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Minutes
in
Attendance.

Besides the Friends present with minutes at our first meeting, we have very acceptably with us at this time Emily M. Burgess, a Minister with a minute from Marlboro. Mo. Mtg. New York.

A summary of the exercises during the first session of this meeting was presented and read. It was directed to be forwarded to the Yearly Meeting. It is as follows:

MINUTE OF ADVICE FROM THE YEARLY MEETING ON
MINISTRY AND OVERSIGHT TO ITS
SUBORDINATE MEETINGS.

DEAR FRIENDS:—The time of our service is short; the work is large; the workers few; therefore let us serve the Lord in every relationship of life with all our powers thoroughly under His control.

There are Meetings within our limits, where for many years no minister has been acknowledged. Does not this indicate a serious lack?

Simply and naturally is the gift received to be developed in harmony with the Lord's will. Every member of our Society should feel himself open to receive a gift in the ministry. Let us plead for the bestowal of gifts in our Meetings, and be careful not to lay ourselves open to the rebuke, "Thou didst not pray for thyself." And let our prayers be united; for where we are united, there the Lord Jesus is in our midst, ready to prompt and to answer our prayer. He will not disappoint. We are not dependent upon the training of theological schools. The Lord is our teacher, and let our chief aim be, to be approved unto Him. To this end let us diligently study the Holy Scriptures, and keep our hearts and minds open to everything that will contribute to our growth, and to the freshness of our service for the Lord, never satisfied with any past experience and knowledge, but waiting continually before Him, and seeking His fresh anointing for each service.

The personal training He gives to us in our lives, as our individual character is developed, goes into the exercise of the gift. The man or woman is always behind the gift. The whole life goes into the message.

Let our younger Friends be encouraged to allow the Lord to lead them forth in this service in early life. Let them not shrink from the public ministry of the word, if He graciously calls them into it, but gladly yield themselves to His will. In the oldest book in the New Testament (1st Thessalonians) we are told to "despise not prophesyings." Many would preach gladly could they be great ministers from the start. They are unwilling or shrink from going through the humiliation of beginning in a feeble way. Yet this is the way service often begins, and there is often a special blessing upon these apparently insignificant efforts. To despise these prophesyings is to quench the Spirit.

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Too often these also who have despised the first beginnings of prophecy, and thus in their turn quench the Spirit, when, instead of encouragement and loving caution, there is criticism and want of sympathy. Members of the Meeting on Ministry and Oversight should be the first to encourage the gifts of others. But we have reason to fear that some gifts which might become useful to the Church and the world are remaining undeveloped because of the need of nursing fathers and mothers. Let us see to it, dear Friends, that we are clear in this matter.

Prophecy is to speak to men, under the immediate influence of the Holy Spirit, to edification, to exhortation, and to comfort. It is more than personal testimony; it is for the sake of others. We do not say that all who speak in our Meetings, even when under right influence, are to be acknowledged as ministers. But we believe that we should be on the look out, and ready to recognize officially those who have been called into this work. In this work women have their equal share, and may they ever be ready to enter into and to maintain their full privileges. For active service in the name of the Lord is a service of joy.

Not only is the general exercise of gifts on the part of the membership a source of help and strength both to the worker and the work, but it directly tends to preserve the true freedom of a congregation, and to keep it from becoming centralized under the control of one person. When this freedom ceases, the Friends' Meeting ceases. Our Meetings, as a rule, are not necessarily powerful through one extensive sermon, but also through the united service of the membership in silence and in speech; one after another speaking out of the silence, as the Lord directs. Whom one can not reach, another may reach.

Activity in service is nothing, unless accompanied by a consistent life. The Lord never guides into unrighteous or unkind ways. Let us judge ourselves in this. Finally, dear Friends, be individually faithful, "and say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry that thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfill it."

We want now in closing, to record our thankfulness to the great Head of the Church who has so graciously been with us and helped us.

We now conclude, to meet again next year if the Lord permit.

Jos. P. Elliott
Clerk.