

without violating the laws of propriety, or principles of morality. But these principles are too liberal and spiritual for the masses to adopt and practice, and for this reason the Society never prospered numerically in membership.

The polity of the Society was not adapted to the development of any large number of able advocates of its principles.

But few of their preachers or writers were ever able to grasp these principles in their fullness, or have had the ability to expound them with sufficient clearness to attract the intelligent thinker to take an interest in them or in the Society that professed to represent them as its religion.

The standards, set up by George Fox and his more able coadjutors, were entirely too high for the average mind to properly appreciate, unless they were expounded and pressed home to their conditions with the exceptional energy that prompted these ardent pioneers.

The Society of Friends took such high grounds, that it has been a difficult task to hold them is no marvel.

The lack of not only "unity of spirit" but the unity of purpose, from the discordant elements that its free principles tolerated, checked any harmonious aggressive action, because it could not move forward in the unity.

The *laissez faire* policy was the only one that did not threaten to disrupt it.

That policy favored no disturbing scismatic views. It was easier to agree to do nothing than to take an advanced step, to indulge in lethargy than to engage in work.

The Society could scarcely have had any other fate than the one it has been its lot to experience.

Its mode of worship, or the conservative way it has conducted its meetings, which has resulted in such preternatural reverence for the time and place, that to indulge in them became long ago the dominant duty and service of the member faithful enough to attend these meetings. To attend the meetings was a badge and sign of

loyalty to the faith and to the church.

It was a virtue that entitled the member to official promotion. So that periodic, so mal worship has become the chief religious duty as such of the modern Quaker. Philanthropic work, which should be the essence and flower of religion, is something the religionist may engage in, but it is not accepted as religion proper.

It is evident that too much religion, too much worship and devotion to the rites and forms, and not enough homage to the God whose abiding place is in man, has been the bane, the opprobrium and barrier, to the spirit of a living, aggressive and progressive Quakerism.

Too much adoration of the Infinite and impenetrable that we have not seen, and not enough love for our brother whom we have seen. Too much energy in keeping up the organization and but little left for using it to promote the Light and the Truth among men—the purpose for which the organization originated.

The sooner we revise these meetings for worship, so called, and adopt them to the more enlightened of the age, and bring them in accord with the urgent and crying demands of the needy, who would eagerly embrace the Light and rejoice in it as a means of improving their unhappy lot, the better for all of us, who profess the faith that we should love our brother as ourselves, and the Lord or God that resides in him, with all our might, mind and soul, for on this hangs all true religion as taught by the law and the prophets. And in doing this we are performing the true worship.

Is not the time already ripe, or near at hand, for us to take this advanced step? To do so now would not, as it once would, invoke persecution and punishment. Why should we fear obloquy or criticism, in carrying forward, as opportunities offer, the principles our fathers suffered so much for enunciating, and in their day found it so difficult and dangerous to do otherwise than to partially avow, and that