

**Draft reply by Kitching to a lecture on decrease in the Society of Friends,
giving his views**

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c 1850s - 1870s

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Dr. Hitching took the opportunity to express his thorough concurrence with ~~the expression~~ ^{what has been said} used with regard to the valuable, instructive, and suggestive ~~language~~ ^{character} of the lecture they had just heard. There was one of the most cheering and valuable inferences to be drawn from it, and that was, that the decrease in their Society and the diminution of the number of their meeting houses, was not in any ~~way~~ ^{way} the result of their principles, but ~~was~~ ^{was owing} some way with ~~to~~ ^{to} the mistaken manner in which ~~these principles were carried out;~~ ^{perhaps to their inertness and inactivity as a religious body in propagating their principles.} He wished that some ~~more~~ ^{more} powerful moving force would arise, and that they ~~might be made more~~ ^{active} ~~in the distribution~~ ^{in the distribution} of that ~~knowledge~~ ^{religious} ~~which they~~ ^{in keeping to themselves.} ~~were~~ ^{were} acting rightly. He said the remarks of the Speaker just before he himself rose, referred to ~~the~~ ^a ~~very~~ portion of the lecture to which he himself took ~~some~~ ^{some} exception. He felt that they were far too little independent ~~in~~ ^{the carrying out of} their principles, both as members of their church and ~~in reference to~~ ^{in reference to} their particular meetings, by which the latter in a great degree were deprived of their usefulness. ~~There was the~~ ^{There was the} ~~lack~~ ^{lack} ~~of~~ ^{of} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~want~~ ^{want} of sufficient liberty ~~of~~ ^{of} ~~looking~~ ^{looking} too much to one another, and ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ ~~their~~ ^{their} ~~meeting~~ ^{meeting} referring to one meeting and then to another meeting.

until their time and energy and
patience ~~was~~^{and} lost. He thought and
felt satisfied that a much greater
degree of ^{individual liberty as well as of} associated energy ~~would~~^{could}
be productive of much good, ~~without~~^{and not be}
^{attended with} any infraction of their principles. It
would be a ~~very~~ valuable lesson
for them to learn, and should no
other result ensue from the lecture
than that single conviction, ~~that~~ the
lecture would have been highly
~~valuable~~ ~~estimable~~.

