

at a time when union and joint interests and closer fellowship seem very desirable. Eastern Friends will generally object to the proposition of our Western Friends for two reasons: 1. Because we want to have them meet with us; and 2, because we want to meet with them.

As a solution of the difficulty the following plan is suggested: Let the General Conferences be held in places situated between the extreme west and the extreme east. Let the Eastern Friends show that they are willing to go half-way, or two-thirds of the way, to meet with our Western Friends. If it is true, as has been suggested by one of the Western Friends, that they can better afford the expense, then it will only be just that they should do this. Why cannot some place within 200 or 300 miles of Richmond, Indiana, and 400 or 500 miles from Philadelphia, be selected as the place of meeting for each Conference, and the place be changed each time, but still remain near the western line of Pennsylvania? Would not this solve the question of justice as to all Friends interested? If, in addition, some centre of historic interest, or surrounded by remarkable scenery, such as Niagara Falls, should be selected, the attractions of the place would tend to increase the attendance at the Conference, as has indeed usually been the case. The question of ready accessibility of the Conference, at a reasonable cost to all Friends interested, is an important one, and should be fairly considered and justly settled.

It may be objected to the above plan that if adopted the Conferences would not be held in Friendly communities. But instead of being an objection, this might be a real advantage, as it would give us the opportunity of presenting our views among those not acquainted with them, and thus accomplishing more good than by reiterating old truths to those already familiar with them. If eight or ten hundred Friends should hold a Conference in Pittsburg, or Cincinnati, or

Cleveland, their meetings would doubtless attract more attention than if held in some sparsely settled country neighborhood. If the papers presented should be published in the city newspapers, both the papers and the city would be the better for that, and the Friends would not be harmed by having their efforts and views compared with those of others. Every large denomination pursues such a plan in holding its religious Conferences; why should not we?

The plan above outlined would at once settle another very perplexing problem in connection with these Conferences; that is the question of entertainment. While a large membership, like Philadelphia has, can readily arrange to entertain any number of visitors, there must be cases in the future where such entertainment would prove a heavy burden. The only just way to settle this question is to allow each person to pay his or her own way. If the Conferences were held in large centers of population this could readily be done. Low rates at hotels could be secured by the Committee in charge, and the Friends in attendance could pay either these low rates or higher rates, as they might prefer. This method of settling the entertainment question is simple and just to all, and it would seem that, after the next General Conference, it should be adopted.

The question may arise, "Where would the meetings of the Conference be held if we should go to a city where there is no Friends' meeting-house?" This difficulty would easily be solved by renting a public audience-room, of which every large city contains many, or, as is altogether likely, the audience-room of some church could be secured, as was the case at Chicago, either as a free gift or at slight cost.

The above is offered in the hope that it may solve the question of how to keep the Western Friends with us in the East, without working hardship to any interested Friends. I. R.

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