

ing, but it is equally a duty to give strength to the meeting. This effort may be only the earnest, honest attempt to lift one's own spirit to a higher plane during the meeting, and a loving interchange of thought and feeling afterwards. But in very many cases—in the majority of cases—I think the duty goes farther and reaches the duty of public utterance. This duty we should recognize and prepare for. The saying that a silent meeting is the best is often merely formal. No doubt it may be satisfactory to a few, but I have questioned a great many for an honest opinion in this matter, and almost invariably find that Friends feel the meeting to have been better and more helpful if some true words had been spoken. Now, there is hardly one among us to whom true words do not come at one time or another, and it is the duty of every one to not only prepare for such messages, but to strive for them. Again there is a great deal of formalism in connection with the idea of the inspiration of the ministry. We must recognize that our thoughts and ideas come to us from the All Father, but so do our friends, our food, our clothing. Every good gift cometh from above, yet we know that we must strive for them, and the most earnest striving brings the greatest results. Even so with ideas and ideals. We must reach up for them and our own strength must be used in drawing ourselves up to them. We must wrestle, like Jacob, for our blessings, and cannot obtain them without the struggle. God's gift of high thought and purpose is no special and miraculous gift, but are to be obtained by striving. And this is also true of God's gift of expression of ideas. It can be won by effort, greater in some cases and less in others, but always by effort. To this duty so much neglected, I call the Young Friends. I ask you to frown down and ignore the idea that any miraculous call, any supernatural leading, is required in this duty more than in other duties. To see the need is a call to

supply the need and a call to supply it, rightly. For simply to speak is not enough. It is our duty to supply a need for inspiration not for words, so that in addition to the duty of struggle for a message and for utterance on the part of those who really have a message is the duty of struggle against expression when such expression has become a habit merely.

In the business meetings and committees as, indeed, everywhere, the duty of Young Friends is first to attend, them and secondly to make them worth attending. In order to bring about the first result, the meeting must be held at such times as are convenient for all without interfering with regular duties. In the cities this is usually in the evening, and in the country it is usually after meeting. The First-day School can well afford to give way one day in four, if by the sacrifice we can make it possible for all of our members to attend the business meetings. Many a time the reproach of neglecting business meetings, and leaving them to a few old Friends, is addressed to the Young Friends when the time at which it is held has been, for most of them, bought and paid for by an employer, and it would be dishonesty to leave their work. The change of time can nearly always be accomplished if Young Friends request it, as the experience of various of our most active meetings shows. Secondly, I have said, the business meetings must be made worth attending. They must be rescued from formalism. In very many cases the clerk could as well make out the record of the meeting without the effort of holding it, and in such cases I see no reason why we should complain if the clerk is allowed to do it under the observation of a few whose time is at their easy disposal. Please do not misunderstand me to say that this is the case with all or even with most of our business meetings, but they are by no means rare. If it is queried, the answers might in many cases be stereotyped and printed with the questions. If it