

**THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS:
AN ENQUIRY INTO
THE CAUSES OF ITS
WEAKNESS AS A CHURCH**

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The Society of Friends: An Enquiry into the Causes of Its Weakness as a Church by Joseph John Fox

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JOSEPH JOHN FOX

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OF

Its Weakness as a Church.

BY

JOSEPH JOHN FOX,

FELLOW OF THE STATISTICAL SOCIETY.

"ORA ET LABORA."

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PREFACE.

THE church universal of the Christian world is, in the present day, made up of many separate churches. Of these, the Society of Friends forms one—conspicuous, not for its numbers, but for the simplicity of its views, and the position its members have held in modern civilization.

Its weakness as a church will be admitted by many who are not prepared to acknowledge its "decline." Indeed, comparison with former generations will rather suggest the idea that it is undergoing a revival. There is much to encourage this conviction in the present aspect of the Body; and the twelve months that have elapsed since the following Essay was written, have afforded some cheering evidence that the Spirit of the Great Head of all Christian churches still dwells among this section of its children.

Its future, as a constituted body, is uncertain ; but it is the aim of Essays like the present, while pointing out its errors, to gather together what scattered elements of strength yet remain to it.

With this animating hope the following pages have been composed. They were penned amidst the pressure of constant professional engagements, and, owing to long ill-health, have not undergone the subsequent revision that the writer would wish to have given them.

STOKE NEWINGTON, 1859.

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