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## Front Matter -- Quaker Religious Thought, no. 4

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# QUAKER RELIGIOUS THOUGHT

Volume II, Number 2

Autumn 1960

*Sponsored by the Quaker Theological Discussion Group*

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Persons wishing to have their names added to the Quaker Theological Discussion Group can do so by sending \$2.00, and those sympathetic to this endeavor are invited to make contributions to it in any amount. These will be gratefully received.

## *Editorial*

As this periodical rounds out the second year of its existence under the sponsorship of the Quaker Theological Discussion Group, with the avowed purpose of exploring "more fully the meaning and implications of our Quaker faith and religious experience," it begins to regard itself not yet as mature but certainly well on the way to adolescence. It seems clear that not only those who were the first members of the Discussion Group but many other Friends and friends of Friends have felt the need to explore the intellectual roots of Quakerism. This exploration has been undertaken not in the mood that the past shall determine the present or the future, but in the hope that we shall come to see ourselves more distinctly (at a time when the meaning of Quakerism has become very indefinite and uncertain) as we understand clearly what we originally represented. Understanding the Quaker heritage of thought will continue to be a major interest of this Journal, but it is expected that the near future will see added to this interest consideration of contemporary concerns, always in line with the original purpose for which this publication was founded.

It is a special pleasure to be able to welcome to these columns a woman contributor, Edna M. Hall, who brings both a British and a feminine touch to the consideration of our theme. The question of man and his nature is in one sense at least the most closely related to us of all theological discussions. We all, more or less consciously, do hold certain views of the kind of beings we men are, and *what* view is held makes a great practical difference in both personal and group relationships. Many Christians in the past have almost rejoiced in the total depravity of man while not a few persons today are convinced that man is "very good" and needs only to be reminded of his inborn perfection. Still others do not know how to regard themselves and their fellows, feeling with Pope that man is the "glory, jest, and riddle of the world." Christian views have generally avoided both extreme pessimism and optimism about man, holding that as he actually is he is sadly in need of reconstruction, and that this reconstruction is possible, not through his unaided efforts, but through the grace of God. It is this vast topic, seen within the perspectives of both early and contemporary Quakerism, that Wilmer Cooper discusses.

J. C. K.