and suffering come out of war. But after a war most people want to forget all about the suffering and go back to normal living. Quakers, because of the historic peace testimony, have a special responsibility to continue to work for peace. It isn't just a job for grownups. It is a job for everyone, even very small children. We can build for peace at home, in school, and in our play. All our daily actions count and help to make the kind of world we live in. Are you helping to build for peace? Elise Boulding in *My Part in the Quaker Adventure*.

I. Tackling Some Global Problems

Living as Quakers in a revolutionary world means that individual Friends will have to be revolutionary themselves in their Quaker Christian witness. George Loft in *Quakers in a Revolutionary World*.

We should (also) help create the conditions under which the nations of the world can work together to help themselves in the struggle for food and freedom, justice and security. In some parts of the world, such as the densely populated sections of Asia, the struggle centers on health and improved methods of production, particularly of food. In other parts of the world, such as Western Europe, where the arms burden is increasingly heavy, the problem is that of converting the large production capacity from an arms economy to a peace economy, thus avoiding the depressing and

disastrous effects of an armament race. *Steps to Peace*, American Friends Service Committee, 1951.

There are certain specific activities which Friends throughout the world, in the context of their own meetings, might undertake. It might well be hoped that this new World Resources Committee of the Friends World Committee for Consultation will serve as a useful liaison function in connection with the following suggestions: (1) Encourage Yearly Meetings to set up a "1% Fund" with provisions for its use in consultation with the World Resources Committee of the F.W.C.C., . . . Encourage individual Friends to give an additional 1% of their income (after taxes) to this 1% Fund. (2) Set up Quaker study groups to study the whole problem of the right sharing of the world's resources . . . , (3) Investigate what other groups are doing . . . , (4) Take initiative in public ways of showing this concern, (5) Consider the implications of the world's needs upon the level of simplicity in one's own life as a plausible spot to begin the revolution, and (6) Perhaps the most valuable resource that we can share is our own lives. . . . The proven value of a period of service overseas by young people leads one to hope that Young Friends might see their way in regarding a two-year period of service and residence in a developing country as a natural and expected part of their Quaker testimony. This need not necessarily be with a Friends body Such service on the part of Young Friends might do more to shape the witness and concern of the future Society of Friends in this matter than anything else

that could be undertaken. Denis Barritt in *Right Sharing of World Resources*.

The concern about the right use of nuclear energy is a good example of one aspect of modern Quakerism. George F. Gorman in *The Society of Friends*.

International participation is likewise necessary to bring maximum results in self-help. The experience of Quaker work in war-torn and (economically) underdeveloped countries indicates that reconstruction efforts by non-national teams best promotes the rapid and understanding participation by local groups. *Steps to Peace: A Quaker View of U.S. Foreign Policy*, American Friends Service Committee, 1951.

The United Nations System

The United Nations and the wide range of world (including regional) organizations may have as many or more problems than other human institutions, but there is good evidence that they are better than most governments. More effective world institutions are one necessity for us to build a more just and a more peaceful world. Barrett Hollister in *New Call to Peacemaking* (1976).

Research and Education

If I were to nominate the activity which is now open to mankind and which would increase most dramatically the probability of his survival, I would nominate a massive intellectual effort in peace

research — that is, the application of the social sciences to the study of conflict systems — especially of conflict systems in their international aspects. Kenneth Boulding in *The Meaning of the Twentieth Century*.

Another program that is already underway: A few colleges and universities have accredited courses in peace subjects and international disarmament, peace-building and the cultivation of international cooperation, or international law and justice. In view of the realities . . . the introduction of such courses on many more campuses would be justified and would soon enlarge the number of those capable of providing trained leadership for peace-building in their communities and the nation. Again, this would be on a professional level, and Friends have many qualified and creative minds in educational circles to promote such efforts by careful research and organization so that the programs are presented specifically rather than abstractly as so much peace advocacy is done. Charles A. Wells in *New Call to Peacemaking*.

. . . if we are going to take the social sciences seriously, we should at least establish a world network of social data stations, analogous to weather stations. . . . It is because I feel that we are only at the beginning of these developments in social information collection and processing that I am optimistic about the future of the social sciences. Kenneth Boulding.

ON SOME VIEWS ON SCIENCE AND NATURE, ART AND BEAUTY AND RELIGION

A. On Science and Nature

Quakerism has another peculiar opportunity because of the close similarity of its standard of truth with that of science. Howard H. Brinton in *Quakerism and Other Religions*.

Religious creeds are a great obstacle to any full sympathy between the outlook of the scientist and the outlook which religion is so often supposed to require. I recognize that the practice of a religious community cannot be regulated solely in the interest of its scientifically-minded members and therefore I would not go so far as to urge that no kind of defense of creeds is possible. But I think that it may be said that Quakerism, in dispensing with creeds, holds out a hand to the scientist. The scientific objection is not merely to particular creeds which assert in outworn phraseology beliefs which are either no longer held or no longer convey inspiration to life. The spirit of seeking which animates us refuses to regard any kind of creed as its goal. Arthur S. Eddington (famous British scientist and Quaker).

As a scientist and as a person, I recognize the co-existence of two worlds, two systems. For want of

better names I will call them the world of matter and the world of spirit — not independent, yet capable of independent description. The world of matter is the world that we apprehend with our five senses, the world we can measure, the world of time and of space, the world of natural laws that we believe operate without being spoken The world of the spirit is the world of love and of hatred, of imagination and illusion, the world of fear and suffering, of ecstasy and of memory, of gratitude, of resentment, of hope and of happiness. No two people have the same inward experiences, although understanding comes from shared experiences. There are laws in this world which do not cease to operate although they are broken every day These two worlds are interlocked. God makes his sun to rise on the evil and on the good and sends rain on the just and the unjust. Even if we take an airplane and travel around the world with the speed of its rotation so that we experience a continued sunrise, we cannot escape “the starry heavens above” and “the moral law.” Kathleen Lonsdale in *The Spiritual Sickness of the World Today*.

The scientist may one day know more about the mechanisms of emotion than he does now. But understanding and experience are not the same thing. And what I have been trying to say . . . is that personal experience of God, however limited, is far more convincing than reasoning, which is always inadequate. Don't think that I despise the intellectual questioning. That would hardly be possible for a scientist. It is a part and a very

essential part both of the process of growing up and of the acquiring of knowledge for oneself. But we mustn't despise emotional experience as a means of knowing, either. God became more real to me when I was in jail. He seemed much nearer. We can't find out everything by thinking about it, any more than we can know what love is by reading about it. Kathleen Lonsdale in *A Scientist Tries to Answer Some Questions About Her Religion*.

He (John Woolman) believed that the intention of his creator was that man can and should live in harmony with his environment, that God was expressible in the image of love and therefore the business of our lives should be more and more to channel all that we possess into the channel of universal love. And by possessions he had in mind our physical treasures no less than our endowments and gifts of character, for he sought in his purchases and material activities to support all that was good and to cause no suffering to others. The material and how it was used were to be vehicles for God's love. O. Theodor Benfey in *Friends and the World of Nature*.

What I have tried to show . . . is that there is struggling to be born a new view of the natural world and our relation to it. This new viewpoint will not be anti-science nor call for an end to industry, for both are integral and necessary parts of the life of the vast populations of today. Science and industry have brought deep new insights into man's power — admittedly for good and evil — and the directions by which many of man's problems may be tackled. But that . . . is also the humanist's

claim. What is missing in humanism is a way of harnessing the moral will to the accomplishment of what humanist reason so clearly sees. What we need is to forge a new link between the insights of science and the deeper promptings of the human spirit. And we will not be able to achieve this as long as the material world seems alien to us. When we see nature no longer as nails to pound with tools or bent, but as flesh and blood of our blood, whose handling will not only affect us directly by the feelings we sense through our actions, but also indirectly . . . then we will be moving to wholeness, to health. The environmental movement is pointing to the close interconnectedness of our terrestrial spaceship, but it is not yet releasing that love which alone can adequately reverse present trends. What we need is a rebirth of love for matter, becoming friends with rocks, heeding Emerson's call. Those who most have that sense of oneness, of communion with materials today, seem to be the craftsmen and craftswomen still active in all cultures They learn from years of working with a given material what its properties are, its rhythms, how it may yield in the hands of a skilled and loving worker to serve our highest needs for beauty, use, inspiration, and direction. O. Theodor Benfey in *Friends and the World of Nature*.

B. The Arts and Beauty

Wonderful . . . is the way in which beauty breaks through. It breaks through not only at a few highly organized points; it breaks through almost everywhere. Even the minutest things reveal it, as

well as the sublimest things — like the stars. Whatever one sees through the microscope — a bit of mould, for example — is charged with beauty. Everything from a dew-drop to a mountain, is charged with beauty. And yet beauty has no function, no utility. Its value is intrinsic, not extrinsic. It is its own excuse for being. It greases no wheels. It bakes no puddings. It is a gift of sheer grace, a gratuitous largess. It must imply behind things a Spirit that enjoys beauty for its own sake and that floods the world everywhere with it. Wherever it can break through, it does . . . and our joy in it shows that we are in some sense kindred to the Giver and Revealer of it. Rufus M. Jones in *Inner Light*.

The artist, whatever his calling, must play his part, side by side with the scientist and the engineer, in enhancing the value of life and in adding meaning, joy, and beauty to our existence on this, and, perhaps, on other planets. Fritz Eichenberg in *Art and Faith*.

If the artist's work is his worship, if he earnestly desires to serve God and through Him, man, — the artist will, in the end, achieve that peace of mind, that freedom of the soul, that mastery of matter, which will bring him to the foot of the cross. Fritz Eichenberg in *Art and Faith*.

It doesn't take much to create a home, if one is creative. It can be attractive and even beautiful, and at the same time simple. It can consist of four whitewashed walls with a fine old chest in the corner, or with a few pieces of simple, well-made

modern furniture. It can be austere without being forbidding, with one single print on the wall, but a good one that you like to live with, — that speaks to you. Books, to reach out for whenever you need them; flowers in a well-designed vase, placed in the right spot; a fabric — preferably handwoven, on your cushion, couch, or window, will cheer you up when you come home. If the floor should happen to be good solid oak, well scrubbed or polished, you don't need any Persian rugs or cheap imitations. Harmonious colors and proportions can create an atmosphere in which art can grow and that is where we start. This is where we raise our children and maybe where they will raise theirs. This is the place from which they will start out and inevitably influence the taste of their friends. Home is a reflection of man's spirit, the domain where he can start to create the little things which will deepen his understanding of the great things in art. Fritz Eichenberg in *Art and Faith*.

For reasons probably rooted in the Puritan environment in which Quakerism unfortunately had to find a foothold, it seldom crosses a Friend's mind that his child might enrich and deepen the lives of his fellow human beings through insights only expressible by ways of painting, sculpture, music, drama, or the dance. The inhibitions built into the Quaker tradition . . . have immeasurably impoverished the range of service of modern Friends, and it will be largely in the home that Friends will be able to redress the balance. O. Theodor Benfey in *No Time But This Present*.

A Prayer for Beauty and Joy

God of all beauty and joy,
Grant unto us that this day we may share with thee
The purity of thy divine passion for beauty,
For form and sound.

For beauty of thought and of expression of
thought,

For beauty of action and of character,
For beauty of life and beauty of soul.

Give us thy perception, that we may hear
With thy divine joy

The one deep-going harmony behind
The clashing discords of this world.

Give us thine eyes, to see indeed the disfigurement
and the sin,

But to see through them the divine possibilities
of beauty,

Which lie hidden beneath the loathsomeness.

Give us thine eyes to see the perfect status
In the rough-hewn, weather-stained block;

To see the ideal manhood in the twisted, blackened
villain.

Give us thy divine zeal for beauty,
That we may transform hideous places,

hideous lives, and hideous souls,
Into places fitted in beauty for thy habitation.
Into lives fitted in beauty for thy companionship,
Into souls fitted in beauty for thine indwelling.

Make us ambassadors of thy kingdom
In which all things beautiful are forever
preserved and perfected.

John S. Hoyland in *A Book of Prayers*.

ON ONE'S LATER YEARS AND ON DEATH

A. One's Later Years

Old age can and should be beautiful; but it will not be if it is feared, evaded, and rejected. Rachel R. Cadbury in *The Choice Before Us*.

A very dear and very aged aunt of mine who lived well into her hundredth year used to say, "Youth is for learning, the middle years for doing, and old age for enjoying." Anna Cox Brinton in the Preface to Elsie Marion Andrews' *Facing and Fulfilling in the Later Years*.

I am convinced it is a great art to know how to grow old gracefully, and I am determined to practice it I always thought I should love to grow old, and I find it is even more delightful than I thought. It is so delicious to be done with things and to feel no need any longer to concern myself much about earthly affairs I am tremendously content to let one activity after another go, and to await quietly and happily the opening of the door at the end of the passageway that will let me into my real abiding place. Hannah Whitall Smith (1903).

A sturdy independence developed from early life is the staunchest bulwark in age, as is the sense of reality which usually goes with it. For the continued

enjoyment of experience is only possible when we *accept* our life's situation and exert ourselves to make the most of it. Even failing powers, by narrowing the scope of experience, may serve to concentrate interest and thereby deepen the understanding of that interest. Elsie Marion Andrews in *Facing and Fulfilling the Later Years*.

Growing old is

- . . . liberation.
- . . . slowing down.
- . . . making things last longer instead of encouraging them to wear out.
- . . . loss and relinquishment.
- . . . the fear of loneliness.
- . . . emotion recollected in tranquility.
- . . . discovering the younger generation.
- . . . cherishing older friends.
- . . . finding other things, not only people, much more precious.
- . . . learning to live in the present.
- . . . making an opening for new things.
- . . . being lazy and enjoying it.

Excerpted from various parts of Norma Jacob's *Growing Old: A View from Within*.

Remember, above all, that the mainsprings of courage and strength lie within. Some material comforts are needed, but a great many won't be missed. We have to give them up and show a willingness to grow, to change, and to be creative. A friend wrote me recently, "Old Age is like climbing a hill, a high hill, each step of which becomes harder and harder, but when you come to

the top, what a wonderful vista!" Dream that impossible dream, for nothing is impossible with God. Saying "Yes" to life helps that dream come true. Terry Schuckman in *Aging Is Not for Sissies*.

Is not the real purpose of the Meeting to be "a caring fellowship?" The older members have played an important role in the Meeting's development. We do have a responsibility toward them. Wayne Allman and Harold Tollefson in *Guides to Creative Living*.

B. Death

Death is not the opposite of life. The machine is the opposite of life. Death is a part of life. Howard H. Brinton.

In view of the triumphant attitude Christianity takes toward death, it is strange that most of us avoid it as a topic of conversation. If we are not afraid of death, we seem to be afraid to speak of it. Yet death is as natural as life and one is the counterpart of the other. If we cannot speak freely of death, we cannot really speak freely of life. Bradford Smith in *Dear Gift of Life: One Man's Encounter with Death*.

No one has reached maturity until he has learned to face the fact of his own death and shaped his way of living accordingly. Then the true perspective emerges. The pre-occupation with material things, with accumulating goods or fame or power, is exposed. Then each morning seems new and fresh, as indeed it is. Every flower, every leaf, every

greeting from a friend, every letter from a distance, every poem and every song strikes with double impact, as if we were sensing it for the first time and for the last time. Once we accept the fact that we shall disappear, we also discover the larger self which relates us to our family and friends, to our neighborhood and community, to nation and humanity, and, indeed, to the whole creation out of which we have sprung. We are a part of all this, too, and death cannot entirely withdraw us from it. To the extent that we have poured ourselves into all these related groups and persons, we live on in them . . . So the divine spark kindled in us can never really be extinguished, for it is a part of a universal flame. Bradford Smith in *Dear Gift of Life: A Man's Encounter with Death*.

Jesus himself discouraged speculation about what lies beyond death. Let the dead bury the dead: God is the God of the living This should put a stop to any foolish attempt to carry our cultural and earthly preoccupations into the next stage of being. Carol M. Murphy in *The Valley of the Shadow*.

Weep not for me. Rather let your tears flow for the sorrows of the multitude. My work is done. Like a ripe fruit, I await the gathering. Death has no terrors, for it is a wise law of nature. I am ready, whenever the summons may come. Lucretia Mott in Margaret Hope Bacon's *Valiant Friend: The Life of Lucretia Mott*.

The hope of life after death has never been considered a reward for virtue, nor as a compensation for adversity. Neither has the fear of damnation

been used as a threat to induce godly living. Such ideas are wholly repugnant to Quakers. The Quaker view of what happens beyond death is firmly rooted in their experiences of this life. They affirm passionately their conviction that life is good and that an essential clue to its real nature is to be glimpsed in the love that people have for one another. There is always an element of mystery about love which men cannot penetrate, but Quakers are convinced that it has a timeless quality and that it always points to a mystery beyond itself. Death cannot destroy this love; it is not limited by time or space So Quakers do not dogmatize about what happens after death. There are Friends who are convinced that there is an after-life and those who are convinced there is not. All Friends feel that it is more important to get on with living this life and seek to improve the conditions of man in this world (rather) than to engage in speculations about the next. George H. Gorman in *Introducing Quakers*.

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