

thing), that they who a short time before were the honored centre of the gathering, the moment they start for the carriage are pursued with rice and rubbish, shoes and shouts, and the courteous and gentle conduct of the guests is changed to a vulgar display of semi-rudeness, reminiscent of the *charivari* of the backwoods settlements of the early day.

It has always been expected that the pupils of Friends' Seminary should attend the Fourth day morning meeting, and some of them have done so. For several years perhaps a third of the school has been excused at the request of parents. This year, however, no such exceptions have been made, simply because none of the parents have insisted after an explanation of the matter has been made, and no pupil has objected to attending after the purpose of the meeting has been set forth. The meetings are therefore larger and the pupils more attentive than formerly. But it is too bad that the scholars do not find more Friends in attendance.

The appointment of Elders that has just been made in the New York Monthly Meeting has brought to the minds of some of our young Friends thoughts on the composition of this meeting of Ministers and Elders that it may do no harm to publish. In the first place, there is a feeling that that body is not doing for the Society what it ought in the way of encouraging or discouraging, admonishing or advising those who speak. In fact, it is very difficult to discover what the body is doing in any way. In the second place, there is a feeling that the appointments to the Eldership are too often made in recognition of past services to the Society rather than in the expectation of further service; that the appointment is looked upon as an honor rather than a call to difficult duty.

There is a growing conviction that

if our meetings are to receive any benefit from the Ministers and Elders, we must change the character of the appointments. While nominally the term of service is three years, practically it is for life, as it is exceedingly difficult to drop a name from the list no matter how much old age or infirmity may hinder the performance of duty. Since the appointment is looked upon as an honor, a failure of reappointment is felt to be a disgrace, and it would be a bold Nominating Committee who should omit the name of any Friend still living who had already been appointed, whether for physical inability or intellectual or spiritual unfitness, to perform the duties of the position, or for such a thing, for instance, as the use of tobacco. But inasmuch as the Elders are expected to furnish consistent examples of Christian living according to the standard set by the Discipline, and to have a special care over the ministry, how can good results be hoped for when some of those we appoint we know to be living by other standards, or to be incapacitated for active service?

The difficulty of making changes has made some of us question whether the Society would lose or gain by the abolition of the meeting of Ministers and Elders. It is a fair question if asked in seriousness and in the desire to find out what will best help or most hinder the Society in doing its work in the world. If these thoughts were the indication of idle fault-finding, or of a restless spirit of change, or of a destructive rather than a constructive disposition, they should not be uttered or repeated. But inasmuch as they are present in the minds of some who are most deeply concerned for the good of the Society, they deserve consideration by all.

We sometimes hear it remarked in our meetings that we keep too much to ourselves and do not let the world know what we believe. But the question arises as to the means of letting