PETER BALLING
The Light upon the Candlestick

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LONDON, Printers for Robert Robinson, 1663.
THE QUAKER UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP

...is composed of seekers, mainly, but not exclusively, members of the Religious Society of Friends. QUF seeks to promote open dialogue on its issues of interest. It writes in words of prayer, on behalf of the Religious Society of Friends. QUF seeks to ensure that the influence of Quakers is not heard but carried out.

Notes:

— Kingdom Singing / Sally Krehm

...黔的流動不是線性而是循環的，有著對一個人的影響，又有著對不同人的影響。

— Quaker Universalist Fellowship

...the flow of influence was not linear but circular, with Quakers, Collegians and Spinoza at the service of one another in humankind's unending pursuit of ways to think about the nature of the Ineffable Other. We may hope that some future scholar will solve the major remaining puzzle presented by The Light upon the Candlestick, who decided to put William Ames's name to Peter Balling's work, and also the name of the Tryal of the Candlestick. We may hope that someone future scholar will solve the matter remaining puzzle of why Balling chose to put Hamlet's name to the work and to present the Tryal of the Candlestick. We may hope that someone future scholar will solve the matter remaining puzzle of why Balling chose to put Hamlet's name to the work and to present the Tryal of the Candlestick.
Universalist ideas are found in abundance in the writings of early Friends. Their rediscovery and dissemination aids modern Friends in their search for a better understanding of their roots. Winifred Burdick, who shares our interest in Quaker universalism, inspired our search for this tract. A student of sixteenth and seventeenth century religious literature, she remembered it as strong support for the proposition, as expressed by Rufus Jones in his *Spiritual Reformers in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, that Quakerism is no isolated or sporadic religious phenomenon. It is deeply rooted in a far wider movement that had been accumulating volume and power for more than a century before George Fox had become a prophet of English Quakerism of the 1660’s.

The tract brought to English Quakerism of the 1660’s a representative product of the religious ferment in the Low Countries evoked by the religious philosophy of Descartes (1596-1690) and Spinoza (1632-1677), and it used a then well-known Quaker name (William Ames) as the name of its probable author. Its probable author was Peter Balling, a member of the group of spiritually-minded Dutch intellectuals, known as Collegiants, with whom Spinoza lived from 1660 to 1663. New research by scholars Richard Popkin and Michael Signer shows an even stronger connection with the religious philosophy of Descartes and Spinoza. Popkin’s discovery that Fisher and Spinoza were both associated with Descartes’ *A Loving Salutation* adds weight to the assumption that Spinoza was directly influenced by Fisher’s work. Popkin also noted that Popkin was a marked admirer of Spinoza’s ideas, and this association with Spinoza was directly influenced by Fisher’s work.

Although there was this close Quaker influence on Spinoza, Popkin’s influence on Balling and, through this tract, on English Quakerism was not sweetness and light. Adam Boreel, chief of the Collegiants, and Peter Serrarius, a fellow Millenarian, were in dispute with Quakers on some issues. In addition, there was also present in Amsterdam a loyal follower of Spinoza who was present in Amsterdam. He was a direct influence on Balling and, through this tract, on English Quakerism.

Returning to our main theme, it seems right to conclude that the interaction among Quakers, Collegiants, and Spinoza was of substantial mutual benefit. It also seems clear that the interaction among Quakers, Collegiants, and Spinoza was of substantial mutual benefit. It also seems clear that the interaction among Quakers, Collegiants, and Spinoza was of substantial mutual benefit.
The Light upon the Candlestick

Called \textit{The Light upon the Candlestick}, or \textit{Lucerna super Candelabrum}, the tract was written in 1662. It was translated into English from the original Latin by Benjamin Furley, a Quaker merchant of Colchester then living in Rotterdam. It was adopted as a Quaker tract and circulated as such in England, with a title page, reproduced here, that connected it only vaguely with its author.

William Ames (? - 1662), the Quaker "author" whose name appears on the title page of \textit{The Light upon the Candlestick}, had been an English soldier and a Baptist, and had joined Friends in Cork, Ireland in 1655. He was banished from that city in 1657 and spent most of the rest of his life on the Continent. Here, too, he was imprisoned at a critical time for our story. For, after his believed meeting with Spinoza to engage him to translate a letter from Margaret Fell (see Epilogue), he is supposed to have invited the Jewish scholar to join with him at meeting for worship. Unfortunately, according to Popkin, Ames was jailed before the two went and states that he (Popkin) is certain that Spinoza at no time went to a meeting for worship. With far less information than this recent scholarship, Sewel in his \textit{History of the Rise, Increase and Progress of the Christian People called Quakers} (London, 1722) speculated that Balling may have been influenced by Ames' preaching, for even at the time of Sewel's writing it was known that Ames had some contact with the Collegiants. Sewel suggested that...

In 1660 Fisher published a massive work of Biblical criticism, \textit{A Rustic Alarum to the Rabbies}, a radical attack on the Protestant claim that the Scripture is the Word of God, and what Christopher Hill has called the most radical Bible criticism of the 17th Century.

According to Popkin, Quaker influence on Spinoza's thinking is most clear in the work of Samuel Fisher, who was first university graduate to join Friends. After all, Fisher's work offers evidence that there was a rich and complex interaction among Quakers, Collegiants, and Spinoza's, which Popkin's work strongly suggested. Spinoza's name, the Jews' ideas, strongly suggested his need to know Moses, the Prophets, and Christ inwardly. Spinoza's work was reprinted in seven parts, and the central question remains about what Spinoza meant when he wrote, "I now entirely adopted the mode of thinking with the Jew, and converted my previous method of expressing those ideas into a method of reasoning from my own experience and scientific judgments." This quotation is taken from the first of his philosophical works, \textit{A Treatise on Religious and Political Philosophy} (Tractatus Theologico-Politicus), published ten years later.

Popkin's work offers evidence that there was a rich and complex interaction among Quakers, Collegiants, and Spinoza's, later referred to as one of Spinoza's Amsterdammers. Spinoza's later reputation is that there was a rich and complex interaction among Quakers, Collegiants, and Spinoza's, later referred to as one of Spinoza's Amsterdammers. Popkin's work offers evidence that there was a rich and complex interaction among Quakers, Collegiants, and Spinoza's, later referred to as one of Spinoza's Amsterdammers.

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The Light upon the Candlestick, to which we shall now turn for the ripest ideas of this little sect, was written while Spinoza was living among the Collegiants in Rynsburg. It was very quickly discovered by the Quakers, who immediately recognized it as "bone of their bone," and circulated it as a Quaker Tract. It was translated into English in 1663 by B. F. (Benjamin Furley, a Quaker merchant of Colchester, then living in Rotterdam), who published it with this curious title page:

The Light upon the Candlestick. Serving for Observation of the Principal things in the Book called, The Mystery of the Kingdom of God, &c. Against several Professors, Treated of, and written by Will Ames. Printed in Low Dutch for the Author, 1662, and translated into English by B. F.

The Collegiant author, quite in the spirit and style of Spinoza, urges the importance of discovering a central love for "things which are durable and uncorruptible," "knowing thereby better things than those to which the multitude are link'd so fast with love." We have outgrown the "toyes with which we played as children," "there is now no desire of those things in men," so too, "all those things in men, even to old age, would seem like 'toyes' if they discovered the true Light "which abides forever unchangeable," and if through it they got a sight of "those things which are alone worthy to be known." The true and lasting change from "toyes" to "things which are durable and eternal" can only come through an inward conversion. When a new vision begins from within, then the outward action follows of itself, for no man will part with what he prizes best until he sees something better, and then the weaker part is cast off.

Add to this, That the knowledge of God in all things must first be, before the knowledge of any creature or particular thing; so no particular thing without this, can be well known: and consequently is altogether incapable to come to know, or understand, or discern the hidden spiritual Light by either eye or understanding, but only by turning within and to the Light that is in oneself. "The light of the Spirit is the light of God", and it shines in the inward and spiritual parts of man, and to those who have not gone forth of themselves to any creature, "there is no vision nor understanding of the light of the Spirit." Therefore the light of the Spirit is nearest unto every man, and there he finds it, "and no where else.

The knowledge of God in all things first must come from within, and then the outward action follows of itself, for no man will part with what he prizes best until he sees something better and then the weaker part is cast off, and this is the only way to know God. There is no way to know God but by turning within and to the light of the spirit. There is no means to know God, but to look for the light of the spirit, and to turn within and to that which is nearest unto oneself, and nearest unto God, which is the light of the spirit. When this spiritual light is discovered and understood, then the knowledge of God is obtained, and the knowledge of things is gained by the light of the spirit. Therefore, the knowledge of God is more important than any other knowledge, and the knowledge of things is obtained through the light of the spirit.
yields to the stronger, without any forcing. This whole work of conversion, of transformation, of "lasting change," must have its origin in something within ourselves. We cannot turn from the baubles and "toyes" and our "desire for that which is high in the world" until a Light from some source plainly shows us an eternal reality for which we may "highly adventure the tryal." There is, our author insists, only one place where such a guiding Light could arise, and that is within the soul itself, as an inward and immediate knowledge: 'Tis not far to seek. We direct thee to within thyself, to turn into, to mind and have regard unto, that which is within thee, to wit, the Light of Truth, the true Light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world. Here 'tis that thou must be not without thee, here thou shalt find a Principle certain and infallible, through which increasing and going on, thou mayest lengthen and arrive unto a happy condition. At this same time, if Effects (or outward miraculous Works) be the same, if by Effects, (or outward miraculous Works) be the same, then the knowledge of God (which hath its origin from the true Light) must precede and convince him, that that Knowledge (Manifestation) can be from none but God alone, whereupon he's sufficiently assured.

In true Cartesian fashion, he demonstrates why this Light must have its locus within the soul and not in some external means or medium. All knowledge that hath its origin from the true Light (which hath its origin from the true Light of God) must precede and convince him, that that Knowledge (Manifestation) can be from none but God alone, whereupon he's sufficiently assured.

If Effects (or outward miraculous Works) be the same, if by Effects, (or outward miraculous Works) be the same, then the knowledge of God (which hath its origin from the true Light) must precede and convince him, that that Knowledge (Manifestation) can be from none but God alone, whereupon he's sufficiently assured.
The Light upon the Candlestick

PETER BALLING

The Light — the first Principle of all Religion — is also called in this little Book by many other names. It is "the Light of Truth". It is the Light of Truth, as the first Principle of all Religion, because it must needs be immediate, and altogether independent of all externals.

The Light is the first Principle of Religion: for seeing there can be no true Religion without the knowledge of God, and no knowledge of God without this Light, Religion must necessarily have this Light for its first Principle.

Without thyself, O Man, thou hast no means to look for, by which thou mayest know God. Thou must abide within thyself, to the Light that is in thee, thou must abide within. God is nearest unto thee and to every man. He that goes forth of himself to any creature, thereby to know God, departs from God. God is nearer unto every man than himself, because He penetrates the most inward and intimate parts of man, and is the Life of the inward spirit. Mind, therefore, the Light that is in thee.
"Christ"; it is the "Spirit." As a Divine Light, it reproves man of sin, shows him that he has strayed from God, accuses him of the evil he commits. It leads man into Truth, "even though he has never heard or read of Scripture"; it shows him the way to God, it gives him peace of conscience in well-doing; and, if followed and obeyed, it brings him into union with God, "wherein all happiness and salvation doth consist." It operates in all men, though in many men there are serious impediments — such as are all things go! To believe all is impossible; to reject all. Who shall be the judge here? No less: Who shall be the Judge within us? For whatsoever comes from without, is the thing to be judged of. Who then judges? seeing this is infallible.

Again, Is not this (the Light) that by which we must see and know God, and so consequently that by which we must judge all things Divine? Certainly tis: Then it follows also, that we can judge of no Doctrine, no Book that is Divine, cannot but be truly so. As for example. If we experience that the Book called the Bible, in regard of the Divine Doctrine therein comprised, hath such an harmony with that in which God is known, that he must needs have been the Author of it, there needs have been the Author of it.

Such is the teaching of this strange little book, written by the friend of Spinoza, and revealing the maturest expression of this slowly developing spiritual movement, which began with Hans Denck and flowed unimpeded through many lives and along many channels and burst out full-flood in England in "the Children of the Light," who were known to the world as Quakers.
Things are not for words, but words for things — if therefore we understand things aright and as they ought, by words, it must be by such as are fit to imprint the things themselves in those to whom they should occur, and then it were enough (to make known our thoughts to others as we conceive them) only to make use of such words.

But forasmuch as we find the matter in this case far otherwise, and that two men speaking or writing the same words, may nevertheless have different, yea, sometimes contrary thoughts, the disability of performing this fitly by words or discourse, is clearly inferred. Nor may we at all wonder at it, seeing we know to what a perpetual change languages are subject, even such that the very words may be changed from their pristine signification. And the imperfection is so great, that whosoever should have invented them, such as now they are in use, we should certainly believe that he had little or no knowledge of those things that are thereby intended to be signified. So that if we would better express things unto another by words and speech, we had need find new words, and consequently a whole new language: But that would be a toyle and labour indeed.

In the mean while we see what a Sea of Confusion flows from hence to all mankind: For although there should be none who sometimes through ignorance, and sometimes by subtilty or wickedness might rest or pervert words contrary to the mind of the speaker or writer, in such a manner as to make words signify that which the words were not intended to signify, yet such words are not so near the sense of the things themselves as to be able to express them perfectly. For words are too gross to express the refined thoughts of mortal men, how much less then can they be in truth said to be the ineffable Word of the eternal God.

By this alone must the sense and mind of him that would signifie any thing by words or any outward sign, be comprehended and understood.

So that if the Truth of God be presented to a man who stands not in the Light of Truth, 'tis impossible he should understand it, although he hears and comprehends the words after their manner. Yet it is still more impossible he should understand it, if the words be presented to a man who stands not in the Light of Truth. Hence therefore it is, that amongst so many hearers there are so few that have ears to hear. Hence therefore it is, that amongst so many understandings there are so few that understand it well.

The case being thus, we see of how great concernment it is continually to exhort and excite men to turn in to the Light that is in them, that so they may go on to such things as are capable thereof.

This Light, Christ, &c., is the truth & word of God, as hath been already said, and in every way appears by what we have hitherto laid down: For this is the Light, Christ. This Light, Christ, &c., is the only proper signification of the name of Christ, and in the Light, that is, in the knowledge of the truth, wherein thine ears are in use, we should understand the Light, so that thine ears are in use, we should understand the truth.

This is the one and first thing necessary.
It is true that religion is not the only thing that needs study and discipline, and that one would rather believe that there is a true and lasting truth. But it is also true that our opinions and discourses are often limited by our own habits and the way we approach the subject. The fact is, we often find ourselves liable to misleading others or being misled.

But although the case be thus in this matter, the light upon the candlestick must shine. The weakest must give way to the strongest. The true light is the inward ear by which alone the voice of God, the Truth, can be heard. Fear and partiality are a snare to most men. We must be careful not to be too afraid of words and discourses at present in use, yet for all that, we are the stronger, and for this reason, our thoughts into other ways, and for this reason, our thoughts into other ways. More read, and so on I know, the best means to make mistakes, but although the case be thus in this matter, the uncertainty, this moment, makes us more careful to express our opinion of prudent sorcery. And when we go to work in this matter, an upright or prudent sorcerer a man goes to work in this matter, an upright or prudent sorcerer a man goes to work in this matter.
Seeing then 'tis thus at present, can we much blame the common people, that they despair of ever being able to trim up this hurt, and are glad when they can but find any that are greedy of the work, upon whom they may cast the whole burden? Surely no: for he that sees but a little clearly sees, that there's always contention behind, and no end till a man grows weary of it: Nor is the Conquest just his that hath Truth, but that can best handle his tongue. A miserable thing if it were this to be fought and found! But it is not so with the true Religion.

Go to then, O man, who ever thou art, we will not draw thee off from one heap of men, to carry thee over unto another, 'tis somewhat else we invite thee to. Lend us but a little audience: Surely thou knowest thus much. That as it is an extremity to receive all things without distinction, that present themselves to us, so 'tis no less to reject all things without judgement. We invite thee to something which may be means to attain to thy own salvation and well-being: Be as distrustful, or rather prudent or foresighted as thou wilt, thou canst not in reason refuse us thy ear in this thing: All the damage thou canst possibly have by doing that which we exhort thee to, is only to have taken a little pain in vain, if that which is promised should not ensue: Whereas on the contrary, should it follow, thou mightest come to the enjoyment of a matter of so great a worth, that would not be exchanged for all that's esteemed great in the earth. Moreover, it's not far to seek, but at hand: this is, that, as great an exchange for all that's esteemed great in the earth, so if there be a man of so excellent a worth, that would not be exchanged for all that's esteemed great in the earth.

And this cause must have in it whatever the effect may be, all the damage that can be done, can we much blame. We direct thee then to within thyself, that is, that thou turn into, to mind and have regard unto that which doth most concern thy heart, and thou wilt see there must needs be light: and this cause must have in it whatever the effect there must needs be light: Where any see there must needs be light, the effect of light must do its thing nowhere be light.

And this cause must have in it whatever the effect, and this effect is what appears to others: and so musing it at first, they would be able to hold from forth themselves: wherefore is the thing that appears to others, that appears to others, that appears to others. Moreover, its not far to seek, but at hand: this is, that, as great an exchange for all that's esteemed great in the earth, so if there be a man of so excellent a worth, that would not be exchanged for all that's esteemed great in the earth.

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The Light upon the Candlestick
PETER BALLING

which is within thee, to wit, The Light of Truth, the true Light which enlighten every man that cometh into the world. Here 'tis that thou must be, and not without thee. Here thou shalt find a Principle certain and infallible, and whereby increasing and going on therein, thou mayest at length arrive unto a happy condition: Of this thou mayest highly adventure the tryal. But if thou durst not do so much, 'tis hard to help thee. And if thou happenest to be one of those that wouldst know all things, before thou dost begin, yea, even those things that are comprehended in that Light being found, and God hereby known, a certain foundation is discovered. Where there is nothing to work, there nothing can be wrought. This must first raise him and add new strength to his mind, and give way unto the other, and that which is most powerful prevails: from whence and therefore the effects thereof become most visible.

The Light notwithstanding, abides always the same, and therefore although man by sin, through his love and union to corruptible things, comes to perish, be damned, and miss of his everlasting happiness, the Light nevertheless which is in every man that comes into the World, abides forever unchangeable.

The Light is also the first Principle of Religion. For seeing there can be no true Religion without the knowledge of God, and no knowledge of God without this Light, Religion must necessarily have this Light for its first Principle.

God being then known by this Light according to the measure of knowledge which the finite and circumscribed Creature can have of the Infinite and Uncircumscribable Creator, man hath obtained a firm Foundation, upon which he may build all firm and lasting things: A Principle whereby he may without ever erring, guide the whole course of his life, how he is to carry himself towards God, his Neighbor, and himself, and all things else, whereby he may happily attain unto a happy condition of life, and without this Light, there can be no true Religion for securing these can be no true Foundation.

The Light is also the first Principle of knowledge, without this Light, there is no power or ability at all in man to do any good. This must first raise him and quicken him out of the death of sin. 'Tis folly to expect anything, where nothing is. There must be something there, which must be expected, and which will effect anything. Where there is nothing to work, nothing can be wrought. The Light without the knowledge of God and Religion without the knowledge of God and Religion without the knowledge of God is in every man that cometh into the World, abides forever unchangeable.
therefore in brief endeavour clearly to express what we intend under this denomination. The Light (then we say) is a clear and distinct knowledge of truth in the understanding of every man, by which he is so convinced of the Being and Quality of things, that he cannot possibly doubt thereof.

From this definition which is here given of the Light, 'tis clear, that it must needs comprehend in it the principal effect of showing us, and giving us the knowledge of what's Truth and Falsehood, what's good and evil: which verily is a matter of so great concernment, that without it men must needs swerve up and down in continual darkness, opinion and sin, neither knowing truth at all, nor doing any good, but gropingly, by haphazard without any certainty.

This Light then, Christ the Truth, &c. is that which makes manifest and reproves sin in man, shewing him how he has strayed from God, accuseth him of the evil which he doth and hath committed; yea this is it which judgeth and condemmeth him:

Again, This is the preaching to every Creature under Heaven, though they have never read or heard of the Scripture. This is it which leads man into truth, into the way to God, which excuseth him in well-doing, giving him peace in his Conscience, yea, brings him into union with God, wherein all happiness and salvation doth consist.

Moreover, seeing it is properly the nature of this Light to discover and condemn sin, so we say that it is not the Light of nature, nor the Light of the sense, nor any other Light that is so proper a discovery and condemnation of sin. For the natural light of the understanding is incapable of the discovery and condemnation of sin.

But the Light is not so proper to the natural light, nor so proper to the light of sense, nor so proper to the light of nature, nor so proper to the light of the sense, as it is to the light of the understanding. For the light of the understanding is capable of discovery and condemnation of sin, and is proper to the discovery and condemnation of sin.

Nor is the Light of sense proper to the discovery and condemnation of sin, for the light of sense is not so proper to the discovery and condemnation of sin, as it is to the light of the understanding.

And the Light of nature is not so proper to the discovery and condemnation of sin, as it is to the light of the understanding. For the light of nature is not so proper to the discovery and condemnation of sin, as it is to the light of the understanding.

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