

**AN ESSAY UPON THE  
INFLUENCE: OF THE  
TEACHINGS OF GEO. FOX**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649310937

An Essay Upon the Influence: Of the Teachings of Geo. Fox by Edward R. Wood

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**EDWARD R. WOOD**

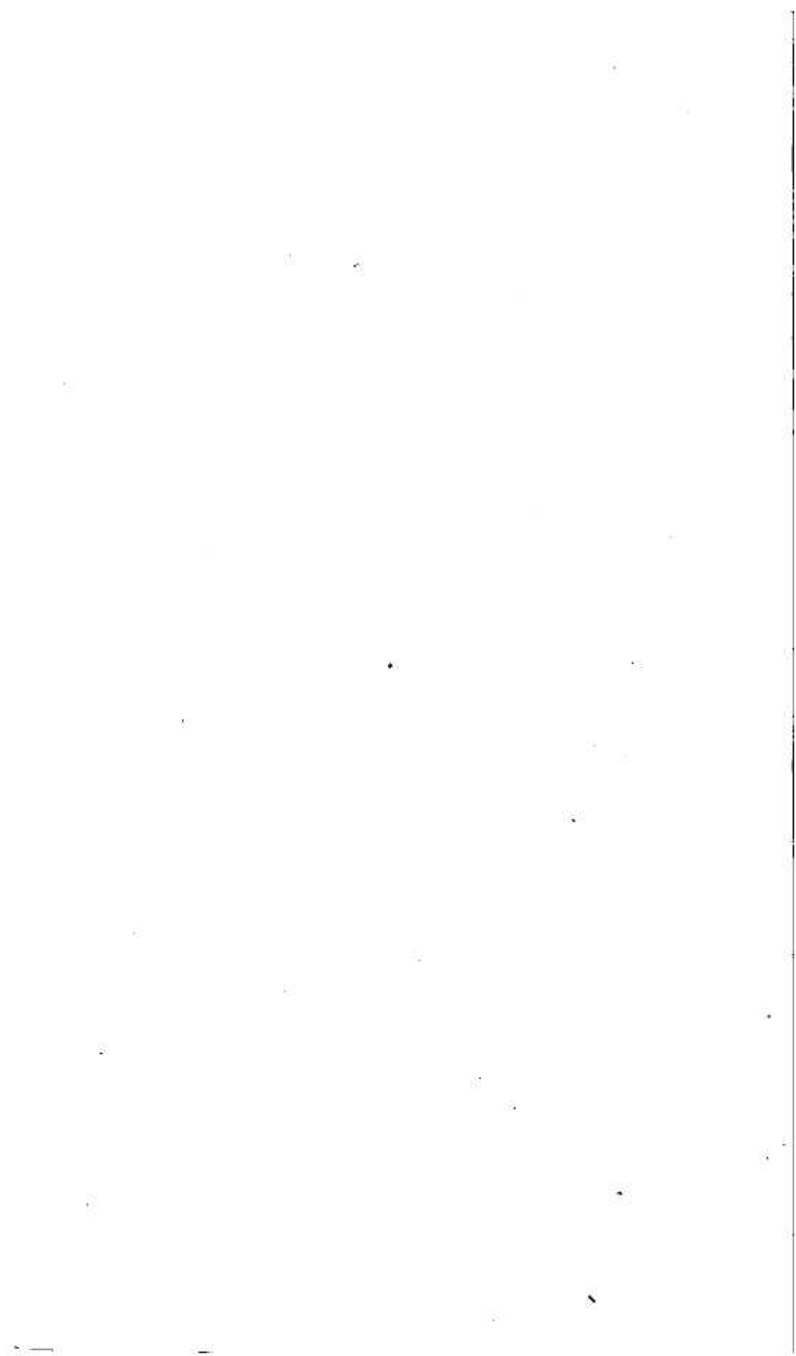
**AN ESSAY UPON THE  
INFLUENCE: OF THE  
TEACHINGS OF GEO. FOX**



PRIZE ESSAY

OF THE

Haverford Alumni Association.



PRIZE ESSAY  
OF THE  
HAVERFORD ALUMNI ASSOCIATION.

---

AN ESSAY

UPON THE

INFLUENCE OF THE TEACHINGS OF GEO. FOX

ON

CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY. //

BY

EDWARD R. WOOD.

---

"Ye shall both know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free."

---

PHILADELPHIA:  
C. SHERMAN & SON, PRINTERS.

1862.

11261  
350-62

CP344.39.153  
~~1856.20.00~~

1873  
May 3

1873, May 3.  
Gift of  
Hercules W. ...  
at Philadelphia.  
(No. 26. 1854.)



## ESSAY.

---

THERE is no work concerning Quakerism or the Quakers, which can fairly be considered entitled to rank as an historical treatise. There is, therefore, no source from which to receive immediate information as to the influence which they began to exert from the time of their origin, nor of the influence they have since continued to exert, upon the development of national life in the countries they inhabit. But there is much material for such a work, extending over the whole period of time, which has elapsed since the stormy epoch in which the Quakers first came together, amid the fierce conflicts of civil war, and the harsh uncharitableness of contending sects, down to the present moment, when the Society of Friends receives so largely the world's respect, and holds a position in the community the extreme opposite of that of the class of men who had been its original founders.

And even a slight research among this mass of material is sufficient to show, to a considerable degree of accuracy, the character and influence of this people.

In the outset, the searcher would probably be startled and almost shocked at the vagaries for which they were so often responsible; he would find constant evidence of crude and ill-considered thought reduced to actions full as inconsiderate, but his heart would warm toward this almost fanatical sect, when he found them undergoing suffering and persecution, such as almost

equalled the darkest the world has seen, and supporting their sufferings with a patience and unyielding endurance such as history affords no other example of. And if, in following the course of their succeeding history, he would lose some of that intense admiration, which glows within every honest heart as it becomes acquainted with the deeds of the martyrs, he would never lose that respect, the payment of which is a debt always due to the good citizen and the devoted Christian.

But let this search be conducted in a spirit of candid inquiry, and I believe it will satisfactorily appear, that what is reprehensible or narrow-minded in Quakerism, forms no part of its essential character; that these things are not the natural growth from its foundation stock, but are excrescences which have survived the age to which they belonged, by being adopted into the organization of a plant of more noble origin.

---

#### CHAPTER I.

It was about the time of Henry VII, that the idea of reform may be said to have taken life in England. The reign of that monarch lies as a sort of neutral ground between the domain of the dark ages, and that pertaining to the present era of history. The turbulent spirit of the feudal Barons had been effectually laid to rest, and the spirit of inquiry or reform (for one implies the other), was beginning to creep from cell and cloister, and to afford occupation to the unemployed energies of the people. Little by little this spirit developed itself; and when Henry VIII wished to institute his new establishment, he found a population not unprepared to acquiesce in this revolution; a revolution which bears about it every mark of having been undertaken solely for the benefit of the monarch, inasmuch as it did

but invest one despot with the power it had wrenched from another; for Henry became virtually the Pope of England,—nay, more—he claimed powers which the Pope himself had never dared to assume. According to the teaching of Cranmer, the King of England was the head and embodiment of the whole Church contained within that realm. He was the sole source of discipline,—the sole organ of government,—that is to say, he wielded over the Church a full, unmitigated despotism. All the Church functionaries were commissioned by him, held their offices at his pleasure, and by his death, their offices were considered vacated.\*

Such a revolution can scarcely be considered a step toward either civil or religious liberty, but yet it had this advantageous effect,—that it accustomed the public mind to contemplate without finching the greatest changes of state policy, and what was of much more importance, it brought the centre of Church government home to the doors of the people, enabling them to observe more closely the administration of that government, and giving them a greater interest in rectifying the abuses of which they might then find it guilty. And thus the new spirit of liberal thought received an all-important impulse from the hands of one of the most despotic of monarchs.

But the power which Cranmer had consented to place in the hands of the King, was not such as the clergy of a rich and powerful Church would long be willing to submit to. And accordingly, we find that during the reign of Elizabeth and James, the clergy had discovered a new dignity in their office. Throughout all those rapid changes in the professed religion of the state, which occurred during the reigns of Henry, Edward, and Mary, there were still found prelates who could follow as rapidly as the Crown might choose to lead; and to the vacillating character of

\* Hallam, Vol. I, p. 186.