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The Concern of Evangelical Friends for the Fellowship of the Gospel Among All Friends, Fall 1959

Arthur O. Roberts Editor

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CONCERN

THE CONCERN OF EVANGELICAL FRIENDS

for the fellowship
of the Gospel
among all Friends

“Ye are my friends,
if ye do whatsoever
I command you.”

John 15:14

expressing the CONCERN of evangelical Friends in the areas of theology, Biblical study, outreach, and devotional life.

dedicated to a Christ-centered renewal of spiritual life among all Friends.

praying for an enlarged Quaker witness to the Gospel throughout the world.

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Until the Canton Conference

The sixth triennial conference of evangelical Friends is slated to meet on the campus of Malone College, Canton, Ohio, beginning on the third Wednesday of July, 1962. The location is an excellent choice, not only because Ohio Friends anticipate using their new college campus for hospitality, but also because Friends from the midwestern and eastern yearly meetings will be enabled to attend in larger numbers than heretofore.

Meanwhile certain serious concerns rest upon our hearts because of the ministry of our speakers at the Newberg conference. Let me lift out three goals to be achieved as individuals and yearly meetings seek to follow Christ in faithfulness:

(1) Continued and increased visitation among Friends—local meetings, colleges, yearly meetings, appointed meetings—in the name and power of Jesus Christ. Begun by the journey of Everett Heacock and Gerald Dillon, this itinerant ministry of encouragement and revival must continue.

(2) In the light of Everett Cattell's provocative Newberg address (featured in this issue of CONCERN), a prayerful, considerate hearing for the "evangelical grievance" regarding missions and service. Let us pray that in the power of the Holy Spirit grievances which are caused by misunderstandings will be dissipated and those which are based on just cause will be redressed by centering again about the Cross of Christ.

(3) Strengthening of ministerial leadership. With appeal to the church for "full commitment to the support of its colleges"—several of which already provide ministerial training—the education workshop recommended and the association adopted a proposal that the Administrative Board explore the feasibility of establishing a summer seminary for the higher education of our ministers and Christian workers, and, subject to financing and personnel, that such a school of theology be established and maintained.

Among Friends

Just concluded October 12, was a weekend conference arranged by Irish Friends on the theme "Has the Bible a Message for Today?" Under direction of Ulster Quarterly Meeting Home Mission Committee, the residential conference convened at Carrig Eden C.E. Holiday Home, Greystones, County Wicklow. The theme was divided into topics relating the Bible message "for thyself," "for thy home," "for thy neighbor," and "for thy meeting." Charles Lamb, secretary, sent greetings from the Home Mission committee to the Conference of Evangelical Friends, and various Friends in attendance at the conference reciprocated with prayerful concern for the Greystones meeting.

The summertime visit of Merle and Ruth Roe of Kansas Yearly Meeting was appreciated by Irish Friends. It is reported that John and Dorothy Sinton, evangelists, will be ministering in the United States this next year.

The Quaker Theological Discussion Group met June 29-July 1, on the campus of Olney Boarding School, Barnesville, Ohio. Your editor attended. Comprised of Friends from a variety of theological backgrounds, the movement aims at serious thinking about Quaker doctrines and beliefs, and has attracted the interest especially of a number of Friends for whom the complacency of religious romanticism has become untenable. The conference, by arrangement and by encouragement from the chairman, Wilmer Cooper, Earlham College, produced a frank recognition and sharing of differences. This was a more wholesome approach than glossing over major differences in the interests of outward harmony. The group performs a distinct service in developing a bibliography of Quaker research and writing.

We suggest these observations concerning the attenders of the conference and Friends among whom they are leaders:

(1) there is a growing "seeker" movement among erstwhile liberals which needs to be gathered into a personal experience of Jesus Christ.

(2) the Rufus Jones' interpretation of Quakerism has ceased to dominate the scholarly field.

(3) there is strong concern over inadequacy in ministerial leadership, both within pastoral meetings and non-pastoral meetings.

In this issue appears the first of the three major addresses presented to the fifth triennial conference of evangelical Friends, held at Newberg, Oregon, July 22-26. The other two will appear in succeeding issues. Space does not permit complete reporting of the many other fine species, but excerpts and quotations will appear in this and the next several issues.

Passion for Unity

A CRITICAL SURVEY OF CONTEMPORARY QUAKERDOM

By Everett L. Cattell

The anomaly of our day is that now, when world tensions are so great as to threaten atomic racial suicide, the peoples of the world are expressing a passion for peace which history never before recorded. There may have been a day when men thrilled and yearned to fight—but not now.

Likewise, there may have been a day in the history of the Society of Friends when men spoiled for a fight, championed dogmatism, and welcomed division. If so, that day has gone. Today the whole Friends Church is caught in a passion for unity and the anomaly is that this comes at the precise time when the tensions of real difference amongst us are at their maximum stage of development. The Society of Friends as well as the secular world is living over a powder keg and strangely enough, no one wants it that way, nor is happy to have it that way.

Quaker Tensions

It is deeply significant that the late Elbert Russell in 1943 should have closed his admirable HISTORY OF QUAKERISM with a chapter entitled, "The Problem of Unity in the Society of Friends." The last half of his book deals with all those cross currents which led to strife and divisions in the Society. But of recent times he states that "The historic lines of division between Orthodox, Hicksite and Conservative Friends no longer corresponded to real differences in the Society. . . . the issues which resulted in the separation of 1827-1828 were dead issues. . . . The real differences were between pastoral and non-pastoral Friends, between theological conservatives and liberals, and between socially progressive and socially conservative Friends." (pp. 529-530)

Evangelicals could pretty well agree that Russell's statement of the three areas of real difference in our day are correct. They would find it hard to agree, however, that the issues of 1827 are dead issues, for certainly one of them is the view of Christ which is central in the tension today between "theological conservatives and liberals."

To say that the issues are dead is to beg the question. For the liberal of certain types the issue may well be dead. For the evangelical it is

as live today as ever precisely because Christ lives. Furthermore, if it is true that the issues are dead, then re-union has little significance or meaning. It only means that the liberals in certain Yearly Meetings have been able to draw together just as the evangelicals in many Yearly Meetings have now drawn together in the Association of Evangelical Friends and so, willy nilly, a realignment is actually taking place. The possibilities in this situation are explosive. At the very time when two opposing groups, liberal and conservative, both with a genuine hunger for unity, are drawing ever closer within their own circles, it may turn out that both have been blinded by their local momentary successes to the larger cleavage which is being precipitated and may be shocked by the magnitude of the schism which will eventually result.

To evangelicals the three areas of real difference named by Elbert Russell are not of equal value. The question of pastoral and non-pastoral Friends is a question of methodology and few of us would cross the continent to discuss it. This is an area in which difference of opinion could well be tolerated and arrangements could easily be made for both concerns to be implemented if there is a spirit of unity and good will on both sides. The question of difference between socially progressive and socially conservative Friends is a little more difficult just because the whole question is more fluid and convictions less fixed on both sides. Here, too, there can be considerable give and take in the area of application; but the more fundamental question of the basic ground out of which these convictions grow is a theological one and points to that other area of tension between conservative and liberal theology which to the evangelical is the really basic source of difference amongst us.

It is easy to dismiss the difference between conservative and liberal theology by pointing out the inexactness of the labels. It is true that "liberalism" is used loosely to cover a very wide range of views. At one extreme end stands the humanist and the syncretist. At the other extreme end stands the man who believes everything held by the evangelical except his high view of inspiration. We must be careful to understand where on this scale we have located, when we use the word "liberal." Sometimes in this paper it is used loosely to cover all those who deviate from the stricter evangelical faith. In other instances the varying degrees of liberalism will be significant.

Elbert Russell says: "The main points of the 'Evangelical' creed in the narrower sense are (1) the plenary (or even verbal) inspiration and final outward authority of the Bible; (2) the total depravity of human nature as a consequence of the Fall; (3) the 'deity' of Christ and (4) his substitutionary death on the cross; and (5) the necessity of a definite personal religious experience." (p. 288)

This statement does not do justice to evangelical Friends because of its lack of perspective. The evangelical is first and foremost a Christian. Christ is the center of everything for him because Christ has

captured him and made him His own. He acknowledges Christ as absolute Lord of his life. Because of this experience of Christ and its very deep mystical meaning to him he wants to share it with others. He realizes from what he has seen about him something of the perils of subjectivism in much mystical experience. He longs for a counter-balancing objectivity by which he can check his experience and make sure it has universal and real significance beyond himself.

Since the Bible is the source of his objective knowledge of Christ he approaches it with a favorable prejudice commensurate with his total commitment to Christ. When he is at his best he is not obscurantist (which the dictionary defines as "opposed to progress and the spread of knowledge"). On the contrary, his knowledge of the Scriptures is so profound as to lead him to the conviction that only a very high view of divine inspiration can account for it and that it is therefore normative for "doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." (2 Tim. 3:16) He does not consider the Bible to be on trial. All else is tried by it precisely because it is the Book of Christ, Who is the Judge of all the earth. Since Christ is the Truth, the evangelical is absolutely and unequivocally committed to the Truth wherever it may lead him. He is too intellectually honest to be found down the blind alleys of highly subjective Biblical criticism. He is not afraid of knowledge, including new knowledge, but he does insist on a distinction between knowledge and theory. Christ has forever saved him from the vagaries of humanism. Since he has been reconciled to God by Christ's sacrifice on Calvary he looks back upon the pit from which he was digged and sees human nature as a pathetically warped and damaged thing, to be leaned upon no more than upon a broken reed but to be gloriously transformed through Christ's redemption. This Christ he knows both Scripturally and mystically as God come in human flesh and for whose atoning sacrifice, likewise known through Scripture and experience, he is so profoundly grateful as to purpose to live always as a humble and faithful servant of the King of Kings to Whom be glory forever and ever.

The evangelical is first of all a Christian. To him Christ is the Center and the All. He follows the Scriptural view of Christ and repudiates any humanist tendency to see Him as less. He takes a high view of inspiration—high enough to make Scripture normative for life and faith—while being no less aware than the most ardent critic, of the problems involved in explaining precisely what that inspiration means or how it was accomplished. He is willing to discuss these issues openly and frankly so long as the presuppositions of such study do justice to Christ in His full glory and are not tainted with inadequate humanistic notions. He is passionately moved by Christ's command to evangelize and thus his program is certain to differ from that of those who approach Christ through humanistic presuppositions. He will be glad to sit and talk with any and all about the implications of Christ but he is a man under commission who must not be hindered in his task of proclaiming

the good news that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." (2 Cor. 5:19)

Wherever men love this Christ, too, regardless of race or creed, and varieties of understanding of Scripture and of mission, those men are brothers and of the household of faith. To such the evangelical holds out a hand of fellowship, willing to make it real in consultation at once, begging that variety of action be not curtailed pending perfect agreement, and that all may be caught up in what George Fox described as an "infinite ocean of victorious love."

The Evangelical Basis for Union

Every corporate body has some basis for its own cohesion. At Antioch, pagans applied the name "Christian" to the followers of Christ as the Christ-ones. The church gladly accepted the title for it truly represented the center of their unity as well as of their lives. Since the Reformation there have been many groupings about lesser items of particular emphasis within the Christian faith. There is an association of Reformed churches which centers in concepts which root into the views of John Calvin on election. The various associations of Baptists represent a complex of ideas which center in adult baptism as a unifying core. It is possible for Baptists, Presbyterians, Anglicans and Methodists to talk of Church union as is being done in North India by using Christ as their common denominator and sacrificing some of the lesser rallying points. Obviously, a united church cannot exclusively be both congregational and episcopal, paedo-baptist and ana-baptist at the same time. Something has to give. Some points once held inviolable must now be surrendered in whole or in part in favor of a higher or larger point of unity. The question will be whether any of these will now feel that points once held essential can now safely be surrendered.

Whereas in the above instances Christ is the center, there are inter faith movements today where Protestants, Catholics and Jews are invited to consult together—or in some cases a still wider collection of non-Christian faiths. Obviously, Christ cannot be the basis for such discussion. Something approaching a humanistic view of religion is essential to make such a gathering. The common ground is simply the common religiousness of human experience. Only on such a base can one speak of "equal respect for all religions." When the Fellowship of the Friends of Truth was established by Quakers in India a Hindu wrote in their official organ that this was what he had been looking for all his life and at last had found. Here was an organization with no religious bigotry and true mutual respect for each religion. Then with great candor he testified that he had found in this group the ideal really being fulfilled—that is, with the possible exception of some of the Christians of whom he was not quite sure as yet.

The word Quaker once had an exact and unambiguous content. But through three centuries of development it has come to cover a wider variety of contradictories than most group terms. There is a serious

question as to whether it is any longer a useful word inasmuch as useful words need to have unambiguous meaning. The Friends World Committee for Consultation is basing itself upon the widest possible connotation of the words Quaker and Friend. Since this includes the Fellowship of the Friends of Truth people and the General Conference Friends as well as others who are dubious about Christ, it is obvious that Christ is not and cannot be the base for unity in this Committee. It can only be based upon the wider humanistic connotations now current in the word Quaker in some circles.

The problem, then, of the evangelical Friend concerned about unity with other Quakers is twofold. The liberal at the humanistic end of the scale poses one problem and the liberal who differs only in his view of Scripture inerrancy poses another.

The Evangelical and the Humanist

Evangelicals believe that the essence of Quakerism is in the experience of George Fox when he heard the voice say, "There is one, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition." The basic conviction that Christ is the answer to every human need, is the genius of Quakerism and has worked itself out into a multitude of forms which have come to be known as the Quaker character.

The chief differences amongst Quakers today stem directly from uncertainty about Jesus Christ. Whatever else may have entered into the division of 1828, the issue of Christ was central and still is today, although some Orthodox Friends may have changed to Hicksite views of Christ. I am told by the Secretary of General Conference Friends that amongst Hicksites today one will find two types—some who are moving toward a more Christ-centered position and others who are frankly humanist.

It is significant that the Oxford Conference had to deal with this question and did pronounce that Quakers are Christians! That needed to be said. We have had an organized group of Quakers who called themselves "Humanist Friends." It is an open question why such should want to call themselves Quakers at all. Just what kinship with George Fox could be claimed is a difficult question.

Again, it was Rufus Jones who argued so persuasively at the Jerusalem Conference of the International Missionary Society that the distinctive and exclusive emphasis on Christ should give way to a move in which all men of religion should join hands in the common fight against secularism. Human religiousness was to be the new base of unity—not Christ. Rufus Jones was also a part of the Layman's Commission which left the whole Christian world in doubt as to whether mission or syncretism was to be the new watchword. He told me personally that the Commission really did not mean to uphold syncretism—that he personally had worshipped in a Buddhist temple and sensed a certain lack there.

I have been a missionary. Probably nowhere is the extreme tension of Friends shown more dramatically than in the cleavage between mis-

sions on one hand and the service committee on the other. In India we have gotten on together about like Jews and Samaritans. The missions evangelize. The service groups are horrified at "proselytization." There is a false antithesis raised in the minds of many by the assumption that the service groups carry on a service program and the missions preach the Gospel. This is not true. The missions have always had a service program, operated of course without benefit of the vast funds available to the A.F.S.C. And it is to be hoped that through some of its personnel the Service Committee does something with the Gospel. In India, however, the projects being carried through in cooperation with Government are on the specific terms that religion will not be mentioned. My own conviction is that evangelism or conversion that does not issue in a service program is an inadequate conversion. And, likewise, a service program which does not root into evangelism, by which I mean the conviction that all men need Jesus Christ, is futile. I believe I can present from India a concrete factual case for the futility of service programs not based on Christ. The cleavage between Friends Missions and Service is tragic indeed. Our Mennonite brethren have shown us a more excellent way. We ought to learn.

English Quaker service men were responsible for starting in India the Fellowship of the Friends of Truth. This organization is open to men of all faiths based upon the principle of "equal respect for all religions," and worship services are held on the basis of silence (which is obviously the only basis on which they could be held) in which Hindus, Muslims, Christians and others worship together, each his own god in his own way. Two years ago I attended a conference of scattered Friends held in Rasulia, India, where all kinds of Quakers were present. Sumner Mills and Clarence Pickett with their wives were then making a world tour and were present. Also present at the conference were at least four "Quakers" one of whom was a Sikh and three of whom were Hindus, including one who was chairman of the committee on arrangements and served as chief interpreter. Somewhere these had been admitted to membership as Quakers without becoming Christian. No wonder that frequently one hears someone say, "Oh yes, Quakers—you are the people who do not believe anything." This points up the dilemma of Quakerism. This is why the Oxford Conference—shades of George Fox—had to pronounce that Quakers are a Christian body.

Evangelicals at this point must be explicit. We will have no connection with this sort of thing. We are no more humanist than we are Hindu or Muslim, Jain or Sikh or Parsee. We are Christian openly, avowedly, and we trust so deeply that we want all men to share the wonder we have found. We recognize some valid insights in other faiths and some worthy seekers therein. But to identify ourselves with these seekers as but one of them would involve us in the sheer hypocrisy of hiding under a bushel the Light of the World which we have found, because He found us. We belong to a fellowship not merely of seekers but of finders. To those seekers who feel that our claim of finding is

bigotry we can only say in great humility, "Come and see."

All Quakers can understand a man who for conscience sake refuses to bear arms and accepts the consequences at any cost. We understand that conscience takes precedence over unity with a Government order. All Quakers should therefore be able to understand the evangelical who has a tender conscience about his loyalty to Christ Whom he must serve at any cost. And, while it is painful to separate from any who call themselves Quaker and thus want some share in his heritage, yet his duty is clear. He must be unswerving in his loyalty to Christ and remove every ambiguity which he can see.

With those who do not share his loyalty to Christ he can find no solid base for fellowship. He will share their common humanity and exploit it for ways of communicating the Gospel to such. But fellowship in Christ assumes common loyalty to Christ.

At this point, however, the evangelical is pressed for further definition. Many humanist Friends will claim that they are being loyal to Christ as they understand Him. They will say that in joining, let us say, the Fellowship of the Friends of Truth, they join as a Christian, expressing thus a preference for one of the greatest of all religious leaders, but without bigotry, a thing which they believe Jesus would condemn. In this case bigotry seems to be identified with making an exclusive claim for Christ. To the evangelical not only is the making of unique claims for Christ a necessity but he feels that the refusal to do so betrays a position and a viewpoint just as much crystalized as his own and no less dogmatic. He is convinced that since Christ came into the world there is no longer possible any place of neutrality. To put Christ merely in the place of a great man is to refuse His divine claims. This locates one immediately for there is no middle ground. God has seen to that. One is either for or against the Divine Son of God.

The evangelical can see no good purpose in any organizational grouping which tries to combine these irreconcilable positions. This means no lack of love for those who differ but it does mean that in love we recognize that it is for the best interests of both parties that each should pursue its own purposes separately. Where the fundamental basis of thought for two groups is irreconcilably different, as where one says yes and the other says no, the resultant programs of action are bound to clash in such a way as to cancel each other out. To force this is not the way of love or unity. It is far more loving and shows far more tender consideration for those who differ when each is willing to say to the other that they love the other too much to continue to be an embarrassment to them and a source of frustration in their program of service. Hence each will agree to part, leaving to each a clear field of unhampered service, each according to his own best light, and in charity leaving any final judgment as to the relative effectiveness of the two programs to the Great Judge of all the earth.

Separation is not the worst possible evil. Sometimes it is much less

an evil than to try to force two irreconcilables together in such a way that inevitably one is submerged or both are cancelled out.

A Suggested Principle of Cooperation

This illustrates a profound spiritual principle which has not as yet been grasped by Friends but which probably will show us the way out of our present impasse. To use the familiar philosophical device of dialectic may help at this point. When two apparently irreconcilable points of view are brought together—the thesis and the antithesis—we are taught to look for the third thing, or synthesis, where the two opposites are caught up and held together in a larger truth. The whole ecumenical movement, Friends included, is today caught in the error of supposing that organic union is the synthesis in which the irreconcilables will find their common home. The fallacy in this is that it is too narrow and does not give a large enough framework for the actual accommodation of both. It errs precisely in that instead of giving a true home to each, as a proper synthesis must, it means the negating of one by the other. This is the idea of peace by superior armaments and Quakers ought to know better than to be caught in such specious reasoning.

The more excellent way is to recognize a distinction which will give us a far more profound approach than mere organic union. It is a distinction between two levels of union. One is the level of consultation while the other is the level of action. Granted that organic union may be the ultimate ideal objective, the fact remains that in many areas we are not ready for it and great damage is being done by the premature forcing of such unions where the slow tedious ground work necessary to achieve true unity is being by-passed.

The value of the distinction I have made is that the area of consultation and the exchange of ideas is one into which the most dogmatic may enter provided expression is free and no action is involved which compromises conviction. It is precisely in the area of action (which includes the making of pronouncements portending to speak for the group) that conviction does become compromised. Discussion does not. But where decisions eventuate in action the minority tend to be compromised. If this viewpoint could be fully appreciated it provides a ground upon which there is some hope of growing unity. Where union means being made party to decisions and actions which violate conscience, those of tender conscience have no choice but to withdraw and separate. The evil in this case is not the mere fact of separation but of certain overtones of spiritual attitude which are damaging to both. These tend to be crystallized by the sheer fact of the disruption of communications between the separated groups. My plea, then, is that we accept separation in the field of action where programs clash, and maintain a media of communication and discussion which will keep the door open for further light to penetrate in the hope of ultimate unity.

This is the principle to which I believe evangelicals could subscribe

and I am hopeful that others might do so as well. It is now necessary to apply this to the contemporary Quaker scene. Two areas need investigation. One is the evangelical criticism of the present trends to union amongst Friends. A second is the evangelical proposal for a path toward unity.

The Evangelical Criticism

Evangelicals have often been accused of non-cooperation and of precipitating strife because they do not fall in line with the movements toward unity which have been current amongst Friends now for half a century.

Elbert Russell traces this growing movement for reunion amongst representatives of the classic divisions of Friends and calls attention to the following significant elements in the movement: The restoration of epistolary correspondence between divided groups, the holding of conferences across the lines, cooperation in organizations such as Friends Service Council, the American Friends Service Committee, Friends Fellowship Council, the wider Quaker Fellowship, and the Friends World Committee for Consultation. All of this is presented by Russell in a highly optimistic fashion, assuming that progress toward unity is inevitable and that those who delay it are guilty of a certain intransigence. It is precisely this attitude which calls forth a strong protest from evangelicals. The evangelical is willing to be shown deeper truth than he has yet perceived but he is not prepared to be brushed off while his precious convictions are ignored.

A good illustration of this attitude on the part of liberals is shown in Elbert Russell's treatment of this subject. Having optimistically presented the grand sweep of the unity movement, he then reluctantly conceded some difficulty by saying:

"On the other side of the picture there developed . . . some centrifugal tendencies toward disunity and division. These are chiefly due to the recrudescence of evangelical and other fundamentalist types of theology The real difficulty today is with the large body of Orthodox Friends in the middle and far west, who do not know Hicksite Friends except through an ancient and distorted tradition, and where the evangelical fear of unsoundness still operates to a considerable extent as a barrier to reunion." (p. 537)

He briefly records the withdrawals of Central, Kansas and Oregon Yearly Meetings from the Five Years Meeting, but minimizes the result with the assertions that, "These withdrawals, however, have caused no great disturbance in the Society These setbacks to the movements toward unity are apparently only temporary," (p. 541) and he feels that since the best folk in these Yearly Meetings are opposed to withdrawal, reunion will soon occur.

It is clear that Elbert Russell credits evangelical opposition to ignor-

ance rather than to valid principle. We are prepared to admit that we know very little, we see in part and know in part. But we believe it really requires only a modicum of intelligence to see what Jesus Christ means and to choose Him above all others. Elbert Russell failed to grasp that the real reason why the withdrawal of several Yearly Meetings "caused no great disturbance" was not the inevitability of progress in reunion movements, but precisely the passion for unity amongst evangelicals which caused them to suffer long rather than precipitate a widespread agitation. History is working out its own verdict. While Russell's prediction of growing unity has been fulfilled in the reunion of Hicksite and Orthodox Yearly Meetings in New England, Canada, New York, and Philadelphia, this has been a doubtful victory inasmuch as it has precipitated new tensions greater than those which were healed. Instead of the easy optimism that reunion is inevitable and that ignorant evangelicals will die out or see the light, these very union efforts have forced evangelicals to unite in organized association to give body and form to convictions which they believe will never die. If the liberal wants unity he must stop ignoring evangelicals and take the trouble to understand them.

This is the center of the evangelical complaint. All of the unity movements of recent times have been based upon liberal presuppositions with a peculiarly callous and intransigent refusal to understand the evangelical position. Even so early as the founding of the Five Years Meeting the evangelicals were uneasy lest they be the victims of ambiguity in the use of language. In 1912 the Five Years Meeting met this uneasiness by adopting the following statement concerning George Fox's letter to the Governor of Barbadoes and the Richmond Declaration of Faith: "These documents are historic statements of belief, approved by the Five Years Meeting in 1902, as expressed in the clause of the Discipline referred to and approved again at this time, 1912, but they are not to be regarded as constituting a creed." (Minutes 1912, p. 49) Evangelicals were quick to recognize that this was completely ambiguous and made nothing normative for the Society—indeed it was a confession of disunity in the Society! In 1922 the issue was raised again and Elbert Russell betrays the liberals' attitude to the evangelical in his statement that, "As a concession to the evangelical group in the interest of unity, the Five Years Meeting of 1922 omitted the offending phrase in the minute of 1912." Some naive evangelicals thought of that session as a veritable Pentecost and did not realize that they had been plainly victimized. That action did not change the facts in the Society one iota and the element of contempt for evangelicals implicit in that kind of action has brought about today's impasse.

With the coming of the Friends World Committee for Consultation the issue is clear cut. The very form of this organization is recognition that the basis of unity is the word Quaker or Friends and has no reference to Christ whatever. It is conceivable that evangelicals could even sit in such a committee if it lived up to its name and was simply and solely

for consultation. But by becoming a body for Quaker action it has violated our conscience and made membership difficult if not impossible because of the implication of complicity in its actions.

Specifically, evangelicals complain that liberal Friends have precipitated actions in various bodies which are a direct violation of evangelical conscience and show a callous failure to appreciate their position. A limited but significant group of these may be named.

1. The Five Years Meeting has authorized the publication of Christian Education materials for use in Sunday schools which are offensive to a large section of the Society because of doctrinal positions taken or assumed.

2. Within the Five Years Meeting three member Yearly Meetings have united with their Hicksite counterparts and thus by a tactical device brought Hicksites officially within the Five Years Meeting without getting the consent of the other members or of the body as a whole and thus without frank facing of the issues involved. To some the issues of division are dead issues. This can only be where people in Orthodox Yearly Meetings have changed to a substantially Hicksite view of Christ or to a view of Christ in which His Deity is not an important element. To evangelicals this is still a life and death matter and the evangelical cannot understand the callousness with which actions of this sort are forced upon him without consultation and without appreciation of his position.

3. The Missionary Board of the Five Years Meeting oversees work which was founded and supported by evangelicals. Over their protests, infiltration of the Board produced a change in policy which eventuated in the sending forth of liberal personnel to the field where inevitable tension and clash damaged the work. This led to an alienation of evangelical support and over the years led to the withdrawal of three Yearly Meetings from the Five Years Meeting and the turning of large measures of support to interdenominational boards. This situation has been the gravest of all areas of complaint. The Missionary Board has been peculiarly inept in its handling of the situation, has been intransigent in the face of evangelical protests, lacking in frankness, and specially insensitive to the implications of their policy. Having, by their intransigence, succeeded in forcing three Yearly Meetings to withdraw from the Five Years Meeting they have still apparently learned nothing. Instead of bettering the situation, or even being diplomatic about it, they have in Kenya introduced the highly controversial sharing of the field with British Friends and persisted in employing liberal personnel who are unsatisfactory to evangelicals. Nor is there redress in sight, for in the current case of dispute assurances given that an unsatisfactory person would not be returned to the field are now set aside and we are informed that this person will be returned after all. This is intransigence of the ultimate sort.

4. The American Friends Service Committee many years ago assumed

the prerogatives of a Quarterly and a Yearly Meeting in setting up new Monthly and Yearly Meetings. This function has latterly been taken over by the Friends World Committee on Consultation which has continued the recognition of such new meetings. The subtle distinction between founding and recognizing these meetings is meaningless in the present context. The breach of unity involved here is that most of these meetings have been established within the borders of existing evangelical Monthly Meetings. They were founded because of dissatisfaction with evangelical theology and practice. They constitute the concretion of our differences. And the official recognition of them constitutes a callous disregard for established evangelical Friends.

5. In a multitude of publications purporting to explain Quakerism, there has been a presentation of a very limited, particular and highly provincial phase of Quakerdom and a complete and callous ignoring of the evangelical strain and modern development in Quakerism. One sometimes hears expressed the conviction that the evangelical development amongst Friends is not true Quakerism and that the liberal strain should withdraw from, disown, expel or disassociate itself from the evangelicals. This hardly makes for unity.

6. Several colleges founded by evangelical Friends have adopted the liberal position. Some have solved the problem of responsibility to their constituency by dissolving official connection with their Yearly Meetings while continuing to insist on being a Quaker college. Others continue to belong to their Yearly Meetings and simply ignore their responsibility to their constituency with a kind of superiority complex mentality which justifies its action on the ground that they are giving the constituency what is best for it although the constituency does not as yet realize it.

7. The American Friend as an official organ of the Five Years Meeting could not be expected to ignore the different types of Friends in the Five Years Meeting. Attention should be given to pastoral and non-pastoral Friends, to liberals and evangelicals. Indeed a really competent editor would so fairly and fully represent these various areas as to bring mutual understanding. But under the present set up, the evangelical, while deploring the generally wordy innocuousness of the paper, must go beyond that and protest vigorously the extreme list toward eastern liberal Friends and the almost complete ignoring of evangelicals who constitute the big majority constituency.

The Evangelical Dilemma

What is the evangelical to do in the face of these facts? Whether liberals recognize it or not, these actions are highly provocative. They have strained the evangelical conscience to the breaking point. Only their concern for unity and dislike of strife have kept evangelicals from precipitating a clean-cut cleavage throughout the Five Years Meeting.

On the one hand the evangelical is determined to be true to his con-

victions. In the above seven named ways, and in many others beside, liberals have talked unity and violated the conscience of the majority group in the Society. The evangelical suspects duplicity, hypocrisy and double talk in this. He sometimes feels that he is being victimized by a sort of political manipulation within the Church. Yet he tries to put these thoughts—these judgments of motive—out of his mind and to be patient, hoping that the intelligence of liberals will surely make them eventually heed his protests. Half a century has passed and the provocative actions are increasing rather than decreasing. They have resulted in a certain hardening of the evangelical mind. They have produced an organized unity amongst evangelicals now known as the Association of Evangelical Friends. The evangelical was willing to be patient when he thought he was misunderstood. But since he is now convinced that he is being deliberately by-passed, he is determined that his convictions shall no longer be ignored. He will be heard! And that for the sake of his Master alone! He is not interested in another organization for organization's sake but he will organize if it becomes necessary to preserve the witness to the Deity of Christ which means everything to him. The refusal of liberals to make amends upon hearing his protest, make him wonder whether the liberal would not be happier if he were to withdraw after all.

A serious impulse arises at this point to solve the problem by meeting each of these opposition actions with a counter and clearly evangelical movement. There are many who cry for a parallel Evangelical Five Years Meeting, where the testimony to Christ and His Redemption will be unequivocal. Evangelicals are urged to set up a united Evangelical Friends Missionary Board to strengthen the several distinctly evangelical works now being conducted by Friends. Why, we are asked, should the funds from Quakers who are dissatisfied with the American Friends Board go to non-Quaker agencies, when it could be channeled into a united Evangelical Board? Evangelicals are also moved to establish satisfactory publications for our various needs.

These proposals have been seriously weighed. Let no one mistake this: They are all distinct possibilities. Evangelicals now have the strength to realize all these objectives if they so choose. Then why not do so at once?

There is only one reason. It is the evangelical concern and passion for unity. Ideally a division should leave the evangelical solidly aligned with those of like conviction in a group which bears consistent and adequate testimony to Christ. In practice this would not occur inasmuch as evangelicals themselves would divide over the question of whether it is best to bear testimony within a divided church or to withdraw and bear it alone. No division is ever clear cut. Personalities and other issues become involved and the resulting fragmentation is usually tragic.

Another consideration grows out of the theological changes which

are now taking place and which leave old labels inadequate. The word liberalism which has been used in this paper in a loose fashion covers a wide range of divergence from evangelical faith. Where it is to be identified with humanism and syncretism the evangelical simply has to draw the line. Division there is a lesser evil than compromise. But there are many liberals whose difference is far less than this—who may indeed go all of the way with the evangelical except in his view of inspiration of Scripture. Such men claim loyalty to Jesus Christ as God, as Lord and Savior. It is not for the evangelical to judge this claim untrue. Along with the evangelical's profound sense of loyalty to Christ there is an almost equal compulsion, in that love for Christ involves love for the brethren. Where men refuse Christ the case is different. But where men love Christ, while profoundly differing in views of truth, we are nevertheless bound to maintain that unity which is already a fact in Christ. To precipitate division here would be tragic. We must keep the doors of conversation open. We must never stop talking and learning from those who love the Lord even though our differences in viewpoint are large. This perhaps is the greatest reason why evangelicals have not, and I trust will not, precipitate division. They do ask for liberty to carry forward unhampered the program essential to evangelicalism, and want to give the same liberty to liberals. Such a separation at the action level is the surest way to keep open the doors for unity at the consultation level.

And, frankly, for liberals to refuse this and to continue offensive action while talking union will eventuate in pushing evangelicals out where they must organize for self preservation and the onus for division will rest squarely upon the liberals.

The Evangelical Solution

What then is the way through? The evangelical proposes the following:

1. Let liberals first of all recognize evangelicals not as gadflies, or nincompoops, but as a legitimate and important part of the Church, here to stay.
2. Let evangelicals recognize that liberals who have not denied Christ and who claim Him as Savior are to be accepted as Christians and to be loved and held in regard as Christian brethren with whom in some sense and by some means we must maintain fellowship.
3. Let liberals recognize the validity of the principle of unity in consultation while working separately in different fields of action.
4. Let evangelicals meet this with a fresh willingness to take the time for wider consultation.
5. Let the liberals refrain from all actions on the part of united consultative groups which tend to compromise the convictions of either side. Specifically from the evangelical viewpoint this should mean at once:

a). Refraining from any further unions of Hicksite and Orthodox bodies until full consultation with evangelicals can be had to find whether there is a way through without essential compromise. Failing this, those Yearly Meetings which have already done so should, in fairness, be willing to withdraw from the Five Years Meeting and find their orbit of unity for action purposes in the General Conference with consultation maintained in the Friends World Committee as, indeed, Philadelphia has already done, until such a day may come as makes possible with the approval of all, the union of the General Conference and Five Years Meeting. Unilateral action at this point has been and is now offensive and can only increase tensions.

b). In all publications of an official character such as the American Friend, let the evangelical viewpoint be as faithfully presented as others. Where there are differences let those differences be frankly, openly, and fully discussed with a view to fuller understanding on both sides. In the publishing of study materials such as Sunday school helps, let there be an avoidance of offensive statements and, if this makes for such watered down and innocuous material as to be unsatisfactory to both sides, let there be a frank blessing put upon the publishing of two types of material to satisfy both groups.

c). Let the Friends World Committee withdraw completely from the field in recognizing monthly meetings. If such meetings are not in unity with evangelical meetings then let them seek their fellowship with some other grouping—perhaps the General Conference or a new organization which will be committed to a liberal position which suits them. But if evangelicals are to use the World Committee as a vehicle of consultation then it must withdraw from all fields of action and become truly and only a "Committee for Consultation."

d). In the area of Missions let us recognize that the present work was founded by evangelicals and requires essentially an evangelical philosophy for its success. Let us recognize that extreme liberals have an action outlet for their viewpoint in the work of the American Friends Service Committee. Evangelicals have never been satisfied with this nor have they tried to take it away from the liberals. This is true in spite of the fact that evangelicals believe in service and feel that all true evangelism must eventuate in a service program. They do insist, however, that it be Christ-centered. In all fairness, therefore, let the Missionary Board be so altered in personnel and policy as to command the respect and confidence of evangelicals. This could easily be done in such a way as to still be satisfactory to mild liberals. Failing this, let the Five Years Meeting give its blessing to evangelicals forming a united board to serve their conscience.

6. Let evangelicals seek the cleansing of their own spirits from any remaining elements of bigotry, intransigence, divisiveness, lack of love, and obscurantism. Let evangelicals in this difficult field of relationships with other Quakers with whom they have serious differences be prepared to practice as well as preach the way of the Cross.

7. Let both evangelicals and liberals be very tender with each other's consciences and consult together with hearts as open to truth as they are firm in truth and as open to each other as should be true of brethren in Christ. At the same time let each be prepared to grant full freedom to the other circle to work together in such organizations as each may see fit to establish for the implementation of their concerns, without disparagement or suspicion of promoting disunity thereby, but rather regarding such as steps in unity toward the larger unity for which we all pray.

"The real problem of today's church is to prepare within our churches members who learn ways to continue as Christians. We must teach them to pray through the fellowship of prayer, to study through the fellowship of reading the Bible with them, to witness by going with them to witness."

—Mark O. Hatfield, Governor of Oregon
Opening address

"The church displays too much of the supercolossal and not enough of the supernatural." —Gerald Dillon, president, Association of Evangelical Friends, in the presidential address

"David could get all worked up about social injustice but ignore the fact of personal sin. There is a parable for today in Nathan's finger of judgment." —Roy Clark, professor, Friends Bible College
Haviland, Kansas

On the theme, "The Altars of Abraham," "A man strong as Abraham but without faith's altar is sure to fail." —Keith Sarver, superintendent
California Yearly Meeting

"The church that is not a missionary church is not the church of Jesus Christ." —Keith Sarver

"The words which we say will go no further than our lives will project them." —Orlando Dick, Des Moines, Iowa

How Beautiful Upon the Mountains

By Gerald Dillon

(Editor's note: Everett Heacock and Gerald Dillon left Portland, Oregon, August 19 on a world tour of Friends missions, engaging in a ministry of visitation in the interests of spiritual renewal among all Friends. At the time of this writing they are in Kenya. Further reflections concerning their trip will appear in subsequent issues.)

Although we have not yet visited all the Friends missions on our round-the-world trip, we have visited a number. And as we lived with them, talked with them, and walked with them, Isaiah 52:7 came again and again to my mind: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace." In lofty poetic imagery, the prophet extols the beauty of the messenger himself. This beauty we saw in the walk of our Quaker missionaries whose virtues were seen against the background of sin and privation.

We saw the beauty of simplicity. These messengers do not live in isolated compounds tucked away in a comfortable American atmosphere, safe from the "heathen" life around them. To be sure, they are Americans, but in so many ways they have made significant adjustment to the life around them. They ride bicycles in the villages and third class trains on the railroads (it was all I could do to stand their first class). They drink tea and eat the rice so courteously offered. Their homes are simple, clean and neat, and located among the villagers or townspeople among whom they minister. I will never forget a train ride through central Formosa with Charles DeVol. At dinner time a waitress brought into the overcrowded coach a carrier with large flat tins filled with hot rice, each topped by a small piece of meat. I had been warned against all kinds of "bugs"; but friend Charles gently urged us to take some, too. With great inward uncertainties we accepted and began manipulating those chop-sticks. The food was delicious and satisfying—what we got into our mouths! What really stuck in my throat—or heart—was Charles DeVol's casual statement "this is what we eat most of the time, except when we have company from America."

There in the midst of simple, unsophisticated people, God's messengers maintain a life of rugged, beautiful simplicity.

We saw the beauty of humility, demonstrated by the sacrificial labors of those whose abilities could command important positions in American

culture. A Ph.D. teaching in a university science department, a physician and surgeon laboring in a central India hospital of sixty beds, an outstanding preacher laboring in missionary administration—these and others had one great vision—the joy of being in His service. No word was spoken about sacrifice, but rather words of thanksgiving for God's commissioning for special service in the ministry. They rejoiced that they could use their abilities to glorify Christ in the isolated communities of some foreign country.

We saw the beauty of compatibility. It is comparatively easy to get along with people who believe, live, and worship like we do, especially if we see them only once or twice a week. But here were people who rubbed shoulders day after day with those of other lands, often so difficult to understand, adjusting to diet, ignorance, backwardness, poverty, and innumerable problems of seemingly insurmountable proportions. How easily impatience, frayed nerves, intolerance, and harshness could creep out through murmuring, complaining or faultfinding. Among our missionaries we sensed a spirit of love and congeniality flowing out in a constant stream of understanding, acceptance and kindness. In the spirit of Christ these Quakers adjust to a life of poverty, ignorance, and moral filth. They have learned from Paul, "in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content."

Finally, we saw the beauty of dedication. On occasion in our sojourn we found some Quakers who had lost sight of the commissioning of Christ to make known the redeeming love of God in Christ. Social service and seminars had become ends in themselves and apparently served only to elevate the religious culture in which they ministered. The Quaker missionary we found to be profoundly different. All he did and spoke was for the one purpose that men might understand the redemptive love of God in Christ and come to have faith in Him. The Quaker missionary is a man sent from God. He is restless until that message be understood and believed.

It has been our privilege to be in the homes of other Christian missionaries, too, but it is a deep satisfaction to know that our missionaries merit the loyalty and support of every Quaker. Yes, how beautiful are the feet of those who extend Christ's church. May God grant to each of us that our feet—our paths of sacrificial service—may be just as beautiful, that in laboring together through prayer the Church may be built and God greatly glorified.

On October 27, 1659, William Robinson and Marmaduke Stevenson, Quaker missionaries, were hanged on Boston common. But all of Governor Endicott's hired drummers could not drown out the witness to Jesus Christ and the plea for religious liberty which these people "in scorn called Quakers" proclaimed. Three hundred years later we honor their martyrdom with a prayer for the same measure of loyalty to Jesus Christ, Risen Lord and Abiding Presence.