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A Handbook for Elders and Overseers

Raymond Binford et al.

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A HANDBOOK for ELDERS and OVERSEERS

QUAKER HILL PAMPHLET No. 2

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Leslie B.
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A concern for a Handbook for Elders and Overseers sprang up independently in at least four yearly meetings in recent months. As a result, a voluntary conference of Elders and Overseers was held at Quaker Hill, October 1944, with thirty-two in attendance from five yearly meetings. This conference felt it would be better for Quaker Hill to take the lead in the preparation of a Handbook which could have wider use than one prepared by an individual yearly meeting. Hence the conference named an editorial committee, and Quaker Hill agreed to underwrite the printing of the Handbook.

Contributions in writing were secured from various Friends. These were edited and compiled by the editorial committee. Those who contributed as authors or as members of the editorial committee are the following:

Raymond Binford     Milo S. Hinckle
Alvin T. Coate        Herbert S. Huffman
James R. Furbay        Charles W. Palmer
Loren S. Hadley       Jesse O. Stanfield
W. Bruce Hadley       Frances Doan Streightoff
Milton H. Hadley       Anne Willis
Cecil E. Haworth      Charles D. Wood
Cecil E. Hinshaw
THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY

The objective pursued in these pages has been to produce for elders and overseers in Friends meetings a body of literature which is problem-centered. The swiftly moving historical scene during the last generation has been the cause of immense and widespread confusion about the important spiritual testimonies which characterize the Christian life. The automobile, the radio, the motion picture—to mention only a few of the products of the last quarter-century—have had revolutionary effects upon society. The older Quaker communities have been rooted out of their former isolationism from the rest of the world where the Christian life as envisioned by Friends could be taught the young without interruption from the outside world. The vast population movements in the last twenty-five years have affected Friends as they have everyone else and have made us now veritable children of the dispersion in this modern world. Our homes suffer the shock and strain of modern life, as other homes do with the economic arrangements of our time that bring varying hours of employment during the night and day and split apart the activities of the members of the family who work, and, in addition, the multitudinous claims of present day society from outside the home that constantly intrude upon our families and tend to break them down. The two world wars in our generation have been successively more totalitarian in their effects upon the life of the people. All these circumstances and more have shaken us to the foundations, and the bewilderment and confusion which beset the people in our churches is not of itself to be mistaken for any less earnest Christian desire on their part. The persons who occupy the positions of elders and overseers in the light of contemporary situations, and illuminating people are in need of help by way of defining their responsibilities as Christian desire on their part. The persons who occupy the positions of elder and overseer and to re-charge the mind of the reader with fresh insight into the treasures held within the sanctuary of these positions. For it assuredly may be asserted without fear of contradiction that the quality of the life of the meeting and of Quakerdom as a whole is utterly dependent upon the Christlike imagination and effectiveness of our elders and overseers. An historical presentation of the positions of elder and overseer is not sufficient to meet this need. Somewhere there must be helpful guidance in terms of the contemporary life situations which face us. That has been the aspiration of the committee and the writers alike as we have composed the pages which follow.

SUGGESTIONS FOR USE

From previous experience with similar Handbooks, the recommendation is made that the material included be studied and discussed in each local Meeting on Ministry and Oversight or Pastoral Committee. Some have followed the practice of considering such material in the regular prayer meeting sessions, since the work of elders and overseers is of interest to and significant for the entire meeting. The questions at the end of each chapter are to guide the thinking and discussion of the group, or of concerned individuals. The editorial committee hopes that many local meetings will have a group study of this handbook, taking a chapter a week.

IF THE TENTATIVE DISCIPLINE IS ADOPTED

At present the tentative draft of the new Faith and Practice provides for only elders. But omission of the overseers does not mean that there will be duties or tasks which are no longer necessary. It means that the elders, probably with their number increased, will have all the responsibility. Hence the Conference and the Editorial Committee agree that the following chapters will continue to have significance.

This Handbook in Chapters IV and V, discusses "areas of guidance." It is not expected that every elder or overseer will seek to become an effective guide in all these areas: rather that different elders and overseers have differing interests and abilities and that each shall prepare himself in at least one area of guidance. One or two consecrated individuals in every meeting who have prepared themselves for counseling in personality problems should prove a blessing to disturbed and maladjusted people of the community. This is recommended for some concerned elders or overseers since they remain in the community year after year and thus have sufficient time to gain the respect and confidence of persons in need. Thus they have an advantage in counseling their fellow citizens.

This Handbook is sent forth with the sincere desire that it may prove of assistance to many elders and overseers, making more effective their work for the Kingdom of God.
CHAPTER I
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF ELDERS AND OVERSEERS

The movement initiated by George Fox and his associates began with no thought of organization, since they were actuated solely by the desire for spiritual freedom and the right to worship God as prompted in their own souls. These seventeenth century Christians formed what was essentially a spiritual fellowship, informal, and open to any and all who were similarly motivated. For a considerable time such a basis of fellowship and group search for truth was completely satisfying. Then came the sufferings in families deprived of common necessities by the imprisonment of parents. Came also the perfectly natural tendency in a pure democracy for individuals of even the best of intentions and unquestioned sincerity to go to extremes in the exercise of personal freedom and in the belief that what one feels within himself to be proper should be the sole criterion of conduct.

LEADERSHIP OF STRONG PERSONALITIES

The first step toward group control in the interests of good order and proper decorum recognized by early Friends as essential within the rapidly growing, informal fellowship was the acknowledgement of persons of strong character and good judgment as "elders." Ministers whose authority to function as exponents of the new interpretation of the Gospel rested, not upon any agreements as to qualifications, but solely upon the inner urge to give expression to convictions which surged in liberated souls like a mighty stream breaking over a crumbling dam, had already been informally recognized. The natural course characterized the first selection, or recognition, of elders in that they were picked from the ministers whose personalities were already the formative influences giving shape and direction to the movement. Not until about the middle of the 18th century, according to Robert Barclay and T. Edmund Harvey (as quoted by authors of the North Carolina Yearly Meeting booklet on "elders"), did the Friends begin generally to select elders who were not ministers.

ELDERS AND OVERSEERS

The terms elder and overseer seem to have been used rather interchangeably in the earlier years. Later the term elder came to be attached to the more definitely spiritual concerns of the Society, and overseer to
matters of physical need, morality, and conduct generally. Overseers were also charged with the responsibility of passing upon applications for membership and dismissals from membership. In recent years, in quite widespread areas, especially within the Five Years Meeting of Friends, there has developed a neglect of the distinction, both in qualification and function, between elder and overseer. This neglect is noted both on the part of appointed persons and in the meetings. In the place of this former distinction there has come to be a fairly general practice merely to appoint persons to membership in the Meeting on Ministry and Oversight, or to the Pastoral Committee.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE APPOINTMENT

Through the years, but especially in the earlier years of the Society, the term “weighty” was used to describe those chosen for the positions of elder and overseer. Generally speaking, this term connoted good judgment and the knowledge which grows out of experience. Unfortunately, it sometimes thinly veiled a recognition of financial or other more or less materialistic superiority. Almost without exception, until recently, the office of elder was accorded to persons of mature, if not advanced, age. Moreover, because of all of these considerations, the appointment came to be looked upon as a recognition of superior worth in the one appointed, and this rather automatically developed an unwritten law of “life tenure” in office. Even in the more modern times, when the disciplines had specifically stated that the term of appointment should be for three years, both elders and overseers expected to retain such positions for life, or during good behavior. Failure on the part of any meeting to re-appoint an elder or overseer has generally been received as a vote of censure; and it must be said that such an attitude tends to stultify the spirit and nullify the purposes in a body of Ministry and Oversight.

WISDOM MANIFESTED

Notwithstanding any and all weaknesses which occasionally came to light in the working out of the system, the Friends set up a very high standard for this service, so vitally important to the life of the meeting and to the individual member. The earlier habit of choosing elders from the group of ministers furnishes an intelligent background for understanding the intimate relation of the elders to the care of the spiritual needs of the Church. This same background makes it natural to commit so much

to elders in relation to the character and appropriateness of the spoken and pastoral ministry in the meetings. It is altogether appropriate to speak of the “ministry of eldership,” as to speak of the ministry of preaching, or ministry of music, etc.

AN ENGLISH STATEMENT

In 1934, Edward Grubb read an excellent paper on the subject: "Elders: A Definite Service," before the Yearly Meeting of Elders of London. His paper was printed in pamphlet form. From it the following is taken:

"The Eldership used to be looked upon as a ‘status’ to be acquired by Friends not ‘ministers,’ who through social position and a comfortable income had ‘weight’ in the Society—in fact, as a kind of spiritual Peerage. The idea that any one raised to that dignity should ever have it taken away, except for some moral backsliding, was unthought of. Now, happily, the Book of Discipline (Part III) directs that, when Elders and Overseers are being appointed, Monthly Meetings should regard it as a new appointment, and not as the mere revision of a permanent list of names. We now think of Eldership not as a ‘status,’ but as a service. Any Friends who have discharged that service to the best of their ability should be willing and glad to retire, to make way for those who have younger and fresher minds."

The spirit and content of the above quotation are sadly needed in practically all meetings on ministry and oversight among American Friends. If incorporated into our thinking and practice, it would go far toward revitalizing and enriching all groups of elders and overseers from the local meetings up to the yearly meetings.

QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE DISCUSSION

1. How would you justify a meeting in having elders and overseers?
2. In the Appendix, Section I, you will find a comparison of the qualities and duties of New Testament leaders and those of our Society. Why is there such similarity?
3. What do people mean when they say that elders and overseers have a task rather than a position?
4. An increasing number of meetings name elders and overseers for three-year periods with the provision that individuals may not succeed themselves more than once. (Or they may serve six out of every seven years). Give advantages of this plan; disadvantages.
5. How can we secure younger and more active elders without hurting the feelings of those who have served for years?
THE QUALIFICATIONS OF ELDERS AND OVERSEERS

The most important qualification for an elder or overseer is wholehearted commitment to God as revealed in Christ. The duties of these leaders of the meeting are so demanding that it is hopeless to expect fruitful service until the person concerned has indeed become a “new creature in Christ Jesus.” As Thomas Kelly expressed it, “No average goodness will do, no measuring of our lives by our fellows.” One should hesitate to accept the responsibilities of an elder or overseer unless he can feel deep within himself that he has yielded completely to God, that he has been born again.

A LIVING HUMILITY

A corollary to this requirement is that there shall be no pride or boasting concerning spiritual achievements. As a matter of fact, any pride is evidence that the commitment to God is not complete, that self still treacherously seeks to be satisfied. Consecration to God makes a person childlike in his unawareness of himself. It is this natural, uncultivated humility which enables an elder or overseer to speak in meeting and not be proud, or even conscious, of the fact that he may have spoken well. It is this humility which enables him, without any pride in his own moral standards, to speak with tenderness to others about their spiritual and moral life and needs.

COMMITMENT TO GOD DETERMINES THE CHRISTIAN’S DECISIONS

However, we cannot completely rid ourselves of self. Throughout life we are faced with problems and decisions involving these selves of ours. But our commitment to God can be so complete that, whenever such questions arise, our answer is largely determined by our previous decision to do the will of God. Once we have committed ourselves to God, there still remains a lifetime of decisions to be made, of continuous struggle, of continued growth.

VITAL PRAYER IS A NECESSITY

A primary qualification for this continued growth in Christian life is vital prayer. We may make only a few observations on this matter here. Prayer is both an attitude and a discipline. As an attitude, it is largely determined by the quality of our dedication to God. Prayer is not difficult when we love God; nor is it realized by mere repetition of words and phrases. All of life becomes a prayer and a sacrament to those who have let Christ come into their lives in all His amazing, thrilling power. Communion with God is a fountain of living water. We are qualified as elders and overseers when life has thus become a glorious experience of God in all the varied activities in which we engage.

THE DISCIPLINES OF PRAYER

The discipline of prayer gives us a seriousness of purpose, a method of self-examination, a dynamic for everyday living which is especially important to all of us who must live our lives in the world of today. Therefore it behooves each of us to apply himself to the discipline of regular and habitual prayer, in the family group, in our circle of friends, and in our own personal lives. Not until a person has bared his soul completely before God in the searching silence where all veneer and sham disappear has one truly prayed. Periodic searching of our inmost thoughts and listening to the voice of God is essential for any true Christian.

FRIENDS DO NOT DICTATE

If Quakerism is true to its heritage, Friends will always insist upon great flexibility in the exercise of prayer and worship. Times of worship, places of prayer, means and ways of speaking to God, physical posture, even the content of our prayers or worship should not become stereotyped. We dare not insist that others pray just as we do. Many find, as did Brother Lawrence, “the time of prayer does not differ with me one whit from the time when I am washing dishes”; for truly, he prayed without ceasing.

ELDERS AND OVERSEERS SHOULD BE SENSITIVE

Elders and overseers must be sensitive, sensitive to the leading of God’s Holy Spirit, sensitive to the possibilities in others, and sensitive to the way in which God is working and leading others. We believe that God is anxious to make His will known to those who are ready to do that will. He can lead us to an understanding of the spiritual needs of others and to minister to them. A domineering spirit in an elder or overseer, though well-intentioned, will crush the tender bud of God’s Spirit in another. The person who properly serves as a spiritual
guide for young people must recognize that outward appearances are not always to be trusted. Underneath a rough, forbidding exterior may be a deep, unrecognized longing for spiritual reality. Sensitivity to such needs in all people is essential in one who would be a spiritual adviser. Jesus set the example by finding among sinners and publicans divine possibilities undreamed of by the Pharisees. The sensitivity of Jesus needs to be manifest in us today, finding among unchurched people, labor union members, soldiers, young people, the stirrings of God's love which, with encouragement, may lead them to become outstanding Christian men and women. But such service requires that self be forgotten and that we see others through eyes of love.

LIVE ABOVE REPROACH

The only safe standard for elders and overseers is that stated by Paul: Avoid the appearance of evil. Christian character is the fruit of religious living; it is by character that one's religion is inevitably tested. "By their fruits ye shall know them." No genuine test of character can be too severe as a qualification for elders and overseers. The New Testament declares that they must be "blameless," "above reproach," "without sin." While they will not be beyond honest error, they must not knowingly or intentionally commit sin, nor by word or action wound the spirit of another. Elders and overseers dare not become a part of the moral chaos of our time. Others may debate moral issues, but an elder and an overseer must be consistent with the highest standard revealed to him. Recognizing that there are areas of doubt and question regarding many of today's moral standards, we must insist that Christians should fully and completely obey what they believe to be the will of God for them. Let elders and overseers preach and practice a standard of moral perfection which will challenge the stoutest and bravest hearts.

THE LEVEL OF SINELESS LIFE

Many Christians today accept the old Calvinistic doctrine, "A man must sin every day in thought, word, and deed." Most so-called Christians proceed to do just that! The clarion call of the early Christians and of George Fox needs to proclaim again that man can rise above such a level. John insisted, "Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not." George Fox knew he lived in the same power and life that motivated those who wrote the Bible. He insisted that this power lifted him to the level of sinless life. We need men and women who, out of their own experience and relationship with God, can proclaim in humility that sin is not necessary. Our Society needs today to have raised up in our midst men and women of stalwart faith and integrity who know that the power of God is an ocean of light sufficient to conquer the ocean of darkness which now besets men. Let the Society of Friends come again to the standard and purity of life that once made it a proverb. Such a quality of life is the final evidence of fitness for service as elders and overseers.

QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE DISCUSSION ON CHAPTER II

1. The above chapter holds the standard for elders and overseers high. How can the meeting help its elders, overseers, and other members to reach this standard?

2. Are Friends careful to see that the group of elders and overseers shall not be handicapped by appointing or continuing to appoint elders and overseers who do not hold the confidence of others by leading consistent Christian lives? How can such a situation be avoided?

3. How can a Christian become so sensitive to the Spirit of God that His guidance will be a continuous experience?

4. Describe what you consider ideal personal daily devotions. Ideal family devotions. What is the value of each, not only to elders and overseers, but also to all Christians?

5. It is said, "The elder or overseer with the most pride in his position is likely to be rendering the poorest service." Explain why such a statement may be true.

6. How can the Monthly Meeting be sure of securing the best elders and overseers available?
CHAPTER III

ELDERS AND OVERSEERS

THEIR RELATION TO WORSHIP AND TO THE PASTOR

It has been said that the students of a Friends' Boarding School facetiously insisted that the forms seen in the facing seats in their meetings for worship were not really alive, but were wax figures brought in to help give the setting desired. No doubt the signs of life on the part of many elders and overseers are not too much in evidence. It is especially important that pastors feel a concern to help prevent elders and overseers from becoming little more than useless organs in the body of the meeting. We are not forgetting the weight of their silent influence, nor are we unmindful of the fact that in general they are the most faithful and spiritual members of the congregation. Their concern for the integrity and spiritual life of their fellow church members should insure their readiness to review their opportunities for service in relation to the meetings for worship, and to the pastor.

A NON-WORSHIPPING MEMBERSHIP

The matter of attendance at meetings for worship and business is in need of the most careful consideration. Perhaps from two-thirds to three-fourths of the members of the Society of Friends fall below the standard set by the first Query of our Discipline: "Are all your meetings for worship and discipline duly held, and are you regular and punctual in attending them?" Many bring their children to Sunday School and let the children take them home before meeting for worship. A resulting shallowness in religious life and experience is all too frequently the price paid by a non-worshipping membership. Surely elders and overseers should get to the bottom of this question. The concern should be deep enough to insure a readiness to make daring changes if necessary, such as in the hour of meeting or the planning of a unified Sunday School and meeting for worship. Possibly the decision will be to concentrate on the meeting for worship on Sunday morning while devoting afternoon and evening to youth and to adult educational activities. Or an adaptation of these plans may be adopted if it meets local conditions.

A HANDBOOK FOR ELDERS AND OVERSEERS

QUAKER FREEDOM

There should be the finest kind of cooperation between elders, overseers, and pastor in planning for the meetings for worship. Together they should decide how much of the hour of worship should be programmed. This cooperative planning should be guided by the same Spirit which, being manifest in the meeting for worship, helps in finding solutions for life situations in the community. Certainly some time should be given for spontaneous expression and silent worship. In many pastoral meetings this expression is too limited to "personal testimony." Elders and other Friends should not be allowed to forget that our testimony to the possibility of direct and personal religious experience is weakened when it appears that only the pastor is capable of contributing suitable illustrations, incidents, quotations, admonitions, and exhortations in the meetings for worship. Elders should study hymnals being used. Occasionally an elder seems to have a gift for selecting a hymn which fits the thought rising in the mind of the meeting, while others seem unaware that the hymns may add to the spirit of worship and thought of the hour. Many hymnals have few hymns that give expression to the Friendly concerns for service, temperance, brotherhood, and world peace as vitally related to the coming of the Kingdom of God. On the other hand, a hymnal rich in such expression may be rejected if it does not contain a sufficient number of the hymns the congregation has previously learned to sing.

COUNSEL TO PASTOR

The elders may help the pastor to realize the reaction of the congregation to his sermons. If they are too short, too long, too much given to one subject, deal with too many subjects, too light, too heavy, too wandering, too pointed, too controversial, too non-committal, the elders and overseers should give sympathetic counsel. Common sense observations may be of much value but the elder who becomes sufficiently concerned to do a bit of studying himself in the field of sermon preparation and delivery may add greatly to the weight of his suggestions. And the elder’s responsibility for the doctrinal emphasis of the ministry cannot be fully met without regard to the conclusions of our most painstaking and reverent scholars in the field of religious thought.
DEMOCRACY OF RESPONSIBILITY

In many conferences on worship it has been recommended that elders sit at the head of the meeting with the pastor. This may help convey the idea of democracy of responsibility and expression in the meeting and bring about a deeper experience of sharing of concerns between minister and elders. Unfortunately the difficulties some elders have in keeping themselves from nodding or dozing, and in presenting an appearance which does not call attention away from the concerns of the meeting, have to be considered. At least once a year it has been found profitable to review the question as to which persons should sit on the facing seats. Some may well have a permanent service at the head of the meeting; others may prefer to take their turns for a few weeks at a time. In some meetings others than members of the Meeting on Ministry and Oversight are asked occasionally to sit in the facing seats. Elders and overseers should help with the personal greetings and inquiries at the close of the meeting. Together with the pastor they may set the tone of friendliness of the meeting.

ELDER, OVERSEER, AND PASTOR COOPERATE

From the very beginning of the pastor's work, there should be the richest fellowship in the meetings on ministry and oversight. In larger meetings elders and overseers can be of great assistance to the new pastor in helping him get names and faces properly related. It is not enough to plan a reception and have him and his wife meet a hundred or more people in one evening. If he is permitted to take a little time with each family group, he may go farther toward acquaintance than if he is taken on a non-stop introduction tour around the room. There are games which are excellent aids because of their frequent use of the names of the participants. And for a few weeks an elder can help prevent the "Do you remember me?" embarrassing moments. It takes so much less time and personal wear and tear if the member himself, or the elder, sees the pastor's effort to remember and gives him the name at once.

GUARDING THE PASTOR'S TIME

Elders and overseers can help the pastor to keep his work properly balanced between sermon preparation, pastoral calling, and administration. They should be able to carry on a meeting for worship without his presence, and many a pastor would be grateful, if in times when pressing personal ministries have crowded out time for public ministry, he could turn to the elders and depend upon them to lead the congregation in a satisfactory experience of worship.

Perhaps one of the most difficult tests in the Meeting of Ministry and Oversight occurs in deciding how long a pastor should serve in a given meeting. If the question is not faced in the right way at the right time the unity of the meeting may be at stake. Surely there is no place for petty reactions among seasoned elders, overseers, and ministers. Neither should their best judgment be suppressed. (See "The Meeting and Its Pastor" in Appendix, Section II.)

QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE DISCUSSION

1. Describe your ideal of a Friends' meeting for worship.
2. How much general participation do you have in your meeting? How could this participation have greater value? Are there individuals whose contribution never varies? How can we keep contributions fresh and vigorous?
3. Do you carry the meeting for worship on your heart during the week so that you are prepared to participate if called by the Spirit to do so?
4. What does the meeting do when the pastor is not present? Is there much use of members, especially young adults?
5. Many meetings have part-time pastors. What are the advantages of such a situation? How have some meetings used it to develop their own leadership? What are its disadvantages? How can they be overcome?
6. Who, in the congregation, makes strangers welcome? Are the elders and overseers alert to help in this? Are there small cliques, exclusive groups, who only talk with each other when meeting closes?
7. Does silent worship in a meeting increase reverence? Is it used effectively?
CHAPTER IV

THE ELDER AND OVERSEER AS COUNSELLOR AND SPIRITUAL ADVISER

A—EVANGELISM AND CHRISTIAN GROWTH

In his personal dealings with individuals, Jesus verified the basic principle that human experience and growth cannot be standardized. He respected the individuality of each person. He was more interested in the growth and fulfillment of each one's life than He was in any standard patterns. Likewise, elders and overseers need to recognize that a growing person will go through a number of critical stages or transitions. This personal growth may be facilitated by receiving guidance at these times of need, or stunted by neglect. And arrested growth may not mean death. Plants seemingly dead will revive and grow again under favorable conditions.

FOSTERING THE CHRISTIAN GROWTH

The role of an elder or overseer in a Friends' meeting is like that of a wise parent in the home, who watches, guides, and encourages the personality growth of his children, and gives special help at the time of stress and strain. Elders should develop such a relationship of friendly interest, confidence, and comradeship with children, young people, and young adults that they will be sensitive to the opportune moments for great decisions, the potential turning points in careers, and they will lay hold upon these opportunities to lead on to the spiritual triumph of Christian character.

CONSTRUCTIVE COMMENT

Encouragement, rather than criticism or overpersuasion, is the most effective way of expressing this friendly interest and concern in others. This is the primary service of elders to children and young people in the meeting. There are others who have made a wrong start and their lives have gone to pieces. Many adults have gone a long way on the road of irreligion and selfishness. Such persons will need a different kind of help from that given to children and young.

THE METHOD OF CHRIST

A local meeting should be: 1. a Sanctuary for worship; 2. a School for Christian education; 3. a Society for friendly fellowship; 4. a Clinic for spiritual healing; and 5. a House of Service for humanity. Jesus took children naturally into his love and fellowship. He showed his appreciation for the rich young man. He had a way of helping the morally errant Samaritan woman; the politically corrupt Zaccheus; the learned but nationalistic ruler, Nicodemus; and the woman who, though greatly diseased in body, yet manifested undying devotion, the Magdalene. He met each person where he or she was and helped them all at the points of their need. "I came not to judge . . . but to save" should be the spirit and purpose of the elder and overseer.

ENCOURAGE THE STIRRINGS OF THE SPIRIT

Elders may well watch for the signs of the stirrings of the spirit in the lives of people and for the signs or symptoms of religious difficulties. Individuals can be helped to make a Christian decision or commitment if there are persons who know and understand them, and can help them at the right time. Andrew, the layman, brought his brother, Simon Peter, to the Master.

Helpful books in this area of counseling:
- The Ministry of Friendly Guidance, by R. Hoiland (Judson, 50¢).
- Pastoral Work and Personal Counseling, by Russell L. Dicks (Macmillan, $2).

B—COUNSELING TOWARD CHRISTIAN CONDUCT

In the tentative draft of Faith and Practice, page 51, the duties of elders are briefly set forth. "Elders should exercise watchful care and affectionate oversight for the maintenance of a consistent moral life by the members of the meeting. If the occasion arises, they should extend care and admonition, and should endeavor to restore offenders to an orderly life and useful service in full fellowship with the meeting." (Note: The functions of elders and overseers have been combined in the proposed revision of the discipline).
HELP IS NEEDED

The elder's task should no longer be thought of as that of a disciplinarian. The easy way is to pronounce judgment upon wrong conduct. The creative and helpful way is to endeavor to understand the person who has done wrong, and to find out the reason for his behavior. Individuals, however well adjusted they may be, will face some situations in which the right course is not clear to them. They need help from some more experienced person. If such help is given at the right time, questionable conduct and unfortunate consequences may be prevented. It is always better to prevent than to correct an unwise action.

HINDRANCES TO CHRISTIAN LIVING

Acute personal problems are often found in the following areas: immaturity in religion, or where people fail to "grow up"; a sense of inferiority and guilt; anxiety and worry which continually haunt; fears that paralyze life; a consciousness of failure and humiliation; inner conflicts which have not been resolved; problems coming out of sex and its relation to wholesome living; and situations of misfits or maladjustments in marriage and vocations.

INFLUENCE OF OUR CONDUCT

The proper concern of a Friends meeting in the conduct of its members centers in the alert attention and watchful care of its elders and overseers. Some of the areas where people's conduct most affects the community are: the relations of members one to another: the way people live in their homes: business practices: and political responsibilities as citizens.

A major concern of elders and overseers should be to maintain unity with one another in Christ. Through example, teaching, and gentle counsel judiciously given, elders and overseers can help to reduce frictions and misunderstandings in the meeting.

The following books are helpful in this area of counseling:

Solving Personal Problems. Elliott and Elliott (Holt $2).
The Art of Counseling, Rollo May (Abingdon-Cokesbury $2).

C—COUNSELING IN PERSONALITY PROBLEMS

This topic opens the door to an opportunity for service not undertaken by the majority of elders and overseers, although many wise discerning ones in America and Britain have used its chief methods for most of the Society's history. Heretofore, this particular type of counseling has not been considered one of the functions of lay membership of the church: indeed, the ministry has touched it only lightly and in widely separated spots. And such training as has hitherto been provided for lay leadership has failed to see the field under review: only recently has the training of ministers paid any serious attention to it.

UNDERSTANDING TERMS

This counseling is not merely a matter of giving good advice, telling disturbed folk what we would do if we were in their situation. Counseling of disturbed personalities is a distinct field of endeavor and it requires specialized training to fit any person to function in it. This does not eliminate the possibility of persons' becoming very helpful as friendly advisers, but it means that they must have enough preparatory study to understand the simpler operations in the field, and especially that they shall know the limitations of the non-expert in order that tragic mistakes may be avoided. This is just as true of ministers as it is of others. Becoming a minister does not automatically prepare one for dealing with the complicated, vexing personal problems which are to be found in practically every community.

INNER CONCERN

No person, minister or member, should ever presume to function as a counselor who does not feel in himself a peculiar aptitude and call to enter thus intimately into those areas of life where the need for counseling is indicated by the general situation. Where the aptitude and the call do exist, then special study must follow before an attempt is made to do this type of service, or more harm than good may result.

NOT BY PRAYER ALONE

Many seem to think that all human problems can be solved by prayer, and that the presence of personal problems and difficulties is primarily an
evidence of sin, calling for repentance. Such an attitude does away with the possibility of counseling in the sense in which it is being used here. If the above were true, evangelism would solve all problems. However, the facts do not support this conclusion, much as evangelism may help in some instances. The counselor must realize that many disturbances are not due to deliberate wrong doing. There are many who need to hear Jesus say: "... neither did this man nor his parents sin." Many of these distraught persons have prayed as earnestly as they are capable of doing; they have tried to exercise faith for the righting of their situation, but without avail. One might conclude that faith and prayer do not have the power many have claimed for them; but this conclusion would probably not be true. Rather, we would conclude that such a person needs expert help in addition to prayer and faith. If we become skilled as counselors, we will recognize our tremendous need of prayer for guidance in dealing with individuals.

THE CHRISTIAN SUPERIOR

An elder, an overseer, or a minister is doubly efficient as a counselor because in addition to his special training in the understanding of personality problems, he or she is a devout Christian, equipped with the assurances of faith, hope, and love. The counselor's approach must always be that of a sympathetic, interested, understanding listener. The true counselor's first business is to furnish the wholesome, inviting, conducive atmosphere for the complete recital of all that concerns or disturbs the other. Any statement or attitude of the counselor which seeks to lead to the kind of portrayal he desires is unfair. To be a good listener without even indirectly indicating any judgment is a first and primary necessity for efficient counseling.

ATTITUDE ALL-IMPORTANT

Another very important matter is the counselor's attitude which should be warm, sympathetic, understanding. This will promote freedom and ease in those who need help, and it will prevent all self-righteousness in the counselor. It will also avoid the devastating inclination to state conclusions, announce the answers, or prescribe courses of action. An intelligent and sympathetic counselor encourages the burdened one to empty his or her life of the troubling factors and thus be led to see the solution himself, if possible, in the light of what has been revealed about the situation. And no counselor needs any finer tribute than this: "He is so understanding."

READ THE LITERATURE

The requirements stated above emphasize the necessity of becoming acquainted with the literature in this field; literature which guides the enquirer in perfecting the basic attitudes and methods, and then furnishes a foundation for the psychological factors which must be understood if we are to help anxious persons after they have exposed the areas of inmost disturbance to us. It is not enough to be kind, to have Christian love and sympathy; one must also be intelligent in this field.

DISCERNING TYPES

Intelligence acquired by reading not only provides the tools to work with when one attempts to help another, but it enables one to see when the situation demands, not amateur or inexperienced skill, but the highly trained ability of a psychiatrist or a physician. It is tragic for one to whom counseling is only a side-line to undertake to solve those cases which can be handled only by experts. This is well stated by A. L. Swift, Jr.: "It is not the business of a minister or church worker to practice psychiatry. It is his business to be sufficiently well informed in this field to deal with the large variety of personal problems which do not require professional handling, and to recognize those which do."

TOWARD AN ADEQUATE PERSONAL RELIGION

But for elders and overseers approaching this interesting field of service it is essential that one be buttressed by a deep sense of divine guidance, a devotional experience of one intent upon the wholeness of life's attainments. Swift goes on to say: "In each of these areas the minister or church worker can do much to make his guidance more adequate. True, prayer is often a great help in resolving a difficulty. Homilies upon duty to parents, the virtue of chastity, and the significance of humble toil are, by contrast, less than helpful. If organized religion is to regain some of its lost significance in life, it must avail itself of the opportunities here presented. For in solution of such problems as these the pattern of individual and social life is shaped. In the choices which must be made the Christian ethic
has a contribution to offer. It is in these real and inescapable situations and issues that religion belongs if it is a way of life. The goal of all counseling is to help an individual find an adequate personal religion, and the counseling process is not complete until this end has been gained.

QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE DISCUSSION

1. Christian Endeavor has been and in some places still is a great training school for meeting leadership. Where are the young people of this meeting receiving this training? If there is no "Society" functioning, should young people's Sunday School classes be conducted in that manner?

2. To whom are the members of the meeting turning for advice and assistance?

3. Why has the term "eldering" implied severe and adverse criticism? This Handbook is based on the assumption that an elder or overseer should use commendation at least 95% of the time, condemnation less than 5%. Why do you agree or disagree with this conception?

4. What are the chief problems of the members of this congregation? Compare Appendix, Section III.

5. Counseling in personality problems is a new field as such, although such counseling has been done for centuries. Why is it counted a dangerous field for amateurs without special study? Do you have members who could and should become proficient in this type of work? How can such individuals be encouraged to prepare themselves for this service?

ELDERS AND OVERSEEERS AS GUIDES OF YOUTH

This chapter deals with three fields of opportunity: assisting young people in the choice of a vocation and in the establishment of a home, and dealing with the additional problem faced by part of the men returning from national service—either in the military forces or the Civilian Public Service.

THE RICHNESS OF THE OPPORTUNITY

An elder or overseer with a true perspective of life and Christianity, and fairly well equipped with the right kind of reading, can do untold good in the areas of economic fears, social displacements, domestic tensions, the choice of companions, preparation of youth for marriage and home, racial and group antagonisms, and in many other personal matters which are now clouding the happiness of multitudes. One should feel a distinct urge to undertake so important a service, but it is likely to well repay all the time and effort required to fit one's self for this high calling of being a Christian guide.

VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE

The meeting worker who wishes to help young people choose careers has certain aids at his disposal: series of pamphlets issued by the U. S. Department of Education on a large number of careers. (These can be secured from the Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C.) Schools of Education in several states are often willing to send Inventories of Vocational Interests and Aptitudes, and to evaluate the responses of young people to these.

METHODS OF GUIDANCE

School records often give criteria on which to help predict success in any occupation. Superior school work is often necessary for various professions. If school records show evidences of good social adjustment, they are valuable for guidance in the direction of medicine, teaching, and other vocations in which one deals with people more than things. Successful men and women in many fields of endeavor are often glad to have young people come to them for guidance. The meeting worker may be able to arrange for such interviews. If he can take time to "sit in" on the conference, two people will be served.
are tender, and concern for the future of the child is uppermost. Add to an anxious to discharge their religious responsibilities. This is most likely and home that offers a challenging opportunity to Meeting leaders.

SOME HINTS ON VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE

Even without training in such guidance, we can be of real help. Youth should have pointed out to them the fact that every worthy vocation has real values for his fellow men. In spite of aptitude and vocational tests, no one can determine for another exactly what vocation should be chosen, but he can insist on the young person’s choosing one that will be within the limits of his abilities and likes. He should be sure that his interests in any occupation will be permanent and not passing. Youth should know the requirements of preparation—as, for example, the years of study necessary to become a doctor, or a lawyer. The counselor should be ready to point out that some vocations may not be required in the future. Thus, while medicine, the law, teaching, engineering, farming, much machine work will continue, some vocations, such as type-setting and blacksmithing, are declining. Also youth should have assistance in choosing a profession which does not now seem to be overcrowded, nor one that is likely to be so in the future.

CULTIVATING RELIGION IN THE HOME

There are few opportunities for religious guidance where the wise and trusted elder will find such cordiality as in the homes of the Meeting, especially the homes of young parents. The average young parent today is sobered and moved perhaps more than ever before by his responsibility for the lives in his care. Such parents are anxious for counsel and even anxious to discharge their religious responsibilities. This is most likely to be true just after the first baby has come into the home. Then hearts are tender, and concern for the future of the child is uppermost. Add to the above the confused atmosphere of our time, the wistful longing for those things that are sure and certain, and you have a situation in the home that offers a challenging opportunity to Meeting leaders.
WE WILL BE HUMBLE

Anyone should speak with humility of family problems. The perfect home has rarely, if ever, been realized. Knowledge of the human body, of the mind and of the spirit is not yet complete. We do not have the last word. So our counsel will carry more weight if we speak with not too much assurance about matters which may yet be hidden from the wisest.

MAKING OUR COUNSEL EFFECTIVE

The greatest opportunities for the elder will come in indirect and offhand ways. Few families would appreciate a lecture on their religion. Few will get out the family Bible, asking the visitor to read and have family prayer, although this is a rewarding opportunity when it comes. But in most homes fragments of concern and counsel will have to be imbedded in the ordinary conversation that takes place in the course of a visit. Possibly literature offers one of the safest and most lasting ways of counseling. It is indirect, impersonal, and inoffensive, but powerful. It is proper to express a concern that The American Friend should be in every home. It is well to refer to helpful messages in a devotional book. It is natural to mention an article, a pamphlet, or a book that has been especially helpful to oneself. The bibliography at the close of this chapter section will indicate some directions our suggestions might take.

An occasional elder or overseer has the rare gift of talking intimately and personally about matters of religion. There is great need for this when it can be done in the spirit of Christ. The average person will be inclined to condemn in cases of laxness; but Jesus seldom if ever condemned: “Neither do I condemn thee; go, and sin no more.” Jesus was a master in cultivating the attitude of understanding. The wise elder and overseer will follow in the footsteps of his Master.

HELP FOR THE TEEN-AGED

A most important function for the elder and overseer in influencing Christian home life is in creating a suitable and understanding environment within our meetings for our young people. The period of early courtship and marriage is exciting as well as bewildering. Within it lie the seeds of tragedy or great happiness for the future. The attitudes which the members of a meeting hold toward young people in this stage of development may determine whether the outcome will be sorrow or bliss. We must not drive our young people to other places for courtship. Even the earliest friendships between boys and girls should always be spoken of in the home and in the church with dignity and respect, never disparagingly or as a joke. The mind of every young person is filled with the dreams of a happy home in the future. He is eager for the truth and the issues of boy-girl relations, and readily responds to understanding guidance.

THE CHURCH AND SUCH FRIENDSHIPS

The church can make available literature and courses of study in boy-girl relationships and in Christian home life. One of the amazing facts of our civilization is that it educates the young for successful business and professional careers, but gives little or no preparation for the most important phases of life, Christian home life. The period of friendship, of courtship, needs to be recognized and taken for granted as a normal period of development. Here and there gentle bits of encouragement to young people in the midst of confusing aspects may properly be made by discreet elders and overseers. Attractive places of entertainment in the home and church should be provided. Elders and overseers may well counsel with the parents of this age-group, and assist in providing opportunities for the young people to enjoy Christian social life. It is better for young people to become acquainted and to marry within the church than outside. Many far-seeing churches are arranging places where young people come regularly in the evenings during the week to play games and enjoy one another’s company. Here is the place to begin. Most of the young couples whose friendship and love have ripened into marriage within the church will be permanently attached to the church and to its ideals for family life.

AN ENDURING CONTRIBUTION

After a young couple is married, a large responsibility and marvelous opportunity is open for elders and overseers to provide help in the adjustments to marriage. Usually the young couple is anxious for help rightly given. The home may be helped over those small difficulties which might grow into unhappiness and failure. Thus a contribution is made to an enduring home in which not only the family but the entire community will find refuge and peace.
GENERAL READING—
There's No Place Like Home, Ellenwood.
When Children Ask, Margaret Bro.

CHURCH AND FAMILY—
The Church and the Family, Sherrill.
Their Rightful Heritage, Taylor.

DISCUSSIONS FOR PARENTS—
Growing Together in the Family, Wood.
The Home and Christian Living, the Haywards.
Your Child Needs, Chalmers.

THINKING ABOUT MARRIAGE—For Young People
Making a Home, Wood.
A Guide for a Man and a Woman Looking Toward Marriage, Burkhart
Harmony in Marriage, Wood.

FOR PARENTS—
Bringing Up Ourselves, Hogue.
Does Your Child Obey? Wieman.
Your Child and God, Trent.
Your Child's Religion, Eakins.

DEVOTIONAL BOOKLETS—
Quaker Meditations.
The Secret Place.
The Upper Room.

PERIODICALS—
The Christian Home, 810 Broadway, Nashville, Tennessee
Marriage and Family Living, 1126 East 59th, Chicago.
The American Family, 141 West Jackson, Chicago.

COUNSELING RETURNED SERVICE MEN

Probably too much is being said and written about the special
problems of returned service men. No doubt the vast majority will fit
readily back into civilian life, be ready to talk about their experiences,
and seem little different than when they were away. But a few will need
special help. For them, the following is included:

1. Some basic principles for counselor:
   a. There must be a feeling of mutual confidence and acceptance. The
      responsibility is on the counselor.
   b. Good counseling cannot be done without full information.
   c. There must be no "superior-inferior" feelings. The counselor recog-
      nizes his own limitations and does not set himself up as the "see all
      knows all."
   d. The counselor must not reflect any feelings of shock or surprise at
      any revelations whatever from the one he seeks to help. When the
      person seeking aid is sharing personal intimacies, he wants to have
      complete assurances that the counselor will respect the confidential
      nature of this information; and such information must not be
      exposed to the counselor's most intimate friends, or even with his
      family. It is a sacred trust forever sealed up in the counselor's heart.

2. Special hints regarding Service Men and members of C. P. S.
   a. There will be many more physical and health problems—more
      "repaired" men.
   b. They will show a general lack of confidence as indicated in the
      following:
      1. Physically—"Will I be able to do what I used to do?"
      2. Socially—They doubt ability to become civilian again, feel isolated.
      3. Mentally—Fear of failure, especially returning students.
      4. Emotionally—Feel insecure, frustrated; hatreds and intolerances
         likely to be expressed, often explosively.
      5. Morally—Worry about being acceptable, often feel guilty.
   c. Many find it difficult to settle down, even in marital relations. Domestic
      skills have been lost; home adjustments are difficult.
   d. A higher degree of maturity is noticeable. They have "grown up"
      under conditions which we can scarcely imagine. Some of the things
      which we consider important often seem juvenile or silly to them.
   e. In general, they prefer not to discuss the horrors of their experiences.
      They doubt if we really want to hear because we can't talk their
      language.
f. A general disillusionment is evident. While they have been away they have tended to idealize their homes, their meetings, and even their friends beyond the degree of reality.

g. Demands for honesty are almost brutal, at times. They made the great sacrifice. Lesser loyalties seem trivial to them.

h. Profanity may have become a regular part of their vocabulary. They have lived in a "world of men" for several months.

i. Most of them have many pet "gripes."

j. They find it difficult to understand most of us who have been at home and removed, even in thought, from the horrors of the conflict.

k. Pity is not acceptable, but they are very responsive to personalized help which is given in the spirit of sympathetic understanding.

I. Keep on the plane of naturalness and genuine friendship.

QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE DISCUSSION

1. Where do the young people of this meeting find recreation and their social life? Do the elders and overseers help in providing for this necessary part of life?

2. Where can these young people learn about Christian social standards? Where do they receive reverent and truthful teaching about sex?

3. What is the value of family devotions? What is being done to foster them?

4. Where are the young people securing help in choosing their vocations?

5. Why is the average young Friend in national service under more of a spiritual tension than young people of other churches—if he or she is in military service? If in Civilian Public or detached service?

CHAPTER VI

ELDERS AND OVERSEEERS

THEIR OPPORTUNITY IN QUAKER OUTREACH

In the last chapter we saw how elders and overseers are continuously working to win individuals to Christ, then to assist these new Christians to grow. First the blade, then the stalk, finally the full ear in the husk. Salvation is the free gift of God; if one continues to be saved he must cooperate with God. We seek to promote such cooperation.

ENCOURAGEMENT FOR CHRISTIAN SERVICE

We are going to keep our eyes and hearts open for qualities which fit the individual for part-time or full-time Christian service. Ministers, elders, and overseers have occasionally had the gift of discernment regarding young people. We may not go about indiscriminately insisting that someone should be a minister, a Sunday School teacher, or a missionary. But as we become acquainted with individuals, see their gifts, we can raise the question of their feeling a call or an urge to understand such work. Seeds planted thus often bear fruit. The Lord looks not on outward appearance. He is concerned about the heart. If someone seems to have the gift and the urge we should open ways for him to begin his service. This may first require our assistance in providing a good education.

EDUCATION

One overseer helped twenty-nine young people to get a college education. Both loans and gifts were involved. Influence may be extended through generations by inspiring young people and then opening channels through which training may come. It is not sufficient to have a right spirit and good intentions; these must be implemented by good methods. This is one reason why Friends have laid great emphasis upon education.

YOUTH AND THE COMMUNITY

Elders and overseers, as much as the minister, should be shepherds in the church of Christ. The primary interest of the church in the surrounding community centers in its inescapable obligation to childhood. Even children from Christian homes are greatly influenced by the community
in which they live. Thus in Chicago a thorough house-to-house study was made of the people moving into two neighborhoods. These families were adjudged by experts to be fairly equal in quality. Why then did nineteen out of twenty sons in one neighborhood have police records before the age of eighteen; and in the other, nineteen out of twenty received no such records? The answer lies in the differences in the two communities. Whether living in the city or in the open country, the quality of children and overseers must be concerned that the level of life in the community be made as Christian as possible.

COMFORT IN PRESENCE OF TRAGEDY

The tragedy of the modern church is that its leaders, like Peter warming himself comfortably before the fire, become indifferent to injustice and social conditions which Jesus would condemn. Elders and overseers may tolerate in their midst an area of neglected dwellings and neglected lives: Bucktown, Jimtown, and Shantytown, and in so doing they handicap the total program of the church. In such neighborhoods there are children who especially need good friends, children about whom other children's mothers say, "I wouldn't play with so-and-so." People concerned with Negroes in Africa sometimes neglect Negroes in America. Even some Friends can love foreigners—until they move close by. Is there any such situation in your community? If so, what may be done about it?

THESE DESERVE OUR SUPPORT

There are key organizations concerned with community welfare. Consider only a few of those more widespread. Service clubs frequently live up to their title. Next to the church, the Parent-Teacher Association is potentially most significant. It reaches parents who may never go to church, whose children are not in Sunday School. Classes in Parenthood in the P. T. A. may be of great value. The W. C. T. U. is well known and often well supported by church people. The 4-H clubs deserve support. Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts play an important part in the lives of millions of boys and girls. Fundamentally the Scouts train for life and help in acquiring skills which result in self-confidence which endures long after the skills are forgotten. But none of these organizations, nor any others, should receive time or energy which properly belongs to the church. Elders and overseers, if alert to the church's primary function in community life, will not only lend the support of religion to those organizations noted above, but also will undertake to promote definite projects through church channels to make the church community conscious.

A CONCERN FOR THE QUARTERLY MEETING

The responsibility of leaders among Friends does not end with the borders of our community. Elders and overseers are not merely members of a local meeting but are also members of a quarterly meeting. Just as no local meeting prospers without the prayers, interest, and work of its members, so it is with this larger organization. Every quarterly meeting needs Friends who give time and thought to its work. There is no vigorous quarterly meeting without such individuals. Concerned Friends continually look for tasks and responsibilities that should be laid on the quarterly meeting.

THE YEARLY MEETING

Regular attendance and active participation in the affairs of the yearly meeting is a bounden duty of every elder and overseer. What the yearly meeting decides is important to the local meeting. From its committees come many suggestions for work. It is incorporated, holds property, raises money, and otherwise influences our lives. When the "Minutes" of its annual sessions arrive, they should be carefully read and considered in the local meeting.

THE FIVE YEARS MEETING

There are tasks which can be carried on more effectively by an even larger group than a yearly meeting. Thus the Five Years Meeting was established near the beginning of this century. Elders and overseers through their yearly meetings are members of this body. Unless circumstances prevent, the Five Years Meeting assembles every five years. Its Executive Committee and Boards meet annually. Its headquarters are at 101 South Eighth Street, Richmond, Indiana. Through its Board of Missions, missionary work is carried on in Africa, Cuba, Jamaica, Mexico, Palestine, Oklahoma, and Tennessee. The Publication Board sponsors The American Friend, the Penn Series of Bible School Supplies, The Penn Weekly for young Friends, and operates a Book and Supply House. There are Boards on Christian Education, Public Morals, Peace, and Education. Some of the above Boards have full-time paid staff members who prepare and issue much of the material used in our local meetings.
OTHER FRIENDS' ORGANIZATIONS

Three other organizations of national scope among Friends deserve mention: the American Friends Service Committee, Civilian Public Service, and the Friends Committee on National Legislation. The American Friends Service Committee has been active since World War I, seeking to aid many groups facing special difficulties during war and peace. The Civilian Public Service offers alternative service for Friends and others whose consciences will not permit them to become part of the military organization. "Work of National Importance" is offered together with many forms of detached service—such as service in mental hospitals and as "guinea pigs" in medical experiments. The Friends Committee on National Legislation was organized not to be "just another lobby in the halls of Congress," but it seeks to promote legislation in keeping with the ideals of Friends, to oppose legislation which seems undesirable or unchristian, and above all to lay upon legislators the appeal of reason and conscience in the formulation of the nation’s policies and laws. Occasionally a conference to which interested Friends are invited is held to consider the plans and policies of the Committee.

OUR UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

Finally, let us note that one of the highest missions for elders and overseers today—truly a summit for their leadership—is to bring the people in the local meeting out from the darkness of provincialism into the universality of Christ’s gospel. Local groups are often characteristically provincial in their outlook. Provincialism comes upon people almost never by conscious choice. It is a state of mind into which we fall because of the claims of immediacy—the necessities of making a living, the interests of the family and the local community. These demands are so clamorous as to set our sight wholly upon them and on little or nothing beyond them. But provincialism in its various forms pits group against group, church against church, race against race, class against class, nation against nation. The result is ruinous. In its larger aspects the ultimate effect is war. Over against all that is Christ in whom the entire human race finds unity. The objective of Friends today must be not merely the revival of Quakerism; it must indeed be more than the "revival," as such, of Christianity. Our objective must be to affect our entire culture.

to influence our western civilization which is now "so sick," to transform the whole atmosphere of humanity by bringing into it the "mind of Christ." Nothing less will do. This, it may be said, was the objective of the early Christians in their world. "The field is the world," they proclaimed. Moreover, it was the objective of early Friends: "Go cheerfully over the earth answering to that of God in every man." With that objective in their minds, the success of these brave forebears of ours in actually affecting the culture of their two eras—as we see it now in retrospect—is, in fact, astounding. And that is our mission in our world today.

REDEEMING OUR MEETINGS

The vision of the elder and the overseer on this matter of the relation of the local meeting to the kind of world we have will largely determine what the outlook of the people in the local meeting will be. Given ten or fifteen years (or even less!) of faithful effort on the part of elders and overseers, the whole character of a meeting can be changed and redeemed into a dynamic and victorious power for good—fulfilling, in measure, the high objective which characterized the early Christians and the early Friends.

A DYNAMIC CONCERN

In accomplishing this transformation of local Friends groups from a provincial to a world outlook, there are two areas of church work into which the elders and overseers should constantly press the young and the old of their local meeting. The first of these is the larger interests and activities of Friends. The local group should be in continuous contact with the yearly meeting and the Five Years Meeting. Interest should be enthusiastic in the local meeting for maintaining contacts with other Friends groups. Ardent concern and support should be constantly developed among local Friends for the work and program of the yearly meeting, the Five Years Meeting, and the world fellowship and endeavors of all Friends everywhere. Elders and overseers should avail themselves of every opportunity to promote the attendance of local Friends at larger Friends gatherings.
OUR WIDER CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

The second area in which elders and overseers should promote interest among local Friends in transforming their outlook is that of interdenominational fellowship and cooperation. Under the terrific impact of a non-Christian world upon us today, accentuated by all the ferocity of the present war and the yet more terrible possibilities of wars to come, there is a rising sense of "one-ness" among Protestant groups everywhere. In the world's agony, denominational barriers break down, and the various Christian groups find one another as "brothers in Christ." The issue now plainly is one, not of denominationalism, but of whether we shall or shall not have a Christian world. More and more the realization grows that the alternative to a Christian world is too horrible to contemplate. The contest is no vain shadow-boxing: it is one of life and death. Protestants everywhere, in this dark hour, earnestly anticipate fellowship and leadership from Friends. Certainly Friends, down in the local meetings, must become conscious of our Christian brothers in other denominations, and of the great interdenominational movements abroad in the land; the spirit of Friends will thus be re-enforced for this hard hour by the strength of their spirit in Christ. This rising oneness of the whole Christian community affords us the single hope that the character of the world can be actually influenced for Christ. Friends must enter into the growing unity among Christians everywhere, and engage actively in our common efforts.

By all means elders and overseers should read and promote the reading of informative and reputable books. Institutes and study groups should be held in the local meeting to bring the people forward in their knowledge and thinking about the issues that now confront us. Competent leadership from the outside should from time to time be brought in to provide enlightenment and inspiration for our people in fulfilling their Christian mission. Faithful and alert representation and attendance at the larger gatherings of Friends and of interdenominational endeavors should always be encouraged and secured.

By this means we will be surely on the path that leads from darkness to light. In this way, we shall be effectively assuming our responsibility in Christian groups and in a world that is otherwise falling to pieces. For it is the Christian people that hold the world together.

QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE DISCUSSION

1. How can Friends again produce individuals with such Christian passion that they will seek out the leaders of the earth, as early Friends went to see the Pope, the Tsar, the Sultan, and others around the earth?

2. What per cent of the community has no connection with any church? How are you seeking to reach them, especially the boys and girls with their parents?

3. There is great difference in communities. How would you summarize the level of moral and spiritual life of this community? How could it be improved?

4. How many concerned Friends of the meeting give time and thought to the work of the quarterly meeting? How could the quarterly meeting be improved?

5. What ties are binding the local meeting to the yearly meeting? To the Five Years Meeting? To other Friends organizations? What is being done to strengthen them?
CHAPTER VII

ELDERS AND OVERSEERS

IN THE MEETING ON MINISTRY AND OVERSIGHT

OR THE PASTORAL COMMITTEE

The six previous chapters have dealt largely with elders and overseers as individuals in relation to their work. In this chapter they are considered as a group in their meeting, either the Meeting on Ministry and Oversight or The Pastoral Committee.

A REPRESENTATIVE BODY

Meetings on Ministry and Oversight or Pastoral Committees should be representative, large enough and young enough to ensure alertness. Surely the average age should not be over fifty. Official bodies vary in size from five to thirty-two, possibly more. Even the smallest meetings should have five or six members. The average meeting might have nine to fifteen. The largest meeting should have few over twenty members.

A REGULAR MEETING

The body should meet regularly and rather often. Once a month is most common and very satisfactory. The meeting should be held at such a time as to provide sufficient opportunity for necessary deliberation. There should be questions to discuss and real decisions reached. Nothing should be decided beforehand by a small group of intimate friends. These meetings should open with an earnest devotional period in which there is a deep searching for the will of God for the meeting and for the accomplishment of the tasks of the Kingdom. Devotion and love should be such powerful forces in the meeting, that, though there be differences of opinion, love will overcome any resulting disunity. The spirit of Christian fellowship must be strong. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another."

THE FIRST CONCERN—THE MEMBERSHIP

What will this meeting of elders and overseers consider during these monthly sessions? (1) The first matter is a concern for the membership: resident, non-resident, active, associate. Occasionally the membership list should be considered from the point of view of commending and lending encouragement to greater faithfulness in carrying responsibility. Means of contact with non-resident members should be developed, thus avoiding the feeling on their part that the meeting's only interest in them is financial. A quarterly newsletter may be sent out to all members; otherwise friendly correspondence should be encouraged. The elders and overseers are responsible for the spiritual care of non-resident members until they become established in a meeting or church in the vicinity of their new residence. Elders and overseers should gently and persistently encourage non-resident Friends to become established in Friends meetings in the communities where they now reside, or, in localities where no Friends meetings exist, in other Christian groups, and promptly to transfer their membership there.

CONCERNS FOR THE LEVEL OF LIFE

(2) The level of life of members and attenders will be studied: first, spiritual welfare, condition, and needs; also moral, social, and material welfare. The need of social life among the younger people will be of interest. (3) The material welfare of Friends and attenders is a concern, especially of the overseers. For about two centuries, Friends cared for their own cases of need. Nothing which vitally influences the welfare of the meeting, its members or attenders, is beyond the legitimate scope or prayerful attention of the elders and overseers.

OBSERVING THE AGES OF LIFE

(4) The official body may desire to observe the various ages of life, with a dedication program for the baby. A Monthly Meeting Birth Certificate (copies can be secured of the Friends Book House, 101 S. 8th St., Richmond, Indiana), indicating associate membership, may be given at this time. Children may profitably receive recognition as they start to school. As early as the age of eleven and through adolescence a class in preparation for membership should enroll all the youth of both Sunday School and Meeting, and should combine instruction with an effort to lead each one into a definite Christian experience. Some give special recognition at the age of 21; again at 35 when individuals should enter the period of their greatest usefulness; also at 70. (In some communities there are successful clubs for those who have retired or reached the age of seventy. These provide new interests and associations).
STUDYING THE MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP

(5) At least once a year thorough consideration should be given to the meetings for worship. Are they satisfying the needs of the congregation? What is their appeal to others as shown by attendance and comment? Are certain needs of the congregation being neglected? Is preaching over-emphasized? Have the values of the Friends type of worship with its freedom and opportunity for congregational participation been maintained? The real values of the older type of Friends worship can be maintained under the Pastoral system, although often they are lost because the minister dominates the meetings for worship. Thus, one midwest meeting expects a message from its pastor, but also expects the message to be concluded ten to twenty minutes before the end of the hour of worship unless there has been much participation in the early part of the meeting. Those final moments are open for contributions of prayer, song, and brief messages.

NEEDED MESSAGES

(6) In all meetings, the official body will do well to ask occasionally, “What messages do our Friends need?” The vocal ministry may stress only one or two phases of Christian experience and life. While elders and overseers should not dictate what message be given at any certain time, the real shepherd of his flock will welcome guidance that his messages may be suited to the needs of the congregation. Some meetings have elders and overseers named by the meeting to occupy the facing seats or pulpit area. The presence of dedicated Christians in the facing seats may be an encouragement to the congregation.

YOUTH AND WORSHIP

(7) What is there in your meetings for worship that a twelve-year-old can understand? The “lambs” as well as the “sheep” are to be fed. It is part of the task of the elders and overseers to see that opportunity for the commitment of life to Christ is provided. Statistics show that only about one in one hundred becomes a Christian after the age of twenty-one. Yet many people, even elders and overseers, insist that the meetings for worship be conducted by and for older adults. Meetings for worship should be suited to the needs of the teen-aged as well as adults. Also are the principles of Friends emphasized, or are they half-heartedly set forth with an apology? Has the meeting improved or declined in the past ten years?

COMMITTEES WHICH FUNCTION

(8) Today much of the work of our meetings is done by committees. The Pastoral Committee or Meeting on Ministry and Oversight will not try to do all of that work, but it should have a concern that all work vital to the Kingdom is cared for. Meetings are often handicapped by too much organization. It is often better to have one person who is really concerned about some phase of meeting work than to have a whole committee. How well are committees functioning? Also how well is the membership distributed and used on committees? One meeting with an average attendance of over one hundred on Sunday mornings uses fewer than twenty people on all committees and uses each person several times. Such a situation should not exist. It is doubtful if any person should be on more than two committees. Interest is generally in proportion to opportunities for service. No capable individual in the meeting should be neglected; but at the same time, committees should function or membership on them means nothing.

PROBLEM MEMBERS

(9) Meetings commonly have problem members. These are likely to be in two groups: non-active or disinterested, and those not living Christian lives. Epidemics of “dropping” disinterested members are common; often without serious effort to contact those involved. Possibly the meeting has shown as little interest in them as they in the meeting. Discontinuance of members should be done with great care.

DISOWNMENT

(10) Disownment once was common among Friends. Occasional cases of disownment are known in the Five Years Meeting in recent years. There can be no hard and fast rule, but moral decline is likely if immorality and unrighteousness are permitted among the members without any apparent concern on the part of elders and overseers. If such a person, dealt with in love by individual elders and overseers, then by a committee, yet persists, disownment is justified and suffering comes to both meeting and community if it is neglected. However, each case must be handled on its own merits and in love, with disownment only as a last resort.
THE QUARTERLY MEETING

(11) The official body of elders and overseers has a duty to keep the meeting conscious of organizations of which it is a part. Representatives to Quarterly Meeting on Ministry and Oversight, who can attend, should be named. A report from the session of Quarterly Meeting on Ministry and Oversight should include the questions raised, the issues faced and the decisions reached as well as a report on the state of society when that is given. It can be an exchange center, with ideas of merit which have been tried out being made known to other meetings. That a full report may be returned to the local body, the representatives may meet and work out their report together. Occasionally recommendations will be sent to Quarterly Meeting on Ministry and Oversight in regard to matters which cannot well be cared for locally.

OUR REPORTS

(12) Elders and overseers should carry a concern for the quality of reports sent to the Quarterly Meeting on Ministry and Oversight. The terminology should be fresh and up-to-date. The reports should be frank, clear and honest. (Some are not since they do not give an accurate picture of conditions.) They should relate themselves to spiritual life rather than mere activities. The Queries should be carefully read and pondered at least every three months in this body; they can serve as a guide in the making of reports.

QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE DISCUSSION

1. Pastoral Committees or Meetings on Ministry and Oversight vary greatly in quality. Is yours excellent, good, fair, or poor? What are its good points? Its shortcomings?
2. Why is it necessary to meet regularly to be effective?
3. What is your reaction to the proposal of observing the various ages of life? What is the value of a Dedication for Parents and Babies? Do you give a certificate of Associate membership?
4. How does the meeting keep in contact with non-resident members?
5. In what direction are the meeting and its Pastor's goals being carried out? Are the aims of the society clearly understood?
6. What do you expect to do as a result of the study of this Handbook?
7. Have you discussed "The Meeting and Its Pastor" section found in the Appendix? It is recommended for the guidance of meetings!

THE APPENDIX

SECTION I

THEIR FITNESS FOR SERVICE

Qualifications from Discipline compared with the New Testament

DISCIPLINE

Elders are charged with the oversight and care of the spiritual interest of the various congregations. The choice of these is based upon moral character and the possession of spiritual gifts and qualifications. (Page 47).

Elders should have quick spiritual discernment for the proper performance of their duties; a good understanding of the Scriptures and of the doctrines of Christian religion, and a knowledge of the position and purposes of our branch of the Church. Feeling the weight of the responsibilities resting upon them, Elders will be prayerful in the active performance of their duties. The words "tenderly" and "brotherly love" also give telling insight into the qualifications of Elders. (Pages 55, 56).

Overseers—"faithful and judicious persons." (Page 48).

Elders—The qualifications for Eldership are varied and difficult to define. Spiritual discernment, good judgment, insight into character, an understanding of the needs of the meeting and the individual, a gracious tact, a desire for the spiritual growth of the Church, especially of the young, an out-reaching interest in the spiritual welfare of those who might come within the circle of influence of our meetings—such are among the characteristics of rightly

NEW TESTAMENT

I PETER 5:1-9:

The elders therefore among you I exhort... tend the flock of God which is among you, exercising the oversight, not of constraint, but willingly, according to the will of God, nor yet for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind: neither as lording it over the charge allotted to you, but making yourselves examples to the flock. Yet, all of you, gird yourselves with humility, to serve one another: your adversary, the devil... whom withstand steadfast in your faith.

JAMES 5:14:

Is any among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.

ACTS 20:28:

Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops (overseers), to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood.

ACTS 6:3:

(Goodspeed On Overseers)

"... Pick out from your number seven men of good standing, who are wise and full of the Spirit. (Moffatt)"... look out seven of your own number, men of good reputation who are full of the Spirit and of wisdom.
qualified Elders. . . With a large capacity for friendship, Elders should be such men and women as would draw to them those who need spiritual advice, comfort, and understanding. Above all they should be men and women of prayer, who seek for the guidance of the Spirit in the difficult service He asks of them, and they should be ready to follow His bidding, be the service large or small. (From Philadelphia Yearly Meetings Faith and Practice, pages 77, 78. Following, pages 83, 86:)

Characteristics may be judged by use of the words: "prayerful," "sympathetic," "thoughtful," "courteous," and . . . prayerfully endeavor to fulfill the charge to tend the flock of God, not by constraint, but willingly."

ELDERS: (Pages 55-56)

Ministers and Elders are associated in the spiritual care of the flock, and they should jointly feel the responsibility for the spiritual condition of the membership and the congregation. Elders are to co-operate with, encourage and strengthen the ministers, in both ministerial and pastoral work, facilitate their labors, promote their usefulness, have an oversight of the public ministrations of the Gospel, assist therein as the spiritual needs of the congregation may require, and extend such advice and counsel to minister as circumstances may demand. . . . They are tenderly to encourage any who may take part in public meetings for worship and who give evidence of true spiritual exercise, and they are to restrain such as do not give such evidence. They are prayerful to seek to discern the spiritual gifts that any may receive and to encourage their exercise and development in every proper way. They

I TIMOTHY 3:2-7:
The bishop (overseer) therefore must be without reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, orderly, given to hospitality, apt to teach, no brawler, no striker: but gentle, not contentious (Moffatt gives these characteristics thus, "not a drunkard or violent, but lenient and conciliatory"), no lover of money: one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; . . . not a novice, lest being puffed up he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have good testimony from them that are without: lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

TITUS 1:7-9:
For the bishop ( overseer) must be blameless, as God's steward: not self-willed, not soon angry, no brawler, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre: but given to hospitality, a lover of good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled; holding to the faithful word which is according to the teaching that he may be able both to exhort in the sound doctrine, and to convict the gainsayers.

I TIMOTHY 3:8:
(Deacons and Overseers)
Deacons in like manner must be grave, not double-tongued. (Goodspeed translates this "straightforward"), not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also be proved: then let them serve as deacons. if they be blameless. . . . Let deacons be husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own households well. For they that have served well as deacons gain to them-

are to see that opportunities for such exercise are conveniently afforded.

Elders will be prayerful in the active performance of their duties, and it is helpful to have them give public endorsement to the ministry, as way may open therefor, when the truth has been satisfactorily presented. Elders are tenderly to advise with members of the congregation as to their spiritual condition, and, in the freedom of brotherly love, endeavor to aid all in the attainment of a high standard of Christian life.

OVERSEERS: (Page 48)
It shall be their duty to exercise watchful care and affectionate oversight for the maintenance of a consistent moral life by the members of the meeting: to extend care and reproof in all cases of disobedience, disorder, or any conduct unbecoming a Christian, and to restore, if possible, such offenders to an orderly life and to full fellowship with the meeting. If due care and labor in this direction prove ineffectual, it becomes their duty to enter a complaint to the Monthly Meeting against such offenders. (Page 73 the following) All formal complaints against a member shall be introduced to his Monthly Meeting in handwriting by the Overseers.

PASTORAL COMMITTEE DUTIES:
(Pages 83, 71)
It is the duty of this Committee to have a general oversight of the shepherding of the flock, to be watchful of the interests of absent members, to visit the families of attenders of meetings, to extend a special care to those attenders who are not members and to invite them to join in membership when they are prepared to do so. They shall extend a
watchful care over Associate members, and encourage them to become active members as soon as they are prepared to do so. The Pastoral Committee shall receive applications for membership, examine each case carefully and act upon it. It shall be the duty of the Pastoral Committee before presenting the name of an applicant for membership to ascertain whether he makes a credible profession of faith in Christ as his Saviour, and accepts the doctrines of the Christian religion as held by the Friends; whether his present life indicates the sincerity of his profession, and whether he will conform to the rules of Discipline. The judgment of the Committee shall be given, with application.

SECTION II

THE MEETING AND ITS PASTOR

THE MEETING CALLING A PASTOR

1. The decision to call a pastor should never be made hastily, nor by a few of the members.

2. While it is the Monthly Meeting which issues the call to a new pastor and determines the details of the agreement, it is the responsibility of the Meeting on Ministry and Oversight or Pastoral Committee to take the initiative. Usually a small committee is named to canvass the possibilities and carry on correspondence. The first person to be consulted is the Yearly Meeting Superintendent or Secretary.

3. The Committee should never carry on negotiations with two or more individuals simultaneously, but in the order of preference. Matters especially worth considering are:
   - The Christian experience and life of the minister and family.
   - Their ability to get along with people.
   - The results of their work in other meetings.
   - The quantity and quality of pastoral work.
   - The minister's ability as a speaker.

4. After the Pastoral Committee or Meeting on Ministry and Oversight has made its tentative choice, it shall make its recommendations to the Monthly Meeting, which has the authority to make an agreement with a new pastor.

5. Pastors should refuse to enter into competition with each other in seeking opportunities for service or any other place of honor. No minister should entertain a call from any meeting which has not cleared the situation with its present pastor.

6. The meeting should recognize that a minister is entitled to adequate remuneration. Adjustments of salary may be necessary during a period of service.

7. Both meeting and pastor should have a clear understanding of the agreement between them, and, even though unwritten, both parties should faithfully abide by its terms unless it be changed by mutual consent.

THE PASTOR WORKING IN THE MEETING

1. As a new pastor enters a field of service, he should rapidly cultivate the acquaintance of members and attenders, then the unchurched people of the community. He should be slow in making changes in procedures or customs.

2. The minister should regard as confidential all information given to him on individual problems, being careful never to "gossip." His visiting and work should be completely impartial, not catering to any "faction" or "clique" which may exist.

3. While maintaining the dignity of his high calling, the minister must be friendly and sympathetic, giving attention to politeness, neatness, and refinement, without formality and coldness.

4. Both meeting and minister should be concerned that the minister's time be occupied with matters of importance to the congregation and the community, rather than becoming a mere "handy-man" to the meeting.

5. That he may be physically, mentally, and spiritually fit, the meeting should make it possible for the minister to have one day of relaxation in seven, also an annual vacation with pay.
6. The first duty of a conscientious pastor is to his congregation, but he also has obligations and responsibilities in the community and also in support of the church at large.

7. The pastor needs constant cooperation and he needs to cooperate. He should avoid being a dictator or doing all the work himself. People grow as they have responsibility and exercise their spiritual muscles. In the transition to a "paid ministry" the problem of balance is important. For the pastor to be all that he ought without becoming more than he ought requires high skill; to be less than he ought leaves the flock unfed; to be more leaves the congregation and its leaders mere spectators of religious rites. Elders and overseers should not permit an ambitious pastor to usurp all the visiting, spiritual counseling, or vocal participation in worship.

THE PASTOR LEAVING THE MEETING

1. During his period of service, the pastor should have avoided, so far as possible, all debt. When he leaves all bills should be paid, even if it is necessary to borrow funds and give a note. Also the meeting should meet its obligations promptly: its business should be carried on in a businesslike manner.

2. The pastor should not use his influence or any method which borders on "scheming" or "politics" to remain in a comfortable pastorate. Occasionally he should absent himself from sessions or parts of sessions of the Pastoral Committee or Meeting on Ministry and Oversight, thus promoting perfect freedom of discussion and committee decisions. If even a significant minority of the meeting feel there should be a pastoral change, it is doubtful if the minister should remain.

3. Having left a pastorate, the minister should hesitate to return except in unusual circumstances. In case of a special request which cannot well be refused, he should request that the resident pastor be invited to participate in the service. It is unethical for a minister to "meddle" in the affairs of a former pastorate.

4. A pastor should not speak disparagingly of a predecessor or a successor, or, for that matter, of any other minister.

5. In case of any change in pastoral relationship, at least three months' notice should be given to protect the interests of both minister and meeting.

6. Both meeting and minister should maintain a harmonious, Christian spirit even after notice has been given of a pastoral change. To publish the shortcomings of the congregation or of the pastor does harm to the entire Kingdom of God.

7. No person who ever walked the earth was more courteous or tactful than Jesus Christ. Love was the foundation of His dealings with others; it should be the foundations of all our dealings.

SECTION III

SOME PROBLEMS ELDERS AND OVERSEERS MAY ASSIST OTHERS IN SOLVING

Problems listed as facing Friends and people in Friends communities include the following:

1. Fear, business, uncertainty due to the war.
2. A scale of values—importance of various phases of life.
4. A deep devotional life.
5. Adequate leadership in church and its organizations.
6. Poor parents.
7. Evangelism.
8. Living by Christian principles.
10. Temptation of selfishness.
11. How to maintain moral standards (inner conflict: high standards, poor conduct).
12. Marital relations and divorce.
14. Tenancy.
15. Gambling.
17. Race Relations.
19. Getting along with others.
20. Leisure time.
21. Strength to bear sorrow and disappointment.
22. The meaning of life.

A YOUNG FRIENDS' LIST

2. Moral issues—how far to go with the crowd; how to maintain ideals yet not be counted sissy or too peculiar.
3. Where to find Christian fun and recreation.
4. How to get along with others, especially parents and older people.
5. Choice of a vocation.
6. To be a pacifist or not.
7. How to plan for the future—probable influence of war on plans.

These do not include any problems which brought overseers into existence; those dealing with poverty and the need of financial and other kinds of help. Since early Friends were outside the realm of ordinary poor relief, they had to provide their own. In more recent times the overseers have not only been concerned with physical or material needs, but also have dealt with the moral conditions and welfare of the people. If the above questions had been listed in 1933 instead of 1943 and 1944, they would have contained many problems on material welfare.