

MEETINGS FOR DISCIPLINE.

he Quarterly Meeting, with such reports in writing, signed by the clerk, as may be given them in charge; also that at least four Friends be appointed, for the like service, in each Quarterly Meeting, to attend the Yearly Meeting. And it is earnestly advised, that all Friends who submit to these important services, may be punctual in their attendance, or if prevented by sickness, or any other unavoidable occurrence, that they be careful to send information thereof; also, that those who are under appointments to attend meetings as representatives, do not withdraw therefrom before the conclusion of such meetings, without obtaining the consent thereof.

Account of sufferings. It is also directed, that Friends keep an account of such sufferings to which they may be subjected from the world, for maintaining those testimonies of truth which we believe it is our duty to bear; and that Monthly Meetings use suitable endeavours that such accounts may be collected and transmitted to the Quarterly Meetings, and when there approved, that Quarterly Meetings forward them annually to the Meeting for Sufferings.

Rights of children. As to the rights of children, born hereafter, they are not to be considered members, unless, at the time of their birth, both parents shall be in membership. Application may be made either by themselves, or by their parent, parents or guardians, on their behalf; and if the Monthly Meeting which is applied to, on a consideration of the case, is easy to admit them, or any of them, they are at liberty to do it.

Appointment of clerks. A committee should be annually appointed, in each of our Quarterly and Monthly Meetings, to nominate clerks, which may afford opportunity for their being seasonably changed, and more of our qualified members exercised in those services.

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Design of preparatives. As the design of Preparative Meetings is, in general, to digest and prepare business as occasion may require, which may be proper to be laid before Monthly Meetings, Friends ought to be careful therein, not to occasion unnecessary delays, or undertake to decide on any business which properly belongs to Monthly Meetings.

DIVERSIONS.

FRIENDS are fervently exhorted to watch carefully over the youth, and others of our society, who may be so inclined, to prevent them, by affectionate counsel and brotherly admonition, from frequenting stage-plays, horse-races, music, dancing and other vain sports and amusements; it being abundantly obvious, that those practices have a tendency to alienate the mind from the counsel of divine Wisdom, and to foster those impure dispositions which lead to debauchery and wickedness. If, therefore, any of our members fall into either of these practices, and cannot be prevailed with by private labour, to decline it, but shall repeat the offence, the Monthly Meetings to which they belong should be informed thereof, and if they cannot be reclaimed by further labour, should proceed to disown them.

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It is affectionately desired by the Yearly Meeting, that all young or unmarried persons in membership with us, previously to their making any procedure in order to marriage, do seriously and humbly wait upon the Lord, for his counsel and direction in this important concern, and when fa-

Must be undertaken seriously.

voured with satisfactory clearness therein, they should seasonably acquaint their parents or guardians with their intentions, and wait for their consent; thus preservation from the dangerous bias of forward and uncertain affections would be experienced, to the real benefit of the parties, and the comfort of their friends. And it is earnestly recommended to Friends, that they tenderly and carefully watch over the youth, and extend seasonable caution and admonition relative to this interesting subject, as occasion may require.

Proceeding. All persons about to marry at a distance from home, should procure from the Monthly Meeting to which they belong, certificates of their right of membership and clearness from any other persons, in respect to marriage engagements; they should also obtain the consent of their parents or guardians; and none should be permitted to join themselves in marriage until such certificates, and the consent of their parents or guardians, be also produced in person, or by writing, where it is practicable, or can be reasonably obtained. But as there is tenderness due to children and wards, as well as to parents and guardians, it is not to be understood that marriages are to be prohibited, on account of improper objections on the part of the latter, but that Monthly Meetings exercise righteous judgment in such cases.

Certificates. On application for certificates of clearness from other marriage engagements, the name of the woman must be furnished to the Monthly Meeting.

No Monthly Meeting is to permit any marriage to be proposed therein, sooner than one year after the decease of former husband or wife.

The Yearly Meeting being tender concerning marriage, directs that no misdemeanor be trea-

sured up against a person, until the time of proposing marriage to the meeting, and then disclosed; though perhaps long before known to those who so object to it at that time.

Decorum. It is recommended that such men and women Friends as make or receive proposals of marriage, do not reside in the same house from the time of laying such proposal before the meeting, until the marriage shall have been accomplished.

Moderation. It is earnestly directed, that on the occasion of marriages, Friends be careful to set a becoming example of moderation, it being the judgment of the Yearly Meeting, that expensive and superfluous entertainments and large companies, are inconsistent with christian gravity, and the solemnity of the occasion.

Attendance at marriages accomplished out of the order, &c. Let such of our members be admonished, who keep company in order for marriage, with persons not of our society, or with any bound servants or apprentices, without the leave of their masters or mistresses, or who are either present themselves, or consent to their children being present at marriages of those not in membership with us. And where any are present at the marriage of a member, accomplished contrary to our order, or the entertainment given upon the occasion, they are to be treated with, and where they cannot be brought to a sense of their error, let them be testified against.

Order. For the accomplishment of marriage the following order is to be observed:—The parties are to inform the men's and women's Monthly Meetings of their intention, by a written proposal, under their hands, in substance as follows:

To the Monthly Meeting of _____

We the subscribers A. B. son of C. and D. B. and F. G. daughter of H. and I. G. purpose taking

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each other in marriage, which we hereby offer for the approbation of Friends.

A. B.
F. G.

Committee of inquiry.

The notice should be minuted in each meeting, and two women friends are to be appointed, to make inquiry concerning the clearness of the woman in regard to any other marriage engagements; and, if the parties are both members of the same meeting, two men friends should also be appointed, to make a like inquiry respecting the clearness of the man. If the parties have parents or guardians present, their consent should be expressed; or, if the man be a member of another Monthly Meeting, the consent of his parents, if he have any, should be produced in writing, either then, or at the next meeting, with the necessary certificate from his Monthly Meeting.

Rights of children secured.

If the woman be a widow, having children, two or more Friends should be appointed in the meeting of which she is a member, to see that the rights of her children be legally secured. At the next meeting, if the committee report that careful inquiry has been made, and no objection to the further proceeding of the parties appears, they are to be left at liberty to accomplish their marriage, according to our rules; and two Friends of each sex appointed to attend and see that good order is observed. Marriages are to be solemnized at the usual week-day meetings for worship, or at a meeting appointed at a seasonable hour, in the forenoon, on some other convenient week-day, at the discretion of the Monthly Meeting—when, at a suitable time, the parties are to stand up, and taking each other by the hand, declare, in an audible and solemn manner, to the following

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effect, the man first, viz.—“In the presence of the Lord, and before this assembly, I take F. G. to be my wife, promising with divine assistance, to be unto her a loving and faithful husband, until death shall separate us;”—and then the woman in like manner, “In the presence of the Lord, and before this assembly, I take A. B. to be my husband, promising, with divine assistance, to be unto him a loving and faithful wife, until death shall separate us.” This declaration is not to be considered as terminating the meeting, which should be continued, until it is concluded under the direction of those whose duty it is to close the same; and the marriage certificate being audibly read, by some suitable member of the society, named by the Friends, appointed by the Monthly Meeting, to attend to the marriage, and signed by the parties.

Decency in accomplishment. It is further directed, that the said marriage be accomplished decently, gravely and weightily; and that the parties themselves, their parents and others concerned, do take care at the houses or places where they go after the solemnization is over, that no reproach arise, or occasion of offence be given, but that all behave with such sobriety as becomes a people fearing God; and that the company retire to their homes in seasonable time. And if any thing to the contrary be observed, the overseers or other concerned Friends present ought, as speedily as they conveniently can, to take such steps as may be necessary to put an end to a better behaviour; and the said overseers are to make report to the next Monthly Meeting whether good order has been observed; and take care that the marriage certificate be recorded. Marriage certificates previously to their being

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read and signed, shall be examined, and if necessary, corrected by the attending committee: the form of which certificate shall be as follows:

Whereas A. B. of _____ in the county of _____ in _____ son of C. and D. B. of _____ and F. G. daughter of H. and I. G. of _____ having in writing laid their intentions of marriage with each other, before a Monthly Meeting of the religious society of Friends, held at _____ (where the parties are under the care of parents or guardians, unless in the case of unreasonable objections add,) and having consent of parents or guardians concerned, (as the case may be,) their said proposal of marriage was allowed of by the said meeting. Now these are to certify whom it may concern, that for the full accomplishment of their said intentions, this _____ day of the _____ month, in the year of our Lord _____ they, the said A. B. and F. G. appeared in a meeting of the said people, held at _____ and the said A. B. taking the said F. G. by the hand, did openly declare, that he took her, the said F. G. to be his wife, promising with divine assistance, to be unto her a loving and faithful husband, until death should separate them. And then in the same assembly, the said F. G. did in like manner declare, that she took him, the said A. B. to be her husband, promising with divine assistance, to be unto him, a loving and faithful wife until death should separate them. And moreover they, the said A. B. and F. G. (she according to the custom of marriage assuming the latter name of her husband,) did as a further confirmation thereof, then and there to these presents set their hands.

A. B.
F. G.

And we being present subscribed our names as witnesses.

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Marriages with persons too nearly related may, as much as in us lies, be prevented. That the marriages of persons too nearly related may, as much as in us lies, be prevented. It is the conclusion of the Yearly Meeting, that no marriage between any so near as first cousins, the children of half brothers or half sisters, or the brother or sister of a former husband or wife, shall be permitted among us; and that where any persons so circumstanced shall intermarry, it shall be considered as a relinquishment of their connexion with society; and they are to be accordingly disowned by the Monthly Meetings of which they are members. And if such should afterwards request to be united to the society, Monthly Meetings ought to be fully satisfied that they are brought to a due sense of their transgression; manifested by a conduct circumspect and consistent with our profession, before they are again received into membership.

Care of parents. It is further recommended, that parents exercise a religious care over their children, and endeavour to guard them against improper connexions in marriage; that they be not anxious to obtain for them large portions and settlements; but that they be joined with persons of religious inclinations, suitable dispositions, and diligence in their business, which are necessary to a comfortable life in a married state.

In admonishing the youth. The increase of the breaches of our testimony, in going from amongst us, in the important engagement of marriage, being, we fear, often for want of due care in parents, and those who have the charge of educating youth, timely 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

Care of parents.

In admonishing the youth.