

MARRIAGES.

tenderly exhort Friends, in all quarters, to increase 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 insufficient 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 temporal and spiritual wellbeing; yet it is often too inconsiderately entered into, and from 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 temporals and spirituals; 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.

Where the parties differ in their religious sentiments, the most interesting band of union is wanting; even that which should increase and confirm their mutual happiness, and render them mutual helps and blessings to each other: under these unhappy circumstances the reciprocal obligation into which they have entered becomes their burden, and the more so as it may not be of short duration. The prospect of felicity they might have flattered themselves with in the beginning, they have found themselves disappointed in, by the daily uneasiness accompanying their minds, and embittering their enjoyments.

Danger of difference in religious sentiments.

MARRIAGES.

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; brothers and sisters are trained up in lines 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 ensnaring friendships of the world, the contaminating pleasures and idle pastimes of earthly minds; also the various solicitations and incentives to festivity and dissipation. Let our dear youth likewise avoid the too frequent and too familiar association or intimacy with those from whom may arise a danger of entanglement.

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 feel a living concern for the good of all, and the prosperity of truth upon earth.

It is directed that if any of our members join in marriage with such as are not in membership with us, or in any other way than with the consent of the Monthly Meeting, they should be dealt with, agreeably to our Discipline, and if not brought to a sense of their error, disowned. And in all cases

Sordid interests, &c. of the world.

Unequal connexions.

Proceeding against delinquents.

When parents or guardians consent.

MEETING HOUSES.

Monthly Meetings are enjoined to exercise deliberate caution and circumspection in relation to the reinstatement of such; a religious conviction of the error of their conduct being the alone proper ground upon which they should be received, it ought to be satisfactorily demonstrated by a conduct and conversation of the parties, corresponding with such conviction—for which purpose sufficient time should be allowed, before an acknowledgment be received.

And if any parents or guardians consent to, or promote the marriages of their children, and those under their care, (members of society,) contrary to our established order, if after brotherly labour has been extended to them, they cannot be brought to a due sense of their error and to make a satisfactory acknowledgment for the same, Monthly Meetings are authorised to issue testimonies of denial against them.

MEETING HOUSES.

QUARTERLY and Monthly Meetings are directed to make timely and careful inspection into the situation of the titles of meeting houses and burial grounds, and other estates, which have been vested in trustees, and by them held for the use and benefit of the society at large, or of any of those meetings, so that if it should appear needful, by the death of any such trustees or otherwise, due and seasonable care may be taken to appoint others to the trust; that future difficulties, and the risk of being deprived of such estates may be avoided. And, it is further directed, that Quarterly and Monthly Meetings respectively, as the case may require, keep exact record of all such

Trustees.

MEETING FOR SUFFERINGS.

trusts and conveyances; and also that a clear and regular account be kept by each respective meeting of the place where, and the persons with whom the papers, minutes and records belonging to our religious society, are from time to time deposited; wherein due care should be taken to lodge them with suitable Friends. And when the Meeting for Sufferings requests information of any Monthly or Quarterly Meeting, in relation to the titles of any of our meeting house lands, the same should be furnished accordingly.

MEETING FOR SUFFERINGS.

In order that the Yearly Meeting, with its several branches, might be properly represented during the recess thereof; a meeting was instituted in the year 1778, by the name of the "Meeting for Sufferings," which by a subsequent regulation is to consist of twenty Friends appointed by the Yearly Meeting, and four Friends appointed by each Quarterly Meeting who are to meet at Baltimore, on the seventh day of the week next preceding Baltimore Quarterly Meetings, at three o'clock in the afternoon; but the said meeting is privileged to sit on its own adjournments, or to call a special meeting whenever four members shall judge it necessary; and is to be subject to the following rules:

1. The said meeting shall keep fair minutes of all its proceedings, and annually lay them before the Yearly Meeting.
2. No less a number than twelve of the members shall constitute a meeting capable of transacting business.
3. On all occasions of uncommon importance previous notice thereof shall be given or sent to all the members, if practicable.

Rules.

To represent the Yearly Meeting.

MEETING FOR SUFFERINGS.

4. In case a vacancy, by the decease of any member or members appointed either by the Yearly Meeting or Quarterly Meetings should not be immediately supplied;—or if any declining, or greatly neglecting their attendance; the Meeting for Sufferings are to notify said meeting or meetings of such death or delinquency, in order that the places of those may be supplied by new appointments.

5. The said meeting is not to interfere with any matter of faith or discipline, which may not have been determined by the Yearly Meeting.

The further services confided to the said Meeting for Sufferings are:

Business of.

1. In general to represent the Yearly Meeting, and to appear on its behalf in cases where the interest or reputation of our religious society may render it needful.

2. To take the oversight and inspection of all writings proposed to be printed, relative to our religious principles or testimonies, and to promote or suppress the same at their discretion; also to print and distribute any writings already published by the society, or which may be offered for inspection as aforesaid and approved; and in all cases where expenses are incurred in the execution of the duties assigned them, they are to draw on the treasurer of the Yearly Meeting for such sums as may be necessary.

3. To inspect and ascertain titles to lands or other estates belonging to any of our meetings; also to attend to the appropriation of charitable legacies and donations, or to give such advice respecting the same, as may appear necessary.

4. To receive from the several Quarterly Meetings their annual accounts of sufferings; and also such memorials concerning deceased Friends as

those meetings may have concurred with, that when examined and approved they may be laid before the Yearly Meeting.

5. To extend such advice and assistance to any individuals under sufferings for our testimonies, as their cases may require; and if necessary, to apply to the government or persons in authority, on their behalf.

6. To correspond with such other Meetings for Sufferings as are, or may be established by any other Yearly Meeting of our religious society.

Approved ministers and the members of any other Meeting for Sufferings may also be permitted to attend its sittings.

MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP.

It is the fervent concern of the Yearly Meeting, to press upon the consideration of our members, the indispensable duty of pure and spiritual worship. It is not enough, that, after the example of our forefathers we meet together in one place, in outward silence; rejecting those forms and ceremonies which were invented by the wisdom, as well as that worship which is performed only in the will of man: it is not enough, that with a commendable diligence we attend all our religious meetings, unless also like them, we wait in humble reverence for spiritual ability to worship acceptably the Lord of heaven and earth. May we therefore, humbly and diligently wait for the coming of Him, who told his disciples, "without me ye can do nothing;" that we may experience the influence of his spirit to enlighten and quicken the soul, to a true sight of its condition; and approaching the throne of grace under a renewed

Worship pure and spiritual.

MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP.

sense of the father's mercy and goodness, may be enabled to offer the tribute of worship, and the sacrifice of praise.

Instrumental ministry.

This is the important purpose of our assembling together in silence; and though, at times, there may be amongst us but little instrumental ministry, or even none; let not this produce any abatement of diligence in the duty. Instrumental ministry in the life and power of the gospel, is a great favour to the church; but the distinguishing excellence of the gospel is the immediate communication with our heavenly Father, through the inward revelation of the Spirit of Christ. May therefore the deportment of our members while engaged in this most solemn duty, be such, as to demonstrate, that they are earnest in waiting upon and worshipping God in spirit; that serious and tender hearted inquirers may be encouraged to come and partake in our assemblies of that inward and spiritual refreshment and consolation, which the Lord is graciously pleased to impart to the souls of such as are humbled in his sight, and approach his presence with reverence and fear.

Disorderly behaviour in meeting.

It is directed that those who come late to meetings, or when there fall asleep, or are restless, or do not stay in the meeting, but go forth unnecessarily, or otherwise demean themselves on these solemn occasions unbecoming our Holy profession, be tenderly treated with, and seasonably admonished; and that Friends who are exercised in the discipline pay early attention, in the love of the gospel, to such as neglect their duty in attending our religious meetings. A wilful negligence in this respect, being a manifest evidence of ingratitude to the Divine Author of all our mercies, and contrary to the practice of the primi-

MEMORIALS.

tive believers in Christ, and our religious testimony—it is our judgment that Monthly Meetings after having fully discharged their duty towards such, and finding their endeavours to reclaim them ineffectual, should testify our disunity with them.

It is further directed that Friends endeavour to keep their children and such (members) as are under their care, to a constant, seasonable and orderly attendance of meetings, both on first-days, and on other days of the week: instructing them agreeably to the ability received to wait in stillness upon the Lord, that they may receive a portion of his spiritual favour; and from the tendering virtue of his Holy Spirit, may be engaged in heart and mind, to walk worthy of so great grace, and in a holy zeal for his honour, submit to bear the cross, and become dedicated witnesses for him among men.

Care of parents in bringing their children to meeting.

MEMORIALS.

INASMUCH as the commemoration of the lives of the righteous, may prove an incentive to the living to imitate their virtues, should any Monthly Meeting, upon due consideration, believe, that it would be profitable to prepare a memorial concerning a deceased member; such memorial is to be sent to the respective Quarterly Meeting, where it is to be further considered, and if approved, is from thence to be forwarded to the Meeting for Sufferings, in order for inspection and approbation, previously to its being laid before the Yearly Meeting.

Order of proceeding.