

# Appendix 1

## Complete Text of Advices from the Meeting of the Elders at Balby, 1656

1. The settled meetings to be kept each first-day. General Meetings, as a rule to be on some other day of the week.
2. As any are brought in to the Truth new meetings are to be arranged to suit the general convenience, without respect of persons.
3. Persons ceasing to attend meetings are to be spoken to. Persons who walk disorderly are to be spoken to in private, then before two or three witnesses; then, if necessary, the matter is to be reported to the Church. The Church is to reprove them for their disorderly walking, and, if they do not reform, the case is to be sent in writing “to some whom the Lord hath raised up in the power of the Spirit of the Lord to be fathers, His children to gather in the light” so that the thing may be known to the body and be determined in the light.
4. Ministers to speak the word of the Lord from the mouth of the Lord, without adding or diminishing. If anything is spoken out of the light so that “the seed of God” comes to be burdened, it is to be dealt with in private and not in the public meetings, “except there be a special moving so to do.”
5. Collections to be made for the poor, the relief of prisoners, and other necessary uses, the moneys to be carefully accounted for, and applied as made known by the overseers in each meeting.
6. Care to be taken “for the families and goods of such as are called forth in the ministry, or are imprisoned for the Truth’s sake; that no creature be lost for want of caretakers.”
7. Intentions of marriage to be made known to the Children of Light, especially those of the meeting where the parties are members. The marriage to be solemnized in the fear of the Lord, and before many witnesses, after the example of scripture, and a record to be made in writing, to which the witnesses may subscribe their names.
8. Every meeting to keep records of births, and of burials of the dead that died in the Lord. Burials to be conducted according to scripture, and not after customs of “heathen.”
9. Advice to husbands and wives, as in I Pet.iii. 7. Advice to parents and children, as in Eph. vi. I, 4.
10. Advice to servants and masters, as in Eph. vi. 5–9.
11. Care to be taken “that none who are servants depart from their masters, but as they do see in the light: nor any master put away his servant but by the like consent of the servant; and if any master or servant do otherwise in their wills, it is to be judged by Friends in the light.”
12. Needs of widows and fatherless to be supplied: —such as can work and do not to be admonished, and if they refuse to work, neither let them eat. The children of needy parents to be put to honest employment.
13. Any called before outward powers of the nation are to obey.
14. That if any be called to serve the Commonwealth in any public service which is for the public wealth and good, that with cheerfulness it be undertaken and in faithfulness discharged unto God, that therein patterns and examples in the thing that is righteous ye may be to those that are without.
15. Friends in callings and trades are to be faithful and upright, and keep to yea and nay. Debts to be punctually paid, that nothing they may owe to any man but love one to another.
16. None to speak evil of another, nor grudge against another, nor put a stumbling-block in his brother’s way.
17. None to be busybodies in other’s matters.
18. Christian moderation to be used towards all men.
19. The elders made by the Holy Ghost are to feed the flock, taking the oversight willingly, not as lords, but as examples to the flock.

Dearly beloved Friends, these things we do not lay upon you as a rule or form to walk by, but that all, with the measure of light which is pure and holy, may be guided: and so in the light walking and abiding, these may be fulfilled in the Spirit, not from the letter, for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.

