

1878

The Committee appointed on Second day morning, to endeavor to embody some of the exercises of this Meeting in a suitable minute, to be published in our Extracts, for the benefit of our absent members, produced the following, which was satisfactory to the meeting, viz:—

On entering into an examination of the State of Society, as shown in the answers to the queries, the meeting was made to feel that these searching inquiries as to our spiritual health are attended with deep exercises of mind, and may often be of advantage to us if we will only improve by the revelations they make: for it is not to the self-righteous, but to sinners, that the Son and Sent of the Father comes with healing on his Wings.

Minutes of Exercises
In consequence of the apparent neglect in the attendance of some of our meetings, especially those held near the middle of the week, a deep baptism of spirit spread over the assembly, and many concerned minds were brought out in testimony to the advantages arising from our thus mingling together in social worship. It was clearly shown that love to God and to our fellow-men would lead us to seek these opportunities of renewing our spiritual strength, and of encouraging one another in the ways of righteousness.

We were reminded that true and acceptable worship can be as well performed in our small silent meetings as in any other, if they are only held in the power of God. An earnest prayerful desire to draw near to Him, so as to bring our minds under his influence, is the highest and purest worship man can perform. It was so felt to be by Robert Barclay, Jacob Kitter, Job Scott, and other ancient worthies who have left testimonies as to the effect produced on their minds in silent meetings. Friends were encouraged to increased faithfulness in this respect, and some interesting circumstances were related where concerned members had gone out of their way to encourage the young to this religious duty, with the happiest results.

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The church was compared to an arch in which there is a Key Stone without which the arch cannot stand which Keystone is the love of God shed abroad in the heart, and where this prevails there will ^{sure} be a gathering to Shiloh.

Minutes of Exercises
Our important testimony against all intoxicating beverages claimed serious consideration, as some of the reports indicated that all our members were not sufficiently guarded in dealing in them. Under the specious plea of their being used as a medicine it is feared that some have been induced to sell them to others to whom they have proved an injury: and some may have been betrayed into keeping them for sale for fear of losing the custom of those with whom they deal. and it is now pretty well established that they act on the human system as a poison, they should only be used as a medicine, and then in the most guarded manner and under the severest restrictions. Our members were affectionately cautioned against dealing in them, and Monthly Meetings were encouraged to extend the necessary care in all cases where this testimony is violated: for unless our own hands are clean, we cannot successfully wage war against the crying evil of intemperance.

Friends were admonished to beware of extravagance in all its forms, and earnestly advised to be careful in making engagements, either in the way of trade or by going surety for others, when by so doing they would imperil their estates beyond the extent of their means.

In consideration of the many evils that arise from tale-bearing and detraction, Friends were advised to be very careful in talking about persons, as mischief in neighbourhoods is very often produced by so doing when none is intended. If we were as careful of the reputation of our friends as of those of the members of our own households, we would not speak even that which is true if it disparaged them, unless good could be accomplished by so doing.