

fear, often for want of due care in parents, and those who have the important charge of educating youth, early to admonish and instruct them in the principles of truth, and impress their minds with the duty of religiously observing them; as much as possible restraining them from such company as will be likely to entangle their affections improperly; we therefore tenderly exhort friends, in all quarters, to encrease their care over the youth, that the consistency of our principles, in all respects, with the nature of true religion, may be impressed on their tender minds, by upright examples, as well as by precepts; and ^{that} where there is apparent danger of the affections of any being improperly entangled, and the care of parents or guardians, or those who have the oversight of them, appears not sufficient to prevent their taking imprudent steps in the accomplishment of marriage, care be taken, timely, to apply for the assistance of ^{their} friends.

Marriage being a divine ordinance, and a solemn engagement for term of life, is of great importance to our peace, and well-being in this world, and may also prove of no small consequence respecting our state in that which is to come, yet it is too often inconsiderately entered into, and upon motives inconsistent with the evident intention of that unerring wisdom by which it was primarily ordained; which was for the mutual assistance and comfort of both sexes, in spirituals and temporals, that their endeavours might be united for the education of their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; and for the discharge of their duty in their various allotments in the world.

Marriage implies union, as well in spiritual as temporal concerns. Whilst the parties differ in religion, they stand disunited in the main point; even that which should encrease and confirm their mutual happiness, and render them help-mates and blessings to each other. Where it is otherwise, the reciprocal obligation, into which they have entered, becomes their burden; and the more so, as it may not be of short duration. Whatever felicity they might have flattered themselves with in the beginning, they have found themselves disappointed of by the daily uneasiness accompanying their minds, and embittering their enjoyments.

The perplexed situation of the offspring of such alliances

is also to be lamented; attached by nature to both parents, their confusion often renders them unfixed in principle, and unsettled in practice; or if, as is usual, the sons attach themselves to the father, and the daughters to the mother, brothers and sisters are trained up in lines of conduct diverse from, and in some instances opposite to each other; thus differing in principle, they are frequently divided in affection, and though so nearly related, are sometimes at the greatest distance from that love and harmony which ought continually to subsist between them.

To prevent falling into these disagreeable and disorderly engagements, it is requisite to beware of the paths that lead to them—the sordid interests and enslaving friendships of the world, the contaminating pleasures and idle pastimes of earthly minds; also the various solicitations and incentives of festivity and dissipation. Let our dear youth likewise avoid the too frequent and too familiar converse with those from whom may arise a danger of entanglement, by their alluring the passions and drawing the affections after them.

For want of due watchfulness and obedience to the convictions of divine grace in their consciences, many amongst us have wounded their own souls, distressed their friends, injured their families, and done great disservice to the church, by their unequal connexions; which have proved an inlet to much degeneracy, and mournfully affected the minds of those who labour under a living concern for the good of all and the prosperity of truth upon earth.

In relation, therefore, to this interesting testimony, it is the affectionate desire of the Yearly Meeting, that where there is occasion to apprehend that any of our members are likely to join in marriage with those who are not in membership with us; or that any are about to depart from our deliberate, fair and honorable order of marriage, by which that right which belongs to society to investigate the clearness of the parties, relative to the consent of their parents, or guardians, as also the further necessary enquiry, how far such individuals are clear of other marriage engagements, and of all clandestine proceedings whatever, together with that particular and religious mode of accomplishing marriage, established by us, under the influence of divine wisdom, are wholly avoided and disregarded. That elders, overseers, and other religiously concerned friends, considering it as a duty, be engaged to