SHAKER SERMONS: SCRIPTO-RATIONAL. CONTAINING THE SUBSTANCE OF SHAKER THEOLOGY. TOGETHER WITH REPLIES AND CRITICISMS

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Trieste

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CONTAINING THE SUBSTANCE OF

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REPLIES AND CRITICISMS

LOGICALLY AND CLEARLY SET FORTH.

BY

H. L. EADS,

BISHOP OF SOUTH UNION, KY.

"The Supreme good in the mind is the knowledge of God, and the highest virtue of the mind is to know God."—SPINOZA.

"There is no soul so feeble but that, well directed, it may attain to absolute control over the [animal] passions."—DESCARTES.

"And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent."—CHRIST.

SHAKERS, N. Y.
THE SHAKER MANIFESTO.
1879.

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PREFACE BY THE EDITOR.

This Book of Sermons scarcely needs a preface. The author and orator began life among the Shakers when less than one year old, and may therefore be supposed to be excellent authority upon Shaker theology. It is the first book ever written for publication, by an individual whose whole life has been consecratedly devoted to and guided by the principles of Shakerism; and the tenor of the discourses denotes "words fitly spoken, like apples of gold and pictures of silver." The sermons embrace nearly or quite every feature of Shaker polity, and will be highly appreciated by very many as a book of reference upon the subject of Shakerism. That the author is a most excellent representation of what Shaker principles can do for a man, we are only proud to vouch therefor; and we feel a certainty that in the perusal of the following pages by the seeker after truth, the reader will feel the hallowed influences of one who has been with the Christ, and who walks and lives with the Christ; and will also realize that he is one of the "*Saviours to come upon mount Zion, to judge the mount of Esau.*" To the rearing of such individuals as Saviours is Shakerism devoted. That it is successful, as evidenced in the author of these Sermons, gives a renewed confidence that *Virgin Purity, Non-resistance, Peace, Equality of Inheritance and Unspottedness from the world — the fundamental principles of Shakerism* — have not been, nor are they preached and practiced in vain.

☆

HARMONY OF TRUTH.

I begin my discourse with the enunciation of two or three aphorisms; neither of which, I presume, any honest, unbiased mind, of ordinary comprehension, will have an inclination to gainsay; for they consist of a simple declaration of the *harmony* of *truth*.

First. — All truths, both spiritual and natural, harmonize. One truth cannot be opposed to another truth; hence, any two statements or propositions that antagonize or conflict, one or the other, or both, must be false.

Secondly. — In the end, nothing but truth will have been or can be advantageous to any soul; hence, it would be wisdom in us to cast off all prejudice and prepossession, and make any required sacrifice to obtain the "knowledge of the truth," especially that sacred truth by which we expect to obtain our redemption and the salvation of the soul. It is necessary that some of our discourses should be mainly argumentative or theological, from the fact that mere declaration of truth, scriptural or otherwise, does not in this day seem to satisfy the inquisitive mind, and people must learn to *think* correctly before they can either *speak* or *act* correctly.

Well nigh two centuries ago a certain philosopher penned the following:

First. — That a man use no words but such as he makes the sign of a certain determined object in his mind in thinking, which he can make known to another.

Secondly. — That he use the same word steadily for the sign of the same immediate object of his mind in thinking.

Thirdly. — That he join those words together in propositions, according to the grammatical rules of the language he speaks in.

Fourthly. — That he unite those sentences into a coherent discourse. Thus, and thus only, I humbly conceive, can any one preserve himself from the confines and suspicions of jargon.