

166

Suitable Minutes for our dear Friend, Joseph James
New, of Australia and England, who is now in
attendance on the Yearly Meeting, but reaching Baltimore
after our last Meeting, when his service in this
Country is completed, viz: John Nicholson, Jas. Cary &
Mary McCullough, Saml E. White, R. N. Thomas and
Annie D. Stallen.

We have at this time been favored to meet under
a special sense of the Lord's blessing and presence.
Much valuable Counsel has been given, and there
has been an unusually large expression of concern
and interest on the part of our members.

We adjourn, hoping to meet at the usual time
and place if the Lord permit.

The concluded

Richd Henry Thomas

Clerk.

167

71

MINUTE OF ADVICE OF THE YEARLY MEETING ON MINISTRY AND OVERSIGHT.

In looking forward to the work of the coming year, we have been reminded that our strength is of God. Outwardly the forces against us may seem greater than we can cope with, but it is the unseen forces that are the strongest. If we be in harmony with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, they that are with us are more than they that are against us.

The subject before us has been service, and its keynote, co-operation, first with God and then with one another. God is ready to bless us. Are we ready to receive his blessing? The first secret of power is submission to the Lord, that His aims may become our aims; that His desire to save men may find a response in our hearts, and that His love and power be made known in us. Not only to ministers, but to all of the Lord's children, comes the call: "Be faithful; stir up the gift that is in thee;" in the exercise of it, wait for and act under the ability that God gives.

Co-operation one with another means more than a wish that others may be faithful. It implies thought for each other and intelligent help. Both in meeting and out the whole membership should co-operate with one another. The simple acknowledgment of a gift in the ministry does not make a minister less liable to human error or mistake than he was before. He is simply a member with an acknowledged gift. There is at times too much of a tendency to let the praise or blame for the condition of a congregation rest upon the ministers. The truth is that there is a mutual dependence, and the effectiveness of the ministry depends largely upon the condition of a congregation. Where the membership is apathetic, or where it looks to the ministers for entertainment, the result is greatly to hamper the ministry, whereas a congregation in which there is true active spiritual life, not only is a help to the ministry, but is one of the best preservers of its freedom. On the other hand, ministers who wish the co-operation of fellow-members will be careful not only to say so, but to avoid taking up so much of the time in our meetings for worship as to prevent others from the right exercise of their gifts.

It is written in the Gospel that in a certain place our Lord could do no mighty work because of the unbelief of the people. They were watching Him to see how they might catch Him in His words. In the same way it is to-day an almost fatal condition, when unkind criticism takes the place of faith, and the ministry is listened to for the purpose of discovering faults, instead of receiving the message.

As an aid to co-operation, we must remember that while it is important to be sound in the doctrines of the Christian religion, we are very differently constituted. Two men may really think alike, and mean the same thing, and yet express themselves so differently as to seem at

on Ministry and
advisement
from the 9th of
of the same volume

Meetings on
following Friends

Thomas, Saml. R.
B. Thomas,
Elija Abells
Chas. Y.
and Howard M.
Report not received
Mary J. D. P.
K. A. R. and

to join for the
seasons were given
our Friends in

Quarterly Meeting

Mary J. Weaver, a Minister from Elba North Meeting
Endorsed by Farmington Quarterly Meeting, New York