

subjects improper, the Elders of Philadelphia mentioned that the conference was to have been with Elias and his companions only, and that they were willing to enter into it if all the other Friends would withdraw, but this proposal not being acceded to, and Elias Hicks not manifesting any disposition to have a slack interview, the Elders of Philadelphia then left the St. Louis.

12 mo 18. A short account of the proceedings of Friends being prepared and as Elias had thus rendered the several attempts for a select personal interview fruitless; it was judged necessary that a communication in writing should be made to him, expressing of the sense of the Elders as to his proceedings and doctrines, which was accordingly produced on the 19th, read, approved, agreed to be signed, and sent to him.

On the 23rd an answer from Elias Hicks with a certificate signed by three Friends, members of the Southern Yearly meeting to it was received. As this certificate did not tend to remove the cause of uneasiness which had been given, and Elias Hicks answer being quite unsatisfactory, it was concluded to make a reply to his letter — a paper containing and a account of a conference which Ezra Comfort had with him on the 19th inst. was on the 28th produced in the meeting of Elders (see page 2 & 3) with this addition. Ezra informed some of his Friends that before he could get on to these other parts of the objectionable expressions which Elias Hicks had made use of at the Southern Yearly meeting, Elias said there were those in the other room who wished his company, and so abruptly left Ezra.

On the 9 of 1st month an answer to Elias Hicks letter having been prepared, it was read, approved, and being afterwards signed, was sent to him.

Concerning the settings of last year's meeting, as not any of my fellow members of that meeting discovered or noticed any such things, which I presume to be the case, as not an individual has mentioned any such things to me, but contrary thereto, many of our most valuable friends (who had heard some of these foul reports first promulgated by an individual in our City) acknowledged the great satisfaction they had had with my service & services in the course of that meeting, and were fully convinced that all these reports were false, and this view is fully confirmed by a certificate granted me by the annually & quarterly meetings of which I am a member, in which they express their full unity with me, and which meetings were held in considerable time after our yearly meeting, in the course of which Joseph Whetall has presumed to charge me with censurings, contrary to the sense of the yearly, quarterly & annually meetings of which I am a member, & to whom only I hold myself amenable for all conduct transacted within their limits.

The other charges against me made by Ezra Comfort as expressed in your letter are in general incorrect as is proved by the aforesaid certificate, & moreover as Ezra has departed from just order in not mentioning his expressing to me when present with me, and when I should have appealed to Friends of that meeting to have testified me. Therefore I consider Ezra Comfort to have acted disorderly, & contrary to Discipline; and these are the reasons that induced me to refuse a compliance with your requestions as considering them arbitrary & contrary to the established order of our Society. Elias Hicks

Elders answer to Elias Hicks' Letter & Certificate of 12 month 21. 1822

To Elias Hicks. Philad. 1 mo 4. 1823

On the perusal of thy letter of the 21st of last month, it was not a little affecting to observe the same disposition still prevalent that avoided a select meeting with the Elders, which meeting, consistently with the station we are placed in, and with the sense of duty impressed upon us, we were engaged to propose and urge to thee as a means wherein the cause of uneasiness might have been investigated, the Friends who exhibited the complaints fully examined, & the whole business placed in a clear point of view.

On a subject of such importance the most explicit candour & ingenuities, with a readiness to hear & give complete