

contracted that there was no room in the system for expansion to suit the altered conditions of society; and thus, as years rolled on, it was found in antagonism with advancing ideas, and repelled instead of attracting adherents.

When persecution ceased, there came to the Quakers a day of ease, of outward prosperity and abated zeal. With commercial success came wealth, luxury followed, and then indifference to religious things. Even as early as 1700 the Quakers were noted for that commercial success which has continued to be common among them to the present day. This success arose no doubt largely from their integrity and plodding industry, as well as from the superior education they were able to give their children; but perhaps still more from the fact that the whole energies of the Quakers were directed to trade and commerce, as in the case of the Jews. They discouraged literature and the fine arts; they were at first shut out from civil employments, and could hold no post under the crown, owing to the operation of The Test and Corporation Act. Hence their energies, checked in all other directions, flowed into the single channel of commerce. Wealth followed, and with it, unhappily, a decline in religious zeal. An able writer has said, with bitter pungency, "Quakers pursue the getting of money with a pace as steady as time and an appetite as keen as death." With an anxiety to testify against superfluity in dress and indulgence in the pleasures of the world, the Society of Friends have not been equally faithful in warning its members against the too eager pursuit of riches. Thus unduly immersed in the pursuit of worldly gain, while loudly condemning the frivolous pleasures of the world, men naturally said that they

"Compound for sins they are inclined to,
By damning those they have no mind to."

There can be little doubt that one great cause of the decline of Quakerism has been their views on the ministry as connected with worship. They denied that there was to be any order of men set apart as religious teachers and preachers, and in the meeting for worship they held that no man should open his lips unless prompted by the Spirit. The ultimate result of this was that silent meetings became the order of the day, which, to the undevout, became profitless and irksome, and repelled the young, who went elsewhere for instruction. This repulsion was still farther increased by the rejection of music, whether vocal or instrumental, from worship.