

**THE DIGGER MOVEMENT IN THE DAYS
OF THE COMMONWEALTH: AS
REVEALED IN THE WRITINGS OF
GERRARD WINSTANLEY, THE DIGGER;
MYSTIC, AND RATIONALIST,
COMMUNIST AND SOCIAL REFORMER**

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The Digger movement in the days of the Commonwealth: as revealed in the writings of Gerrard Winstanley, the Digger; mystic, and rationalist, communist and social reformer by Lewis H. Berens

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LEWIS H. BERENS

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1921

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MYSTIC AND RATIONALIST, COMMUNIST AND SOCIAL REFORMER

BY
LEWIS H. BERENS

AUTHOR OF "TOWARD THE LIGHT"
ETC. ETC.

"Was glänzt ist für den Augenblick geboren ;
Das Echte bleibt den Nachwelt unverloren."

GOETHE.

LONDON
SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, HAMILTON, KENT, & CO. LTD.

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RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED
TO
THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS
(THE CHILDREN OF LIGHT)

TO WHOM THE WORLD OWES MORE THAN IT YET RECOGNISES

AND

WHOSE FUNDAMENTAL DOCTRINES

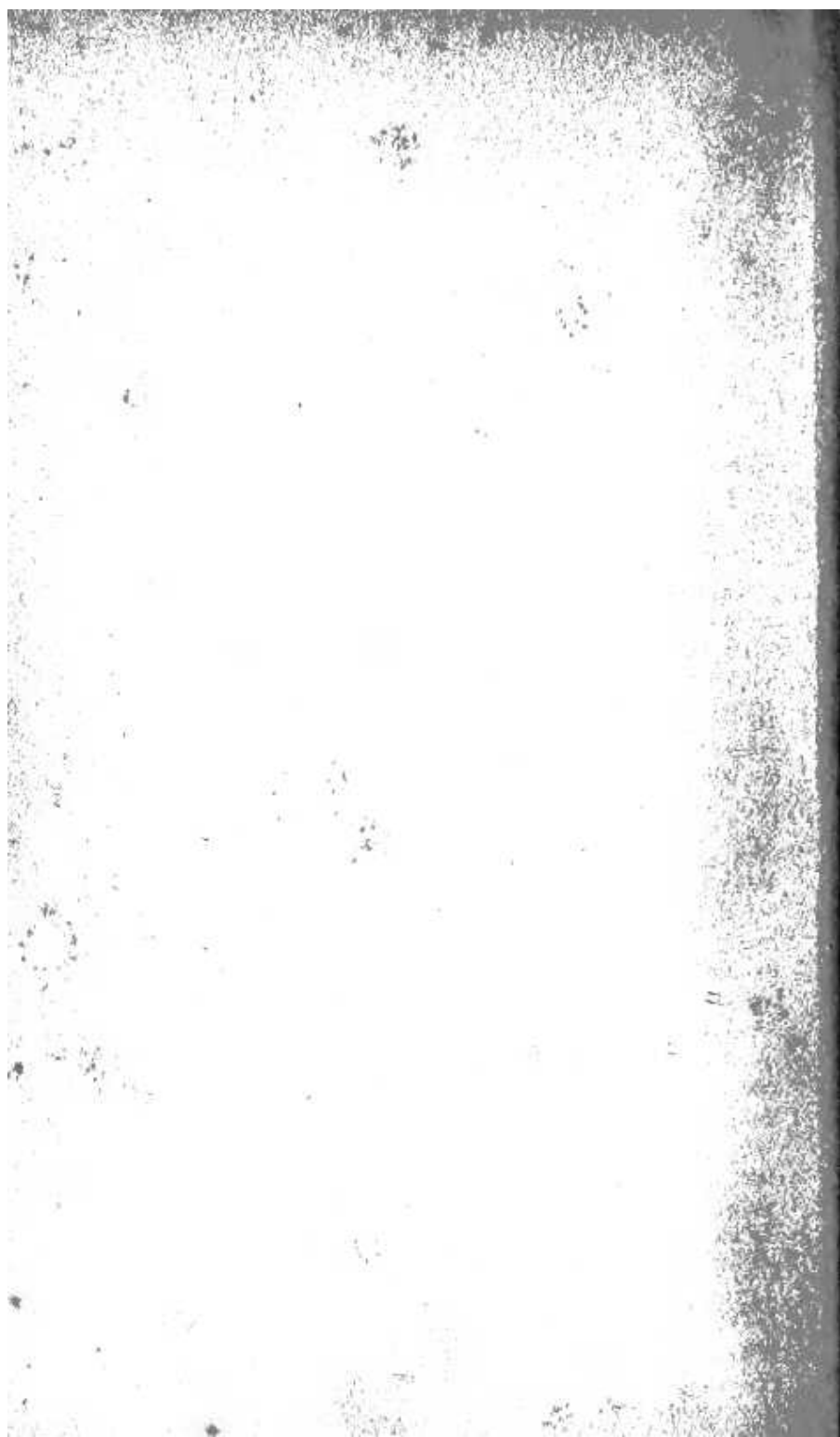
THE AUTHOR

HAS LEARNED TO LOVE AND ADMIRE

WHILST WRITING THIS BOOK

CONTENTS

CHAP.	PAGE
I. THE REFORMATION IN GERMANY	1
II. THE REFORMATION IN ENGLAND	12
III. THE GREAT CIVIL WAR	23
IV. THE DIGGERS	34
V. GERRARD WINSTANLEY	41
VI. WINSTANLEY'S EXPOSITION OF THE QUAKER DOCTRINES	52
VII. THE NEW LAW OF RIGHTEOUSNESS	68
VIII. LIGHT SHINING IN BUCKINGHAMSHIRE	79
IX. THE DIGGERS' MANIFESTOES	90
X. A LETTER TO LORD FAIRFAX, ETC.	100
XI. A WATCHWORD TO THE CITY OF LONDON, ETC.	112
XII. A NEW YEAR'S GIFT FOR THE PARLIAMENT AND ARMY	132
XIII. A VINDICATION ; A DECLARATION ; AND AN APPEAL.	146
XIV. GERRARD WINSTANLEY'S UTOPIA : THE LAW OF FREEDOM	162
XV. THE SAME CONTINUED	179
XVI. THE SAME CONTINUED	206
XVII. CONCLUDING REMARKS	228
APPENDIX A. THE TWELVE ARTICLES OF THE GERMAN PEASANTRY, 1525	235
" B. CROMWELL ON TOLERATION	241
" C. WINSTANLEY'S LAWS FOR A FREE COMMON- WEALTH	244
BIBLIOGRAPHY	255
INDEX	257



THE DIGGER MOVEMENT



CHAPTER I

THE REFORMATION IN GERMANY

"Whatever the prejudices of some may suggest, it will be admitted by all unbiassed judges, that the Protestant Reformation was neither more nor less than an open rebellion. Indeed, the mere mention of private judgment, on which it was avowedly based, is enough to substantiate this fact. To establish the right of private judgment, was to appeal from the Church to individuals; it was to increase the play of each man's intellect; it was to test the opinion of the priesthood by the opinions of laymen; it was, in fact, a rising of the scholars against their teachers, of the ruled against their rulers."—BUCKLE.

WHAT is known in history as the Reformation is one of those monuments in the history of the development of the human mind betokening its entry into new territory. Fundamental conceptions and beliefs, cosmological, physical, ethical or political, once firmly established, change but slowly; the universal tendency is tenaciously to cling to them despite all evidence to the contrary. Still men's views do change with their intellectual development, as newly discovered facts and newly accepted ideas come into conflict with old opinions, and force them to reconsider the evidence on which these latter were based. Prior to the Reformation, many such conceptions and beliefs, at one time holding undisputed dominion over the human mind, had been called into question, their authority challenged, undermined, and weakened, and they had commenced to yield pride of place to others more in accordance