

N^o 43, Concerning Servants.

1705

1703 Advised that Servants professing the Truth behave themselves in Due Subjection, Humility & plainness, as becomes their Profession and places, and Likewise that Masters and Mistresses behave themselves towards their Servants according to the Apostles Direction, Eph. 6. 5, 6. Colos. 4. 1. — 1 Tim. 6. 1, 2, Tit. 2, 9, 10. — 1 Pet. 2, 18, 19, 20.

1718

1718 A Religious Care is recommended toward our Servants, that all Appearance of Pride, Idleness, and vain Conversation in them may be Discouraged, & that they may be Exhorted to attend first day and Week day Meetings and have a Sense of Gods Love upon their Spirits, and therein partake with us of the Sweetness of Truth; and in the Discharge of their Duty to God, and to their Masters & Mistresses, know Peace in themselves.

1737

1737 See Removals & Settlements, page, 288, 289.

Singing

N^o 42ⁿ Concerning Singing

1675

1675 It hath been and is our Living sense & constant Testimony according to Our Experience of the divers Operations of the Spirit & Power of God in His Church, That there hath been and is serious sighing sensible Groanings, and reverent singing, breathing forth an heavenly sound of Joy with Grace, with the Spirit, & with Understanding, in blessed Unity with the Brethren, while they are in the Publick Labour and Service of the Gospel, whether by Preaching, Praying or Praising God, in the same Power and Spirit, & all to Edification and Comfort in the Church of Christ, which therefore is not to be quenched or discouraged by any: But where ^{we} do or shall abuse the Power of God, or are Immoderate, or do either in Imitation, which rather burthens than Edifies, such ought to be privately Admonished, unless rebellious; for that Life Spirit, and Power is kisen in the Church, which doth Distinguish, & hath Power Accordingly to Judge.

Steeple house rates

N^o 43ⁿ Concerning Steeple house rates.

1688

1688 See Sufferings, page, - 350.

1693

1693 Advised, That Our Christian Testimony against Steeple house rates or Lays, be Faithfully maintained.

1703

1703 See Tithes, - page - 369.

1727

1727. See Tithes, page, - 372.

1732

1732. See Tithes, page, 372.

1733

1733. See Meetings for Discipline, pa, 173.
and Tithes, page, pa, 373.

1744

1744. See Questions, page, . . . 273.

N^o 44th Concerning the National Stock.

1672 & 1676.

1672 The Uses for which it is collected.

- 1676
1. For the Service of Truth beyond Sea.
 2. For Books Disposed of and given away to the Chief Rulers and Others.
 3. For Packets of Post Letters with accounts of General Sufferings, & Charges of Recording, & often Transcribing the Same.

1679

1679 Disbursements out of the National Stock to be such only as shall be agreed & Directed by the Weekly Meetings for Sufferings in London, and not any other.

1682

1682 Agreed, that for keeping the Moneys of the National Stock, at every yearly Meeting, three Friends shall be Chosen, & those three of the six that have served two preceding years, shall yearly be Dismissed, and others to be appointed in their Room as aforesaid, so that the Number of six may be still Compleat, who shall have the keeping of the Cash for the General Service Intended.

1692

1692 Advised, That for the future when there shall be Occasion for a Contribution, Friends that come up from the several Counties, bring with them an Account of the Total sum of each Collection, that may be made in their respective Counties, to the next ensuing yearly Meeting,

after

Stock National

after such collection is made that it may be compared with the accounts here for Friends Satisfaction therein.

1698

Ordered, That when a collection is made in the several Counties, It may be sent up to their correspondents here to pay to the several meeting for sufferings, and the Friends of the several Counties, when they come up to the next yearly Meeting, to bring up the total sum collected and returned in their County to the yearly Meeting.

1732

See yearly Meeting, page, 416.

Sufferings

N^o 45th Concerning Sufferings.
1672

1672 Advised, that Friends be exact and brief in drawing up their Sufferings in each County, of the Times, Names, Causes, and Places of both Friends and their Persecutors, Distinctly, and send them up to the next General Meeting.

1675 Agreed, that Certain Friends of this City be here Nominated to keep a Constant Meeting about Sufferings four times in a year, with the Day and time of Each Meeting here fixed & Settled.

Meeting about Sufferings first appointed

Agreed, that a meeting of these City Friends under named be every fifth day of the week before each Term.

- Ratcliff. Arthur Cook, and Richard New.
- London. John Eggood, and Thomas Quayard.
- Wheler Street. Francis More, and William Welch,
- Westminster. Gilbert Lattice, and James Beech.
- Peck. John Elson, and John Staploe.
- Southwark. William Shewen, & Walter Myers.

Publick Friends Members These Friends before named with as many as are free of the second Days Morning Meeting of Publick Friends to meet together as aforesaid.

one of each County That at least one Friend of each County be appointed by the Quarterly Meeting thereof, to be in readiness to repair to any of the said Meetings at this City, at such times as their Urgent Occasions or Sufferings shall require. That the Agreement about the Meetings for Sufferings four times in a year in London, be read to the second Days Meeting of this City, constantly before the day of the Meeting Appointed.

That

1675
Poor
Friends
wasted by
Sufferings
to be taken
care of

That the respective Quarterly Meetings be Encouraged in the Love of God, & Bowels of his Truth to take care of such Poor Friends as have been wasted much with Sufferings, & where any County is not sufficient to the Loves, among themselves, that they be mindful of the Order of Truth agreed to, of recommending their Case to the Adjacent Counties!

That notwithstanding the Meeting about Sufferings by the Nominated Friends of this City, It is Consented & agreed, That in any County, Meeting or Place in England or Wales, where any deep Sufferings may happen the Monthly or Quarterly Meetings may both state ^{their} Case fit to be presented to those in Power, & send up One, Two or three faithful Friends with their Case so stated to be presented, to attend those in Power there with for Relief, if they be ^{convinced} thereunto, or find a Necessity lying upon them to Endeavour for Relief, & this is a most likely way to be Effectual in their Applications.

1676 See Records, Article the 32. & the last pp, 277 & 278.

1678 Mention is first made of the Weekly Meeting for Sufferings in London.

And see Records, page, 278.

1679 Agreed, that any Quarterly or Monthly Meeting has any extraordinary or Grievous Sufferings in their County, that they would have Printed forthwith, that they give notice thereof, & send up the same to the Meeting for Sufferings.

1681 That when Sufferings are sent up in Order for Redress, of any particular Case, the same be writ down as well to the Sops sustained, Goods Distreined, Severe & Illegal treatment or Usage, by Justices or other Persons, Plain, pertinent & distinct as to Matter

of

1681 of Fact only; without any reflections upon the Magistrates and Persons by whom Friends have suffered, or against whom any Complaint is made.

That Sufferings sent up to be recorded here, be first Perused by the Quarterly Meeting, & signed.

1682

1682 And when Necessity requires that Accounts of Sufferings, Be sent up with such speed, that they can not stay to a Monthly or Quarterly Meeting, that such accounts be viewed & approved under the hands of three or four Friends at Least, to prevent Mistakes & Loose Uncertain Accounts of things Complained of, And that before any Accounts be entered in the Quarterly Meeting Books, the same be plainly & orderly drawn up by some knowing Friends in such Concerns.

Upon Consideration of Sufferings in General, It is the Advice of this Meeting, that in Cases of Difficulty, and where Friends who are Sufferers stand in need of advise, in any particular Case, they send up their respective case to the Meeting for Sufferings in London

1684

1684 If a Friends Goods be seized, and a Neighbour Buy them from the Sheriff, & they by Bill of Sale be made over to him, and he leave them in the Sufferers Possession, It is a suffering Case, and to be recorded as it is in itself.

It is thought most convenient that all particular Accounts of any Great & Extream Sufferings which Require, speedy Application or Complaint to the King &c. After Carefully drawn up & signed by the respective Sufferers, & the truth thereof if possible, Certified by some other Faithful Friends of the same County or Neighbourhood, known here;

That

Sufferings

1684 That then they be brought up by One or Two Understanding Sound. Friends that may be capable to present them if need Require, having knowledge of the particular Cases, & that no such accounts be sent up unsigned.

1688

1688 And it is the Desire of Friends Generally, monthly Quarterly Meetings in Collecting the Sufferings of Friends by Priests & Impropiators for their Sufferings from them on that account, with the value thereof & also about repairs of Steeple houses; and about not Swearing; and all other Sufferings on Truths Account: & Let them be carefully Recorded, & Witnessed, and Copies sent up to London from your Quarterly Meetings to your Correspondents: That the Sufferings of Friends for their Testimony may not be Lost.

1689

See Records page, - 279.

1693

1693 The Meeting for Sufferings is Intrusted with the Care of all Sufferings of Friends for Truth & Conscience sake, as at first Intended

See Records, page, - 279.

1695

1695 See Records, page, - 280.

1700

1700 See Records, page, - 280.

Sufferings

1703 And where any Friend or Friends shall be prosecuted upon any Branch of their Testimony for the Truth; That such Labour in a sense of the Weight of their Testimony with the Prosecutor, before or at the Beginning of his Prosecution, that so if possible, the Witness of God in him may be reached, & he convinced that their refusal to comply, proceeds not from Obstinacy, or self Interest, but from a Godly Care to preserve a Conscience void of Offence towards God and Man.

1746

1746 This Meeting Desires, that for the future an Account of all Proceedings in such Suffering Cases as come under the Care of the Meeting for Sufferings, and the Issue thereof, may be duly brought or sent to that Meeting in Writing, specifying the Places or Counties where such Sufferers dwell, with the several Proceedings in the said Cases, in Order to be Duly Recorded.

1774

1774 At a yearly meeting held for New England This meeting being under a Weighty concern for friends who are or may be under Sufferings & Difficulties from the Powers of this world on account of our Religious Testimony to appoint our friends - a Committee who are desired to take Cognizance of all grievances arising amongst us wherein any friend or friends may be spotted either in Person Property or in regard to our Christian Testimony &c and to advise Counsel & assist as best they may think, and they are desired to meet once a month

Sufferings

month or oftner if need bee That seven of said
Committee constitute a meeting which may transact
the Business thereof, And that any agreed Friend
or friends may apply to them either in a collective or
separate Capacity as the Circumstances of the case
may require and that said Committee in a meeting
Capacity draw on the Treasurers of this meeting for
the monies that shall be necessary for the purpose
afore said who is ordered to pay the same
And that this Committee view and Judge of manuscripts
proposed to be printed and Correspond with the meeting
for Sufferings at Philadelphia or Elsewhere

1780

1780

The Testimony of many Friends in the Non-payment
of Taxes part whereof goes for the support of war coming
under Consideration of this meeting - It is our sense and
judgment that the several monthly meetings collect
accounts of the Sufferings of our Brethren or account
of said Testimony and send them up to the meeting
for Sufferings there to be recorded after due inspection,
in friends Book of Sufferings as our Brethren Testimony
for the Truth against the Appropriation of any part
thereof to the purposes of War - And it is Recommended
to friends that Laboursing to be prepared unbiased
herein, as to the powers which are or may be, they
keep a single Eye to the Testimony of Truth against
War & Fighting -

Tale-bearing & Backbiting 357

N^o 46ⁿ Concerning Tale bearing & Backbiting.
1689

1689 Advised to watch against & shut out all Occasion of Offences, Contentions & Divisions, And in the Name of the Lord to stop & Judge down all Whisperings, Tale bearings, Backbiting & evil speaking tending thereunto, & to be kind & tender hearted One to another, And Earnestly Labour and press for Universal Love, Union & Peace in all the Churches of Christ.

1692

1692 Advised, to be careful & Watchful against all Whisperings, Backbitings & Tale bearings, to the Defaming Friends or Others, and put a speedy stop thereto, & pass righteous Judgment upon all Whisperers & Back biters who appear Instruments of Division & Offences, contrary to that Peaceable Truth & Gospel, We Profess, & where any have received Offence against any other, first to speak privately to the party concerned, & Endeavour Reconciliation to themselves, & not to whisper or aggravate matters against them behind their backs, to the Making parties, and the Breach wider.

1695

1695 Let those Just & ancient Commands of God be Observed, Lev. 19, 16, "Thou shalt not go up & down as a Tale bearer among thy People, & Exod. 23, 1, Thou shalt not raise a false report, & Psalms, 15, 3 he that Backbiteth not with his Tongue, nor Doth evil to his Neighbour, nor taketh up a Reproach against his Neighbour &c 'Tis only such Innocent ones that shall abide in

the

1695 The Lords Tabernacle & dwell in his holy hill, Wherefore in the fear of the Lord, stand against all Whispersers, Backbiters, Tale bearers, Defamers & Slanderers, & against all Whisperings, Backbitings, Tale bearings, Reproaching & Slandering & put a speedy stop thereto as much as in you lies, For such works of Darkness & Envy tend to Division & Discord, & the righteous Law of God goes against both the Authors, Somentors, Receivers & Encourgers thereof. See Prov. 11. 13. & 18, 8. & 20, 19, & 26. 20. 22. & also 2. Cor. 12, 20.

1719 The former advise of 1695, repeated, with this Addition, & therefore if you hear a report of a friend be careful not to report it again but go to the person of whom the report is and Enquire if it be true or not ~~if you hear the report~~ if it be true then Deal with such a person for it, according to the Doctrine of Christ, Matt. 18. But if false then Endeavour as much as in you lies to stop such Report, for as Solomon says a Good name is rather to be Chosen than great riches, Prov. 22, 5.

1721 1721. The advices of 1695 & 1719, repeated,

1725 1725. The former advices again repeated,

1727 1727, The same again recommended.

1733 We think proper to Exhort Friends every where to avoid all Whisperings, Backbitings & Tale bearings tending to blemish the Reputation of any, or to sow Discord, & Create evil Surmizings one of another. A Practise which Ought to be Zealously Discouraged, as being of a most pernicious

Consequence

1733 Consequence to Society, is therefore Recommended, That when any shall hear a report of such a nature, they take an opportunity to acquaint the Person concerned thereof, before they again report, or be Instrumental to spread the same; and in Order to stop the Mouths of all Tale bearers & Slanderers Friends would do well to manifest their Aversion to such a Practise: "The North Wind, saith Solomon driveth away Rain, so doth an angry Countenance a Backbiting Tongue. Prov. 25. 23.

See Defamation, page, 93 & 94

1744 Whereas it may so happen, that some Friends may suffer much in their Reputation & Character, by a Detracting Spirit, which too much prevails among some bearing Our Name, Who shelter themselves under a pretence, that they say no more than they have heard from others; but will not Discover who they are; Wherefore to prevent this evil of Reporting and Tale bearing to the Prejudice of Others; It is Agreed that such Reporters or Tale bearers shall either Discover the Authors or be Dealt with and Testified against, as Authors thereof.

N^o 47th Concerning Tithes.

1675

our ancient
Testimony
to be upheld
and
orders to
be dealt
with

1675
Advised, That our Ancient Testimony against Tithes, which we have born from the beginning, and for which many have deeply Suffered, some not only the spoiling of their Goods, but Imprisonment even unto Death, be fully & punctually upheld and Countenanced in the Name of God; And that all those that oppose, slight or neglect that Testimony, be looked upon, and dealt withal, as unfaithful to the Ancient & universal Testimony of Truth, according to Gospel Order established among us.

Innocency in
Suffering
to be kept to
1689.
p. 367

That Truth's Testimony against Tithes, and Friends Innocency in Suffering, be kept to; and th^o Innocent Endeavors may be used to save them from being taken away, yet that Friends be careful of violent th^ough-ling to detain them, when the Adversary comes to take th^{em} by Force.

1676

No Consent

1676
That Tithes taken away by Force be recorded as a Suffering for Truth.
That all Friends have a Care that they nei-ther Openly nor Secretly Consent to the taking away of their Tithes, nor to the Payment of them by any One whatsoever on their behalf, but keep faithful to their Testimony.

1678

Tithes
in kind

1678
And, because some have not kept an Account of the Tithes in kind, that have been taken from them, as if that were no Suffering, because the Priests and Impropriators, pretended Due; We find our selves engaged in Spirit to desire you to rec^ord that of Tithes, amongst the other Sufferings that you send up;

and

1678 and for the time to come, to take the same Care of Recording all taken away upon that Account in your Book of Sufferings.

See Records page, 278

1682 Executors It is the Sense of this Meeting, that the Executors who have a Testimony for Truth, have a Testimony against the Paying of the Tithes pretend'd to be due from the Testator, and ought to bear his Testimony against Payment thereof.

1687

1687 We do in the Love of God, & his blessed Truth, and Testimony of Jesus Christ, recommend to your tender & Christian Care, that Friends in the several Counties, do sincerely keep to their Ancient & Christian Testimony against that old and great Oppression of Tithes for which many faithful Friends & Servants of Christ have deeply suffered, some till Death (in days) and several still do suffer, whereby it appears that the Priests, as they were the first, so they are like to be the last Persecutors for Conscience sake; — and also We request it of you carefully to Collect, & make Return of all Friends Sufferings for Tithes, as well as other Sufferings, whether by Imprisonments, or by taking away Goods, as, Corn, Cattle, or other Goods, either by or without Law, both which are Sufferings, & ought to be accounted, of, & Enter'd upon Record, in behalf of all faithful Friends who stand clear in their Testimony for Truth.

Tithes taken with or without Law to be Record-ed

who

1689 We desire your Testimony against Tithes may be kept up in the peaceable Spirit of Christ as becomes true Christians, rather suffering patiently in the spoiling of your Goods, than any way to strive or struggle with the Spoilers, to retain them by Force, but humbly Commit your Cause to the Lord, who will plead it, and Judge Righteously.

not to strive with the Spoilers

1690

1690 That all Friends be faithful in their Testimony against Tithes of all Sorts, knowing that since they were Ended by Christ, they were imposed & Originally sprang from that Anti-Christian Root & Popish Innovation in Church & State. And that Friends would tenderly consider, that where any decline their Testimony, or are negligent in this weighty Case, they do there by increase the weight & Burthen of Sufferings upon them that are faithful, and strengthen the hands of their Adversaries.

1691 That the Christian Testimony against Tithes may be duly kept up, and such as are unfaithful therein be diligently exhorted to Obedience and Faithfulness to Christ Jesus, that they may not strengthen the Persecutors hands, increase others Sufferings, nor make void Truths Testimony therein, which so many have offer'd up, & laid down their Lives for.

1692

1692 That Friends be careful & diligent to keep up their Ancient Christian Testimony against the Oppression of Tithes. For the more faithful and unanimous Friends are therein, We are really perswaded, the Lord will the sooner make way for our Ease and Deliverance from that Burthen.

1693

1693 ¹⁶⁹³ Advised That our Christian Testimony against the grand Oppression and Anti-Christian yoke of Tithes, Born & greatly Suffered for, be faithfully Maintained in all respects

1696 ¹⁶⁹⁶ With respect to a Proposal about taking a Farm, Agreeing to pay so much the more, to be Exempted from Tithes, It's left to the several Monthly & Quarterly Meetings, to advise Friends to be careful that nothing be done that tends to weaken our Testimony against Tithes by any, & that such be admonished as they see Cause.

1698 ¹⁶⁹⁸ Advised That our ancient Christian Testimony against Tithes be not avoided or shund by any indirect ways or Courses with Landlords, or otherwise. And that Friends be Careful to keep a true Record of the Value of what is taken from them, on that Account, in the field, or otherwise, whether it exceeds the Demand or not, with the respective date of each Suffering, & the Time when any Suit is Commenced.

1701 ¹⁷⁰¹ Our Testimony against Tithes & Forced Maintenance in this Gospel Day, being received from Christ our Head & High Priest, is not of our own Making, or imposing, nor from the Tradition of Men: but what we have from Him, by whose Divine Power, we were raised up to be a People, & by which, we have been preserved to this Day, knowing that his Ministry & Gospel are free, according to his own express Command,

Freely

1701 Freely ye have received, Freely give

1703 ¹⁷⁰³ This Meeting taking Notice, as well from the Accounts of Sufferings brought in from divers Counties, as Relations by several Friends now present, that in many Places advantages are taken upon Friends, by making Stoppages upon them in the Way of Trade, or by Debtors, or otherwise, or by Kindred or Neighbours, laying down the Money for Tithes, or Church Rates, so called, and that this way of proceeding grows & increases upon Friends, in many Places.

Stoppages

It is therefore recommended, as the Sense & Advice of this Meeting, to the several Quarterly, & Monthly Meetings, to stir up Friends in their respective Meetings to Zeal & Faithfulness, in this respect, that they may not consent to, or connive at, such Payments, Stoppages, or Discountings, on such Accounts, but to deal plainly & earnestly with their Relations, or Neighbours who shall so pay, or others who shall so stop or discount, and not discharge the Debt by copying their Books, if Traders men or otherwise, but keep the Debt still in demand, and be as wary & careful as they can for the future, to keep such Persons, as much as in them lies, out of a Capacity of stopping upon them, that they may thereby discourage all such ways of proceeding, which tend to weaken or lessen their Testimony, and not to bring in such Stoppages as Sufferings, inasmuch as they do not discharge the Debt, which if they should do, they would thereby allow the Stoppage, & so let fall their Testimony.

Impropritate Tithes

This Meeting declares it is their Sense & Judgment, that no Friend in Truth can either pay or receive Impropritate Tithes, being Inconsistent with our Christian Testimony; & it's desired Friends of the several Counties may be advised thereof.

1706

Tithes

1706

This Meeting ¹⁷⁰⁶ understanding, that notwithstanding the Judgment and Advice formerly and frequently given by this Meeting against the payment of Tithes, & more particularly in the year 1703 against the paying or receiving of Tithes, by any that do keep the holy Truth with us, there are some Persons who go under our Name, do yet continue not only to pay them, but some few also here, and there, having Dates in improper Tithes, which are the same in Nature & Root with the Tithes paid to the ~~Princes~~ ^{Princes}. Do not forbear as yet to receive them, to the great Dishonor of our holy Profession, and Grief of Faithful Friends who others have consentiously & very honourably given up & released them. This Meeting therefore doth now again signify, as the unanimous sense & Judgment of Faithful Friends, that for any among us in this Gospel Day to Day or receive Tithes, which were a part of the Cerimonial Law, belonged to the Levitical Priesthood, & were Abrogated, and taken away by the coming & Death of our Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross, doth directly Oppose, & tend to overthrow the ancient Christian Testimony of Truth against Tithes, which hath been born by Friends from the beginning of our Day not only by Word & Doctrine, but by deep sufferings, & sealed even with the blood of some of our dear & faithful Brethren, who have cheerfully laid down their Lives, by long & hard Imprisonments in Confirmation of that their conscientious Testimony. In the sense here of this Meeting doth earnestly recommend to the several Quarterly & Monthly Meetings every where of Friends, that they be careful & diligent to make general Observations how Friends do answer and bear up that Testimony against Tithes in their Practice;

and

Tithes

1706

And if they shall find any going under our Name, that do either pay or receive Tithes, that they use their best & utmost Endeavors in the spirit & Order of the Gospel, and in the Exercise of great tenderness and brotherly kindness, to Inform, convince, & short, admonish and reprove, as they see cause, all such without respect of Persons, in Order to gain and bring them to the acknowledgment and Obedience of the Truth in that particular. — And if after such tender & gentle dealing with them, any such shall continue in their Unfaithfulness & Opposition to the Principle & Christian Practice of Friends in that case, that then the Monthly or Quarterly Meeting unto which such Person shall be reputed to belong, having exercised Christian Justice & forbearance towards such, & finding themselves clear in the sight of God, do manifestly declare, that such for their Unfaithfulness & Opposition to that our Christian Testimony, are unworthy to be admitted to the Meetings for Business amongst Friends, or to be received to join in the Collections made by Friends for the service of the Church of Christ: And if after that, such Persons shall persist in such their unfaithfulness and Opposition, that then the Monthly, or Quarterly Meeting proceed further in the Lords Power to give Judgment for the clearing of Truth and Friends, as in the holy Counsel and Wisdom of God, they shall be directed and Guided therein.

1724

1724

Former Advices again Recommended.

1725

1725

'Tis Advised & Earnestly recommended, that it was much as it doth appear there is in some places a Shortness & deficiency in bearing a faithful Testimony against Tithes, that if any Monthly Meeting which have such Members, after a deliberate dealing with them,

In

Tithes

1725 in the Wisdom of Truth, & the Meek Spirit of the Gospel, for their help & Information, Friends have recourse for their further proceedings to the yearly Meeting's Minute 1706.

1727 ¹⁷²⁷ It doth Appear to this Meeting that Friends in divers places are under Difficulty on account of stoppages made in respect to demands for Small Tithes, & Church Rates, so called, and for illegal Seizures without warrants on such Accounts, which are in some places made, whereby we apprehend a voluntary Compliance is implied which doth tend to weaken & lay waste our Testimony, and therefore this Meeting doth tenderly Renew the Caution & Advice thereupon given in a Minute Made in the year 1703, whereunto We Refer. *

1730 ¹⁷³⁰ Friends are heartily desired & Intreated to Read & Disperse Anthony Pearsons Great Case of Tithes, hoping it may have this good Effect, if read with a single Eye, to Manifest the Inconsistency of Tithes with the Gospel Dispensation.

1731 ¹⁷³¹ Former Advices of this Meeting again recommended. And particularly that in 1706.

1732 ¹⁷³² Recommended to the several Quarterly & Monthly Meetings, tenderly to advise & earnestly to Exhort Friends to be Careful in bearing a faithful Testimony against the Antichristian Yoke of Tithes, Priests Maintenance,

and

Tithes

1702 And Church Rates so called; the want whereof in some places hath tended to the Uneasiness & Burden of many Brethren, & added to the Sufferings of such as have stood faithful in this our ancient & Christian Testimony.

1733 This Meeting Observing a Remissness in some Places in respect to our Testimony against that Antichristian Yoke of Tithes. An earnest Concern & Zeal has been on the Minds of Friends, that all might be excited & stirred up to faithfulness therein; In Order whereunto, We think necessary to put you in Mind, that the Zeal of our Friends who have abode faithful in their Testimony against Paying Tithes, Churchhouse Rates, & Priests Maintenance, has greatly tended to the Opening the Eyes of many not only in this, but also in other Countries. We received last year an Account from New England, where our Friends formerly underwent grievous Sufferings, that a Law is made exempting them from paying either to the Maintenance of the established Ministers, Or the Repairing of their Worship houses. And it is our Belief, that if all Friends here had been faithful in their Testimony against Tithes, the Time of our Deliverance from that Oppression, under which this Nation yet groans, would have been nearer at hand. We do therefore earnestly Exhort to a Close coming up in that, & every other Branch of our Testimony, tending to the promotion of Gospel Liberty, which it has been our Concern ever since We were a People, thro' manifold Sufferings, to Maintain. And if any Weakness or unfaithfulness shall appear among the Professors of Truth, We hope faithful Friends & Brethren will not be wanting to administer help;

and

Tithes

1733 And Admonition in the Love & Counsel of God, as they shall see Occasion, for the restoring, and Strengthening of such; according to the advice given by the Apostle, Gal. 6. 1. Brethren if a Man be overtaken in a fault, Ye which are spiritual, Restore such an One in the Spirit of Meekness.

See Meetings for Discipline p. 173

1734 And, Dear Friends, for the sake of those particular Persons in some places, who yet continue remiss in maintaining their Testimony against the Antichristian yoke of Tithes, We think necessary to repeat the advice given last year, That Friends as they shall see Occasion, in the Wisdom of God, would Admonish such, & in a Spirit of Love and Meekness Endeavor to help & Strengthen them, and to Excite & Stir them up to Faithfulness in that Branch of our Ancient Testimony.

1735 And, Dear Friends, as it hath been the Concern of this Meeting frequently to Advise, that Friends should stand faithful in their Testimony against that Antichristian yoke of Tithes, so We do now renew our Advice in that respect.

And, We earnestly Intreat the faithful among you, to take all suitable Opportunities of Endeavoring to demonstrate to such, as are weak & Unfaithful, the Importance of our Testimony against the receiving or paying of Tithes, the natural Tendency whereof is to obtain that Liberty which the purest Ages of Christianity Enjoyed, that is, a Liberty for any Person moved by the holy Spirit of God, to preach the Doctrine of the Glorious Gospel of our Lord & Saviour Jesus Christ, freely, and of which they were not deprived till such time as great Corruptions of Doctrine & Practice were found amongst

the

Tithes

1735 the Professors of Christianity, and the civil Powers were prevailed upon to Meddle with the Consciences of the People, which of right are to be subjected to God only.

We cannot therefore but Bless the Lord from an Experimental Witnessing of the Comfort and spiritual Advantage which Arises from such a Liberty, that We was pleased to raise up our worthy Elders, and give them a Testimony against that Antichristian yoke making them willing in this & other Nations to suffer for that Testimony, thereby, shewing to the World, what the Love of Christ is able to do, — For We believe nothing short of that Love could have enabled them to suffer the Spoil of their Goods, & the long Imprisonments of their Bodies, even unto death, as some of them did for their Conscientious Refusal to pay Tithes, And We have reason to believe that if all among Us had followed their Example, by abiding faithful in this our Christian Testimony, We might before this time have been in a great measure relieved from under that Oppression.

1736 And, Dear Friends, as we have ever since we were a People maintained our Christian Testimony against Tithes, & forced Maintenance of Ministers, as contrary to the Nature of the Gospel Dispensation. We cannot but repeat our earnest Exhortation, that Friends every where stand fast in the Liberty where with Christ hath made them free; & beware of burthening their own Consciences, by a mean Submission to an Antichristian yoke of Bondage thro' fear of suffering. A Meek & quiet Spirit under temporal Inconveniences for the sake of our Christian Testimony is one of the best proofs of our sincerity therein, & may be a means of effectually recommending Us to the Compassion of those whom God has placed in Authority over

Us

1736 Us to whose hands, He has committed the power of giving us relief and from whom it becometh us to seek it with Humility and Patience.

1737 This Meeting being informed that Friends in several Parts of this Nation are in the Practice of calling on their Members to bring in an Account of their Sufferings for their Testimony against that Antichristian Yoke of Tithes, &c; And to Enquire whether such as bring in no Account, do stand clear in their Testimony; which having had a good Effect, It's therefore recommended that Friends thro' the Nation fall into the said Practice, And if they find any deficient, & persist in the same, that such Friends be dealt with, pursuant to the directions, & former Advice of this Meeting, & particularly in 1735, and those recommended therein.

To p. 378 & 374
of p. 173.

You have been often reminded of the Importance of our Ancient Testimony against the Antichristian Yoke of Tithes, and as you are convinced in your Consciences of their Inconsistency with the Nature of the Gospel Dispensation, 'tis certainly your necessary duty to Act agreeable to such Conjections: And if Sufferings for your Testimony shall be the Consequence of your Obedience therein 'twill become you, after the Example of the primitive Christians cheerfully to submit, & to take Joyfully the Spoiling of your Goods, that so you may preserve a Conscience void of Offence toward God, and at the same time by your Christian Meekness & innocent Deportment, give reasonable Evidence of your Sincerity to Men.

See Trading, page. 391

1738

1738

We therefore tenderly Exhort all who Profess the Truth, to watchfulness and Zeal, that this Branch of our Christian Testimony, be not laid waste by Connivance, or private agreement with Priests or Impropriators; But that all abide Patient under that Testimony which the Lord hath called us to bear, not doubting but that the gradual progress of real Christianity will at length Operate to the Removal of a Yoke, so directly contrary to the Liberty where-with Christ hath made us free.

1742

1742

See Questions, page. 272.

1744

1744

See Questions, page. 273.

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1750

Whereas it appears that the Method of taking the Priests Demands, without Warrant, or due Form of Law, prevails more in some places than heretofore; Friends are therefore intreated to be as much upon their Guard, as possible, against the Introduction of any practices that may tend to encourage Unfaithfulness, or Collusion, a Disposition altogether Unbecoming the Nobility of Truth, and inconsistent with the Brightness it Requires.

N^o 48. Concerning Tombstones.

1717

1717

This Meeting being informed, That Friends, in some places have gone into the Vain & Empty Custom of Erecting Monuments Over the Dead Body's of Friends, by Stones, Inscriptions, Tombstones, &c. And being very desirous Friends should keep a Commendable plainness & Simplicity in this as well as other respects, It's therefore the Advice of this Meeting, That all such Monuments as are already in being Over Dead Body's of Friends, should be removed, as much as may be with Discretion, and Convenience: And that none be any where made or set up by or over the Dead Body's of Friends, or Others in Friends Burying Places for time to come.

N^o 49, Concerning Trading.

1675 ¹⁶⁷⁵ Advised, That none Trade beyond their Ability, nor stretch beyond their Compass; And that they use few Words in Dealings, & keep their words in all things, lest they bring through their forwardness, Dishonour to the precious Truth of God.

1688 ¹⁶⁸⁸ Advised, Not to Launch forth into Trading and Worldly Business beyond what they can Manage honourably, and with Reputation among the Sons of Men, and so that they keep their words with all men, And that their yea may prove yea indeed, & their Nay may be Nay indeed, for whatever is otherwise cometh of the Evil One: And such who make themselves guilty by thus dishonouring God, and the holy Profession of his Name & Truth, such are for Judgment by the Truth, & the Judgment of Truth ought to be set over them, that the Truth & those that abide & walk in it may be Clear of their Iniquities.

1692 ¹⁶⁹² It is advised and earnestly desired, that the Payment of Just debts be not delayed & agreed upon, nor Truth beyond the Time promised & agreed upon, nor Occasion given of Complaint to those they deal with; by their backwardness of Payment where no Time is limited, nor any to overcharge themselves with too much Trading & Commerce, beyond their Capacities to discharge a good Conscience towards all men; and that all Friends concerned be very careful not to contract Extravagant Debts to the Endangering the wronging of Others, And their Families, which some have done, to the grieving the hearts of the hearts of the Upright;

nor

1692 Not to break their Promises, Contracts, or Agreements in their Buying or Selling, or in any other Lawfull Affairs, to the Injuring themselves, or Others; Occasioning Strife Contention, & Reproach to Truth and Friends: And it is advised, that all Friends that are Entering into Trade, or that in Trade, & have not Stock sufficient of their Own to answer the Trade they aim at, be very Cautious of running themselves into Debts, without advising with some of their Ancient & Experienced Friends among whom they Live, & more especially such Trading as hath its Dependance on Sea Adventures.

1697 See plainness, p. 223.

1702 We earnestly desire that all professing the blessed Truth with Us, be very careful to keep their Words, & Promises, by paying their just Debts without unreasonable delay, & do Justice to all Men for Righteousness sake, & to prevent the great Reproach & Scandal of defrauding any Persons by breaking in their Debts, or otherwise Injuring any.

1703 A advised, that all Friends be weighty & Circumspect in their Conduct & Management of their outward Affairs, & careful to keep within Compas of their own Substance, to prevent failures & Breaches.

1708 To prevent the great Scandal & Reproach, which any Professing Truth may bring on it, by breaking in other Mens debts, We remind you to exercise a Godly Care therein, as much as in you lies, by giving timely Caution to any such as either Break their Promises,

or

1708 Or delay the Payment of their just Debts, or otherwise render themselves suspected.

1709 Truth leads all who faithfully follow it, to do Right & Justice to all, & not defraud or wrong any, in any way of Commerce, Trade, Trust, or Dealing, much less to put any abuse upon the Government, &c.

See Kings & Governors, page, 129. Also the advice in 1703, again recommended.

1710 Considering the great Suffering that hath been brought upon Truth & faithful Friends by divers professing Truth amongst Us, breaking their Words, Promises & Obligations, to the great Injury of Others, by not paying their just Debts in due Time, & the sad Consequences thereof, & Reproaches brought thereby, notwithstanding our great Care, & many warnings given for prevention thereof, which being to many to recite here, We refer you to the Advice formerly given by our Ancient Friend & Brother, G. F. to Shop keepers, Merchants, Factors or any other Friends, which this Meeting hath thought proper to Recommend unto you in front, & advise that it be read in your Quarterly & Monthly Meetings, as you may see Occasion, at least once a Year.

1720 Let all Promises & Obligations for payment of just Debts be truly kept and performed.

1724 'Tis earnestly desired, that all Friends, every where be very careful to avoid all inordinate pursuit after the things of this World, by such ways & means as depend too much on the uncertain probabilities of hazardous Enterprises, but rather Labour to content themselves with such a plain way & Manner of Living, as is most agreeable to the self-denying Principle of Truth;

which

1724 which we profess, & which is most conducive to that Tranquility of Mind, that is requisite to a religious Conduct through this Troublesome World. — And the Advice in 1710. Repeated.

1727

1727 'Tis earnestly desired that all Friends be very careful not to run into larger Trading & Business, than their Capacities, & Abilities can well answer, and that they may frequently inspect their Circumstances, & do not Live at an expence beyond them. And if thro' Adverse Accidents any should fail in paying their Just Debts, and should after his or her Composition with his or her Creditors, be so far Blessed & prospered in their affairs, as to be capable of paying their deficiencies; 'Tis the earnest Desire & Advice of this Meeting, that they do not omit the same, 'T being agreeable to the Command of the Gospel, and Common Justice among men.

See Negroes, page, 203.

1728

1728 Forasmuch as repeated Occasion hath been given of great Grief & affliction to Friends, which hath caused the way of Truth to be Evil spoken of, by the Launching out of divers under our Profession, too far into the Affairs of this World, to their own hurt, the Reproach of the Society, & Wronging other Persons of their Just Properties. We recommend great Care and Circumspection to all Friends in this respect, & in particular do Refer to the Advices in the yearly Epistles, 1720, & 1724, & last year;

and

1728 And do Desire Friends at their Several Monthly Meetings, to use their utmost Endeavors, by a watchful Eye, to prevent, as much as in them lies, all such unjust Practises, and Scandals.

1729

Notwithstanding many are the good & wholesome Advices, which in former years have been recommended from this Meeting, Exhorting to faithfulness & perseverance in all Godliness & Honesty; yet to our Grief We find there are fresh Instances of great Shortness in coming up in the practice thereof, particularly by some injurious depriving their Creditors of their Just Debts, & not performing their Word & Promise, which have occasioned grievous Complaints, wherefore We desire, & intreat, when any such occasion of Reproach shall be, that whatsover monthly Meeting within the Compass whereof it may happen, that do not fail speedily to set righteous Judgment on the head of the Transgressor.

1730

1730 See Meetings for Discipline, page, 171.

1731

1731 See Conversation, page, 60.

1732

1732 We find it our Duty to remind our respective Members of the remarkable Uprightness & honesty of our Friends in the beginning, in their Commerce & converse, How Exact were they in performing their Words & Promises, without evasive Excuse, and insincere Dealings. How Careful not to involve themselves in Business which they understood not, nor had Stock of their own to manage! How Circumspect not to contract great Debts than they were able to pay in due Time!

which

1732 Which brought great Credit & Reputation to our Religious Society: But with Sorrow we observe that contrary to their Example, & the repeated Advices formerly given by this Meeting, particularly in the years 1729 & 1733, against an inordinate pursuit after Riches, too many have launched into Trade & Business above their Stocks and Capacities, by which unjustifiable Proceedings, & high Living, they have involved themselves & Families in Trouble & Ruin, and brought Considerable Loss upon others, to the great Reproach of our holy Profession. We therefore recommend to Friends in their respective Quarterly & Monthly Meetings, to have a watchful Eye over all their Members, and where they observe any Deficient in discharging their Contracts, & just Debts in due time, so as to give reasonable Suspicion of weakness or Negligence, that Friends do earnestly Advise them to a suitable Care, and necessary Inspection into their Circumstances in order that they may be helped: And if any proceed contrary to such Advice, & by their failure bring open Scandal & Reproach on the Society, that then Friends justifiably may, & ought to testify against such Offenders.

1735 Again, Dear Friends, We esteem it our duty to renew our former Advices, that Friends every where, take diligent Care to prevent, as much as possible, Persons professing with us, defrauding their Creditors of their just Dues, to the great Scandal & Reproach of our holy Religion; by timely Admonishing & Cautioining all those of our Society, who by delays in payment, & breaking their words & Promises,

give

1735 give reasonable Cause of Suspicion that their Circumstances are desperate, Advising all such to inspect their Accounts, & Give up their Effects in time, in order to make the best they can to their Creditors, which will most conduce to their own peace, & Credit, & Reputation of our Christian Society. — But if any thro' Ambition or desire of Grandeur in the World, shall reduce themselves too Insolvently after having been thus plainly cautioned and dealt with, according to the Nature of the Offence, & pursuant to the Advices of this Meeting, in the years 1728, & 1732 to which We refer you, then the Society will justly be Fear of Reproach arising from the Misconduct of such. — A Care of this Nature, We earnestly recommend, not only to Monthly & Quarterly Meetings, but also that Friends in their private Capacity watch over, advise and caution, One another when ever they observe any real Occasion for it.

1737 As some Reproach and Scandal have been brought upon our Religious Society, by some bearing our Name falling short of answering their just Debts, & others professing with us, being Unfaithful in bearing a testimony against the Antichristian yoke of Tithes, notwithstanding the several wholesome Advices given from this Meeting, the several whole some Advices given from this Meeting, that no Person who shall fail as aforesaid, ought to be admitted to act in meetings for Business, or join with Friends in collecting for the Poor & the Service of the Church, untill they have made Satisfaction to the Monthly Meeting they belong to, & Done what is in their Power, to take of the Reproach they have by their imprudent Conduct brought on our Christian Principle.

See Conversation, page, 64.

1738 See Conversation, page, 65.

N^o 50, Concerning Wills.

- 1691 ¹⁶⁹¹ Advised, That care be taken in each monthly Meeting that Friends who have Estates to Dispose of by Will or otherwise, be particularly Advised to make their Wills, or settle their Estates, in due Time, to prevent the Inconveniences, Loss and Trouble that may follow upon their Relations and Friends, & Injury to the Poor, thro' their being Intestate, Delays & Omissions in this Case having been very prejudicial in divers respects.
- 1695 ¹⁶⁹⁵ The above repeated, with this Addition: Making such Wills in due time, will shorten the Man's Day, but the Omission or Delay thereof has proved very pernicious to many, and Injurious to Truth.
- 1696 ¹⁶⁹⁶ See poor, page 235.
- 1703 ¹⁷⁰³ Knowing how quickly many are removed by Death 'tis weightily recommended, that all Friends in Time of Health, & Strength of Judgment, take care firmly to make their Wills, & to dispose of their substance, as in Justice and Wisdom may be agreeable to their Satisfaction.
- 1705 ¹⁷⁰⁵ The Advice in 1703 repeated.
- 1706 ¹⁷⁰⁶ See Orphans, page 211.
- 1710 ¹⁷¹⁰ This Meeting recommends the Visiting the Sick amongst Friends timely, and see that they make their Wills in due time.

1713 ¹⁷¹³ Desired, That Friends will take Care that none do unadvisedly bring themselves or others into Sufferings, by undertaking Trusts or Executorships, where they cannot Legally discharge that Trust.

1715 ¹⁷¹⁵ Advised, That Trustees & Executors concerned in Wills and Settlements do take especial Care, that they faithfully discharge their respective Trusts, according to the Intent of the Donors & Testators, And that all Charitable Gifts, Legacies, Bequests and Settlements of Estates by Will or Deed, intended & Given for the use of the Poor, the Agee, the Impotent, or Putting Poor Friends Children to Education, or Apprentiships, may not be appropriated, or converted to any other Uses than such as the Donors and Testators have directed and Enjoined them by Legal Settlement, Will or Testament.

Yearly Meetings

N^o 51, Concerning the yearly Meeting.

1672

1672

yearly
Meeting
Constituted

Agreed, That One or Two of each County, that are concerned in the publick Service of the Truth in each respective County, do come up to this Meeting Once a Year, to be Chosen or Elected by the Quarterly Meetings of each County respectively for that purpose.

And the publick Labourers to be here in the same Week, on the second Day at even at farthest.

to be held
in London
in the Whit-
sun Week

That for the better Ordering, managing, & Regulating of the publick affairs of Friends relating to the Truth, & the Service thereof, there be a General Meeting of Friends held at London Once a Year, in the Week called Whit-sun Week, to consist of six Friends for the City of London. — Three for the City of Bristol. — Two for the Town of Colchester. & whilst One or Two from each County in England and Wales, to be Chosen at their respective Quarterly Meetings next preceeding the said Week called Whit-sun Week, & to be in London on the second Day of that Week.

Representatives
to be Chosen

As Many Friends that Labour in the Truth, as have Freedom thereunto may be present at the said Meeting.

All Others except such as are Nominated by the Quarterly Meetings, are desired to forbear coming to the said General Meeting, except such Friends as they when met together shall see meet to admit.

The said Yearly Meeting of Representatives to continue till further Order.

ministers
to be there

1673

1673

Agreed, That the General Meeting consisting of two Friends from each Quarterly Meeting about Publick Business, appointed the 29th of the Third Month 1672, till further Order,

cc

Yearly Meetings

1673 Meeting of Friends was discontinued

be discontinued till Friends in Gods Wisdom shall see further Occasion.

That the General Meeting of Friends who Labour in the work of the Ministry do Continue as formerly appointed.

1677

Revised

Then Agreed, That the yearly Meeting of one or two from each County, as formerly agreed upon at a General Meeting in London, upon the 29th of the 3^d Month 1672, appointed yearly to meet about the publick Affairs of Friends, sometime in the Week called Whitsun Week, until further Order, and afterwards agreed to be discontinued from the 2^d of the third Month 1673, till Friends in Gods Wisdom should see a further Occasion for it, Be again Revised & begun this time twelve months, And then Friends to Advise about the Continuance thereof, as they in Gods Counsel shall see Occasion.

1678

Sufferings Information Assistance

The End and Intent of the Meeting

It is the desire of this Meeting, That you would Nominate One or two Friends to come up the next Year at the usual Time for the Service of Truth, & that they bring with them the total of the Sufferings of the foregoing Year not before sent up; And what is over else you desire Information or Assistance in, let it be writ & subscribed by some of your Meeting in the Name of the Rest. The End of this Meeting not being limited to the Case of Sufferings, but Intended for the more general Service of the Truth And Body of Friends, in all those things, wherein, We may be capable to serve One another in Love.

1679

Yearly Meetings

1679

Agreed, That Friends be desired in their Quarterly Meetings respectively to take care to appoint some faithful Friends or Friends to attend this Meeting this time twelve Months as formerly.

N.B. Since ^{this} time it has annually continued.

1681

Wales

A Yearly Meeting in Wales agreed to be held about a Month before that of London.

1688

1690

1691

1694

1695

Intent of yearly Meetings

43

1696

1697

Women publick Friends.

1679
1681
1688
1690
1691
1694
1695
1696
1697

See Representatives, annis, 1688, 1690, 1691, p 301

Agreed, That the Friends of the West of England may have a yearly Meeting for Worship at Bristol.

The Good and blessed Intent & End of This, & all our Assemblies, is, with the Lords Assistance, for His honour, in promoting & maintaining of our Christian Society & Religion in Life and Practice in all the Parts and Branches thereof.

See Epistles, page 113.

Ordered, That such faithful Women Friends as have a publick Testimony, that are in the City at the Time of the Yearly Meeting, may have their Liberty to sit with their Ministering Brethren, at their Second Day's Morning Yearly Meeting for Worship.

1698

Yearly Meetings

1698
Northern Yearly Meeting*
A Proposition ¹⁶⁹⁸ that Friends may have a Yearly Meeting for Worship Only, for their Comfort, and to provoke one another to Love & Good Works, for the Counties of Cumberland, Westmorland, Lancashire, & Cheshire, & any other Neighbouring Counties that are free to join with them, consented to, until this Meeting shall otherwise direct, and upon condition that it may not Interfere with the Service & Power of this Meeting. 1699. See. p. 419

1700 See Representatives, page, 305.

1706 See Questions, page, 270

1707 Agreed, That when this Meeting directs the Morning Meeting, or any other Meeting, to a Service, that henceforth the said Meetings should be provided to give an account to the next Yearly Meeting.

1709 Representatives not to go out of Town before the Meeting Ends. — See Representatives, p. 302. And See Meetings for Discipline, p. 167.

1710 Orderly Managing the Business
It is the Desire & Agreement of this Meeting, that the Business & Concerns thereof be Solidly, in the Fear of God, managed & carryed on without Contention or Striving, & with as few Words, & in as pertinent Expressions to the Matter in hand as may be for Expedition of the Affairs thereof without Loss of Time, or any ways disordering the Meeting. But one at a Time speaking & standing up; that all things may be done decently & in good Order.

Yearly Meetings

1718
The Intent & Design of Yearly Meetings
Friends, are reminded, That the Intent & holy Design of our Annual Assemblies, in their first Constitution, was for a great & weighty Oversight and Christian Care of the Affairs of the Churches, pertaining to our holy Profession & Christian Communion, that good Order, True Love, Unity & Concord may be faithfully followed & maintained among all of us, as a peculiar People called & Chosen out of the World, & the Errors and Corruptions there of, knowing also that Sincere Love & Union in general, will be a great Cause of Truths prosperity among our selves, & of the prevalency thereof over the World, & the Spirit of it. All which seriously considered, We sincerely desire & humbly hope, that God will graciously please more & more to put into the Hearts of Friends & Brethren to be zealously concerned, that Universal Love, true Union, Peace & Concord be followed and maintained in all the Churches of Christ, and all the contrary, as Enmity, division, discord & Strife, watched against & shut out for ever, that the Power & Peace of our God may prevail & rule in all our hearts more & more, whereunto we are called in one Body, that the God of Love & Peace may be witness for ever, which is the earnest Desire and Travel of the Souls of all the faithful.

1719
Advised, that the Several Meetings do commit the Epistles of the Yearly Meeting, whether printed or written, to the Custody of some suitable and able Friend, to whom Friends may have recourse as Occasion requires, or they may be read in Meetings at suitable Opportunities.

See Meetings for Discipline, p. 169

Yearly Meeting

1720
Circular Yearly Meetings in the Western Counties

1720
By a Proposal from the Yearly Meeting in Bristol, held the 16th & 17th Days of the third Month last, sent by Samuel Bowdler & Joseph Dibble Desiring Liberty from this Meeting, to set up a Circular Yearly Meeting for Worship, in the Counties of Cornwall, Devon, Gloucester, Hereford, Somerset, Wilt, Worcester, & Bristol, The first Circular Meeting to begin the second first day in the seventh Month next coming at Bradford; — The said Proposal being taken into Consideration, It is agreed, That the said Circular Meeting may be held provided it be with these Restrictions, First, that the Meeting be for Worship only, & Secondly, that the Time of holding the said Circular Yearly Meeting be in the seventh Month in every Year.

1731

See Conversation, page, 60

1732

It is Agreed, That all Papers to this Meeting, from Half Yearly, Quarterly, or Monthly Meetings be signed ought to be signed in such Meetings.

It is Agreed, That for the future the Meeting for Sufferings shall nominate Six Friends out of their own Members, to this Yearly Meeting in Order for this Meeting to Choose three out of them instead of those who are to go out, to be Cashiers for this Meeting's Stock, and that the Persons so nominated be such as are Members of the said Meeting.

1733

Yearly Meeting

1733
Method for Choosing Clerk

1733
Agreed, That in order to prevent Debate in the Yearly Meeting, respecting the Choice of a Clerk, that the several Meetings that are Members of this Yearly Meeting, be divided into Five Districts, as follows, viz.!

North

Yorkshire, Durham, Northumberland, Cumberland, Westmorland, Lancashire, Cheshire, Scotland.

South

London, Middlesex, Surrey, Sussex, Kent, Hampshire, Berkshire.

East

Essex, Colchester, Suffolk, Norfolk, Norwich, Lincolnshire, Cambridgehire, & Ely Hunting.

West

Cornwall, Devonshire, Dorsetshire, Somersetshire, Bristol, Wiltshire, Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Worcesterhire, North Wales, South Wales.

Midland

Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Rutland, Warwickshire, Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, Nottinghamshire, Staffordshire.

And that a Clerk be Annually Chosen by One of the said Districts, in the Course and Order that they do now stand.

And that as the Clerk for the present year is of the Northern District, so next Year One to be Chosen by the Friends of the Southern; and the Year following by the East, and the next succeeding Year by the West, and the Year after that by the Midland District; and so on in a continual Rotation,

until

Yearly Meeting

1733 Until the same shall be altered by the yearly Meeting.

And in Order that the Election of a Clerk as aforesaid, may be made in a convenient Manner, We think it will be proper, that the Meetings Composing the District on whom the Election for that year doth fall, be first called Over, & the Names of the Representatives of such Meetings, be first Entered, And that they then immediately retire into the Chamber, in Order to a Nomination of a proper Person to propose to the Meeting, for their Approbation as a Clerk, for that Year.

Advice Concerning deputing proper Persons, to attend the Yearly Meeting; See Representatives, page, 303.

1735 Propositions to be in writing

This Meeting desires that all Propositions from any Monthly Quarterly, Half Yearly, or Yearly Meetings to this Meeting, be delivered in Writing, & signed by Order of such Meetings.

2 Days Morning Yearly Meeting

Ordered, That the Second Days Morning Meeting, which precedes every Yearly Meeting, do only consist of Publick Friends, & such as are, or shall be pursuant to the Minute of 1727, appointed to sit in the Morning Meeting of London, or any other Meeting of Ministering Friends.

Conclusion of the Meeting

It is agreed, that immediately after the Finishing of the Business of this Meeting, there be a reasonable Opportunity for the Ministering Friends, & other Members in the Wisdom of Truth, to speak what may be upon their Minds to Mutual Comfort and Edification;

and

Yearly Meeting

1735 And it is Ordered, That at Such times, no Persons be permitted to stay in the Meeting, except Publick Friends, Representatives and Correspondents: After which it is agreed that a publick parting Meeting be held.

1736 Letters

Ordered, That all Letters directed to the Yearly Meeting, except from such Meetings as regularly correspond therewith, be perused by a Committee, who are to consider & report whether the same be proper to be read in the Meeting or Not.

1742

See Questions, page, 272.

1745

See Appeals, page, 4.

1746

See Representatives, page, 303.

1750

x see Representatives, page 302.

This Meeting observing with great concern a Deficiency in divers Counties in not duly attending this Meeting, some being represented but by One Friend, & some without any, cannot but strongly recommend an Observance of the Minute in 1728, which directs that, less than four Friends should be appointed for each County, that in case of sickness or other Accident there may be a sufficient Number to answer the Service of the Meeting, by the want of which the Business is too often obstructed.

1699

Declared, That it was & is the Intent of this Meeting, that those Meetings which are or shall be held Yearly in any of the Counties or Places in England, distinct from this Meeting, be only for Worship, also that they continue Only from Year to Year, intirely Subject to the Advice of this Meeting.

1760

Yearly Meeting

1760

1760

At the Yearly Meeting held in Newport on Rhode Island it was Agreed, & Concluded that the following Method for Constituting Meetings of Ministers & Elders should be here added.

Method of Constituting Meetings of Ministers & Elders

1. That in each Monthly Meeting, some Solid Friends of either or both Sides be appointed for each particular Meeting, as Elders to have the Oversight of the Ministers at home Advise & Counsel both the Ministers at home and such who travel amongst them, as they in the Wisdom of Truth may see necessary.

2. That the Ministers in Unity and Elders be appointed within the Compass of each Monthly Meeting, Meet by themselves, once in three Months, & wait to feel their Minds seasoned with the Virtue of Truth, & then read the Queries, & make diligent enquiry into the State of their Members, & form such Answers thereto, as appears Agreeable to their States. The said Answers to be signed by the Clerk, & some Friends appointed to attend the Quarterly Meeting of Ministers and Elders therewith, where the Queries are again to be read & answered, & at the Quarterly Meeting preceeding the Yearly Meeting, that general Answers in writing be drawn up & transmitted from thence to the Yearly Meeting of Ministers & Elders, by Friends appointed to attend the same, & that the Ministers in Unity & Elders appointed, as above Directed shall be only Deemed proper Members of said Meetings.

Jly 3

Yearly Meeting

1760

3. That where any Friends come forth by way of Publick Ministry, that the Elders and those of Experience have a tender Care over them & after a suitable time of tryal; if their Conversations be Clean and blameless, & Friends are convinced that the Lord hath called them to that weighty Work: That then the Monthly Meeting to which they belong, Do recommend them to the Quarterly Meeting of Ministers. (By a Minute signed by the Clerk) and that they then may set in the Meeting of Ministers and Elders.