

JESSIE ALICE STUART
RITCH

*A Memoir
and A Collection of her Writings*

JESSIE ALICE STUART RITCH

To
Muriel and Edgar Kninisk
From
Millie Petersen



WITH A CHINESE FRIEND AT PENDLE HILL DURING THE FRIENDS
WORLD CONFERENCE, 1937

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RITCH

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and A Collection of her Writings*

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IN LOVING MEMORY
OF
JESSIE ALICE STUART RITCH

22.1.96 TO 12.12.51

“They that love beyond the world cannot be separated by it.

Death cannot kill what never dies. Nor can Spirits ever be divided that love and live in the same divine principle; the root and record of their friendship.

Death is but crossing the world as friends do the sea: they live in one another still. For they must needs be present that love and live in that which is omnipresent.

In this divine glass they see face to face; and their converse is free as well as pure.”

WILLIAM PENN.

PREFACE

This small book has been compiled as a loving tribute to Jessie Alice Stuart Ritch, in the belief that many who knew and loved her may like to have some of her writings in permanent form with a short memoir. It has been a difficult task to give in a few words a picture of Jessie for as one friend has said "no words can convey the colour, the drama, the humour, the warm-heartedness and all the other attributes of heart, mind and spirit which went to the make-up of Jessie."

MILLIE PETERSEN, Dunster, Somerset.

JESSIE RITCH was born on January 22nd, 1896. Her father was an Orcadian and her mother the daughter of an Orkney ship-master. Jessie was very attached to the Orkney Islands and during the latter half of her life she made many visits to the old home in the far bleak North.

From early childhood she lived in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. During this period she gained a first-hand knowledge of life and conditions in an industrial area. This eventually led to her desire for social work among children and young people, which was in one way or another to occupy so great a place in her life.

At the age of twenty-four she began her training at the Rachel MacMillan Nursery School in Deptford. Here working under Margaret McMillan, the founder of the School, she studied for her Nursery School Diploma. Margaret McMillan later wrote of her great aptitude for the work and spoke highly both of her gifts and character. She shewed an especial gift for plastic art, while her joyous outlook on life and her concern for the welfare of the children created a happy atmosphere and won for her the affection of all.

Quite apart from her work at the School itself, Jessie Ritch

interested herself in the parents and in the home-life of the children, entering understandingly into their problems in a way which made her a friend whose advice was sought on many occasions.

Even at this early stage of her career, her powers of organisation and the influence she exercised on the lives of older children and adolescents clearly indicated her fitness for responsible educational and social work.

After four years at Deptford Jessie Ritch entered Salisbury Training College, where she took an advanced course in English and Geography, and also developed her natural gift for drawing. She became at this time much interested in Divinity and for her work in this subject she was presented with the Archbishop's Certificate. Her Principal said that her religious care for the subject, her power over language and her strong influence would single her out as a possible specialist in religious teaching. She was head student of her year with a strong and far-reaching influence for good. When she left college the Principal wrote to her a very warm and affectionate letter congratulating her on her brilliance as head student. At Salisbury as at Deptford many friendships were made which lasted throughout life.

On leaving College Jessie Ritch took an appointment at a London County Council Open Air School for physically defective children. She entered into the work with enthusiasm. As a result of her teaching, art and drama were developed with excellent results, outdoor plays becoming quite a feature of the School life. Many of these children she entertained in her own home at week-ends and holidays. The change from timid, under-nourished children to happy carefree youngsters as the result of the school facilities and her loving care and interest was most marked. When she left the Head Master said that much of the School's success and its happy atmosphere were due to her influence.

Jessie Ritch next took an appointment as teacher at Queen

Mary's Hospital at Carshalton. Tribute has been paid to "her exceptional power of getting into intimate and friendly contact with her pupils and extending her interest to their general welfare, taking on the voluntary responsibility for several girl's training and equipping them for posts and launching them in life." She had a natural gift for obtaining the maximum response from adolescents. This with her genius for smoothing out difficulties and establishing friendly relations between people, made a combination of efficiency, human kindness and gaiety which are only too seldom found.

After a good many years at Queen Mary's Hospital Jessie Ritch was called to undertake work among delinquent and mal-adjusted girls. This became the supreme work of her life. During these turbulent and difficult years, with the untiring help and companionship of those who worked with her, she cared unceasingly for these deprived and often unloved children. She gave so lovingly and generously the whole of herself, her time and her creative gifts. This was stressed in the many loving and heart-broken tributes that were given after her death. These last years of her life were not easy. The war and the resulting increase in crime and delinquency among the girls she worked for brought much pain and sadness. In spite of all the many setbacks, with all the forces of her dynamic creative and magnetic personality she brought into their starved broken lives a security and significance that was vital and necessary to their spiritual and physical well-being. Though there were many of the children who found the odds too great and failed to make normal contacts with life, there were others who settled down as happy human beings. Many there were who in spite of short or long lapses into delinquent ways never ceased to love and revere her. This was borne out by the fact that she often received letters from them after they had passed through her hands, telling of the good and bad, the trials and errors that beset them. Some sought her out in her home for comfort and help.

In 1947 having recovered from a serious illness, Jessie Ritch returned for a time to Nursery School service, lecturing and training students for the work. Later there followed a time as Headmistress of the School at the Country Branch of the Great Ormond Street Hospital for Sick Children. It was a joy to her to be once again among little children. How she loved and talked about each one as if it held a great place in her heart as indeed it did. Her understanding of the individual psychology and need of each sick child was as always the outcome of her deep love for them.

The last appointment Jessie Ritch held was that of Headmistress of the School at Queen Mary's Hospital, where she had spent many of her earlier years. It was a triumphant climax to her career and as far as could be foreseen promised many years of steady, happy work. Her time there, however, proved to be short, for while cycling one day to school, she met with an accident, and after some weeks died without regaining consciousness.

That death should come in this way to one who possessed in so great a degree just those qualities of which the world stands so much in need is something quite beyond our understanding, but she herself, with sublime faith in the Divine ordering, would no doubt have said, "it is all part of the pattern in the web of time".

These lines written in her devotional diary on the very morning of her accident, fitly express the utter and child-like Trust and Joy in God whence she drew strength for each day as it came.

Lying quietly in my weariness;
Lying quietly in the Blessedness of the Father's love;
Lying silently in the stillness;
Lying silently without carefulness in the Sacred Heart;
So my body rests, and my mind sleeps,
So my soul returns to the Peace of God.

“MINUTE OF SUTTON MEETING OF THE RELIGIOUS
SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS) REGARDING
JESSIE RITCH”

ALTHOUGH the strong and serene face of our dear Friend, Jessie Ritch, with the gentle eyes, through which a deep compassion looked out on suffering, bewildered and sinning humanity, will be seen amongst us no more, her spirit remains with us as a living reality.

We are moved to record in our Minutes our gratitude to God for the inestimable privilege we have enjoyed of knowing and loving one in whom the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ was so signally manifested, and for all the blessing that has come to us, as a Meeting, through her life and service.

Jessie Ritch was among those who, in 1932, met together to consider a proposal to start a new Meeting for Worship in Sutton, and a deep impression was made on the meeting as she solemnly charged us to give earnest thought to the seriousness of the step we had in mind. Once the decision was made, Jessie Ritch gave herself whole-heartedly to the service of the Meeting, and throughout its early years it was largely her earnest and moving ministry which knit the group together, and laid the foundations of the fellowship in Christ which we now so richly enjoy.

Although gifted with exceptional fluency and facility in expressing her thought, Jessie Ritch's ministry was the very reverse of superficial. Simple and free from intellectual subtleties, it reached down to the deep springs of spiritual life. Her voice was full, soft and melodious, and although free from trace of her northern origin, her speech had a richness and clarity which was in itself a delight to hear.

Jessie Ritch was strongly attached to her distant home in the

Orkney Islands, and loved to return there when possible. In her home at Banstead, she treasured many mementoes of her native isles; things of beauty, which she loved not only for themselves, but because they embodied the patient care, skill and toil of men and women she had known and loved, and in whose lives she had shared. Especially she valued things which expressed individuality or character, or that were linked in her mind with some human story which had touched her own life at some point. Equally intense were her love of and interest in plants and flowers. She sat lightly, however, to her possessions, and in response to any manifestation of interest, a picture from her walls, a book from her shelves, or an ornament from her mantelpiece, would be taken down and handed to one, with some such words as "You have it".

We recall too, how in discussion, after giving expression to her thoughts, the lilting voice would ask, "Don't you feel that?", or "What do you think about it?", so that one felt that one's opinion really did matter.

Some of us have happy memories of her joining in excursions to Jordans, the Blue Idol or elsewhere in the earlier days of the Meeting, and at her home there was always a warm welcome for the Meeting as a Group or for individuals. She was an ideal hostess, with a keen sense of humour and zest for fun, and more often than not someone who was lonely, homeless or convalescent or in some other difficulty, would be found sharing the shelter of her home. Many can bear witness to the healing of body and spirit which came to them through her companionship and her self-identification with their perplexities, weakness and distresses. For many years she was unselfishly aided in this service of help and hospitality by her cousin, Millie Petersen.

The fountains of the abundant life which Jessie Ritch lived were of course to be found in an inner prayer-life. Those who have shared her daily life know that it was rich in meditation, devotional reading and prayer. We saw the fruits, but the roots

reached down to hidden springs. Prayer to her was something so sacred and intimate that she was never able to share it vocally in the Meeting for Worship; her sensitive spirit shrank from any exposure of the secret depths of her communion with God.

Jessie Ritch placed little value on theological orthodoxy and the conventional forms of the religious life, except in so far as they were living expressions of her fundamental conviction of the all-embracing love of God. Although her intellectual integrity would probably have precluded her alliance with any other branch of the Christian Church, it would seem that she was attracted by the symbolism which finds expression in the Catholic type of religion. This sometimes led her into ways which were somewhat at variance with traditional Quaker practices, as instanced by the little "Chapel" in her garden, with its lighted candles, but which, because it was her place of prayer, we must feel to have been a hallowed spot.

Over the years, Jessie Ritch was a true missionary; she brought many into touch with our Society, not a few of whom have found their spiritual home with us. Her life was spent helping the unfortunate, the handicapped, the helpless, the weak. She was the friend of all, old or young, but the children were always especially the object of her solicitude. She undertook the responsibility of the upbringing of more than one physically or emotionally handicapped child, and she was never tired of stressing the importance of the right training of children and young people, both in the Society and generally. The words of Scripture most often on her lips, and from which she spoke many times were "Feed my sheep; feed my lambs".

Those who have been privileged to see her surrounded by children at Hospital were impressed by the tenderness and joy which radiated from her and which called forth the love and trust of her little pupils. In the difficult task she undertook for some time as Superintendent of the Girls' Remand Home at Hammersmith, many whose lives had been spoiled and who were

resentful or rebellious were unable to withhold the respect and affection which were inspired by her devotion and freedom from censorious judgment or assumption of superiority. Completely selfless, she was in truth one of the

“self-spending children of the dawn and of Christ’s ampler day”.

In all that has been said we do not forget that our Friend was not without her human foibles; these indeed endeared her to us all the more, as we realised that she was no “plaster-saint” but compounded of the same elements as ourselves. Her enthusiasms were sometimes short-lived, but even when, as sometimes happened, she asked to be relieved of some piece of service taken up under concern, the result was often that others were drawn to share in what had been of her originating. Her life was a very full one, dedicated in all its moments to her Heavenly Father’s business.

The fact is, we think, clear that underneath her unfailing serenity and abiding faith, there were strong tensions at work, and she would at intervals stay away from the Meeting for long periods, apparently somewhat out of unity with us, or perhaps (who knows?) disappointed in us. The burden of the world’s suffering had been laid upon her, and one feels that she was not infrequently called on to wrestle in prayer in her own Gethsemane. So far as we know, she faced these times of inner conflict alone, and never burdened others with her deepest problems, but would wait patiently until the struggle was resolved, and then come back to us, completely united in love and fellowship.

As we think of her, we recall the great cloud of witnesses of whom she is one, and of whom it is said,

“These are they which follow the Lamb, whithersoever He goeth.”



IN THE GARDEN, DUTCH COTTAGE, BANSTEAD, 1938



EARLY DAYS AT QUEEN MARY'S HOSPITAL, CARSHALTON

A SELECTION OF POETRY AND PROSE

BY

JESSIE A. S. RITCH

It is believed that the following writings are the work of Jessie A. S. Ritch. If, however, quotations from other authors have inadvertently been included the compiler offers sincere apologies.

ERINNERUNG

Weave them all into a poem
For me to remember,
Cast your spell of magic words
Just this last time.
Capturing the beauty and the
Pain and the laughter
All the music and the wonder
Ere the Darkness comes.

The whirling spray, the glint of it
Leaping in the sunlight
Round the little Cornish coves
When Spring tides surge—
The sunlit Close of Salisbury, all
Gold-splashed and drowsy
The spire in a shimmering haze
Faint against the sky.

The beauty of the gypsy brat
Brown skinned and sleep flush'd,
Lying on the sheep-skin rugs
Underneath the van.
The scutter of beech leaves
Blown along the roadway
The Autumn smell of bonfires
The blue smoke curls.

The old grey doorway and
The shadowy stillness
Of a little wayside church
Where a red light burns,
The cool sweet restfulness
The stone slab where pilgrims
Kneeling there long years ago
Have worn the hollow'd place.

The stained glass window with
The sun behind it
Flinging o'er the ancient stones
A rainbow veil,
The old carven crucifix
The weary beauty
And the aching tenderness
Of the Christ's face.

Home and the dear folk that
Knew my childhood
The kind old eyes and the
Work-soiled hands.
The joy of the home coming
The warm deep peace of it
The evening singing and
The last "Good night."

Weave them all into a poem
For me to remember
Cast your spell of magic words
Just this last time.

WORDS

“Meadowsweet” and “far away” and “long ago”—
These are enchanted words and like some old monastic gold
Shine through the dusty tangle of our common script
And make it live.

We string them on frail chains of memory,
Jewel words that glitter in our English speech,
“Home” and “hearth” and “pasture-land” and “shepherding”
And “golden-rod”.

Some words have beauty cleaving like a seraph’s sword
The dull complacency of ordered thought,
And words there are like solitary sacraments
That sweep their incense through the temple of the soul,
“Galilee” and “Nazareth” and “Eventide”—
And “Broken Bread”.

CHILD AT THE WINDOW

We live at the top of the old dark house
At the corner of Bricklayers' Row
Deaf Sally Russ
Lives under us
And her little shop's just below.
The noisy wee shop
The stuffy wee shop
It's the funniest shop I know.

There's apples and sweets and bottles and brooms
And soaps and candles and tea
And pans and dishes
And chocolate fishes
For little girls just like me
And every day
But the Sabbath day
It's as busy as it can be.

My only playmate is Sally's black cat
Ugly and thin and so old,
With yellow eyes
Grown grave and wise
Like two little lamps of gold.
But he's warm and comfy
So friendly and comfy
When it's lonely and dark and cold.

We sit at the wee attic window together
After I'm put to bed for the night
Watching the glow
In the street below
Where the road-fire is burning bright
And the lamps like beads
Like ropes of beads
Of yellow and ruby and white.

We are here at the window again to-night
And the roadway is covered with snow
The queer old man
Has a frying pan
And is cooking his supper, you know
On the wind-blown fire
The watchman's fire
At the corner of Bricklayer's Row.

“TO THE NOVOCASTRIAN”

Do ye mind o’ the woodyard away up “New Mills”,
Where the bairns of Todd’s Nook used to play?
Do ye mind o’ the magic of Saturday morn
When we woke to the wonderful day?

The whole day of freedom—the penny to spend!
The glorious adventures ahead!
The smell of the golden brown kippers downstairs,
And the tents that we made in the bed?

Up over the cobble-stones sped the bare feet,
Where the sail-less old mill’s shadow fell:
Then through the long alley and down the worn steps
To the woodyard the bairns loved so well.

How we clamber’d and leapt up the great timber piles,
Then snuggle’d in hollows to rest.
The beeches were slippery, the pines were so long,
'Twas the elms and oaks we loved best.

In hollows among the tree trunks we played “house”,
After searching the ground all about
For that precious linoleum all tattered and worn,
That the folk in “the Mills” had thrown out.

In old pots and pans we made glorious stews
Of dockens and licorice and bones.
O how hard was the work of the “mothers” who scrubbed
And polished the “boodies” and stones.

But up in the quarries the dramas we played!
Do ye mind o' the weddings we had?
The bits of old curtain I wore as a veil
Every time that you married me, lad!

Do ye mind o' the funerals down by the wall
And the slimy clay banks where we slid
Into the "clarts" at the bottom with splashes and shrieks
On any old shovel or tin lid.

Wonderful days on the "Leazes" we roamed
Or hunted the mill for its spook.
But never was childhood so radiantly lived
As in yon old woodyard of Todd's Nook.

BONFIRE NIGHT

Old Todd's Nook
On Bonfire Night
With the leaves all a-blazing-o
One o'clock guns
And Catherine wheels
And the world all skyward gazing-o.

Bring the beds
Of ancient straw
From lane and square and alley-o.
Pile them high
And drench with oil
And all the bairns will rally-o.

Burning sky
And singing earth
And dancing lads and lasses-o.
Mounting rockets
Slash the night
And stars fall round in masses-o.

Old Todd's Nook
On Bonfire Night
Magic times of long ago
Here's a song
From far away
To set you all a-dreaming-o.

THE BALLAD OF THE MUCKLE STANE

Jamie Grant went o'er the hills
To herd the kylie kine
 (O rowans scarlet rowans)
A kebbuck-heel he took wi' him
A bannock and some wine
 (O rowans red as blude!)

As Jamie went again' the wind
The mist came down the glen
 (O rowan scarlet rowans)
He wandered many a weary mile
On roads he didna ken
 (O rowans red as blude!)

Till he came to the Muckle Stane
That once fell from the skies
 (O rowans scarlet rowans)
And there he saw a ladye sit
And sairie were her eyes
 (O rowans red as blude!)

What gars ye greet ye fair ladye?
Why sit ye by your lane
 (O rowans scarlet rowans)
When bitter bitter blows the wind
About the Muckle Stane?
 (O rowans red as blude!)

She lifted up her face to him
And but one word she spake
(O rowans scarlet rowans)
And Jamie could have forfeit Heaven
For yon sweet ladye's sake
(O rowans, red as blude!)

Food and drink he shared with her
Upon the Muckle Stane
(O rowans scarlet rowans)
She dipt her finger in the wine
And bade him drink again
(O rowans red as blude!)

He saw no more the turnpike lane
He heard no more the wind
(O rowans scarlet rowans)
He found himself in Faery Land
Beside a milk-white hind
(O rowans red as blude!)

Poppies in the fields he saw
Where folk in silver shoon
(O rowans scarlet rowans)
Carried slow a dead body
All white beneath the moon
(O rowans red as blude!)

The body they were carrying
He saw it was his ain
(O rowans scarlet rowans)
They laid it in an open grave
Beside the Muckle Stane
(O rowans red as blude!)

The searchers from the Clachan glen
Came up the Turnpike Lane
 (O rowans scarlet rowans)
They found a madman laughing loud
Beside the Muckle Stane
 (O rowans red as blude!)

A SONG FOR SALISBURY

Ye citizens of Salisbury
Come listen to my lay
For I will praise your fair citie
Your fair citie of Salisbury
And sing of all its loveliness
That cheered me on my way.

I came along the dusty roads
That lead from London Towne
I found a place where five streams meet
Where five streams of cool water meet,
And in the long green meadow grass
I stopp'd to lay me down.

Upon my back I rested there
And watched the summer blue
Go drifting round your silver spire
The slender graceful silver spire
That rises from the Prayer in Stone
Dead hands have built for you.

Through quaint old streets I wandered
Where drowsy windows blink
From every sun-splash'd quiet house
From each old rose-tiled timber'd house
And at ye ancient Inn of George
They gave me meat and drink.

The Downs that cradle Salisbury
Were wide and free at night
When underneath the stars I walked
Beneath a myriad stars I walked
And left the old-world peace of it
Your citie of delight.

“AND THEY FOUND HIM IN THE TEMPLE”

I knelt within the shrine
Which men had built for Thee
I heard the words of prayer
That like a far-off sea
Made murmur ceaselessly.

I heard Thy name, O Christ
And watched in idle mood
Where dancing candle flame
Made with dumb yearning, brood
The face upon the Rood.

Men had been following Thee
For nigh two thousand years
They held aloft Thy Cross
Yet driv'n by hates and fears
They drenched Thine earth in tears.

“O Man of Nazareth
Whose weary feet once trod
The roads of Galilee
And sanctified each sod
That bore the Son of God—

Can'st Thou still hear the voice
Of man in pain and need?
The whole world travaileth
The hearts of women bleed—
Does not Thy Heart take heed?”

“O Men, lift up your hearts!”
A flame of Love set free
Folded the earth in fire
Scorching the heart of me
And then—I knelt with Thee!

Then drifting sounds of prayer
On last faint echoes flown
The candles burnt away
The worshippers all gone—
Lo, I am left alone.

Alone amid Thy peace,
O God—Abiding One
Thou Love that lived in Him
Why do we storm Thy Throne?
Behold—
Thou foldest close Thine own!

SCARLET POPPIES

Sing a song of victory
March along the street
Hang the scarlet banners out
Poppies in the wheat.

But upon the clouded heart
Deep within each bloom
Dust as black as raven's wing
Symbolizes doom.

How can any valiant soul
Shout of victory
While the children weep and starve
And stark agony
Lies on half the world to-day.

Home again to quiet fields
Where the mind is sweet
Where the poppies dance again
In the growing wheat.

Silent are the brazen guns
All the graves are green
Only in the heart abides
All that might have been.

Now we hold the hollow prize
Now we know the final cost
Scarlet poppies symbolise
Those that we have lost.

Spring and summer, day and night
These things shall remain
Glorious shines the crimson bright
In the golden grain.

DUNSTER PRIORY CHURCH

O all ye folk who come to know
This ancient home of peace and prayer,
We bid you kneel where long ago
The men of Dunster cast their care
 Upon the Lord our God.

Upon the Lord our God they laid
The burden of their fear and grief,
And found that even while they pray'd
There came a blessed, swift relief
 Of love and joy and peace.

And love, joy, peace abiding true,
Will heal the bitter pain
Of folk who come to kneel like you
And go forth whole again.
 God bless you one and all.

ORCADIAN WINTER

Man, there's a challenge to your soul!
Where the windswept hills lie stark,
 And the winter sea,
 Sweeping high and free
Crashes onward through the dark.

The gales are blowing from the north;
There is ice on Saint Magnus' height;
 There's a roaring din,
 But the boat's crowd in
To the harbour's welcome light.

If you come from your soft southern land
To these islands blown and torn,
 You will face the night
 With a wild delight
As you feel your soul re-born!

GREEN MAGIC

O walk in the gardens so full of old magic,
And find out the secrets "They" knew long ago—
The wisdom of Egypt, the beauty of Athens,
The perfumes of Araby—colours that glow
In embroid'ries of China, and legends of Persia
Are soaked in the magic the Herbalists know.

The old hidden magic
The primitive magic
The countryman's magic
Of green things that grow.

Green things a-growing in gardens and orchards,
Green things afloat upon slow-moving streams,
Were used long ago by the old Asclepiads
To heal men of Athens and sooth them in dreams;
The old tomb at Memphis has long kept its treasures,
A queen who slept folded in linen which seems

To hold the old magic
The spice-laden magic
The sun-given magic
That drifts in its beams.

Lavender, rosemary, southernwood, marjoram,
Soft damask roses and tansy of gold,
Pictures and music and poems in the names of them,
Heart-shaking memories their fragrances hold

Of sweet-scented magic
The Mid-summer magic
The lovers' own magic
Earth's incense of old.

Men of To-day, do you know of the virtues
Gerrard and Culpeper found long ago?
That wounds may be healed by our tall snowy lilies?
That Meadowsweet causes a sad heart to glow?
That all your despairs and your aches and your sickness
 Would die in the magic
 The only real magic
 The God-given magic
Of Green things that grow.

Herbs that are bitter but cleansing and healing
Herbs that are pungent like Wormwood and Rue,
Hyssop and Savory, Fennel and Betony,
Thyme, Balm and Spearmint and Rest Harrow too,
All hide the rich wisdom that guided our fathers
The wisdom of life that King Solomon knew,
 The green growing magic
 The life-giving magic
 The wise ancient magic
Of days long ago.

Merrie of heart shall man be in his garden
For borage will fill the most weary with joy
Meadowsweet, roses and balm drive forth sadness
Breathe deep of the healing that comes with the sweetness
Of warm scented herbs that are brushed as you go
 The sweet flower magic
 The soft fragrant magic
 The sunshine filled magic
In gardens we know.

THE HILLS OF GOD

He left the house
A great while before day
And all alone
He sought a place to pray
Among the hills.

His strength was spent
His quietness was gone
So from the roofs
Of men He went alone
Unto the hills.

He needed prayer
That man of Nazareth
Even a Christ
When He would conquer death—
Went to the hills.

Then lift your eyes
The glory of your task
You cannot know
New strength you still can ask
Upon the hills.

When you have prayed
Alone beneath the sky
You find His strength
Whom they did crucify
Among the hills—

You taste His joy
His courage ever gay
His deathless love.
You meet God's Holy Day
Upon the hills.

“Our sure and holy path to God Thou art,
Our Truth, sublime of Truths, our being’s life,
Our grandest deeds are written in Thy heart,
Ere we achieve them, facing sin and strife:
 Thou art our Psalm to cheer
 In desert long and drear:
The Good we dream, the Bread in God’s own hand
Thou art our Brother in the Spirit’s land.”

“FOLLOW THOU ME”

Lord, I would follow Thee
But cannot move,
My soul is full of self,
How can it glow
With Truth and Light?
How can it show
The glory of Thy Love?
O take my heart and mind and soul
And make them whole
Cleanse them from sin
And dwell within.

Prove Thou art here
Strong, sure and near
With love most sweet and dear,
Then I will watch their fear
Vanish away
And their poor driven eyes
Turn to the Dayspring and the Day.

Lord, hear me when I pray,
And quicken me
That I may follow Thee.

*

THE FELLOWSHIP

He walked with us
Along the roads at twilight
His hand was warm
And strong within my clasp.
His quiet voice
Laid peace upon our spirits
His silences
Held all our hearts as one
In steadfast Love.

We found him slain
Upon a hill at twilight
And knew that death
Had met him all alone.
Those crush'd dead hands
Had known no clasp of friendship
When night had come
Yet still his love triumphant
O'erflowed the world.

LEAVE-TAKING

When I took leave of you, I held my face
Smiling and gay up to the golden light,
That you might see that grief was not in sight,
And that my eyes were dry and unafraid,
Though for the last time your dear hands were laid
In mine, and in a little while the empty night
Would close forever on our lost delight,
And I go forth unto a world un-made.
Yet as I smiled into your eyes and spoke
Words of gay courage knowing that your own
Held just as long as I could hide my pain,
There while I stood, my heart grew taut and broke
Broke like a cliff the sea has overthrown,
Still, as you went, blinded—I smiled again.

LIFE RENEWED

Though you are dead
And I have been long buried
Beneath the work and war of all these years
To-day my head
Can feel the warm Spring sunshine
And my numb face
Is wet with sudden unaccustomed tears.

I never knew
The old forgotten glory
Could come again into this foul decay
But that clear blue
That stretches far above me
Pulses anew
With the same thrilling wonder of the day
That once I knew.

When thou wouldst thy Lord adore
Seek His silence first;
Stillness shall thy soul restore
And its waters ease thy thirst.
Quiet has its pastures green
Where all souls may feed;
There on Love thy weakness lean
For Love knoweth all thy need.
Let thy soul have room to grow
Grow and love Him more and more
If His Presence thou wouldst know
Thou in silence must adore.

MEETING FOR WORSHIP, FEBRUARY, 1929

Soon all the dark and the cold will be gone
For the green fire of life has come back to the earth
Like little white flames of the Peace of God
Kindled anew on the icy sod
The snowdrops shine in the quiet dawn.

All that is past belongs to the dead
To-day with its joy and its glory is ours
God has a new word of love for us all
Deep in the silence His message will fall
Here in our midst is the Broken Bread.

Oh God Thy Kingdom shall come to the earth,
Though darkness and winter of soul are here
Our hearts are bound in the frozen mire
But set them free with Thy living fire
To find our life in a glad re-birth.

Oh hush your dear hearts in the sweet certainty
Of silence that softly sinks over us all
Like crocus gold from its slender sheath
Our spirit leaps from the dark beneath
And cleaves the heights of eternity.

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Of silence that softly sinks over us all
Like crocus gold from its slender sheath
Our spirit leaps from the dark beneath
And cleaves the heights of eternity.

MEETING

Hold us close to Thee
Fold us in thy peace
Still our murmuring
Let our questions cease
Shine into our souls,
Burn our false delight,
Call us once again
“Children of the Light”.

O thou following Love
Gather us to Thee
Let the silences
Of eternity
Lie around our hearts,
Till within this place
Once again we see
Vision of Thy face.

Thou that vision be
Not till we have trod
Right to Calvary
Following our God.
Set our lives on fire
Drive us through the night
Torches of Thy love,
“Children of the Light”.

FOLLOWING THEE

Lord, I would go anywhere
Following Thee.
I would give all I have
So willingly.
I would walk forward unafraid
To death or Hell
And count them both as nought
If thou didst dwell
Within my mind and heart and soul.

But I am weak and fail Thee
Every day
Yea, every hour.
There is no glory and no grace
In aught I do
In aught I say
I have no power
To do Thy will.
My very prayers
Are soiled with self
And made unreal and worthless
While I pray.
Yet now again I come:
Though shame would strike me dumb
I plead once more
And all my soul I pour
Out like a breath
To keep a little flame from death.

For I have been given sight
I know the glory of the Light
That fills Eternity.
Though now men cower
Under the dark and blinding power
Of Fear, and all it brings.
The tortured maze of agony
And frenzied misery,
The clamour of poor broken things
Beats on my heart
And stirs my selfish soul
Until I must take part.
I lift my heart to Thee
Lord, show them Thy Truth,
And set them free,
Send forth Thy Light
To make their darkness flee.

IN MEETING

In stillness we wait.
Sometimes we pray,
thanking God
and praising Him
“Bless the Lord,
O my soul
And all that is within me
Bless His Holy Name.
Bless the Lord, O my soul
And forget not all His benefits,
Who forgiveth all thine iniquities
Who healeth all thy diseases
Who crowneth thee
With loving kindness and tender mercy.”
So into our minds
the thought of God flows.
And the thought of God
Is interwoven with the awareness
Of God in the minds and hearts
Of those who are sharing the silence with us.
When we remember their loving
Their loving which has blessed our lives
And their love of God,
We know God again in them
And gradually in the stillness
We realise the moving
Of a mighty power,
A blessing and a glory

That cleanses our hearts
And strengthens our souls
And flows through our being
like a great tide, vital and
Full of love and joy and peace.
So God can be met
In the gathering of Friends.

It is not always easy
To open the gates
Of ones being and feel
the Holy Spirit of God entering.
There are times when it is hard,
Sometimes we fail utterly.
All down the ages
Men have groped for that which opens
The gates of being to the awareness of
The presence of God.
Some have found sore need
of silence and solitude
wherein they could be still
enough to hear the inner voice
of God within the soul.
All those who have revealed
the ways of God to men,
all those who have passed the torch
of living spiritual experience,
have found this need of seeking
times of solitude and silence.
Jesus himself went up into the hills
alone at night to pray,

.
(Unfinished).

“GOD CAN BE MET”

I

God can be met,
and then God can be known
and when God is known
one can love God.
When God is loved
Love then is known
and the meaning of life
is understood.
God is met
in the human soul—
in one's own soul,
in the souls of others.
God can be known
as the soul of my soul
as the soul of your soul
as the soul of 'his' soul,
as a mighty power in my spirit,
irresistible, free, joyous, creative,
deathless and limitless,
and God can be known as
a burning fiery flame,
a flame of life
a flame of mighty loving,
a white hot truth and
a blazing sincerity
a flame of loving wisdom,
a glory and a loveliness

within my heart and mind and spirit
within your heart and mind and spirit,
within their hearts and minds and spirits
God can be known and adored.

Alone and in secret
one can meet God
within one's own soul
Centre and core and depth
at the heart of one's being
one can find God.

Alone, yet with others
one can meet God—
encircled by enemies,
entangled by lies
one can feel love
one can see truth
flame out and conquer
all menace of fear.
One can find God
in the pattern of life
in the complex designs
of human personality,
so that with wonder
and reverend excitement
each truth is recognized.

II

How can one know
when the moment of time
halts on the dial
of the glimpse of Eternity?
How can one know
that one has met God?

When one meets God
There is no doubt
as to the truth,
the glorious reality.
All that the heart craved,
all that the mind sought
all that the soul needed
is found and known.
Then like a child
running for hours,
breathless and tired,
suddenly stops
finds itself at home,
and with amazed recognition
sinks into arms stretched out
to receive it,—
so the heart knows
that this is God,
and the spirits sinks into
the place of its being.
When one meets God
in the soul of another,
there is an instant swift
recognition.
So men saw God
in Jesus of Nazareth,
so men saw God
in the servants of Jesus.
Paul knowing God
said to the people
“I am not living,
Christ liveth in me”.
Then when he told them
how to reveal God

to those who waited
in darkness and error,
Paul said, "Christ in you
is the hope of glory."
So this great truth
lies within reach of us,
yet we are blinded,
defamed and terrified
by the death principle
that the world worships,
so that we dare not
launch out into depths
beyond comprehension.
We cannot believe
that truth is so simple.
We cannot forego
our trust in the familiar
material security.
We plan and attempt
to weave our own pattern.
We dwell on the past
and get lost in the maze
of events and their causes.
We sift all the sayings
of saints and of prophets
and quote the blurred fragments
of truth they discovered.
We talk about God
and we talk about men who
have talked about God.
We pile words on words
till the dust of them chokes us
and only the dry acid thirst
remains.

Jesus once said to a woman,
“If thou knewest the gift of God,
and who it is that saith to thee,
Give Me to drink;
thou wouldst have asked of Him,
and He would have given thee
living water.

Whosoever drinketh
of the water that I shall give him
shall never thirst:
but the water that I shall give him
shall be in him a well of water
springing up into everlasting life.
God is a Spirit
and they that worship Him
must worship Him in Spirit
and in truth.”

To another woman He said,
“Said I not unto thee
that if thou wouldst believe
thou shouldst see
the Glory of God?”

Then to a group of His friends He said
“If ye had known Me,
ye should have known my Father also,
and from henceforth
ye know Him and have seen Him
And I will pray the Father
and He shall give you
another Comforter,
that He may abide with you forever,
even the Spirit of Truth.”

Then Jesus speaking to God His Father said,

“Sanctify them through Thy truth
Thy word is truth.
As thou has sent me into the world
even so also have I sent them
into the world.
Neither pray I for these alone,
but also for them
which shall believe on me
through their word.
That they may all be one,
as Thou, Father art in Me,
and I in Thee,
that they also may be one in us:
And the glory which Thou gavest Me
I have given them,
that they may be one,
even as We are One
I in them, and Thou in Me,
that they may be perfect in One.”

So we meet God
in our own souls
and in the souls of one another.
Then when we know God
in these two ways
and then we gather together
in small groups
after the manner of Friends,
we can find another way,
or rather, a new experience
of awareness of God.
We find that it is possible
to go deep and deeper
into a great stillness

of realisation.

With all our hearts
and all our minds
and all our strength
we reach towards
that certainty we have come to know.

FRAGMENTS

A pattern unfolds in the web of Time
A separate pattern in every life
In the web of time a pattern is wrought
And every life has its own design
And the pattern of each is a part of the whole.

Do they know you are following our Lord?
Have they seen His compassion in your face?
When you walk with your friends on the road
Do their hearts burn within them through His grace?
“Then O my Friend, thou Friend indeed
That in their need, their Lord reveals.”

When the darkness lies deep upon men
And the fear and the anguish spreads abroad
Do you sing through the shadow and the gloom
“Lo, I bring you good tidings of your Lord.”
“Then O my Friend, thou Friend indeed
That in their need, their Lord reveals.”

Love of God in your heart shall run like a
stream of water through the hearts of all
men, and the Kingdom shall come upon earth
and men shall no longer destroy one another.

Lonely I wander the scenes of my childhood
Lone is the house now
And lonely the moorland
The children are scattered
The old folk are gone.
Why stand I here like a ghost in the shadows
It's time I was moving
It's time I passed on.

Love so strong that nought can break it
Though betrayed it never dies
Love that grows and glows and brightens
Love that suffering purifies
Till the glory of its beauty
Pierces through the blind of heart—
God revealed alive and loving.

SONNET

That stillest, deepest and most lovely joy
Which on the other side of silence lies,
Is happiness complete, without alloy;
All longings of the soul it satisfies,
The heart's desire, the body's urgent need
Are met and sanctified to inward peace;
The spirit from all fear and hunger freed—
Feels its old fetters fall—its question cease,
And tides of silence softly surge around,
Filling eternity with golden light—
Until the spirit swinging through has found
That heaven of inconceivable delight—
That utmost living joy that man may know,
The glory that set Jesus' face aglow.

WHAT CHRIST MEANS TO ME

I

CHRIST is my way to God. He is the answer to the hunger of my soul—the hunger for truth, for release from fear for reassurance that absolute Goodness and Truth and Beauty are real.

I contemplate Christ and I come to know more and more of God. I discover what manner of personality God the Father is. To me Christ is the image of God.

Jesus was the incarnation of the likeness of God. He was a man born in time whose short life revealed the love of the Father and whose death was the veritable crown of His witness to the Truth of God's life in Him.

As Herbert Gray said, "I have seen in Christ all the best and more than all the best I ever dreamt that God might be. And that is a saving experience."

That is all the doctrine of the person of Christ into which Christ Himself has led me. Therefore the theological controversies about the person of Christ have ceased to be momentous.

II

I have found that my life has a pattern, a design, and that the beginnings were interwoven with the pattern of other lives long before my birth. I have found that the focal point of the pattern of my life is THE HOLY SPIRIT. My approach to religion is through the Spirit of the Living God. My contact with other lives is through the spirit. I recognise the brotherhood of man through the life of the Spirit within the souls of the men and women of my generation. I have no longer any realisation of race,

colour or class. I find it possible to enter into close and intimate relationships in friendship and love with people in all classes and of all races and colours. Therefore, through the Spirit in all people I know that the Fatherhood of God is truth.

I have arrived at the place where I no longer see Jesus as an historical person. Through years of meditation and reading and prayer I have lost sight of detail and accept the personality of Jesus Christ as the mirror of the Living God the outward manifestation of the Spirit in human form, God incarnate. Thus I find that I have come to understand belief in the Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. I am sure of God and of nothing else. I have no faith in myself and no sufficiency even for my own life. I can love others but I no longer lean on their constancy or integrity because I know that they, like myself are at the mercy of circumstances. Sickness, fear or mental illness can easily defeat us so that we fail one another. Only God never faileth.

I know of only two things that are always adequate. They are love and prayer. Both are very difficult. Love can be submerged in one's emotional life when self is rampant. Self has to die in order that we may know how to love. The pattern of love in Corinthians is an excellent guide.

Prayer is very difficult and has to be learnt through years of discipline. A great honesty and faithfulness are necessary. When all our efforts to help a soul are useless, we can pray. Through love and prayer one becomes conscious of the indwelling of God in one's own life. I have found that miracles happen and that a great power is available.

I have found that I have great joy through the fact that I love people, especially the common people. I enjoy mixing with them. I feel set free from all self-consciousness by them and I find that I am able to set them free and make them feel happy and jolly and hospitable. It seems as though the flowing vitality that is part of the Holy Spirit is peculiarly available to us through this means.

Colour and light and music all bring awareness of the Spirit through one's emotional life. The Catholic Church recognises this and makes use of all three to enrich the place of prayer and worship. I made this discovery when I was a child, so ever since I have turned from the drab sameness of modern life to the medieval richness of the catholic churches, not The Church, but the churches.

The spirit flows into the mind by way of words forming thoughts, reflecting the thoughts of other minds, creating images, quickening the creative part of the mind with beauty and truth and dignity. Maturity of mind brings great enrichment to life. One begins to comprehend dimly the Holy Wisdom that is God. Here again I have felt that God the Holy Spirit was to be found, but not so surely as by the other ways. Words can make a dry deadness cover one's vision. Sickness and old age and fear can wipe out the perception that depends on words. Even the Bible can fade into unreality. Feeling is nearer than thought.

All these things reveal God as the very life of all things, God the Holy Spirit, free and strong, lovely and satisfying, all-per-vading all-comprehending. Like a tide the Spirit flows through all the vital experiences of life, touching one's awareness in all manner of ways, ebbing and flowing through the many gateways.

“THE SOARING”

“The bones of my feet were broken
so that I could not climb.
God gave me wings.”

THERE is a great darkness in the world. The darkness is so great that all men seem blind. We grope along together and when we stumble against one another we are afraid and oftentimes angry. The blindness of others makes us very angry and impatient, and our own blindness makes us lonely. We strain our eyes to see through the dark fog. It seems as though each of us had three kinds of eyes. We look with the eyes of the body and we see clearly many things around us. They seem very comforting these things, and very desirable. Quickly we must gather them for ourselves before others shall take them. Everywhere we can hear people calling out for these things and all the world desires to possess them.

Sometimes, especially when we have just left childhood, we look ahead with the eyes of the mind. We cannot see things clearly with those eyes, but we see people and there seems to be a faint shining about them. Oh how the heart leaps at the glimpse of that shining. Surely it will be good to get close to the people who seem to have that wonderful halo of light around them. Perhaps the darkness will go. But though we seem to see the people and their light clearly for a little while there comes a time when the light goes and the people vanish and the darkness is deeper and colder and more lonely than ever.

To men and women from time to time there has come a call through the dark, “Light! There is the Light!”

It comes from high up the steps of the world, that cry of light. We can only look up there with the eyes of our souls and alas so many of us cannot see at all with these poor closed eyes, crushed long ago by "Things" which the body desired.

Those who can see a little way up the road have seen at times a most lovely radiance, a strong clear shining above the dark, but shadows hide it so quickly. The hill-way is so steep and so covered with cruel stones and thorns. But what makes the spirit faint is the loneliness. There is a terrible deathlike loneliness around those who dare the heights. Strong souls have turned back with despair in their hearts. How shall the weak and the most frail of all souls ever seek those heights?

Now there was one who tried to climb, such a foolish one, whose hands were unclean and whose feet were weak and crippled. So many times that one fell, and always right to the bottom. Poor fool, her feet were never made for climbing. The bones did crumble and break and she lay there in the dark hiding from those who laughed and sneered. Far away the light was shining. High beyond her, others stood to rest awhile. The darkness was like a tomb around. In her heart there was a great bitterness. "Fool! fool! fool! to climb! Fool to try to move at all with such silly feet, oh, blind silly hopeless fool."

. . . Far away up there the light was shining—a great glowing, living light. If only one could reach it and throw a torch to those who stumbled below. Fool! fool! blind eyes and hands all smeared with the mire of many falls. "Light! Light! Light!"

Feet so broken could never climb. . . .
So God gave her wings.

PEACE

I

I FOLLOW after peace, but I am not a Pacifist. I have come to dislike that word, because it suggests a negative to me, one who will not fight, one who agitates against the use of all force and who attacks the uses of force by agitation in speech and print. One who refuses to allow the state to control him, that is how we know the Pacifist to-day.

Therefore I feel bound to seek after a positive rather than a negative way of peace-making.

Peace-making is a task for all time, not just for war time. To make peace in the world one must first understand peace and have its roots in one's own heart. This peace is given by God. It comes not by thought or reading or by a manner of life. It can only be given. Therefore one must turn to God and wait for His gift of Peace. Part of every day must be given to waiting for this gift of God. I have to take time, to put this one thing before all others, the knowing of God and His Peace.

From that place I can begin to make peace, first in all my relationships. A harmony of personal relationships is the basis of true peacemaking. So one must bring unfailing kindness—the loving kindness of God, and build up a strong bond of trust and sincerity between those who are near us and ourselves. One must learn to understand the hearts of others—not only knowing what they do and say but why they do and say it. Only the understanding heart can rectify mistakes in community life. One must also be prepared to admit one's own mistakes and have them rectified for one. One cannot be an active Peacemaker in one's national life until one has learnt how to bring Peace and good-

will and creative effort into the lives with whom one makes personal contact.

So I would learn from the men and women I meet and know. I need to understand them and their lives before I can understand others whom I do not know—before I can work for the real needs of the community I must understand the men and women who make up the community.

Then I must work for a real understanding of my country and its relationships with other countries. Here I would apply the same old method, work from the known to the unknown. First I must get to know my own country. I must know its history, especially its social history. I must read and study to understand the foundations of our national life—both the growth of our strength and the tendencies which indicate our weakness.

Then I must study the things which affect international relationships. One must have a fairly wide and sound knowledge of the conditions which affect trade and which govern the movements of the peoples.

I find it essential to combine history and geography. It is also necessary to know something of the principles of government. This is my stumbling block. My education has its blind spots and this is one of them. But the best preparation for the understanding of the responsibility and dangers of government is, I think, both study of and some service in municipal government. One of the humble and yet very important services a citizen can render a community is to strive for the permeation of public opinion by good will and tolerance.

This form of peace-making requires a sacrifice of one's time—to give time for reading and study, time for hearing addresses by first-class thinkers, time to attend classes such as the W.E.A.

The Quaker group of a small "Meeting" is an ideal nucleus. All this is positive. A negative declaration is unnecessary. One does not feel the need of stating one's renouncement of the use of violence, because one lives in that condition where violence is

unknown. One lives in that Spirit which takes away the occasion of all wars. As a Quaker it is also unnecessary to formulate new statements. The peace testimony is there if one stands by it.

How shall I act if violence is used against me or those I love? I do not know. I can only rule the direction in which my life shall move. It is fairly certain that one generally acts according to habit. If I am habitually friendly and steady under God's leading, I can hope to be steady and quiet if violence is used against me.

II

“O God who art the Author of Peace and lover of concord, in knowledge of whom standeth our eternal life, whose service is perfect freedom. Defend us thy humble servants in all assaults of our enemies that we surely trusting in Thy defence, may not fear the power of any adversaries, through the might of Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Amen.

We have thought of peace as a condition—as something which made a man or woman feel in harmony with life—and as an international condition in which nations were in harmony. To us Peace meant the opposite of War, when we thought of mankind. It meant an untroubled mind when we applied it to ourselves. Of course we realise now that such shallow thinking does not help us to understand the truth.

When we think through to a wider vision, and think deeply to a better understanding we know that peace is not a condition. The condition of men who have harmonious relations between nation and nation, or class and class is the condition of concord. God is the lover of concord. The condition of the mind that is in harmony with life is not peace. It is not necessarily concord. It can be the result of ignorance, even of mental deficiency, for in a world where children are tortured and men's minds crazed

by fear and youth deliberately corrupted in order to make money—it is not really natural for a thinking mind to remain long in a condition of untroubled harmony with life. Yet one can have peace in the heart and mind and soul under conditions which can only be described in words that sear with horror. “If I descend into Hell, Thou art there!” Peace is the power, And God is the Author of Peace.

That much we have understood. That we comprehend, that is the peace which does not surpass our understanding. Let us begin there.

We know now that if only the true church could indeed come to birth—that the real peace could become a reality. If a group of men and women have the vision and courage—“the love and faith and hope” to let the roots of their being be rooted and grounded in the life of God—they become the centre of a spreading creative peace. This peace pervades and transforms the society and generation in which they live. It has left its mark like a vein of gold on the dust of the centuries. All of us who know something of the history of mankind know the records of such groups and the glory that flowered on earth for awhile whenever they have appeared.

We are waiting and praying for such a flowering to-day. “With men’s hearts failing them for fear”—with class war and international distrust and fear and hatred, with homes breaking into isolated and decaying fragments that breed social disease—we wait for the vision that will come to the group in whom the power of the Living God will dwell. They will bring peace to us. The peace which we have understood and longed for and for which we pray.

We read that Jesus commanded his apostles to “Wait for the promise of the Father” which He said, “Ye have heard from Me.”

“Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto Me.”

“Tarry ye in the city until ye be clothed with power from on high.”

We have sometimes made the mistake of thinking we should possess this power and use it, but God wants the power to get possession of us and use us. “Power belongeth unto God and remains His forever.” God seeks for men and women whom He can thus clothe with power. The world waits for it, to be convinced that God is indeed in the midst of His people.

God made man in His own image, and for His likeness. Man was to become a temple for God to dwell in, he was to be a home in which God could rest.

In Jesus of Nazareth God had found a man in whom He could rest whose being was open to the rule of His will and the fellowship of His love. In Him there was a human nature possessed by a divine Spirit and such God would have all men to be.

How could the Father dwell in men as He had dwelt in Christ? The answer was given in Pentecost. The spirit that dwelt in Jesus Christ and in His life of obedience, comes into the life of the apostles pervading transforming and clothing with Power. Man’s heart is now indeed the home of his God. Such was the birth of the church, such must be its growth and its strength. Let the church return to Pentecost and Pentecost will return to her. Then the church may at last convince the world that it is indeed not merely an ecclesiastical organisation but a body of men and women and children in whose lives there dwells the love and faith and hope and power that alone can regenerate mankind. From that power will grow the unity in the bond of peace.

That is the vision of Peace on earth that we have understood. From there we look again at the statement in the Epistle to the Philippians—“And the Peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus . . . and the God of Peace shall be with you.”

One cannot define that Peace. The Peace of God cannot be

analysed and then enclosed in a formula. But the manifestation of that indwelling peace has been witnessed and described. We ourselves, thank God, have known and loved people in whom we recognized the gift of His Peace. They are the salt of the earth and it is the Christ in them that is our hope of Glory.

In a letter written by a woman called Alice Means, who was a missionary in India we get this glimpse of a deeper peace. She had an amazing life, building, teaching, making leaders, and then cancer struck her. She thought she might get home to America before she died, but she became worse in Bombay and had to stay there, the doctor knowing she would never reach America. This letter she wrote from the Bombay hospital to Stanley Jones, after knowing she could not go home to die.

“Use me as an illustration in your book. Sure—but what? I haven’t suffered much, yet, and when I do I may not be able to tell you how it goes. How thankful I am for all these years of perfect, abounding health! What a happy life I have had! Let me tell you of the experience of these last two months. With a host of others I was working along in a great field digging, sowing, weeding, and watering never noticing I had reached the edge till I heard, ‘Alice, that’s enough, come over here and sit down a bit.’ I looked up and there stood Jesus smiling at me. I went over and sat down on the grass by Him, and He said, ‘You have been busy working and have not had time for all those intimacies that go with a great friendship, such as I want with you. Come along and let us walk together here!’ He put His arm through mine and we walked along an avenue all covered with grass and flowers, and the birds were singing. Oh, it is beautiful. As I look down towards the river it is a little misty. But I know He will see me through that. Even now I am forever with my Lord. *His peace within me is wonderful.* Nothing can separate us now. It is heaven. That’s all. The doctors and the nurses cannot understand how I can calmly discuss my condition and outlook.”

The peace which is a deep loveliness in life and power in the soul is the fruit of the Spirit. Love, Joy and Peace. When the Peace of God has taken possession of a human heart no storm can extinguish the Light or banish the steady calm at the centre of being. There is no fear of cancer or paralysis, of poverty or shame, of loss or death. Evil tidings of wars and crude weapons of modern warfare bring the storm around—but the heart is fixed, trusting in God. All these things may come, probably will come, but their power is limited to the destruction of the body within a given section of time and space. Those who have waited upon God and known the gift of His peace, live on in that which is eternal. Jesus, for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame.

We know that there is a way to this Peace. To the Peace of God which passeth all understanding. Which shall keep your hearts and minds, through Christ Jesus.

“WAYMARKS”

“O ye who taste that love is sweet,
Set waymarks for the doubtful feet,
That stumble on in search of it.”

THERE is an old wisdom that I learnt from a Jewish Rabbi. It is the secret of a perfect and lasting love between a man and a woman. So many marriages mean but a fleeting happiness followed by a growing disillusionment and misery. To many people marriage has come to mean but the “lottery” it was jeeringly called, and love is often only a term for describing sexual self-indulgence. Yet in every heart there is a feeling that there is something better, something finer and indestructible. This instinctive belief is justified. There is a way to make marriage the beginning of a lovely and creative relationship.

Here is the Waymark of that wisdom.

When two people fall in love with one another, the first thing of which they are aware is a sense of “quickenings”,—some deep and hidden part of their being has “Come alive”. It is a wonderful experience, especially to those who are young and vital. But here, we are warned, there is need for a clear understanding, first of oneself, and then of this new power which has been brought to life within one’s being.

Every man and woman has a threefold life. We are alive through the consciousness of our bodies, our minds, and our spirits—in that order. So when two people experience this “quickenings”, it is at first a physical awareness. One sees a face that seems dearer and more desirable than all other faces. Every

movement of the beloved has a charm and power over the one who watches with loving eyes. Each meeting brings increasing happiness. To shake hands reveals an awareness of the thrilling power of physical touch. There comes a longing to touch the hands and face of the loved one. This desire is inevitable because love is the great creative force and creation depends upon union. This strong urge for closeness is part of the plan of God in the life of men and women. But marriage should not take place at this stage of a relationship and restraint should be used to check complete fulfilment of desire. There is a danger in a marriage at this stage. Only the first quickening has been experienced—that of the body. The old wisdom teaches us that as our bodies were the first part of us to develop, so their reaction to life is most swift and dominating. In marriages which take place at the first stage of relationship, the physical reaction is so strong and overwhelming that it sweeps away the possibility of any other fulfilment. When the body has satisfied its needs, the mind and soul are left numb, half-grown and frustrated. This is the actual cause of so many unhappy marriages.

Here, then, is the danger point—here is the place where Youth must pause and test the ground, and then use every ounce of intellect and will to take the right course. If there are certain factors which make restraint difficult and thereby prevent man and woman from finding the way of creative love and utmost fulfilment, then such factors must be frankly faced and their character fully realised, so that they may be avoided, at whatever cost.

What are the things which make restraint difficult and which undermine judgment?

The first is lack of self-discipline. If the body is to be the servant of the mind and spirit, then the body must be under perfect control. This is not achieved by wishful thinking. Man is akin to the beasts in the way his body functions and must recognise that fact. He has a body which will slide into pleasant laziness.

ness unless it feels the spur of self-discipline. He has all the greed of an animal that will eat and drink beyond its needs—unless he learns how to control his love of food and drink. He has nerves which flinch from pain and discomfort, but although an animal can be mastered by pain, a man can develop nerves of steel and a woman can triumph over all manner of trials and difficulties when she really loves.

Self-discipline makes restraint easy, and restraint is essential. Self-indulgence makes restraint increasingly difficult and ultimately impossible.

Those who would deeply love must restrain all selfish instincts; must care so much for the greatest possible happiness of their dear one that they seek to portray love rather than demand expressions of love, and have that high sense of chivalry which will empower them, by their words and actions, to assist each other to a sane and wholesome restraint, and to withhold the most insistent desire for contact.

If the body is to be a good servant it must be well treated. Just as a runner must train his body for a special effort in a race, and an air-pilot must avoid everything that clouds his judgment or hinders his steadiness, so for this big effort for self-control and deeper love, both man and woman must see that their bodies are treated with fairness and respect. Adequate sleep and rest are important as well as fresh air and judicious exercise. One thing which it is needful to avoid is alcoholic drink of any description. It is now an established scientific fact that no one can consume intoxicants and retain his normal self-mastery. Alcohol permeates the whole being with excitement and stimulates the emotions, *and at the same time makes one less capable of coping with these emotions and exercising self-control.* Those who would have the very best and finest quality of love and life must entirely forgo this definite cause of failure.

When once this self-control is achieved, a man and a woman in love can set out upon the thrilling adventure of exploring the

kingdom of the mind together. The second part of one's being is "Mind" and a real understanding and companionship of minds is of vital importance to lasting happiness in marriage.

Reading together, seeing plays together, hiking together—sharing music, work and friendships, this is the ultimate test of real companionship. When two lovers have talked with eager freedom of everything that touches their lives—of work, of play, of love and religion, of children and homes, politics and war and death—gradually they arrive at a place where one of two things must happen. If no real companionship of mind has been revealed, then desire will fade and they will drift apart. If they have found their love growing and deepening, as real love always does in this lovely adventure of absolute comradeship—they will know that separation would be unbearable. Together, life is rich and full of colour, courage and promise. Separately, or with a less adequate companion, life would be deprived of much of its richness and value. *This is the time to marry*, when the two who fell in love have become real partners, with a bond of understanding and a conscious need of one another. Such a marriage is the beginning of a life of growing happiness. In such a union the fulfilment of desire has an intensity of delight far deeper and more satisfying than could be known by the gratifying of mere bodily desire. Then after the first joyous months are past, the husband and wife will find that they are entering into a new and amazing "togetherness". They discover something in one another that is beyond all words and touch. It is more lasting than thought and far stronger than passion. It is that which we call Spirit, and when a man and his wife reach the place of that inner knowledge—that is the true Marriage—when two are so joined together by God that no man can put them asunder, neither in life nor death will they lose one another again.

This is the true way of love between man and woman. Surely all who really love would seek this perfect fulfilment and lasting happiness? It is worth waiting for, it is worth any sacrifice. It

is wisdom to heed the Waymark—to hold desire in leash, relentlessly, until there is certainty of its real satisfying.

“They that love beyond the world cannot be separated by it.
Death cannot kill what never dies.”

“PEOPLE THAT WALKED IN DARKNESS”

HERE in Europe we feel ourselves to be verily in the Shadow of Death. It is not merely the fear of another World War that has shaken the very roots of our being. Dismay and despair fall upon us when we find that we are losing faith, not only in one another but also in ourselves.

Hitherto, whatever happened to mar the peace-structure we strove to build, we still believed that there was “that of God” in us, which would ultimately leaven the whole and bring about the regeneration of human society. Now we are making the grim discovery that we can no longer trust our own individual integrity or fidelity. The actual material with which we are building seems to be faulty, and this material is Human Personality. It is the disintegration of personality which is the most formidable menace of our generation. So the Shadow of Death enfolds us.

But this is an ancient place—this valley of the Shadow of Death. How often its terror has touched humanity we know from the Bible and from the experience of the pilgrims of the ages. In that most famous description in *Pilgrim's Progress* there is an astounding and lovely message of hope.

How many Friends have read *Pilgrim's Progress* lately? Some may remember the description of Christian entering the Valley with such courage and faith. How he strode valiantly forth, challenging the fiends by calling out, “I will walk in the strength of the Lord God!” so that the terror receded. But that as he went further he found that his own voice had become so strange that he did not know it.

From so close to him the foul whispers came that he verily

believed they were from his own mind. Then he felt that he had betrayed One who loved him. He lost faith in himself and *then* the darkness began to overwhelm him. Then suddenly, in his dire extremity, he heard a voice calling through the night. It was a human voice and it rang out with fearless clarity,

“Though I walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, I will fear no ill, for Thou art with me!”

As Christian listened to the voice of his fellow, he felt the courage flowing back into his heart. His feet were strong again and his mind clear. No miraculous vision had sustained him—but he was freed from fear, because he found that close to him in the darkness there was a soul radiant with the knowledge of the Presence of God. And then the darkness itself vanished, the day broke, and Christian exclaimed, “He hath turned the Shadow of Death into Morning!” When Christian found the one whose voice had led him forth into the light—behold, it was a friend whom he had known all his life.

Thus it has been with many of us, when we have met our Dark Night of the Soul and all things failed us. Our hopes crumbled and our vision faded so that at last we came to believe that we ourselves had failed utterly, that we had never been truly “Children of the Light” at all. Then into that place of blackness and shame there comes one who brings back hope and joy. We are not conscious of a dazzling mystical experience or sudden blinding glory. It is just that in some ordinary man or woman like ourselves, we see God break through.

We become aware of a forgiveness and love beyond our comprehension and we realise that we have been close to that following Love all our lives. Drawn forward by the power of creative loving—we find that the day breaks and the shadows flee away.

Those of us who belong to “The Society of Friends” have a

unique calling. In some of the storm centres of Europe our name has become a legend. How many of us realise the significance and the responsibility of our name?

It is said of us that we have discarded all outward sacraments. It is also said that we endeavour to meet for worship in a silence that is sacramental. But if we *have* one sacrament—it is Friendship. For we offer to mankind the Friendship of God. This is the friendship which says, "Everyman I will go with thee, in thy utmost need." It is when we find that we have failed those who trusted us, when we can no longer trust ourselves, when we know at last that *our* friendship is utterly worthless—then we learn that what men need is the Friendship of God.

Saint Augustine cried, "Cramped is the dwelling of my soul, do Thou O God, enlarge it!" We, too, feel that our hearts are too small and our souls too weak for the task that awaits us. Then we remember the promise,

"A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you. And I will put my Spirit within you."

"If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."

"We all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

When we are convinced of our inner poverty and stripped of all self-reliance, God can begin to use us—into our empty lives He pours the torrents of His Grace. As we wait in silence and in prayer we shall receive the power to "become"—to become what we were meant to be, Sons and Daughters of God.

Paul said, "Not I live, but Christ liveth in me." How shall men know the living Christ to-day? To-day and Yesterday and forever, God is Love and Christ is Love Incarnate—the Love of God in the lives of men and women. In Jesus of Nazareth God found a man in whom the Spirit could dwell, "whose whole

being was opened to the rule of His will and the fellowship of His Love.”

In Jesus there was a human personality possessed by the Divine Spirit; and such God would have all men to be.

We can meet the need of those who seek in us the friendship of God if we follow the Way the Truth and the Life. Jesus said, “Follow Me.” He did not ask men to begin by believing that He was God. In following Him we learn to know Him and to love Him. We also learn to know men as He knew them and to love them.

There is a book called *The Public Life of Our Lord Jesus Christ*, by Archbishop Goodier. It is a wonderful study of those three crowded years before the Crucifixion. Some Friends have found it a great help as a background for meditation when they felt their need to study more deeply and thoroughly the life of Jesus. It is written by one who has learnt Christ on his knees and so in his heart. If we meditate every day, slowly and deeply on the life and teaching of Jesus, we begin to think His thoughts, to live our lives in His way and to love as He loved.

Jesus did not teach His disciples how to preach, but He taught them how to pray. As old Andrew Murray said, “To know how to speak to God is more than knowing how to speak to men. Not power with men but power with God is the first thing.” It is significant that it was while Jesus was *praying* that His face changed and shone with the glory of the Spirit. Following Him we find ourselves compelled to give time to prayer. So many of us have said that our days are too crowded for real time for quiet and for prayer. So were His days often too crowded—so He used the night for prayer. When the multitudes had thronged Him all day and He was utterly weary, He went away alone up the hills to pray. When He faced his enemies for the last time, it was after forty-eight hours of prayer.

When we begin to follow and to pray and to think through the mind of Jesus, we find that our capacity for loving deepens and

grows, because our roots have gone deep into the very Love of God. A Power beyond our wisdom and strength has taken us and is loving through us, breathing through our praying, touching those we touch—so that even our failures and our weakness cease to matter at all. Then we can really share the lives of our fellows in their utmost need. Through us they know the Friendship of God and by His Love they are released from their fears and their sins.

It was from the radiance of this experience that Paul wrote to the disciples at Ephesus and told them of his prayer “That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; *That Christ may dwell in your hearts* by faith; that ye being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height; and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, *that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.*”

It is through such faith and life and prayer that we can become in truth a Society of Friends. This was the vision of George Fox and all the brave and loving souls who gave us our heritage and our name.

In the same century that George Fox was walking across England, blazing his message of the Light of God in the human heart—far away in India there was a Hindu mystic called Tukaram. He was a writer of the Bhakti school, and to-day millions of peasants sing his verses. It is startling to read his words and discover how the same message came through two such different lives at the same time.

“Thou didst make cheap Thy greatness
To take a human form for us.
Thou, Lord, the absolute, the Eternal One,
Didst pour Thy nature out,
To fill a mould of human flesh

And still Thou pourest forth Thy nature thus,
Indwelling man, in love."

TUKARAM, 1608-49.

"Indwelling man, in Love," is still the message that cleaves our darkness. It is in one another that we can find and know God. It is by loving that we set one another free and reveal God within. Here in the shadow of war and suspicion and fear, we shall walk forward into the darkness, following. We have become conscious of a great stirring in the Society of Friends everywhere, the stirring of a mighty hope, that "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

"The People that walked in darkness have seen a great light."