

Pitfalls of the ballroom / by Geo. F. Hall ; with a preface by Sam. P. Jones...

Hall, George F. (George Fridolph), 1908-

Chicago : Laird & Lee, [1901]

[Find this Book Online: https://hdl.handle.net/2027/nyp.33433011367277](https://hdl.handle.net/2027/nyp.33433011367277)

Digitized by 

Original from
NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY



[Public Domain, Google-digitized](#)

We have determined this work to be in the public domain, meaning that it is not subject to copyright. Users are free to copy, use, and redistribute the work in part or in whole. It is possible that current copyright holders, heirs or the estate of the authors of individual portions of the work, such as illustrations or photographs, assert copyrights over these portions. Depending on the nature of subsequent use that is made, additional rights may need to be obtained independently of anything we can address. The digital images and OCR of this work were produced by Google, Inc. (indicated by a watermark on each page in the PageTurner). Google requests that the images and OCR not be re-hosted, redistributed or used commercially. The images are provided for educational, scholarly, non-commercial purposes.

Generated at University of Texas at Austin through HathiTrust on 2026-04-05 22:05 GMT

NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES



33433011367277

PITFALLS
OF THE
BALLROOM

GEORGE

Generated at University of Texas at Austin through HathiTrust on 2026-04-05 22:05 GMT
<https://hdl.handle.net/2027/nyp.33433011367277> / Public Domain, Google-digitized

Deposited in the Theatre Collection

[REDACTED]
by
[REDACTED]



Finance Collection
Original of the
Millonniere Property, 1889.

Generated at University of Texas at Austin through HathiTrust on 2026-04-05 22:05 GMT
https://hdl.handle.net/2027/nyp.33433011367277 / Public Domain, Google-digitized

*MGW
Hall

WITHDRAWN
LIBRARY

TS 115.21



Geo. F. Hall.

PITFALLS

OF THE

BALLROOM

BY
GEO. F. HALL
Author of "Tabernacle Talks," &c.

WITH A PREFACE BY
SAM. P. JONES, THE EVANGELIST



ILLUSTRATED

CHICAGO
LAIRD & LEE, PUBLISHERS

CASE

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1901,
BY WILLIAM H. LEE,
in the office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington, D. C.

INTRODUCTION

BY SAM. P. JONES, THE FAMOUS EVANGELIST



My friend, brother George F. Hall, asked me to write the introduction to the following pages, entitled "PITFALLS OF THE BALL ROOM."

There are three characteristics which this author has which commend him to the reader: "pith, point, and pathos." He writes on pertinent questions, he writes in a clear, vigorous style, he is an author that concentrates rather than elaborates, he shoots directly at the mark and hits every time—

in other words, every time he churns he gets butter.

In this book on the "Pitfalls of the Ball Room" he gives to the reader the historical and moral phases of the dance. I commend this book heartily to the mothers of our pure girls, to the young man with pure sisters, to the young ladies whose ambition should lead them to higher enjoyments.

If modesty and purity are the two pillars that uphold woman's character, then this book is invaluable to the home life. He draws the line, he makes the issue, he takes sides, and every reader of this book will take sides before they are through, one way or the other.

To the pure all things are pure, but the dance is to some people impure. The people hear this author when he talks, they listen to him when he preaches, they will read him when he writes.

This book should go into every home, be read by every preacher, and commended by all who "fear God and keep his commandments."

I bespeak for it even greater circulation than his former books have had.

Yours truly,

SAM. P. JONES.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

CHAPTER.	PAGE.
Introduction, by Rev. Sam P. Jones, .	5
I. Preliminary Remarks, by the Author,	9
II. Definitions,	14
III. Prevalence,	20
IV. The Bible and Dancing,	26
V. Excuses in its Defence,	40
VI. Minor Objections,	51
VII. The Principal Objection,	62
VIII. The Principal Objection (Continued), .	73
IX. Sad Results,	83
X. Edward W. Bok's Foolish Talk,	98
XI. Testimonies from Church Authorities,	108
XII. Testimonies from Worldly Authorities, .	148
XIII. "Is It Permitted to Dance?"	159
XIV. A Double Standard of Morals,	176
XV. Ten Fatal Blows,	183
XVI. Concluding Thoughts,	236

PITFALLS OF THE BALL-ROOM.

CHAPTER I.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

Of all the popular amusements of this age, dancing probably holds first place in the affections of hundreds of thousands of young people, both in and out of the churches. But that which is popular is not necessarily right.

I believe that dancing as at present practiced is wrong,—very wrong. Ministers of all denominations generally believe so. Yet, oftentimes, so deeply intrenched is the evil in the affections of an aristocratic and influential constituency, that many clergymen fear to open their mouths on the subject lest they lose their positions.

Being a minister myself, I naturally like ministers. I believe their profession to be the grandest among the vocations of man. Yet I

am sorry to say that thousands of ministers are chicken-livered when it comes to denouncing sin at short range. It ought not to be so. What have we to fear if we are on the right side of any moral question? We may lose a job now and then; but in the long-run we will gain the peace of a good conscience, the respect of pure, upright men, the affection of many souls redeemed from a downward course, and, above all, the approval of God. It pays to be brave and true, even at the expense of incurring the displeasure of a few wealthy but wordly-minded church-members.

Ministers ought to stand together in the fight against sin. The pulpit has not lost its power, some loud-mouthed skeptics to the contrary notwithstanding. For many years prior to the civil war, there was lethargy or division of opinion among the clergymen of the North on the slavery question. But when all eyes

were finally opened to the enormity of the evil, and the ministers were led at last to stand shoulder to shoulder in their condemnation of the crime and in their advocacy of abolition, then did a sweeping reformation begin.

We are still divided on the temperance question. Some advocate license, high or low, or other restrictive measures, as the best way to control the drink business. But the most active, and, I think, the most effective thinkers, advocate prohibition as the only scriptural and logical solution of the dilemma. Still many ministers have in their congregations wealthy brewers or distillers, or property owners who have tenants among this class, and to openly and persistently denounce the infamous business would oftentimes mean a speedy severing of the pastoral relation. But we are moving steadily. The public conscience is being gradually quickened, and it is fondly hoped that ere

long every pulpit in the land will prove itself a rapid-fire gun against the rum power. Then, and not till then, may we expect full relief from a curse which is sending 150,000 annually to a drunkard's grave, to say nothing of wasted millions in money, and Niagaras of tears in sorrow.

Even more divided, and more luke-warm are the clergymen of America on the dance question. Many give it little or no thought. Others wink at it. And yet others fawn upon it, like a prominent pastor I heard of in Chicago, whose attention at a soiree one evening was called to the young people dancing in an adjoining room. Watching them a little while with evident delight, he finally exclaimed: "God bless their little feet!"

But I am glad to note that thousands of our present day ministers are becoming fully aroused as to the iniquity of the dance. Books

are being written and eagerly devoured on the subject. Sermons galore are being delivered. Multitudes have already been induced to discontinue their support of an amusement that has scarcely a redeeming feature, and good is being done which eternity alone can measure.

To help a little in this excellent work is the object of this brief volume. I shall aim to get out of the beaten paths somewhat, and strike right and left at the evil, in the church and out of it, in high circles and low, with no fear as to the consequences so far as self-important literary critics are concerned, or "holier and wiser than thou" ecclesiastical figure-heads. If God shall bless this small book in the salvation of one falling soul, I shall be repaid a thousand times for the effort.

CHAPTER II.

DEFINITIONS.

Daniel Webster always held that a clear statement of the case was half the battle in a suit at law. And it was Locke, I believe, who tells of a debate he once listened to, in which the disputants waxed very warm. Finally it was suggested that they revert to the terms under discussion to determine whether they were understood in the same way, when to the amazement of all parties, it was learned that there was really no grounds for discussion, as both saw alike!

What do we mean, therefore, by the term "dancing"? Let us understand each other clearly.

Worcester says the word "dance" signifies, "a graceful movement of the figure, accom-

panied by measured steps in accord with music;" and "dancing" he defines as "the act of moving with regulated and graceful steps."

Webster defines the word "dance" as follows: "A lively, brisk exercise or amusement, in which the movements of the person are regulated by art, in figure, and by the sound of instruments, in measure." And according to this much-abused authority the word "dancing" signifies "leaping and stepping to the sound of the voice or an instrument."

The Standard Dictionary as usual is more elaborate, and defines the word "dance" as follows: 1. "A series of rhythmic bodily movements and steps, taken either alone, or with another or others, or the passing with a prescribed step or steps through the concerted movements of a certain figure, the time of which is usually marked by music. 2. A dancing-party: commonly used of an assembly somewhat less form-

al than a ball; a hop." Illustrating, it quotes Bret Harte in "Her Letter,"

"I'm sitting alone by the fire,
Dressed just as I came from the dance."

Of "dancing" the Standard says: "The act of moving in measured step, as to music; also, any leaping or frisking about."

Now we all know that dictionaries go into technicalities, not morals. While all of the above definitions may be technically correct, they may fail to cover one-one-hundredth part of the real meaning of the terms under examination. If "leaping or frisking about," or "moving with regulated and graceful steps," were all of dancing, I would be the last writer in the world to lift my pen against the practice. To condemn "leaping and frisking about" would be to frown upon the hilarities of childhood, the gamboling of lambs, the wild play of horses. To cry out against "moving

with regulated and graceful steps" would be to prove oneself a cynic, who had no eye for the beautiful, no taste for the aesthetic, no sympathy for that which is thrilling and inspiring. It is not this I object to in connection with the dance, but it's lasciviousness and concomitant evils.

Nor do I object so strenuously to the old-fashioned quadrilles, reels, and cotillions that our grand-parents in their simplicity and purity used to enjoy, though for reasons of association I would draw the line against everything wearing the name "dance," as the Apostle Paul warns us to "Shun all appearance of evil." Old-fashioned dances are out of demand at present, however, and need hardly be mentioned. When we speak of the dance nowadays, we usually mean the waltz. And what is waltzing? Is it not dancing gone mad? Is it not the

whirlwind—the awful result of careless sowing through generations past? The wild, passionate, insistent, though polished and courtly, libertine of modern society?

Let it be thoroughly understood, I am not writing about the dance as it was in scriptural times; not about the dance as it was in log-cabin days; not about the dance as it might be; but about the dance as it is,—the intoxicating cup of sensualism, the destroyer of virtue, the blunting hammer of the finer and higher sensibilities, and eventually the curse of body, soul, spirit, home, and happiness! I am writing about the dance as a dangerous pathway leading oftentimes to sorrow here, and hell hereafter, and if I choose harsh words occasionally in handling my subject, it is because no other kind will equal the emergency. The ballroom is one way, and a very broad way, too, to ruin.

May God help every lover of the race to sound
a note of alarm both to those already astray,
and to those who thus far have not set foot in
the slippery path.

CHAPTER III.

PREVALENCE.

Serpent-like, the modern dance has crept into almost every nook and corner of society. We have it, of course, in all its glory among the "bon-tons," or "upper ten." It is the fad at nearly all swell receptions to have dancing. Many who attend such affairs have more money than brains, hence in lieu of the latter they exercise their feet.

Is it the inauguration of a president, governor, or other official dignitary? It must wind up with a dance. Is it the celebration of the advent of a new railroad into town, or the completion of a public hall? Christen it with the dance!

Even our high school and college receptions in many instances are disgraced by this grow-

ing nuisance. And as to lodges! Very few if any in the whole category of social and fraternal organizations think of trying to get along without an occasional dance, if not in the form of a pretentious ball, then more quietly at some of their ordinary functions.

At a high school reception in an Illinois town some months ago, the superintendent asked one of the young ladies, who happened to be a faithful church-member, why she was not dancing. When she gave the professor to understand that she did not believe in it, he exclaimed, "Oh, everybody dances nowadays!"

But his sweeping statement was untrue. There are many professing Christians who are too faithful to their solemn vows to dance, and there are many thoughtful men and women, who, though not church-members at all, have too much respect for their own purity and the tranquility of the domestic circle to engage in a

practice which is fraught with so much danger to both.

When Gen. Francis M. Drake was inaugurated governor of Iowa a few years ago, as usual a grand reception was given at night in honor of the new chief executive. Of course he attended, as a respectable and loyal gentleman should have done, but being a Christian man whose example in many things has been the admiration and inspiration of thousands, he quietly retired when the dancing began.

Our churches are full of the evil. One or two of the larger denominations wink at it slyly, but as a rule it has always been condemned by the authorities of every religious body. Nevertheless it flourishes in nearly all of them to-day. The pastors and congregational officials are too fearful of offending some of their paying parishioners to openly antagonize it, and so dancing has become very common

among church-members. No wonder a spiritual pall hangs over thousands of churches. Statistics show that vast numbers of them do not have a single convert in a whole year's time. Of course no one would pretend to say that dancing is the only cause, nor even the chief cause of this sad state of affairs; but that it is one cause, and a very prominent one, too, I most emphatically affirm. It is high time ministers generally were paying not less attention to real higher criticism and kindred subjects, but more attention to this and other insidious evils which are slowly but surely strangling the religious life out of their flocks.

The dance has invaded many homes. At first, in a very informal manner—just a select little “hop” managed by the daughters, and one or two of their neighbor girls. Father and mother look on till ten or eleven o'clock, when the visitors retire. Then a reception is planned

in honor of some visiting relative or old school friend. The affair assumes an air of formality now, and not until twelve do the guests say good-night. From parlor to lodge or ball room is only another step or two, and soon our loved ones are in the whirlpool of fashionable life, when it is generally too late to call a halt.

Charity balls are a curse. The name is a subtle argument in favor of their existence, but if ever anything belied its name it is a charity ball. Weeks of preparation, vast sums expended for fine dresses, powders, perfumes, jewels, and flowers, all for the purpose of raising the price of a ticket with which to feed the poor! It is enough to make the imps of Satan dance in fiendish delight to see people deluded with such nonsense year after year in civilized lands.

Hotels, ships, boarding schools, summer resorts, and possibly a hundred other places smile

more or less on the dance. It is being woven into the very heart of present-day life,—a bright but rotten thread. Let no one suggest that the best way to check this evil is to let it alone. That is the coward's, or sluggard's, argument. The best way in which to check its ravages, I think, is to lay bare its grossness. When honest, thoughtful souls can be led to see of just what stuff the article is made, I feel sure that they will promptly reject it as the vilest of shoddy.

CHAPTER IV.

THE BIBLE AND DANCING.

Some people try to get conscience-salve for their practice of dancing out of the Bible. Very well; let us look into the Book and see what it has to say on the subject.

There are eight instances to which I would call your attention, six in the Old Testament, and two in the New.

The first striking account of dancing given in the Bible you will find in the thirty-second chapter of Exodus. Moses went up into the mountain to meet Jehovah, and tarried forty days. He was gone so long that the Children of Israel became restless. "What's become of the man Moses?" they said. "Evidently something has gone wrong with him and his God. It is no use for us to wait any longer. Let us

make us a god of our own, and proceed to be merry." They appealed to Aaron, and he yielded. The people brought their jewels and a golden calf was cast. They began to worship the same, and were in the midst of their devotions when the great lawgiver returned. Naturally he was incensed, and reprimanded the people severely for their disloyalty to the true God.

"And he said unto them, thus saith the Lord God of Israel: Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor. And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses, and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men."—Ex. 32 : 26, 27, 28.

This was certainly a heavy punishment. But we must remember that the event occurred in

the moonlight age of the world, away back yonder when God had only partially revealed himself unto the race. The Israelites were children, and bad children too, hence the severe chastisement that was meted out to them.

But notice the 25th verse of this chapter. It contains a secret:

“And when Moses saw that the people were naked (for Aaron had made them naked unto their shame among their enemies).”

Not only dancing before an idol, but dancing naked! No wonder the punishment was severe. When I observe the decollete waists and short skirts of present-day ball room habits, I always recall this naked hop of the Israelites. But we certainly find here very little authority for dancing.

The next account we have of dancing in the Bible you will find in the twenty-first chapter of Judges. In one of the many wars of Israel

the tribe of Benjamin had been almost obliterated. A few men had escaped, but the women and children had been killed. After the smoke of battle had cleared away, the other tribes repented themselves that they had so nearly destroyed one of the twelve, and said this must not be. So they cast about for wives for the few men who had escaped the edge of the sword. It would never do to allow them to marry their own daughters, but they remembered that once yearly the daughters of Shiloh came together at an appointed place to dance and make merry. So the prospective bridegrooms were instructed to lie in wait. At the opportune time they sallied forth and caught each man a dancer and carried her off to wife. This is the only case on record, I believe, in either sacred or profane history where men went to a dance to select a wife. And yet this was not a modern dance. It was simply a

select soiree for ladies only and has never been elevated to the dignity of a precedent. There is no authority here for the dance as we find it in society to-day.

The third instance will be found in II. Samuel 6 : 14:

“And David danced before the Lord with all his might; and David was girded with a linen ephod.”

This was strictly a religious dance, confined to one man, in broad daylight, decently clothed, and none of the accessories which mark the ball room dissipations of the present day. The ark, so long in captivity, was being restored to its place among the chosen people of God. The king was naturally supremely happy, and in the exuberance of his joy, he danced with all his might. Under such circumstances who could have any objections to dancing? It was simply an act of worship,—Da-

vid's way of praising Jehovah for His great kindness to his people. But what authority is there here for the modern dance with its gross impulses, midnight hours, indecent costumes, and other corrupting features?

The next account, if it may be called an account, we find in the book of Job, twenty-first chapter. In one of his replies to his tantalizing friends, the patriarch is endeavoring to show that worldly prosperity is not necessarily an evidence of divine favor. He admits that the wicked live, wax old and powerful in the things of this world, and enjoy all the prosperity heart could wish without the rod of God falling upon them. In the eleventh verse he says:

“They send forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance.”

Whose children dance? The children of the wicked. The children of those who say, Who

is the Almighty that we should fear Him? Depart from us, ye that would trouble conscience.

Perhaps this example could be copied with some propriety. But there cometh a reckoning time! As Job says, "How often is the candle of the wicked put out! And how oft cometh their destruction upon them! God distributeth sorrows in His anger!"

Much has been made of the next occurrence of the word "dance" to which I would call your attention. It is found in Ecclesiastes, 3 : 4:

"A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance."

Solomon does not say there is a time to dance. In the first verse of the chapter he says, "To everything there is a season," and then proceeds to enumerate a few things without commendation or condemnation. To have done so without some explanation at least

would have been to make himself appear unwise.

And yet had he said emphatically, "There is a time to dance with all propriety," it would not have lessened the force of my argument, for critics tell us that the word translated dance here should be translated rejoice, for that is what the original means. Yet again, if Solomon had really meant to recommend dancing, everybody knows that it would be a religious dance, not the mixed evil that we are discussing. There is certainly very little comfort here for advocates of the practice.

The sixth Old Testament instance to which we should pay our respects, is found in the eighteenth chapter of I. Samuel. After David had slain Goliath, he returned with the triumphant Israelites, the hero of everybody except jealous Saul. The women came out and danced with delight over the glorious victory.

But the Bible neither approves or disapproves of the dancing, which was engaged in by the women only, and is no criterion whatever for the modern practice.

There are two notable instances in the New Testament. First, the case of the daughter of Herodias dancing before her step-father, and receiving therefor the head of John the Baptist in a charger. Herodias, as all scriptural students know, was a bad woman. She had first married her own uncle, Herod Philip, in violation of the law of God and the law of common decency. The dancing daughter was the offspring of this marriage. Tiring of Philip, Herodias left him and married his brother, Herod Antipas, a double outrage. True to his duty, John condemned the whole business, and incurred the everlasting displeasure of the woman. She watched for an opportunity to do the brave preacher evil. It came on a public

occasion, when Herod Antipas, entertaining company and flushed with wine, was in a mood to grant almost anything. The daughter, tutored by her wicked mother as to what to do, danced before the lecherous step-father and his friends to their exquisite delight. What sort of a dance it was we do not know. Some of the older versions of the incident represent it however as a very lewd, indecent dance. It was customary among dignitaries when pleased to proffer gifts. Antipas, probably in a spirit of braggadocio, tendered the daughter whatever she wished, even to the half of his kingdom. But the girl, faithful to her villainous mother's instructions, demanded, and was promptly granted, the head of the man of God. Here we have a cruel woman, a silly girl, and a beastly man as patrons to this dastardly deed, all accompanied by a vulgar dance. Certainly ad-

vocates of this amusement will hardly care to discuss this instance further.

The second New Testament instance is in the case of the Prodigal Son, recorded in the fifteenth chapter of Luke. Upon the young man's return we learn in the twenty-fifth verse that he was regaled with music and dancing. But the Bible neither approves nor disapproves in this connection. The Savior simply used the incident to point a moral. The probability is that the old gentleman was a too-indulgent father, or the boy would not have been so badly spoiled. I imagine the young fellow led the dance himself, yet for this I cannot vouch. Nor can I say whether the dancing was a mixed affair, or in companies according to sex, as the ancient custom seems always to have been. At any rate there is no authority whatever for the modern dance in the example of the prodigal son.

There are a few other passages in the Bible in which the words "dance" or "dancing" occur, but in no instance does their use impair the argument advanced against the amusement as at present practiced. Those seeking justification for the modern dance, therefore, will have to go outside of the Bible, for the Holy Book does not sanction it, either by precept or example, but on the other hand, in a thousand utterances, condemns everything of the kind. When the Apostle Paul, in Galatians, says, "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like," he practically annihilates all excuse for the dance, as it is guilty of almost every sin in the terrible cate-

gory, especially the first four mentioned, as I will show in succeeding chapters.

I wish to close this chapter with a quotation from Dr. Lyman Beecher's celebrated tract on dancing. Dr. Beecher was a great preacher and an incisive writer. His conclusions represent very fairly the consensus of opinion so far as the clergy of all denominations for the past one-hundred years and more are concerned.

After giving the various passages in the Word of God which allude to the subject, Dr. Beecher says:

“From the preceding quotations it will sufficiently appear. 1st, That dancing was a religious act, both of the true and also of idol worship. 2d, That it was practiced exclusively on joyful occasions, such as national festivals, or great victories. 3d, That it was performed by maidens only. 4th, That it was performed usually in the day-time, in the open air, in high-

ways, fields, or groves. 5th, That men who perverted dancing from a sacred use to purposes of amusement were deemed infamous. 6th, That no instances of dancing are found upon record in the Bible in which the two sexes united in the exercise, either as an act of worship or amusement. 7th, That there is no instance upon record of social dancing for amusement, except that of the 'vain fellows' devoid of shame; of the irreligious families described by Job, which produced increased impiety and ended in destruction; and of Herodias which terminated in the rash vow of Herod and the murder of John the Baptist."

CHAPTER V.

EXCUSES IN ITS DEFENCE.

Worldly people who make no pretensions to a religious life are not troubled with the search for apologies for the dance which occupies a considerable part of the time of those professing Christians who really wish to do right, and yet who cannot give up all the sins of the world. There are thousands who would vote a chromo to the man who could frame one really good argument in favor of Christians dancing. But the man has not yet been born. There are excuses and apologies galore however, and a few of them will be noticed in this chapter.

It is urged, for example, that dancing is no worse than gossiping, slander, hypocrisy, bigotry, cheating, etc. Granted; then what? Does it follow that because others do wrong in these

directions, then you are at liberty to toy with your pet sin? Two wrongs never made a right. An adulterer may plead in extenuation of his crime that he has not been guilty of theft, drunkenness, or murder. But does this justify him in breaking one of God's most positive laws in another direction?

It is suggested further that the matter is comparatively of small importance anyhow. "Preachers should confine their efforts to the proclamation of the Gospel, and let their people alone in their tastes regarding pleasures," argue some. Very well; if dancing is of such small importance, why not give it up! So long as the leaders of the churches with almost universal unanimity agree that the practice is bad, for the sake of harmony dancers who regard the matter as of small moment should willingly and promptly surrender.

Many years ago one of the most influential

Episcopal Bishops, when speaking of dancing, in answering the objection just made to its agitation, said: "Such was not St. Paul's opinion and practice. He preached to the heart as much as ever minister did, and yet he preached against 'revellings, banquetings,' and such like things, warning against every inconsistency to which Christians are tempted."

One cannot preach the Gospel fully and faithfully without touching upon these everyday things. Whatever stands between a human soul and its higher development should be preached against, and it is emphatically a part of every true gospel ministry so to do. Dancing is one of the most common causes of spiritual decay in the churches everywhere at present, and the subject is of very grave importance.

Again, it is urged, and that with considerable plausibility, that young people especially

must be amused; that if they are denied the pleasure and amusement of dancing and other popular amusements of the day, religion will become repulsive to them, and they will forsake the churches.

Writing on this question, Dr. J. H. Brookes uses the following pertinent language: "If the pursuit of amusement is the end for which the young are created; if they are under no obligations to remember their Creator in the days of their youth; if it is right for them to put off all serious thoughts about God, and eternity, and salvation, until they are old, or until death lays a sudden arrest upon their career of gayety and frivolity, there is some force in the apology. But if, on the other hand, it is wise and Christian to train them even in early life to habits of self-denial; if it is their duty to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; if they should give all diligence to make their

calling and election sure; if they are required to glorify the Savior in their bodies and spirits; if it is incumbent upon them to be prepared for the eternal world through belief of the truth and sanctification of the Spirit, then the reasoning is utterly worthless."

Of course human nature demands recreation, change, amusement,—something to freshen existence, and lighten the burdens of life. And there are a thousand ways in which this demand may be innocently fulfilled, but the modern dance is not one of them.

Pastors are occasionally confronted with the excuse that certain persons will never join a church so long as they are denied the privilege of dancing. Sometimes the goody-goody shepherd, anxious to enlarge and perhaps, as he thinks, dignify his flock, yields, and lets a few rich, high-toned dancers in, only to see them slowly but surely corrupt the entire member-

ship, and blast all spirituality. Nothing is gained by this namby-pamby method of catching influential adherents. Times and times again have I in my experience as a pastor been compelled to make my position distinctly understood on this point. I have said publicly, before large audiences, that my church wished members, and was always glad to receive new ones into the fold; but that we did not wish them unless they could leave their cards, wine-bibbing, and dancing behind. It may seem strange to the uninitiated, but notwithstanding such plain talk, more people united with my church proportionately than any other three perhaps in the city. The world knows the difference between genuine Christianity and the adulterated article. If people love the dance better than the Lord Jesus Christ, better let them stay out until their affections have been

fumigated. It is always a sad day when the church compromises with the world.

Again, it is claimed that dancing is a healthful exercise, and quite necessary in the training of the young to develop a graceful, easy carriage. On these two points, Dr. Brookes wisely says:

“As to the former assertion, I might easily summon the highest medical authority to prove its absurdity; but it is such sheer, unmitigated nonsense I shall not insult your understanding by supposing for a moment that you believe it. If heated rooms, and sumptuous feasting, and whirling round and round, and jumping up and down until two or three o'clock in the morning, and then sudden exposure to the cold air, followed by a day of slumber or ennui, tend to promote health, then the physicians are all in the dark with regard to hygienic laws, and my own observation has greatly deceived me. As

to the superior carriage of those who are given to dancing, this, too, is bold assumption and utterly untrue. Compare, if you choose, the manly walk of an ingenuous youth, who has caught his steps from the promptings of a conscious rectitude and high purpose, with the mincing tread of a brainless fop, whose grandest achievements are wrought in the ball-room. Compare the natural grace of a pure girl, taught by a pure mother, with the disgusting affectation and brazen effrontery of a pert miss, who is trained by a foreign dancing-master not to blush, and you can judge for yourself whether there is any force in the oft-repeated plea that children should be sent to the dancing school to learn manners."

I will mention one more excuse, which, though more often silent than uttered, perhaps prompts more persons to engage in dancing than any of those named. Some smart young

men and proud young women, married and unmarried, say the best society dances, and if you wish to go into the best society you must learn to "trip the light fantastic toe." Oh, this silly desire to get into society! One of the hollo-est places on earth so far as brains is concerned. I mean society as the term is generally understood. But I wish to say with all emphasis that it is not true that the best people dance. This is a libel on hundreds of thousands of the noblest men and women, in all stations of life, that walk the face of this green earth. The ministers of almost every denomination in Christendom, for instance, do not dance, but on the other hand conscientiously oppose the custom. Very few distinguished and influential persons in any trade or profession lower their dignity and impair their usefulness by engaging in a practice which seems rather to have been devised by the devil for the shilly-shallying, sim-

pering, love-sick lads and lassies, truant wives, and too-amourous husbands of a white-washed society that has no God save the god of pleasure, no heaven but the fleeting present, no hell—because it doesn't want any—and no conscience because it would be in the way.

No, the best society does not dance. The society which elevates, refines, and develops, occupies itself in other and more sensible ways than hopping and hugging several nights out of the week.

When Daniel Webster was asked why he did not dance, he replied sarcastically, "I have not brains enough." And Thackeray said: "When a man confesses himself fond of dancing, I set him down as a fool." Imagine Agassiz dancing! Or Wendell Phillips! And what a sight it would have been to have seen Abraham Lincoln and Harriet Beecher Stowe waltzing at a

four-hundred ball! And yet we are told that "the best society dances!"

You may search the whole realm of human thought, and in all well-organized conditions there is no plausible argument in favor of dancing. In insane asylums it is permitted, probably on good grounds. And there are said to be some very fine dancers in such institutions. But where the mind is well-balanced, the heart pure, the soul aflame with noble ambition, there is no necessity for the dance. Away with all excuses therefore! There are none which can stand the white light of reason. Let those who dance honestly confess that they do so because of depravity, and then possibly fewer innocents will be led into the vortex of ruin by the example of those who ought to know better.

CHAPTER VI.

MINOR OBJECTIONS.

I shall spend very little time under this head, as the objections I shall enumerate might all be plausibly used against Sunday School picnics, church socials, and other forms or occasions of entertainment usually considered harmless. And yet they deserve mention in this connection.

First, its injurious effects upon the health. The devotee of the dance must consent to be a victim of late hours, light clothing, sudden exposure, stomach-insulting foods and drinks, and nerve-exciting practices of various kinds. To call a halt anywhere along the line is to balk while in the harness of imperious society. No argument is needed to prove the degenerating effects of such a course on the health. Reput-

able physicians everywhere recommend a more normal life. Dancers do not know where to stop. They often go on from one indiscretion to another, until the night, so esthetically begun, ends in a drunken debauch.

In a pamphlet entitled "Gates of Hell," Prof. T. A. Faulkner says: "Shortly after my first book was published, a business man of Los Angeles, whose daughters were quite fond of dancing, approached me and said that such a publication was an outrage, and that the book ought to be suppressed; that it was an insult to society which should be resented; that his daughters danced, and that they should continue to do so if they chose. I was well acquainted with his daughters. He had spent many thousands of dollars on their education, and, outside of the ball-room, they were truly ladies. But as they were great dancers, I and other ball-room frequenters knew of their

double life. I knew the private wine-rooms where they and others would spend a couple of hours after the ball. So I invited their deluded father to accompany me, promising that I would convince him that every word of my book was true. I did not tell him I would take him to his own daughters to let him see how they abandoned all decency at dancing parties. I simply appointed a night to show him what really takes place after the ball. Fortunately, or unfortunately, in the first private wine-room door I opened, sat his two daughters, and with them were two 'nice' young men (nice outside of the ball-room). While there, a scene took place of which the police court has the record.

"A minister in San Francisco refused to endorse my first book, saying that his son occasionally indulged in parlor dances, and he knew he was a pure young man. He said he would not care for one of my books to fall into his

hands; that a person could not touch pitch without being defiled. I believe the reverend gentleman was sincere. I made it a point to look up the young man's life, and found that he did not stop at the parlor dance. He was leading a double life. When his indulgent parents thought he was spending his evenings in some down-town mission, rescuing souls from eternal darkness, he was spending the hours in a dance-house, sending his own and the souls of others to hell. A short time afterwards, he was killed in a low place. 'Think of the parents' desolation when they learned the truth! I have known young people to go to church on Sunday evenings, catch the text, and then leave in order to spend the evening at some dance hall. Upon their return home, they would quote the text glibly, thus deceiving their unsuspecting guardians. This is most generally the outcome of parlor dancing. They get a taste of it at

home, but they will go elsewhere to fully gratify their desires.”

One of the saddest funerals I ever conducted while a pastor in Chicago was that of a bright young man who caught a severe cold at a ball, dying of pneumonia a week later. Of course he might have caught cold at a political meeting, or on his way home from a revival; but as it happened he didn't. Thousands annually suffer ruined health and death from the effects of too-much-dance.

In the second place, devotees of the ball-room are sure to form unhallowed associations. “Evil communications corrupt good manners,” is not only true in the copy book, but in actual life. No matter how select the ball may be, those who are doing the most good in the world do not attend it. There may be some exceptions, but as a rule those who attend dances pray little. They are not the patient, faithful,

pious, paying members of the church—the pastor’s main reliance in every good word and work—the pillars and supports of the truth. On the other hand they are generally among the fault-finders, covenant-breakers, and stumbling-blocks. “It is a significant fact that the devil exhibits signs of distress whenever a minister of the gospel inflicts upon dancing a well-directed and vigorous blow,” says Dr. Brookes. “Straightway he stirs up his followers to rush to the defense of his favorite stronghold in the church, and they obey his summons with a zeal worthy of a better cause. Their envenomed darts begin to fly thick and fast at the head of the man who has assailed their cherished pastime, and every slander which malice can suggest or ingenuity devise is unsparingly hurled against him.” Many a noble pastor has lost his position and been compelled to move because he has dared to denounce this fashionable evil

in the face of an influential but sin-loving constituency who would not tolerate the drubbing.

The dance hall is a favorite harbor of dawdling dudes and simpering lasses. Such society is not conducive to the development of lofty ideals. And this constitutes a third objection,—the alarming diversion of the mind from sensible, elevating, and truly happy thoughts. If there ever was a brainless form of amusement since the world began, it is certainly dancing. It is interesting to watch a trained bear dance. It is laughable to see a monkey caper. But to see a grown-up man and woman hop about the floor in the modern ball is painful. I would not for a moment give countenance to the thought that all who dance are silly, or wicked; but for the time being they are undoubtedly soft. Cicero said of the Romans, “No one dances unless he is either drunk or mad.” I fear that if the

same is not generally it is at least too frequently true among Anglo-Saxons.

In the fourth place, dancing is dangerous because it "ministers to vanity and love of display." Give me the vast sums annually expended for ball-room gowns, full dress suits never worn on other occasions, hacks, wine-suppers, etc., and I will feed all the poor and clothe all the naked on the continent! But ball-room habitues simply must dress elegantly, or be ostracised. Hence the custom develops an inordinate affection most distressing to all lovers of the plain and simple.

The fifth minor objection I would mention against dancing is its shameful waste of time and strength that ought to be consecrated to holier use. I haven't a word to say against reasonable recreation. This is a fast age. We live at high pressure. Every one must stop once in awhile and rest. But Gladstone averred

that the best way to rest was to change one's occupation for a time. Hence "the grand old man" of England at nearly ninety could be seen frequently in the woods felling trees, or again in his study translating the classics, while the affairs of state waited. But the spectacle of a hair-brained youth dancing night after night, wasting the precious hours in a form of amusement that

"Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven
As make the angels weep,"

is enough to make students of the times believe that after all Max Nordau had some grounds for his "Degeneration." Time! Time! Oh, precious time! Why will man waste it so ruthlessly when there is so little of it?

In the ball-room no superior knowledge is necessary. No depth of intellect. Brilliant bon mots are as cheap as chestnuts. A little show; a little posing; a little conventionality,—

but an abundance of superficiality, is all that is necessary, and time is killed to perfection!

I might enumerate other objections, such as dancing being a strong suggestion of evil, and Paul instructs Christians to "shun all appearance of evil;" I might quote that other text from the Great Apostle to the Gentiles which strikes at the roots of many a sinful amusement, "Be not conformed to this world." I might argue indubitably against dancing because of its acknowledged tendency to promote worldliness. I could easily show that those church members who dance continually, almost without exception, neglect the ordinances of God's house, and violate all the laws of substantial religious growth. I might point out the fact that dancing grieves the godly everywhere, and serves as a stumbling-block to the weak, thus militating against the work of the church in the redemption and development of

fallen man. I might call attention to all this and much more, and yet, bad as they are, these are but minor objections to the insidious evil under discussion. Hence I will leave this part of the argument right here, unanswerable and unanswered, and pass on to what I consider the chief objection to this choice invention of his satanic majesty.

CHAPTER VII.

THE PRINCIPAL OBJECTION.

“We hear that the ‘sitting-out waltz’ is to be popular this winter and assume that the position will be the same as the dance position. Now that is something like it! We have always regarded it as a nuisance to gallop a mile to get a hug or two. A room full of people sitting around on sofas hugging to music is more to our notion. This will give the old rheumaticky brethren another chance to ‘waltz.’”—
Britt (Iowa) Tribune.

The above facetious paragraph from a country newspaper, conveys a very correct idea of the purpose underlying the present day dance. Quadrilles, reels, and the old-time methods of celebrating holidays and family gatherings are very much out of date, even if they were ever

in very good taste. They give too little play to the passions to suit the modern dancer.

Evangelist J. V. Updike says a cultured lady in a Des Moines, Iowa, church told him that when she used to dance (she has given it up now, as all good Christians should do), she cared little for what is called the "square dances." She said she always liked waltzes better, as she preferred being hugged by one man at a time instead of four. She declared that dancing is simply hugging set to music! And herein lies the principal objection to this seductive but damnable amusement. It is built to fan the flame of passion, to gratify as far as possible an unhallowed lust, to lead the unwary into lascivious nets.

Evangelist Smith, of Chicago, in a sermon at Decatur, Ill., used the following striking words:

"Regarding the round dance I want to say a few words. Superintendent Byrnes of New

York City, after investigation as to the cause of the presence of the fallen women in the houses of ill-fame in that city, certified to the fact that 75 per cent. came there through the instrumentality of the round dance.

“That statement alone ought to lead every lover of purity to give up the thing that would occasion such awful results. What makes these terrible figures? The attitude of the round dance, coupled with the prevailing attire and the God given but abused desires of our nature lead to these figures. I do not believe that a lady ever passes through an evenings dance but her character is besmirched by the impure thought of some man.

“As a rule most of our dancing masters are lecherous teachers. Rather than see my daughter encircled in the arms of the average dancing master, I would see her laid in her grave.”

A number of years ago a gentleman residing in San Francisco, Cal., whose daughter is said to have been ruined in the dance, wrote a book entitled "The Dance of Death." The author was a worldly man, but never since the world began I suppose did even a Christian so bitterly and ably denounce this popular sin. The book had a wide reading, notwithstanding its bold and sometimes inconsistent statements. (It is now out of print.) Among the distinguished persons who perused its startling pages was Mrs. Gen. W. T. Sherman, a pronounced Roman Catholic. In a cordial letter to the author she said: "Now it (the dance) must cease. Women of virtue or self-respect will now blush to have the dance named to them. An amusement which leads, in any case, to such results as you have pointed out should be forever discontinued; even if they should continue it for awhile in order to assert their own inno-

cence and their non-concurrence in your views, they will be only too glad to let it die out. I am rejoiced that you have spoken boldly and told all you know about it." The Rev. Father Accolti, a noted Catholic clergyman of San Francisco, is said to have endorsed every sentiment in the book, and priests certainly have a good opportunity in the secret confessional to learn of the sad results of this and other evils practiced by adherents of their faith.

In Old Testament times, those who perverted the dance from a sacred to an unholy use were branded as infamous and profane. Among the Romans, Kitto assures us, "it was considered beneath the dignity of a person of rank and character to practice dancing." The Mohammedan religion forbids it. In all ages and even among half-civilized peoples, the more thoughtful have set the stamp of disap-

proval upon dancing as a practice which tends to the corruption of purity between the sexes.

Even Byron, himself a slave to passion, though one of the most brilliant masters of English the centuries have yet produced, condemned the dance. His language is shocking, but as he has always been a sort of society idol, perhaps I may be forgiven if I quote his famous lines on the subject:

“Muse of the many—twinkling feet! whose charms

Are now extended up from legs to arms;
Terpsichore!—too long misdeemed a maid—
Reproachful term—bestowed but to upbraid—
Henceforth in all the bronze of brightness shine,
The least a vestal of the virgin Nine.

Far be from thee and thine the name of prude:
Mocked, yet triumphant; sneered at, unsubdued;
Thy legs must move to conquer as they fly,
If but thy coats are reasonably high!
Thy breast, if bare enough, requires no shield;
Dance forth,—sans armour thou shalt take the
field,

And own—impregnable to most assaults,
Thy not too lawfully begotten waltz.

Endearing waltz!—to thy more melting tune
 Bow Irish jig and ancient rigadoon.
 Scotch reels, avaunt! and country dance, forego
 Your future claims to each fantastic toe!
 Waltz—waltz alone—both legs and arms de-
 mands,
 Liberal of feet, and lavish of her hands;
 Hands which may freely range in public sight
 Where n'er before—but—pray put out the light!
 Methinks the glare of yonder chandelier
 Shines much too far—or I am much too near;
 And true, though strange,—waltz whispers this
 remark,
 'My slippery paths are safest in the dark.'
 But here the Muse with due decorum halts,
 And lends her longest petticoat to waltz.

Seductive waltz!—though on thy native shore
 E'en Werthers self proclaimed thee half a whore;
 Werther,—to decent vice though much inclined,
 Yet warm, not wanton; dazzled, but not blind—
 Though gentle Genlis, in her strife with Staël,
 Would even proscribe thee from a Paris ball!"

Commenting on this remarkable production,
 Dr. Brookes truly says, "It is a sad sign of the
 times that a practice about which such words

could be written has, through the mere force of habit, come to be enthroned in established supremacy over the circles of fashionable society, and admitted even into the bosom of the loved and blood-bought Church of Christ, purchased at such a cost, and redeemed for purposes so high and holy."

When I was a young man in college, I had a chum who was fond of dancing. He frequently attended balls. Being thoroughly masculine and magnetic, he was much sought after by the fair ones. He always preferred the waltz. "It is great sport," he said. "But I would not like for my sister to dance."

Ah! a nice practice that must be in which husband or brother will freely engage when opportunity offers, and yet deny the same privilege to wife and sister. It is quite natural, however. For every really good female waltzer must permit liberties to be taken with her per-

son while waltzing for which her partner would be promptly shot if the husband or brother should catch him taking the same liberties anywhere else. For shame! It is certainly high time all lovers of the pure and the good were crying out against a custom that fosters such licentiousness as the modern ball-room, with all its disgusting familiarities. A custom that winks at a double standard of morals, permitting misdemeanors openly that would not be tolerated for one moment in secret. A custom that robs the gentler sex of its native modesty, and changes the heaven-given garb of innocence to one of brazen effrontery. Of course those who like to dance better than they like to pray will scoff at these words. Church-members whose faces are seen more often in the gilded halls of a godless society than in the sanctuary, will loudly proclaim that "to the pure all things are pure," thus violating all de-

gency by prostituting a holy passage from God's Word in the defense of a putrifying righteousness. Dancing masters whose business is at stake like the makers of idols in Ephesus of old will ferociously protest that their patrons are all very sweet and good. But nevertheless the fact will remain that dancing has its main-spring in a perverted passion, and if the sex-element were obliterated the practice would cease.

Suppose it should be made a penal offense for males and females to dance together. How long would the practice remain popular? If men were compelled by law to dance together or alone if they dance at all, and women the same, the passing of the dance would soon be recorded. The practice might be continued in boarding schools, or at an occasional "hen" party; but the whole ungodly business, so far as any pronounced evil is concerned, would be

as good as dead and buried within twenty-four hours from the enactment of such a law.

Byron wrote wisely therefore. The thing is indeed socially demoralizing, and it is simply astonishing that a self-respecting gentleman or lady anywhere can be found giving countenance to an amusement that has scarcely one redeeming feature, but on the other hand is steeped in carnality.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PRINCIPAL OBJECTION—CONTINUED.

In 1893 I was in charge of a church in Chicago. One day a gentleman by the name of T. A. Faulkner knocked at my study door and upon acquaintance I found that he was a young man with a history. From his childhood he had known very little but to dance. He had won prizes, composed, and taught. He ran a school of his own for a time in Los Angeles, Cal. But through the death of a young lady whose promising life had been blighted in the ball-room, he was finally led to renounce the sin, and to confess his faith in Jesus as the Christ, and the World's Only Savior. From that time he has been going up and down the high-ways and the low-ways of this fair country, trying to

open the eyes of Christian people to the terrible dangers of the dance.

Mr. Faulkner had somewhere seen a copy of my book on "Personal Purity," and said he was desirous of meeting the author. He had with him a copy of his little work entitled "From the Ball Room to Hell," which has since passed out of his control into that of The Ram's Horn Company, Chicago. I have always been glad from that day forward to number among my friends the author of such a book, for, while somewhat crude in style, and unfinished in argument, it is a thunderbolt against society's pet sin.

I trust I may be pardoned therefore if I quote freely from the pages of this little work. I was one of the first to help give it publicity, and personally sold several thousand copies of it.

In the chapter entitled "First and Last Step," Mr. Faulkner says:

"Since my conversion from a dancing master and a servant of the 'evil one' to an earnest Christian and a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, the question has been repeatedly asked me: 'Is there any harm in dancing?' And letters innumerable have been coming in with questions to the same effect.

"The more I mingle with people outside of the dancing circles, the more forcibly I am made to realize how many there are who are seeking to know the truth concerning the evil of dancing, and how many thousands more who, if they are not seeking that knowledge, certainly ought to have it.

"Let me assure you in the first place that I am well aware of the fact that there are many church members and professing Christians who dance. Some mothers say, 'I know that I can

trust my daughter. The waltz may possibly be the means of leading astray some shallow, low-minded girls, and may arouse the lower nature of some of them whose said lower nature lies very near the surface, but such girls would go astray anyway. My daughter is a pure, high-minded girl, and I am sure she is entirely trustworthy.'

"I am glad she is. Keep her so, my friend, keep her so! Do not risk making her otherwise by placing her under the greatest temptation that can possibly come to a girl. If you place her in the dancing academy or ball-room she cannot and will not remain what you say she now is, and she has but a comparatively small chance of escaping ruin—comparatively only a small chance, I say.

"It is a startling fact, but a fact nevertheless, that Two-thirds of the Girls Who Enter Dancing Schools are Ruined Before the Year is Out!

Mark my words; I know this to be true. Let me give you two reasons why it is so:

“In the first place I do not believe that any woman can or does waltz without being improperly aroused, to a greater or less degree. She may not, at first, understand her feelings, but she is, though unconsciously, none the less surely sowing seed which will one day ripen, if not into open sin and shame, into a nature more or less depraved and health more or less impaired. It is a noticeable fact that a man who knows the ways of the dancing-academy rarely seeks a wife there. When he wishes to marry he chooses for a wife a woman who has not been embraced by every dancing man in town. It is also noticeable that after marriage few men care to dance or to have their wives dance.”

Mr. Faulkner's second reason for urging mothers to use their influence against their

daughters dancing is that public ball-rooms are frequented by professional seducers, who often have a double purpose in being present; first, their own gratification, and secondly, the ensnaring of girls into an unholy life, a service for which they are paid by keepers of vile resorts with whom they are in league.

“Can you wonder,” he exclaims, “that when the degrading, lust-creating influence of the waltz is itself united with the efforts of such vile demons in male form two-thirds of the dancing-school girls are ruined?”

“Dancing and drinking invariably go together. One rarely finds a dance hall without a bar in it, or a saloon within a few steps of it, and sooner or later those who dance will indulge in drink, which is the devil’s best agent in the carrying on of the vile business transacted in, or in connection with, the dance hall.”

From succeeding chapters of the same work I cull a few additional paragraphs:

“The matron of a rescue home for fallen women in Los Angeles says: ‘Seven-tenths of the girls received here have been ruined through dancing and its influence.’ And yet ball-rooms, where this corruption germinates, flourish, thrive, and are countenanced by some preachers of the gospel, and attended and encouraged by church-members whose pastors have not the moral courage to condemn the evil for fear of offending some of their members who dance.

“The ministers in a great measure set the standard of morality in our land, and when they will rise to the occasion and make a long strike, a strong strike, and a strike all together against this ball-room curse, Christian people will strike with them. Then, and not till then, will this evil be wiped out. It is at the cause,

and not merely at the effect that the strike must be made. In some cities the advisability of closing by law all the houses of ill-repute has been discussed. One might as well try to stop the Mississippi river from flowing by damming it at its mouth. To stop this great tide of sin we must begin at its source. To close the doors of these dens of iniquity, close first the doors of the dancing-school.

“I have for several months been working in a mission in Los Angeles, where before, as a dancing master, I have seen causes at work. I have now had ample opportunity of seeing the effect, and I have often heard some of these unfortunate ones cry out in bitter anguish, ‘Would to God that I had never entered a dancing school!’

“The following 200 were cases of girls who are to-day inmates of houses of ill-repute and whom I talked with personally. They were

frank in answering my questions in regard to their downfall, and I gathered that they were ruined by:

Dancing school and ball-rooms	163
Drink given by parents	20
Willful choice	10
Poverty and abuse	7
	200

“I know of a select dancing school where in a course of three months eleven of its victims were ruined.

“I know many may sneer at my words and say that I have myself done more than most men towards the furtherance of the evil I so strongly condemn. I bow my acknowledgments. I own it all.

“I lived for self, I thought for self,
 For self and none beside—
 Just as if Christ had never lived,
 As though He had never died.”

“I sinned against heaven and in the sight of God and man, and was in no wise worthy to become a child of Him to whom I came ten months ago, and He received me just as I was, all stained with many, many sins, and in His boundless love and mercy He forgave them all!”

CHAPTER IX.

SAD RESULTS.

I fully realize the fact that the language of the preceding chapter is exceedingly strong. It is stronger than I would have written it. But I am glad to confess that I have never had any experience in the dance-business. Personally I am frank to express the hope that Mr. Faulkner somewhat overdraws the picture. Yet if he has done so fifty per cent., there is still enough left to startle all good people everywhere.

While, as stated in the above paragraph, I have never had any experience in the ball-room myself, I have as a pastor, and as a careful student of social purity questions, had ample opportunities for observing many of the sad results that follow the practice.

In my earlier ministry I traveled extensively as an evangelist, conducting revival services in many towns and cities. And oh, the times, and times again, I have witnessed the blighting effects of dancing, both on individuals, and on the church as a body, when, perhaps, right in the midst of a season of grace, a "swell" ball came along to distract the attention of the people, and chill their growing religious fervor.

Again, how often I have seen young converts "run well," as Paul says, for a few weeks or months, and then fall victims to this cruel craze, which gradually, but surely, blunts the finer feelings, compromises spirituality, and finally robs the church of their presence and help forever. The church can stand it, however; lapses are nothing new, and only serve to fulfill the accuracy of Biblical prophecies. But not so with the individual; it too often means present and eternal ruin to the unfortunate one.

In his little work on dancing, Dr. Brookes records the following sad incident from the experience of an aged pastor, which, no doubt, could be duplicated many times from the life-work of many another man of God:

“I was called to visit a young lady who was said to be in despair. She had at some time previous been serious, and had, it was hoped, resolutely set her face Zionward. In an evil hour some of her former associates called on her to accompany them to a ball. She refused to go. The occasion, the company, the parade and gayety, were all utterly dissonant from her present feelings. With characteristic levity and thoughtlessness they employed persuasion and ridicule, and finally so far prevailed that, with a desperate effort to shake off her convictions and regain her former security, she exclaimed, ‘Well, I’ll go if I am damned for it!’ God took her at her word. The blessed Spirit im-

mediately withdrew His influences, and, instead of the anxious sigh and longing desire to be freed from the body of sin and death, succeeded, by turns, the calmness and the horrors of despair.

“The wretched victim knew that the Spirit had taken his final leave; no compunctions for sin, no tears of penitence, no inquiries after God, no eager seeking of the ‘place where Christians love to meet,’ now occupied the tedious hours. Instead of the bloom and freshness of health, there came the paleness and haggardness of decay. The wan and sunken cheek, the ghastly, glaring eye, the emaciated limb—the sure precursors of approaching dissolution—were there. The caresses of friends, the suggestions of affection, were all unheeded. The consolations of piety—the last resource of the miserable—were to her but the bitterness of death. In this state of mind I was called to

visit her. When I entered the room and beheld her, pale and emaciated, and reflected that the ravages of her form without but faintly shadowed forth the wreck and desolation within, I was almost overpowered. Never had I conceived so vivid an idea of the woe and misery of those who have quenched the Spirit.

“I proposed prayer. The word threw her into agony. She utterly refused. No entreaties of friends, no arguments drawn from the love of God, or from the fullness and freeness of atoning blood, could prevail to shake her resolution. I left her without being able to find a single avenue to her heart, or to dart one ray of comfort into the dark bosom, which, to all human view, was soon to be enveloped in the blackness of darkness forever. Never shall I forget the dreadful expression of that ghastly countenance, the tones of that despairing voice. The impression is as vivid as though it had

been but yesterday. Oh, that all the young, gay, thoughtless ones, who stifle the convictions of conscience and repress the rising sigh, and dance along the brink of utter reprobation and despair, would read and lay to heart the warning!"

This is certainly a sombre picture. There is no doubt whatever in my mind that thousands are forever lost just as this poor girl was. Not lost because it was impossible for Christ to save them, but because they had "sinned away their day of grace," and so completely hardened their hearts as to be impervious to the Master's gentle touch. Some temperaments can rally from sin much more easily than others. The gospel is for all, but it must be accepted. Christ never forces his love upon anybody. If one is inclined therefore to become morose easily, it is almost impossible when once they have fallen to redeem them, as they give way com-

pletely to depression of spirit, and refuse all overtures of mercy. Oh, that all could be made to realize that, truly, as the old song has it,

“As long as the lamp holds out to burn,
The vilest sinner may return.”

God is always willing to forgive the penitent. The Lord Jesus Christ, who tenderly forgave the woman taken in the very act of adultery, is always ready to bestow His love and pardon upon those who come to Him in sincere contrition of heart. Yet trifling is fearfully dangerous.

One of the saddest things to me in connection with this dance problem is the fact that vast numbers of pure, sweet, but unwary girls are annually made merchandise of—bought in the ball-room and sold in the brothel. It is only recently that anything to speak of has been published along this line. Mrs. Charlton Edholm, the distinguished and enthusiastic

press Secretary of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, and Reporter of the Florence Crittenton Rescue Work, has done the world a real service in publishing that startling volume entitled, "Traffic in Girls." And yet she has but faintly touched the subject in her chaste pages. In her commendable modesty she does not tell one-tenth of what might be told with reference to the hellish business she describes. It is enough to arouse the righteous indignation of all the saints that have lived since the days of patient Job to think that demons in human form are actually engaged in the barter of virtue in all the large cities of the world. Very little is said about it in the pulpits, because very little is known on the subject. Occasionally a minister here and there will risk the charge of being a sensationalist and "go slumming," peeping into the cess-pools of moral filth which abound in his own town. But

for the most part the clergy contents itself with the preparation and delivery of the good, old-fashioned expository or topical sermons, attendance upon pink teas and chicken dinners, with now and then a little dissipation in the study of higher criticism. I love clergymen; but, oh, how I wish multitudes of them might be made to realize that Peter said the first thing to be added to primary obedience on the part of the Christian is courage (improperly rendered "virtue" in the King James version). Oh, for more preachers like John the Baptist! For more of the spirit that possessed our Lord when he took whip-cords in hand and drove the wicked and blasphemous money changers from the temple! I do not believe in prurient preaching; but I do believe in that preaching which exposes rottenness in high places and low, in the church and out, and arrests the attention of thoughtful men everywhere. A

little less attention on the part of our part-your-hair-in-the-middle, kid-gloved, string-of-titles theological gentlemen to higher criticism, and more devotion to the holy purpose or raising the "submerged tenth" out of moral degradation into a cleaner, happier life, would, it strikes me, be more in keeping with the example of our Savior, and with the crying needs of the hour.

There are 500,000 prostitutes in America today according to the best obtainable statistics. What an army of shame! What an array of moral turpitude! What a charge against our boasted civilization!

And these fallen ones are our little sisters. My heart goes out to them. Oh, that the church, instead of snugly gathering its skirts of self-righteousness about its chaste but lazy limbs, would arise in love and run quickly to the famishing ones with cups of cold water!

This would certainly be more Christ-like than indifference.

I have thus broadly introduced the social purity question in order to say that one of the chief feeders of the evil-resorts is the dance. Yes, this same dance, which has ingratiated itself into the affections of so many goody-goody pastors, and so many nice-but-nasty church members. This same dance, which, notwithstanding its slime from contact with the pit, has woven itself into the very fabric of modern society until it is almost worth one's reputation to say aught against it in many communities where the church, I am sorry to say, is like the one at Sardis of old—"thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead."

Oh, pastors, fathers, mothers, if you could but be made to realize that every time you allow one encouraging word to pass your lips in favor of this modern evil, you are thereby en-

dangering the purity of some fair girl, and possibly hurrying on her eventual sale to the "scarlet woman," perhaps you would turn about, face! on this question.

"Once in my own experience," says Mr. Faulkner, "I was giving dancing-lessons in an aristocratic family, and a man of God called to warn them of the danger there was in the dance. He was quickly expelled from the house, and told not to call on such a mission again. Some weeks afterwards one of the daughters caught a severe cold at a ball given by me. Just before she died, they sent for the minister—they were glad to have the Word of God spoken after it was too late. What was the cause of her untimely death? The dance. Had the parents listened to the earnest voice of the pastor their child would not have died a victim of the ball-room. I believe God will hold many parents responsible for their children's down-

fall. They will allow the agent of the devil to come into their homes to debauch their wives and daughters when they will not allow the man of God to enter their door. Like the Jews of old who cried out, 'Give us Barrabbas!'—a thief and a murderer—and, 'Away with the Lamb of God! Crucify Him!'

"Stop! think! father, mother! While you are educating your child for usefulness and society, will you plant a seed in their hearts that may soon ripen into open sin!"

If, after reading these burning words from the bold pen of one who through past association and present consecration is better qualified to speak on this subject than the average clergyman, anybody can be found who would have the brazen courage to defend the dance, then perhaps advanced theologians will after all be compelled to admit that there is a semblance of truth in the old doctrine of total depravity.

Mr. O. E. Payne, President of the Young People's Christian Temperance Union, St. Louis, an old friend of the author, in a recent letter says: "Had I known you were preparing 'Pitfalls of the Ball Room,' I should have urged you to accompany me on a slumming tour of the St. Louis dance halls. Oh, sir! such sights as our committeemen see! Surely the entrance to these places is the hatchway to hell."

The Rev. Joe S. Riley, a first cousin of the noted Hoosier poet, James Whitcomb Riley, was for several years pastor of the Christian Church (Disciples) at Cripple Creek, Colo. In talking with me concerning the moral delinquencies of that city, he said that one of his church officials, an earnest Christian gentleman, determined, some time ago, to make some personal investigations as to the causes which lead to the downfall of the unfortunates

with which many of our cities are too-abundantly supplied. He accordingly visited 100 fallen women in the licensed district of his city, and in reply to his questions, every one of the number assured him that they took their first downward step from virtue in the dance. I presume this percentage will not hold good in many instances.

The dangers of the dance are too apparent, and it behooves all friends of righteousness to bestir themselves in a hearty crusade against it. From the ball-room to ruin is a short course in thousands of instances if the testimony of reliable witnesses is to be accepted, and I for one desire to raise my voice loud and strong against this spawn of Satan.

CHAPTER X.

EDWARD W. BOK'S FOOLISH TALK.

The editor of the *Ladies' Home Journal*, Edward W. Bok, is a bright young man, but contrary, it is presumed, to his own opinion and that of many of his admirers, he does not know it all. As a newspaper man he is certainly very shrewd, for he has helped to make his publication one of the greatest of the kind in the world. But as an adviser in morals, I should prefer to look farther for my boys. This only proves the old adage that "the shoemaker should stick to his last." Mr. Bok would far better confine his genius to editing fancy-work "copy" for his ladies' paper, and not attempt to lay down rules for the guidance of young manhood.

In a little book entitled "Successward" (a

taking title, but in some respects a misleading volume, in that it places too much emphasis upon the mere externals of life, and too little upon the mainsprings of character), Mr. Bok has this to say concerning dancing, in a chapter on the young man's "Social Life and Amusements:"

"Young men are often puzzled, too, as to the right position to assume as regards dancing."

(I hope they will not be longer in doubt as to the course a real gentleman ought to pursue after reading the preceding pages, and those yet to come in this little work. If I have painted the ugly thing it is in colors dark enough to do the subject half justice, many young men will thank me for endeavoring to perform what is generally a thankless task.)

"So far as this amusement is concerned, I have always liked to believe that dancing, like

going to the theatre, is good when enjoyed in moderation.”

(That is what every libertine under heaven likes to believe. It requires no great amount of genius to “like to believe” in anything that is wrong, provided that thing is pleasant to the flesh.)

“Its unhealthy possibilities in a moral sense no young fellow of the right sort ever thinks of or considers. It is only when they are discussed—as, unfortunately, they are all too often in print—that they suggest themselves.”

(That paragraph is a libel on decency. In other words if a young fellow of the right sort sits down to a table where carrion happens to be one of the articles of diet, he will eat what is set before him like a polite little gentleman, and never once think of any unpleasant possibilities in connection with his menu.

And then to put a muzzle on discussion—

ah, Mr. Bok! you may be an expert in answering the ordinary run of questions submitted to the "Queries" department of your paper by girls in their teens, but you show poor taste to say the least when you take it upon yourself to regulate the affairs of the moral world so far as discussion of the dance question is concerned. To brand the earnest writers who have dared to speak plainly on this and other subjects which affect the morals of the age as fellows of the wrong sort, as the paragraph under examination does by inference, is to slap in the face many of the biggest-brained and warmest-hearted reformers the world has ever produced. But Mr. Bok is yet young!)

"Dancing, to my mind, when it is not indulged in promiscuously, but with friends and acquaintances of the opposite sex, is one of the highest forms of enjoyment, and one that gives

to a young fellow what we all should possess, grace and the ability to carry ourselves well."

(Perhaps if Mr. Bok should never dance with anybody but his grand-mother, or his aunt, or his governess, he might extract from the enjoyment some grace and the ability to carry himself well without any particular injury to himself or anybody else. But he ought to know as well as he knows on which page of his paper to put his latest angel-food cake recipes that the average young man will not care to indulge very extensively in that sort of dancing. The promiscuities of the modern dance is one of its greatest charms to the average man, and at the same time its greatest danger to good morals. I think I have already shown quite conclusively that people do not dance nowadays for the mere pleasure of keeping time to music, nor for the exercise, nor for the development of physical graces, but for sensual

gratification. The idea of enrolling the dance among the highest forms of enjoyment is simply preposterous, and Mr. Bok should be ashamed to think that he ever gave expression to such a sentiment. But I think he belongs to the "four hundred," and of course he must keep in line.)

"But, like all good things, dancing can be abused, and then the injurious effects come in."

(But dancing is not a "good thing." It is a hideous running sore on society, a stench in the nostrils of decency, and I protest against such foolish talk to young men. But how condescending in Mr. Bok to admit that dancing can be abused! So can a snake.)

"If a young fellow goes to a dance, and dances all evening without any regard to his physical abilities, he exhausts himself and is unfit for his regular duties on the morrow. When this practice is followed in this wise, and

a late supper—which generally means cold or iced foods on a heated stomach—is indulged in, then one of the most graceful and enjoyable of pleasures is taken out of its proper place and becomes an injury.”

(A very good pen picture of dancing as it is practiced all over the country. Young men and maidens wearing themselves out with over-exertion, then consuming ices at unseasonable hours, until nature is grossly insulted. If Mr. Bok knows anything about the subject at all, he knows that this is the general rule, and not simply an occasional exception. And yet if there were nothing more harmful in the dance than this, unwise as it is, this book would never have been written. The vital point in the whole business is studiously ignored by our ladies' editor, for he is “the right sort of a fellow” don't-cher-know, and the right sort of a fellow never goes into print with so much as a sugges-

tion that there are any moral delinquencies in connection with dancing. How cute Satan tries to be!)

“There is one thing, however, which a young man carving his own career in the world soon finds out for himself, and it is that dances, as a rule, are very exhausting pleasures and generally mean late hours. And after a while he feels that they interfere with his business duties on the following day. Then it is that he must make a choice, and, of course, dancing must suffer and ‘go by the board,’ so to speak. As I have said a few paragraphs back, any social pleasure which interferes with a young fellow’s best business interests is bad. What one man can stand another cannot, and hence everyone must decide for himself. He need only keep his health in mind.”

(Only his health! Since when did a young man’s health become so all-important? No

matter about his morals if he can just manage to keep well! No matter about the morals of the girls he debauches, or, by his example in patronizing a sensual institution, encourages others less strong than himself to debauch! If he stops before reaching the point where his precious health, or his success at the office, is endangered, all is well. Bah!)

“If he finds that pleasure—whether it be attendance at the theatre, dancing, or what not—makes him wish next day that he had not indulged in it, it should be perfectly clear to him that that particular social pleasure is not for him, and he should give it up.”

Thus concludes Mr. Edward W. Bok's specious arguments on the dance question. There is much to commend in portions of his book, but these paragraphs on dancing are dangerous to the uninitiated, and deserve a severe censorship. Yet, as I have already intimated, I be-

lieve Mr. Bok merely voices a popular sentiment in present day society. The whole disposition on the part of dance-advocates is to get away from any and all moral phases of this and other popular amusement questions, and gauge everything by pleasure and business, two little tin gods that are supplanting the worship of Jehovah to-day in millions of hearts.

CHAPTER XI.

TESTIMONIES FROM CHURCH AUTHORITIES.

Thousands of good men and noble women have spoken their sentiments frankly in the negative on this question. And yet we occasionally hear it said that Rev. So-and-so thinks there is no harm in dancing, and that his religious denomination is not averse to the amusement. Well, there are a few reverends left who, I am sorry to say, do slyly, if not openly, countenance the evil, but as a rule they are not men of influence. And as to any religious denomination favoring the modern dance, I don't know which one it is, unless it be the Episcopal or Roman Catholic, and yet many of their greatest representatives have as earnestly condemned dancing as the representatives of any other religious body. Perhaps the Unitarian

and Universalist people favor the amusement, but both of these denominations are small, and hardly entitled to consideration, for if their beliefs are correctly reported one can do almost anything and still go to heaven on their turnpike.

But the big, brainy men of the big orthodox denominations, with scarcely an exception, unite in their condemnation of the modern dance. In this chapter and the succeeding one I will give a few testimonies, culled almost at random from a vast amount of similar material which has been collected by friends of purity the past few years. When authorities speak all should listen.

In one of their pastoral letters, the archbishops and bishops of the Roman Catholic Church of the United States, in plenary council assembled, unite in the following statement:

“In this connection we consider it to be our

duty to warn our people against those amusements which may easily become to them an occasion of sin, and especially against the fashionable dances, which, as at present carried on, are revolting to every feeling of delicacy and propriety, and are fraught with the greatest danger to morals."

Pope Leo XIII., the present pontiff of Rome, has expressed himself in similar terms on the subject, and the Archbishop of Dublin, some years ago, in a Lenten Pastoral to his people, said:

"Never engage in those improper dances, imported from other countries, and retaining foreign names, such as polkas and waltzes, which are so repugnant to the notions of strict Christian morality, are condemned by many of the highest and most respectable members of society, and are at direct variance with that

purity and modesty of the female character for which Ireland has been ever distinguished.”

Archbishop Spalding, of New York, estimates that “nineteen-twentieths of the women who fall take their first step in dancing parties.”

Personally I believe this estimate is too great. It leaves too small a margin for poverty, love of dress, and perverse propensities. And yet I am not sure that I know as much about the subject as a Catholic Archbishop, who, because of his peculiarly opportune facilities for learning secrets (the confessional), ought to be a much better judge of such things than the average Protestant.

Coming now to the Episcopal Church, we find some exceedingly strong declarations against dancing, and that too by some of the best-loved men in the denomination. For instance Bishop Hopkins, of Vermont, senior bishop at the time of his death, and one of the

most gifted intellects of his church, wrote on the subject as follows:

“In the period of youthful education, I have shown that dancing is chargeable with waste of time, the interruption of useful study, the indulgence of personal vanity and display, and the premature incitement of the passions. At the age of maturity it adds to these no small danger to health, by late hours, flimsy dresses, heated rooms, and exposed persons; while its incongruity with strict Christian sobriety and principle, and its tendency to love of dissipation, are so manifest that no ingenuity can make it consistent with the covenant of baptism. It would give me sincere pleasure to have expressed a very different opinion, because I am well aware that few of my readers will relish my unaccommodating sentiments on such a theme. But candor and honesty forbid,

and I may not sacrifice what I believe to be the truth, in the service of worldly expediency.”

This is about as clear and strong as one could wish, and coming from one who had a right to speak, ought to be received with due consideration. How different these words from the vain apologies devised by the shallow-thinking followers of Terpsichore.

In his ripe, old age, after long years of observation and usefulness, the good Bishop Meade, of Virginia, speaking of this evil, which, sad to say, has taken root a little too deeply in that church whose members upon their confirmation are supposed to “renounce the pomps and vanities of this wicked world,” said:

“As an amusement, seeing that it is a perversion of an ancient religious exercise, and has ever been discouraged by the sober-minded and pious of all nations on account of its evil

tendencies and accompaniments, we ought conscientiously to inquire whether its great liability to abuse, and its many acknowledged abuses, should not make us frown upon it in all its forms? It has always been considered to excel in this as a public performer that such persons have been excluded sometimes from civil, and always from religious, privileges, and from respectable society. Can the practice of it, then, even in a more private way, be suitable or becoming in a serious Christian? Very few persons can be found who do not answer, No! I shall not dwell on these two arguments further for obvious reasons. To my mind they are conclusive to show that social dancing is not among the neutral things, which, within certain limits, we may do at pleasure, and even that it is not among the things lawful, but not expedient; but that it is, in itself, wrong, improper, and of bad effect."

The Bishop strikes the nail squarely on the head when he says the dance is "in itself" wrong, and very wrong. For a minister to feebly oppose the evil when goaded by conscience to do so merely on the grounds of late hours, lightness of clothing, stimulating foods and drinks at unseasonable hours, is too much like a boy trying to batter down a stone wall with pebbles. Go to the root of the matter, my brother. Dancing is inherently wrong, because founded on licentiousness. Fight it out on this line, and you will prove yourself at least a patriot of the Kingdom.

Bishop McIlvaine, of Ohio, another eminent man in the Episcopal Church, wrote as follows a generation ago:

"Let me now turn to two subjects, in which there is no difficulty of discrimination,—the theatre and the dance. The only line I would draw in regard to these is that of entire ex-

clusion. And yet, my brethren, I am well aware how easy it is for the imagination to array both these in such an abstract and elementary simplicity, so divested of all that gives them their universal character and relish, that no harm could be detected in either. The question is not what we can imagine them to be, but what they always have been, and will be, and must be, in such a world as this, to render them pleasurable to those who patronize them. Strip them bare, till they stand in the simple innocence to which their defenders' arguments would reduce them, and the world would not have them.

“If the writer be asked whether, in his view, in the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, which are renounced in baptism, are included theatrical amusements and dances, he answers without hesitation in the affirmative. If he be asked whether, under the apostle's exhortation,

‘Be not conformed to this world,’ they are included as matters of worldly conformity to be forsaken, he answers, Certainly. If he be asked whether these things are consistent with the cultivation of a spiritual mind, and the maintaining of a rightful Christian influence, by example, for the good of men, and the glory of God, he must answer that they are, in his view, very inconsistent with such duties. He thinks they are renounced in baptism, that their renunciation is ratified in confirmation, and professed in every participation of the Lord’s Supper. He prays that the time may come when all communicants will unite in rejecting these things.”

This is a very calm and dignified handling of the evils referred to, though personally I could have wished the Bishop had discussed theatre-going and dancing separately. Of course many of the same objections can be urged against

the former that are appropriately used in condemning the latter. But in Bishop McIlvaine's argument the chief objection to dancing is not made clear I think. Still, I have given the quotation for what it is worth, trusting that its very gentleness may touch some heart where stronger argument would fail.

Bishop Coxe, of New York, writes more to my notion. His carefully chosen words strike like a sledge-hammer, or cleave like a broad-axe. In one of his pastoral letters, addressed to his people just before Lent, he says:

“The enormities of theatrical exhibitions, and the lasciviousness of dances, too commonly tolerated in our times, are so disgraceful to the age and so irreconcilable with the gospel of Christ, that I feel it my duty to the souls of my flock to warn those who run with the world to ‘the same excess of riot’ in these things, that they presume not to come to the holy table.

Classes preparing for confirmation are informed that I will not lay hands, knowingly, on any one who is not prepared to renounce such things, with other abominations of 'the world, the flesh, and the devil.' Let all such choose deliberately whom they will serve; and if salvation be worth striving for, let them be persuaded to a sober life, to self-denial, and to the pure and innocent enjoyments which the gospel not only permits, but which it only can create. It is high time that the lines should be drawn between worldly and godly living."

Even stronger and more to the point is the declaration of the Protestant Episcopal Female Tract Society of Baltimore: "Indecent dances, involving personal liberties between the sexes which would be unsafe and indecent anywhere, become fashionable and finally become indispensable at the meetings of good society." Blessings on these brave women! "Unsafe and

indecent anywhere." At this no doubt some of my bon ton readers will turn up their cultured noses, and charge their Tract Society sisters with being too puritanical. But I suspect that the Tract Society sisters are right in this as they are in the further statement that "for parents to have their children taught to dance is nothing else but leading the little ones into temptation—exposing them to a snare. They may in theory dance innocently, but practically they will not."

I agree with Dr. Brookes when he says, commenting on these and other testimonies which he has given us in his pamphlet, "I am willing to weigh such testimony against those feeble-minded clergymen who choose to disgrace the Episcopal pulpit by publicly defending or privately patronizing the dance with the hope of inducing the wealthy and fashionable to enter their church. Verily they have their reward,

but they have it only here. When they come to stand before their indignant Judge, who will require at their hands the blood of the wicked and the worldly whom they were too timid or too careless to warn, they will wish they had never been born."

I recently heard of a brother pastor in my own church who has a large and aristocratic congregation, many members of which engage frequently in dancing, card-playing, and constantly attend theatres without rebuke on their shepherd's part. He is a young man, and I presume is afraid to attack sin in high places lest he lose his fat living. This is not an isolated case, but a very common one to-day. Thousands of ministers of all denominations patiently condone the practicing of dancing and other popular evils, especially if the chief payers of the fold are friendly to the same. The old Hebrew prophet spoke wisely when he said,

“Like people, like priest.” I do not think it is altogether cowardice, however, that prevents pastors from speaking out against dancing. I think it is more often ignorance. Shut up in their studies from one week’s end to another, poring over good books, or occasionally entertaining some noble-minded caller, whose life is as pure as his own, the man of God sometimes becomes so unearthly that he cannot see the dross in human character as it is his duty to see it if he would save the lost. Thus he comes to look forgivingly upon almost anything. It is doubtless a beautiful state of mind, but certainly very impracticable for church-militant purposes. He perhaps imagines the dance is a sort of spring poem, harmless if not very interesting. He forever pictures to himself the frolics of childhood, the many-colored maypole, and the music of humming-bees, when he ought to be made occasionally, at least, to see

pictures of plighted troths ruptured forever, blighted virtue, broken hearts, and buried hopes, for such is too often the sequel to ball-room revelries. Imagine a man of God condoning a practice about which truthful words like the following can be written:

“Now around the circling dancers sweep;
Now in loose waltz the thin clad daughters leap—
The first in lengthened line majestic swim,
The last display the free unfettered limb.”

Such a scene might be excusable among heathen, but in a Christian land, in this age of intellectual and moral advancement, it is decidedly out of place, and the minister who fails to give it his attention wherever and whenever occasion demands is neglecting his duty.

But to some more testimonies:

“And there is the dance,” says Bishop Vincent, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in his charming little book entitled “Better Not.”

“What shall we say of it? As little girls dance by themselves, or as school-girls dance by themselves in the gymnasium; as old people dance with the old people at a wedding feast, or under the shadow of trees at a harvest home or picnic, what can one say against it? If no one danced but very young people or very old people, and if their use of the recreation were purely recreative, in broad daylight, and in the open air, and for a little time, it would be hard to find anything severely to condemn it. Against such dancing we would not care to write, innocent as it would be in the children, and silly as it would be in the old. But the dance means more than these imply. It is not the rattle one hears in the neighborhood of rattlesnakes that one objects to. A child might play with it. The dance is the rattle, but the danger is in the fang and the poison. The dance cannot be considered abstractly. It is

a usage of society. Its associations and tendencies must come into the count. And one must not discriminate too critically, nor carry his experiments too far where there lurks a real danger. The rattle may please a child, but, grasping the rattle, he may receive a deadly sting. Now, in the dance there must be at some point a peril, or such a man as Bishop Coxe, of Western New York, would not say officially to the clergy and laity of his diocese: 'The gross, debasing waltz would not be tolerated for another year if Christian mothers in our communion would only set their faces against it, and remove their daughters from its contaminations, and their sons from that contempt of womanhood and womanly modesty which it begets. Alas! that women professing to follow Christ and godliness should not rally for the honor of their sex and drive these shameless dances from society!'

“And why should such a large-minded man as Horace Bushnell speak of certain forms of the dance as ‘contrived possibilities of license which belong to high society only when it runs low?’ And why should one of the most fair-minded and earnest New England Congregational pastors say: ‘Fashionable dances as now carried on are revolting to every feeling of delicacy and propriety, and are fraught with the greatest danger to millions?’ There must be more than sparkling eyes and lively rattle and shining skin in the bushes yonder! Keep that child away!

“A Protestant minister of large experience and influence says that ‘the round dance of fashionable society cannot be participated in in the heat and glare of the ball-room, with the accessories of music and motion, with the close physical contact and the hot breaths on each other’s cheek, without intoxicating the brain

and setting the passion of the participants on fire. It is physiologically impossible—deny it who will! Any intelligent and honest physician will tell you so. I do not say that the participants know or are always conscious of the secret cause of their pleasurable excitement; but the fact remains the same. For these reasons and more I maintain that the modern dance is undermining the safe-guards of modesty and virtue.’”

I need not quote further from the Methodist standpoint. Bishop Vincent is one of the most widely accredited representatives of this great body, which from its earliest history in the palmy days of Wesleyism has ever championed the cause of purity. No good Methodist dances or supports the sin with approval.

I am sorry that I cannot speak so positively of Presbyterians. The practice is a little more common among them, and yet many of their

greatest writers condemn it unreservedly. As for instance Albert Barnes, the world-renowned commentator. Writing on this subject, he says:

“Dancing, balls, and parties lead to forgetfulness of God. They nourish passion and sensual desires. They often lead to the seduction and ruin of the innocent. No child dances into heaven; but many a one dances into hell.”

In a tract published some years ago by the Presbyterian Board of Publication, Dr. Engles says:

“Supposing, however, that you are now actually contending for the innocence of dancing, we ask if your present opinion has not been preceded by an evident decline in your religious sensibilities,—the cooling of that fervor which characterized your first love? Have you not been neglecting the duties of the closet? Has not religion lost much of its impressive-

ness? Have you not been silencing conscience and giving way to temptations? In a word, does not your heart testify that you are a backslider? These are serious questions and they deserve serious answers. Our own opinion is that no true Christian can become an advocate of promiscuous dancing until he has gone through this fearfully retrograde process."

In a sermon delivered by Dr. Wilson, for many years pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Louisville, Ky., we find these striking words, which evidently received the endorsement of many Presbyterians at the time, for the address was put in permanent form by the Board of Publication:

"Without the least hesitation it may be affirmed that this fashionable amusement, as taught by French messieurs and mesdames, whether to children or grown-up boys and girls, and as indulged in by a thoughtless

world, at soirees, at fairs, at weddings, or at balls, belongs to the forbidden category of 'chambering and wantonness,' which the Spirit of God has associated with 'rioting and drunkenness.' This amusement can never, with propriety, be participated in by Christians. The promiscuous dance is incompatible with modesty. This remark may be applied to the children's dance in the parlor, and to the dancing of grown-up men and women in other places, according to the measure of each. The evil, indeed, begins in the dancing-school, which, instead of being called a school of easy manners, ought rather to be styled a place where girls are taught to substitute the finesse of the coquette for true female delicacy, and boys take their primary lessons in the art of seduction."

Many other testimonies adverse to the dance might be presented from Presbyterian pens, but I turn now to our Baptist friends. The fol-

lowing excerpts were taken from a very able article in the *Baptist Quarterly*, one of the most reputable publications of this noble church. The writer speaks with a fire and brilliancy that can come only from culture and conviction, and I trust his words may sink deeply into the hearts of my readers, for they are certainly true:

“Our accusation is that the dance, instead of affording an opportunity for mutually ennobling companionship between man and woman, inspired with a chaste and sweet interfused remembrance of their contrasted relationship to each other,—that the dance, instead of this, consists substantially of a system of means contrived with more than human ingenuity to incite the instincts of sex to action, however subtle and disguised at the moment, in its sequel the most bestial and degrading. We charge that here, and not elsewhere, in the an-

atomy of that elusive fascination which belongs so peculiarly to the dance, we lay our scalpel upon the quivering secret of life. Passion,—passion transformed, if you please, never so much, subsisting in no matter how many finely contrasted degrees of sensuality,—passion, and nothing else, is the true basis of the popularity of the dance.

“For it is no accident that the dance is what it is. It mingles the sexes in such closeness of personal approach and contact as, outside of the dance, is nowhere tolerated in respectable society. It does this under a complexity of circumstances that conspire to heighten the impropriety of it. It is evening, and the hour is late; there is the delicious and unconscious intoxication of music and motion in the blood; there is the strange confusing sense of being individually unobserved among so many, while yet the natural ‘noble shame’ which guards the

purity of man and woman alone together is absent,—such is the occasion, and still, hour after hour, it whirls its giddy kaleidoscope around, bringing hearts so near that they must almost beat against each other, mixing the warm mutual breaths, darting the fine personal electricity across between the meeting fingers, flushing the face and lighting the eye with a quick language, subject often to gross interpretations on the part of the vile-hearted,—why, this fashionable institution seems to us to have been invented in an unfriendly quarter, usually conceived of as situated under us, to give our human passions leave to disport themselves, unreproved by conscience, by reason, or by shame, almost at their will.”

The *Church Union*, which may be said to be a sort of mouth-piece for all the orthodox churches, in one of its issues remarks editorially:

“Beecher well says in his lecture on Amusements: ‘Whenever amusements become demoralized, it is better to get new ones than to put the old in hospitals; the turf is past redemption.’ And he might have added the stage, and cards, and dice, and billiards, which were but gambling tools in their very origin, and the dance, which has been devoted to revelry and lasciviousness ever since such things existed, and in the modern world never had so much as an exceptional better use, unless the refined dissipation of God-forsaking modern people be better (which we doubt) than the beastly dissipation from which it descended.”

In his valuable little book, “Plain Talks to Young Men,” Rev. Peter Ainslee, of Baltimore, a prominent minister of the Christian Church (Disciples), says: “No sane person will deny that dancing is a worldly amusement and the twin sister of the theatre. It plunges

me into the deepest sadness to see so many professed imitators of Christ wilfully engaging in an amusement against the advice of the godly element of the churches, discouraging struggling pastors, refusing a divine command, and above all, offending our Lord Jesus Christ. And, too, it is so intensely licentious that I cannot speak of it as I would. The respectable Roman deemed it too infamous to even gaze upon. The Christian is an imitator of the Man of Sorrows. This Man would not dance, but rebuked harshly, and wept and prayed over the worldliness of His generation. Neither will the Christian persistently dance. He has been called out from the world, and is 'a peculiar person, zealous of good works.' If you yourself will define and draw the limits of this royal priesthood by the New Testament standard, and by its work in the world to-day, you must believe me right. What! A dancing Chris-

tian! Tell that Judas Iscariot, and not Jesus of Nazareth died for mankind, and the world would believe you as quickly. If I understand correctly the meaning of that word Christian, and comprehend only in part the vow to Christ, I repeat, and without fear of contradiction, Christians do not persistently dance. I challenge a denial. Mark you, I did not say church members, but I said Christians. For there are Church members whirling on the ball floor almost before their hair has been dried from the baptismal waters. And some minister smiles upon this garnished sin, and his confiding people have said: 'Our minister does not object to dancing or the theatre.' Then he is no minister of God, but an ignis fatuus; yet was not one of the twelve a murderer?

"Our modern dancing and waltzing equals, and too often outrivals, the bacchanalian orgies. It destroys true modesty, breaks down

the barriers that should ever exist between the sexes, and permits liberties that would not be tolerated for a moment elsewhere, and the attempt, under any other circumstances, would call down swift vengeance from enraged fathers, brothers and husbands. I ask you to look just one moment on the dancing floor. There goes a couple whirling in each other's arms for hours to the sound of voluptuous music, their breaths mingling, bosom heaving to bosom, and the personal electricity darting through meeting fingers. Now stop! Think! Remember it is the period of youth and just the season when passion and appetite rises in the heart like sap does within the blooming trees in spring. No period of life is so critical, and the young are the last who should be subjected to such a trial. Give me your sincere thought a moment. Do you tell me, honest man, that at that time no impure thoughts will

flit over the most virtuous mind? No one is so simple. Humanity does not lie. It may be the first tread of evil, but no sooner flashes the thought than the virtuous face blushes like the sky at sunset, and the eyelids fall like midnight throwing her curtain over the earth. I do not say that virtue has gone. Oh, no! A thousand times no! But the door has been unlocked and perchance the key is lost. Evil thoughts, like birds, will fly over every field; but do not let them build their nests in your hair. The strong rise above it, but the weak go down before it. The church and the world, and you, too, know this, and yet people who ought to have brains, if not hearts, will quote scripture to support this devil-nurtured institution that populates disgrace and robs the world of virtue. They cite Miriam and David, and say: 'There is a time to dance.' Read it yourself. It is too infamous, if not blasphemous, for re-

ply. It reminds me of Mr. McVicker quoting scripture to Dr. Herrick Johnson in support of the theatre, and of Satan himself, who quoted scripture to Jesus of Nazareth when he was in the wilderness, that he might fall down and worship him.

“Somebody has said that dancing is the school of gracefulness. Then I willingly confess my ignorance. But, a moment—I point to you a group of young men and I hear you say that one is a dancer. How do you know? His mincing step has told the secret, and somebody will call that graceful just as ignorance calls white-washed trees beautiful. It is the same kind of mechanical grace that belongs to schoolboy elocution, when the eyes go up on certain words and the hands shoot out on certain gestures. But let us acknowledge it graceful for argument; then had you not rather be as awkward as Mr. Tittlebat Titmouse, than

find this coveted accomplishment in the sinks of licentiousness? Humanity is weak. The strongest of us may go down beneath the hurricane of temptation.

“A celebrated physician of New York has said: ‘Dancing is an invention of the devil. * * * The fashionable, promiscuous ball, protracted far into the night, or even till the dawn of morning, in a heated atmosphere, and to the sound of voluptuous music, is injurious both to health and morals.’ Compare dancing with modern physical culture, either as to grace or health, and you compare the plow and the threshing floor of the ancients with our improved farming implements.

“These are only a few of the foolish arguments brought forth by dancers, and there are others of still less importance, but the supreme question is, *qui bono?* what good? It is the lowest order of entertainment, and I cannot be-

lieve that our young men desire to entertain better with their feet than with their brains. It is an institution of barbarism, practiced extensively by the American aborigines and untutored Africans, and indeed, the most accomplished dancers in the world are said to be the savage tribes who dance best in the state of nudity. These are the people that our noble youths are trying to outrival, and this is the institution that we carry into our parlors! With the addition of a hand organ and monkey, the entertainment might be completed, and 'our guests,' 'our hosts,' Bridget and the untutored could all be entertained with a high degree of satisfaction. Surely our fathers misunderstood civilization! Behold, the night must light the day! Africa must teach America. Indeed, is anybody so ignorant as to claim for once that the dance is elevating, or in sympathy with our advancing civilization, to say nothing about re-

ligion? Who is so simple as to take a thing so dirty and loathsome in the eyes of culture and religion, and masquerade it as 'refined,' 'select,' 'cultured'? Above all, do you say Christians do this? I protest. Our civilization may be diseased. We know that society is, but our religion is pure, and rises above this filth as the eagle soars in majesty above the earth. If you were to dump a cart-load of garbage into your parlors, it would not be half as incongruous as setting up the dance as an entertainment for beings who have been made to think, to speak, and to adore that God who has created man to participate even with Himself in the immensity of His glory. It may do well enough for the rude Hottentots, but it is a shame on parents who have chosen to be lovers of virtue and worshippers of God, to allow licentious breeding under a roof that ought long ago to have been consecrated to God by morning and evening

prayer. Thoughtless parents will send their children to dancing school, which is not only in direct opposition to the spirit of the Gospel, but against oldtime virtue when it was said: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." It is amazing to see parents lead their little ones into temptation, and then when their young hearts grow cold to God and go down in sin, fathers and mothers will weep. Why do they weep? Did not the little children follow the path in which their little feet were set? 'What fools we mortals be!' Are these the praying Christians who dance? Show me a dancer, and I will show you a heart that does not pray, but they are the barnacles of the church. The barnacles are so thick that often the world cannot see the purity of the living church, and, as the bride of Christ goes limping along, the world sneeringly points her finger and says: 'You whited sep-

ulcher! you lying Christian!' If these thoughtless and heartless Christians would only realize what shame they bring upon the church, surely they would abandon it; for just as theft upon your own name makes a black spot upon your family record, so a willful sin brings shame upon the church, and makes a wound in the body of our own Savior.

“Does not the godly element of the church condemn it? Does God not say that sinning against the brethren, and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ? Did you ever hear of a minister of the Gospel being a dancing teacher? Are not the leaders of dancing parties and balls worldly people? Do not sinners say that it is not the proper place for a Christian? Does it not lead to forgetfulness of God? Is not your body the temple of the Holy Spirit? Indeed, is not your body a part of Christ? Is not dancing revel-

ling? Does not God say that they who practice revelling and such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Now, are you really so wedded to dancing that you cannot give it up for Christ's sake? Then I must say, in sadness, to you, as the Apostle said to Simon the Sorcerer: 'Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter, for thy heart is not right before God. Repent, therefore, of this thy wickedness, and pray the Lord, that he may forgive thee. For I say that thou art in the gall of bitterness and in bond of iniquity.' (Acts 8 : 21—23.) God hath said: 'Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.' Would you deny this, or would you call in question the veracity of God? Oh, impudent man, this is law and unimpeachable truth!

"I have not spoken of the parlor dance, and, indeed, why need I, to those who want to serve

Christ? Do not the same arguments, in the main, apply to parlor dancing that I have already used? It is the same music, the same costumes, the same liberties taken, and altogether the difference between a large parlor dance and a ball is that one is wholesale licentiousness, and the other is retail."

Many pages more might be given from church authorities, but I think this will suffice. Catholics, Episcopalians, Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists, Disciples, Congregationalists, and all the leading religious bodies unite, through representative men, in condemning debasing amusements. In their own way a thousand gifted writers in these various folds have pointed out the dangers of the dance, and what more need be said to church people? To those who are accustomed to governing their conduct somewhat by the advice and example of their ecclesiastical superiors enough has been

adduced. The Church is against it, first and last, now and forever, and may Heaven help her ever to keep her skirts clean from any connection with this soul-degrading practice.

CHAPTER XII.

TESTIMONIES FROM WORLDLY AUTHORITIES.

For the benefit of those readers who do not care for Church opinions, I will now present a few testimonies from what may be called, without any disrespect, I trust, worldly authorities. Some people are very loath to give the Church any more credit than they are obliged to by politeness. I have no sympathy whatever with this feeling. The Church, through its members, Christ's individual followers, is the "salt of the earth." But for the Church all progress would cease, human development would come to a stand-still, and this old world would become a pandemonium of sin, sorrow, and ruin sure enough. But while I am at it, I wish to make a clean job of it, and will therefore present some evidence against the dance from au-

thorities who do not speak in the name of the Church at all, but simply in the name and for the sake of common, ordinary decency.

That pungent and popular writer, Gail Hamilton, in a brilliant dissertation on dancing, says:

“The thing in its very nature is unclean and cannot be washed. The very pose of the parties suggests impurity.”

The novelist Thackeray cuttingly said:

“When a man confesses himself fond of dancing I set him down as a fool.”

And the great Daniel Webster, when asked on a certain occasion why he did not dance, sarcastically replied, “I have not brains enough.”

The daily newspapers are great public mirrors. It is their business to record passing events without fear or favor. It is nothing uncommon to read of incidents like the following, clipped from the *Chicago American*:

DANCED TO DEATH.

Mrs. Mary Kausky Succumbed to Too Many Waltzes.

New York, Feb. 25—Mrs. Mary Kausky, wife of Gustavus Kausky, a furrier, went to a ball in the Grand Central Palace, on Thursday night against the advice of her physician. At the ball she fainted and was taken to St. Mark's Hospital, where she died. Her physician said her death had been caused by dancing.

But where there is one case of the sort reported, there are perhaps a hundred that are never brought to light—the victim does not succumb so suddenly, and when the end does come some other cause is assigned.

“When in San Francisco, Cal.,” says Mr. Faulkner, in his “Gates of Hell,” “I learned that Prof. Harry Stribes, the renowned champion dancer, also the author of many society dances, was on his wedding trip around the world. I called on him at the Palace Hotel, introduced myself, presented him with a copy of my book, and asked him to read it, stating that I would call on him the day following and

get his opinion of it. I called according to promise, and the following is the substance of our conversation:

“You ask me what I think of your book? A man in my position, who has written dances, taught dances, followed the vocation most of his life, and made his fortune at it, ought not to say much against it. But I can say, nevertheless, that you have the right name for your book, and its contents are true, every word of it.’

“I was somewhat surprised to receive such an endorsement from such an eminent authority. But he said he intended to quit the business now, for he was married.

“‘Does your wife dance?’ I inquired.

“‘No, sir, she does not! nor will I permit her to as long as she is my wife.’

“‘Professor, why do so many husbands al-

low their wives to be made such common property of?' I asked.

“‘I will venture to say that out of every fifty husbands who have dancing wives that over half of them, if they would speak frankly on the subject, would express themselves in terms of the most bitter condemnation.’

“‘What kind of men are they who do not object to seeing their wives dance?’

“‘They are the weak, good-natured husbands who would willingly suffer many personal annoyances rather than thwart the wishes of their beloved wives, no matter how ill-advised those wishes might be.’

“‘What would be your advice to a daughter on the subject?’

“‘It would be this: My child, don't let any man ever encircle your waist until you are married, and then only your husband.’

“And this advice I would echo and re-echo to all young ladies.

“‘Professor,’ I continued, ‘I have been severely criticised for the statement that no woman can waltz well and waltz virtuously.’

“‘Yes, I noticed that in your book. I will say that you are right. I do not believe that a woman can waltz well and waltz virtuously, for to be a good dancer she must yield herself completely to her partner.’

“‘What percentage of the fallen women of the United States do you think were ruined in the ball-room?’

“‘I can safely say four-fifths. You will generally find that these women are perfect dancers. If a young girl that is inclined in the least to be ‘fast,’ the first place she makes for is the public ball-room, where the environments are all favorable to her speedy ruin.’

“ ‘Professor, do you find that the ball-rooms of Europe are as bad as those of America?’

“ ‘I see no difference; it is practically the same way everywhere I go.’

“ ‘Are the New England states as bad as the West?’

“ ‘Oh yes; only they are more refined about it.’

“ ‘What, in your judgment, is the best move to make in order to crush this ball-room curse?’

“ ‘It all lies with the Church and parents. If the reform workers would look where the vice germinates and crush it there, they would soon be able to wipe it out. But most ministers haven’t courage enough to condemn dancing for fear of offending some of their members.’

“ ‘I also called upon Mr. Wm. H. Holmes, an ex-dancing master, now a Christian man, who lives in San Francisco.

“ ‘You ask my opinion concerning the ball-

room?’ said he. ‘I am pleased for the opportunity to say a few words to the world on the subject, hoping that someone may profit by them. I have found the ball-room to be the avenue to destruction for multitudes. This is the truth, burned into the hearts of thousands of sorrowing fathers and broken-hearted mothers. And husbands are legion who can look into deserted homes, left desolate by wives and daughters who have been led captive by this seductive sin.’ ”

A few years ago a certain author who desired to publish a protest against the dance solicited the opinion of a noted Eastern woman on the subject, and received the following reply, which should be read and re-read and inwardly digested by every dancing wife and daughter in America:

“You ask me to say what I know and think about round dances? I am glad of the oppor-

tunity to lay my opinion on that subject before the world; though, indeed, I scarcely know what to write more than you have probably written. I will, however, venture to lay bare a young girl's heart and mind by giving you my own experience in the days when I waltzed. I cared little for square dances and wondered what people could find to admire in those slow dances. But in the soft floating of the waltz I found a strange pleasure, rather difficult to intelligibly describe; the mere anticipation fluttered my pulse, and when my partner approached to claim my promised hand for the dance, I felt my cheeks a little flushed, and I could not look him in the eyes with the same frank gaiety as heretofore. I am speaking openly and frankly, and when I say that I did not understand what I felt, or what was this so-called dancing, I expect to be believed. But if my cheeks grew red with uncomprehended

pleasure then, they grow pale with shame to-day, when I think of it all.

“Married now, with home and children around me, I can at least thank God for the experience, which will assuredly be the means of preventing my little daughter from indulging in such dangerous pleasure; but if a young girl, pure-minded and innocent in the beginning, can be brought to feel what I have confessed to have felt, what must be the experience of a married woman!

“I doubt if my experience will be of much service, but it is nevertheless the candid truth from a woman who, in the cause of all young girls who may be contaminated, desires to show just to what extent a young mind may be defiled by the injurious effects of round dances. I have not hesitated to lay bare what are a young girl’s most secret thoughts, in the hope that people will stop and consider, at least, be-

fore handing their lilies of purity over to the arms of any one who may choose to blow the frosty breath of dishonor on their petals.”

With this powerful yet tender and sympathetic thrust, from a refined and honored woman, I close this chapter, hoping that no reader will need require anything further in the way of adverse testimony. And yet I cannot refrain from adding another chapter which, if all else I have presented should prove ineffective, cannot fail to produce the impression I desire to make on every mind which brings itself patiently and honestly to read and consider these pages.

CHAPTER XIII.

“IS IT PERMITTED TO DANCE?”

This chapter will comprise simply an extract from the pen of Abbe Gaume, a learned Doctor of Theology, who, in his “Catechism of Perseverance,” 2d vol., pp. 650-701, gives us an intensely interesting dissertation in novel form on the question at issue:

“‘Uncle, is it permitted to dance?’

“This was the question which a young lady of eighteen asked of one of my venerable conferees. (Roman Catholic priest.)

“‘You ask my opinion about dancing?’ he replied. ‘I shall be happy to give it to you. We must first of all set aside religious dances, of which we meet a few examples in the Scriptures. There is nothing in common between the holy enthusiasm of Moses’ sister, Miriam,

or of the Royal Prophet, and the vain joy of fashionable dances; between the lively flight of gratitude and the love of worldly pleasure. Nor do you consult me concerning those modest, though secular, dances, which take place between persons of the same sex; the Church has not condemned them.

“The question, then, between you and me is about balls and soirees—in other words, about worldly dances in which the sexes are confusedly assembled together; secular circles, summoned by vanity, animated by desire of pleasure in which the passions dispute for empire; in which it is so rare that modesty has not cause to blush by reason of the nature of the dances, or shamelessness of dress, or the freedom of manner and speech. These preliminaries being disposed of, I proceed to answer your question as to whether it is permitted to dance.

“Innocent of itself, sometimes used in religi-

ous festivals to honor God, dancing was afterwards degraded by the passions and employed in the worship of idols. The pagans used to honor their wicked deities by licentious dances. This, my niece, was the origin of dancing, such as it is practiced at the present day; history leaves no doubt on that matter.

“But, uncle, it is not the history of dancing that I am asking you about; it is your opinion on the question whether it is permitted to dance.”

“I understand quite well, as I shall soon show you. Cicero, having to defend the Consul Lucius Morena, who was accused of dancing, exclaimed, ‘Such a thing cannot be believed, especially in regard to a consul, without making known the vices to which he was subject before giving himself over to this kind of excess. For no person dances, either in private or in public, unless he is a drunkard or a fool.

Dancing is the last of vices and includes them all.'

“Demosthenes, the prince of Greek orators, wishing to cast odium on the persons belonging to the train of Philip, King of Macedon, accuses them publicly of dancing. At Rome, to describe a woman without morals it was enough to say that she danced more elegantly than became an honest woman. Ovid, the voluptuous poet, so little acquainted with severity in his morals, calls dancing-places places of ship-wreck for modesty, and dances themselves the seed of vices. I shall spare you the words of Aristotle, Plato, Seneca, and Scipio.

“‘And you do well, uncle. It is not the opinion of Cicero and others that I am asking; it is your own. Is it permitted to dance?’

“Since you don't like the pagans, we will say no more about them. Though I should not have been sorry to tell you, also, that in the

time of Tiberius, the Roman senate banished all dancers out of Rome; and that Domitian, even, excluded from the senate some members who were attached to licentious dances. But as I promised you, we shall say no more about the pagans.

“The Holy Ghost warns us in Ecclesiastes expressly not to be found with a dancer, and to beware of lending an ear to her words, lest we should be overcome by the force of her charms. And elsewhere speaking, as you need have no doubt, of what occurs in our balls, He says: ‘Behold, the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet; therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the Lord will discover their secret parts.’ (Isaiah 3 : 16, 17.)

“‘But pardon me, uncle; you are not answering me, or rather I have only a glimpse of your answer.’

“You may easily be mistaken.

“‘Be so good, then as to keep me from the possibility of a mistake by telling me plainly whether it is permitted to dance.’

“His soul nourished with meditations of holy writings, a father of the church, St. Ephraim, exclaims: ‘Whoever could show from the Scriptures that it is permitted to Christians to dance? Which of the prophets taught it? Which of the evangelists authorizes it? In what book of the apostles do we find a single text favorable to dances? If such a diversion is to be permitted to Christians, it must be said that everything is full of errors—in the law and in the writings of prophets, apostles, and evangelists. But if all the words of these holy books are true and inspired, as they really are, it is

incontestable that Christians are forbidden to seek diversions of this kind.' Tertullian represents the place of worldly dances as a temple of Venus, or a sink of impurity. St. Basil pictures it as a shameful mark of obscenity. St. Chrysostom regards dances as a splendid school for impure passions. St. Augustine says that it would be better to till the ground on Sunday than to dance.

“Well, now, Uncle, I don't know what you are coming to. You give me every one's opinion in general, about which I am not asking at all, and you don't tell me a word about your own opinion, the only thing I wish to know. It is to yourself, and to yourself only, that I address this question, 'Is it permitted to dance?'"

“In modern times I hear two illustrious bishops express themselves in very clear terms. 'The worldly dance,' says St. Charles Borro-

meo, 'is nothing else than a circle of which the devil is the centre and his slaves the circumference; whence it hardly ever happens that a person dances without sin.' 'The custom of balls,' says St. Francis de Sales, 'is so directed towards evil by circumstances that the soul is therein exposed to great danger. As certain plants draw to themselves the venom of serpents that come near them, so a ball collects the venom of human passions, the poison of a general contagion.'

“‘You are determined, Uncle, to make me submit to all the testimonies of tradition, from Adam down to ourselves. There is no necessity for so much. Answer me, I pray you; it is yourself that I want to hear, not others; is it permitted to dance?’

“The Council of Constantinople forbids public dances under pain of anathema. The Councils of Laodicea and of Lerida forbid them,

even at weddings. The Council of Aix-la-Chapelle terms them infamous things; an African Council, a very wicked notion; the Council of Rouen, diversions full of folly; the Council of Tours, snares of the devil.

“After the fathers of the church there was nothing wanting but the Councils! Without exaggeration, Uncle, I think that you would like to make me a theologian by one conversation. But I am afraid that you will find it rather tedious work; so tell me, is it permitted to dance?”

“Make your mind easy. I will say no more of the Scriptures, or of the fathers, or of the Councils. ‘Dancing,’ says the poet Petrarch, whose testimony you cannot challenge, ‘is a frivolous performance, hateful to chaste eyes; a prelude to the indulgence of the passions; the source of a multitude of infamies, from which nothing ever comes but irregularity and im-

purity.' The father of modern atheists, Bayle, expresses himself thus: 'Dancing is good for nothing but to corrupt the heart and to bring a dangerous war on chastity.' A worldly man, the celebrated Bussey-Rabutin, who had tasted all sorts of pleasures, wrote thus to the Bishop of Autun: 'I have always considered balls dangerous. It was not only my reason that made me think so, but also my experience. Accordingly I maintain that whoever is a Christian should not go to a ball.'

" 'Really, Uncle, it is too much! I shall only ask you once more; tell me, is it permitted to dance?'

"I hope you will not be vexed, my dear niece. I promise to give you my advice when you have answered the questions I am about to put to you. 1st, On the day of your baptism you renounced the devil with all his pomp and works. If you do not meet again what you

renounced in the balls, be so good as to tell me where else? 2d, Would you like to die at a ball, without having a moment to recollect yourself? 3d, Would you appear at the holy table in ball dress. 4th, Do you find in the gospel one set of morals for eight o'clock in the morning and another for ten o'clock at night?

“But, Uncle, Uncle! we are not speaking, if you please, about that at all. The question is not of my opinion, but of yours.’

“Well, I shall excuse you from an answer to these questions, but at least give me an answer to what I am going to ask now. Is it true that a ball is thought of many days before it occurs, and even during one's prayers? Is it true that whole hours are given to one's adornment, hours which ought to be devoted to one's family or religion? Is it true that days consecrated to the Lord are often chosen for dances? Is it true that at a ball one is stormed with

vanity, and that there is as great a parade of ornaments as possible, and too often of indecent attire? Is it true that no means are left untried to please others and to attract applause? Is it true that persons do not fear to veil without covering themselves, and that immodest artifices are employed to show off dangerous charms, and to supply those which nature has refused or time has faded? Is it true that at a ball jealousy is enraged with merit, and that the success of one is the anguish of another? Is it true that, to have a triumph over one's rival there is little account made of pleasantries in no way courteous, of whispers significantly mysterious, of allusions more or less malicious? Is it true that all this is sometimes matter for conversation for many days after a ball?

“Is it true that at a ball everything contributes to awaken the senses, to soften the heart,

to excite the imagination? Is it true that one finds there a brilliant circle, whose members vie with one another in displaying the most captivating ornaments of fashion? A mixture of the sexes, a confusion of persons whose age alone would point out that they ought to be kept separate, and both parties comporting themselves in a manner very proper to cast into each others hearts the most fatal sparks. With all this the gay steps of effeminate dance, the exquisite harmonies of seducing music, the gorgeous illusions of decoration, and the dazzling beams of light!

“Is it true that at a ball one spends what would feed a great many poor persons, who, while you are inebriated with pleasure, tremble with cold; who are in want of clothes to cover them, of straw on which to sleep, and of bread to eat, and whose sobs and tears ascend to God with your laughter and song? Is it true that,

during the ball, that is, during the greater portion of the night, servants of both sexes remain without any watch over them, and are exposed to the danger of permitting among themselves that which a more careful education forbids to their masters and their mistresses?

“Is it true—

“‘Ah, Uncle, I have heard enough! I pray you, no more of this at present. To be candid with you, I would rather, instead of answering all these questions, tell you that I shall never dance, so clearly do I see that you would not permit me to dance.’

“You are mistaken now. I tell you in plain terms that I permit you to dance. Do you hear that?

“‘You permit me, Uncle?’

“Yes; I, an old man, with gray hairs; I permit you to dance, on one slight condition.

“‘What is it?’

“Will you promise to observe it?

“ ‘Certainly.’

“Well, listen. You know, my niece, that the most general and unassailable principle of Christian morality is that which obliges us to refer to God everything we do; and God is so good that He accepts the offering of our most common and indifferent actions, such as our meals, our recreations, our sleep, because all these things enter into the order of His Providence. When, therefore, you have arranged your toilet for a ball, you shall retire to your room. There, alone, without any other witness than God and your conscience, you shall place yourself on your knees at the foot of your crucifix, and make the following prayer:

“ ‘Oh, my God! my model and my judge, I am about to do freely and willingly a thing which Thy gospel and Thy church declare to be most dangerous, a thing which has brought

shipwreck to the piety, the humility, and the innocence of an immense number. To do it well I have spent a long time in adorning myself; I am crowned with roses, the better to please. I offer Thee, therefore, my ball and my toilet, to imitate Thee, oh, my Lord! who was crowned with thorns, and to fulfill the promises of my baptism, by which I renounced the devil with all his works and pomps; also, for the edification of my neighbor and the salvation of my own soul. Vouchsafe to accept my offering, and to give me Thy blessing!

“ ‘Why, Uncle, your condition is impossible. There is no baptized person that would dare to make such a prayer; it is mockery.’

“As you like, my niece; take it or leave it; this is the price of my permission.

“ ‘Let others avail themselves of it then; as for me, I renounce it!’

“Since dances and balls cannot be offered to

God without mockery, you see, my child, that they are not so innocent as the world pretends. Dances, being an occasion of sin, ought to be avoided."

CHAPTER XIV.

A DOUBLE STANDARD OF MORALS.

There is no question among well-informed, fair-minded persons but that dancing fosters a double standard of morals. Sometimes it works both ways, but more frequently the sterner sex is favored. And a double standard of morals is one of the greatest curses of the age.

Why is it that society promptly kicks out and down forever the girl whose sin is found out, while the male demon who debauched her is permitted to continue in the even tenor of his way? Where does such a code find its origin, or its reason to exist? Certainly not in the Word of God. Nor in an innate sense of justice. And yet this state of affairs exists to-day, and has long existed.

I plead for a single standard of morals. What

is wrong for the woman is wrong for the man. And what is wrong for husband is wrong for wife, with reference to violations of the conjugal relationship. To all who love the purity and happiness of the home; who respect childhood and reverence old age; and who desire to keep bright on their own hearts the image of God, no argument on this question is needed. And the Church ought to be swifter to learn this lesson and practice it. But how often we see Ella Wheeler Wilcox's little poem on this subject enacted,

"There was a man, it was said, one time,
 Who went astray in his youthful prime;
 Can the brain keep cool and the heart keep quiet,
 When the blood's a river that's running riot?
 And 'boys will be boys,' so the old folks say,
 And 'the man is the better who has had his day.'

"The sinner reformed, and the preacher told
 Of the prodigal son who came back to the fold.
 And the Christian people threw open the door
 With a warmer welcome than ever before.

Wealth and honor were his to command,
 And a spotless woman gave him her hand.
 The world strewed their pathway with flowers
 abloom,
 Crying, 'God bless lady, and God bless groom.'

"There was a maiden who went astray,
 In the golden dawn of life's young day.
 She had more passion and heart than head,
 And she followed where blind love led.
 And love unchecked is a dangerous guide
 To wander at will by a fair girl's side.

"The woman repented and turned from sin,
 But no door was opened to let her in.
 The preacher prayed that she might be forgiven,
 But told her to look for mercy in heaven.
 For this is the law of the earth we know,
 That the woman is scorned, while the man may
 go.

A brave man wedded her after all,
 But the world said, frowning, 'We shall not call'."

This would make a good theme for a drama,
 but I fear it would not be popular. It would
 be too realistic.

Shortly after this poem appeared in print for

the first time, its talented author received the following letter which no doubt made her heart glad, though it must have drawn tears from her eyes:

“Mrs. Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

“Dear Madam: Will you allow me to thank you for the poem entitled “The Two Sinners.” You, who are so pure and charitable, will understand the grateful feelings that one who was once a fallen woman must have toward you. I have found no mercy since I tried to regain my position among respectable people, and I despair of future hope. It may be that I shall return to my old life. But please accept these few lines from one who is sincerely grateful. We may meet beyond the river. God bless you.

“_____”

I have no doubt that if this poor unfortunate had told all the particulars of her life, the story would have run something like this. Well-

born; parents in good circumstances; father insisted on good education; mother proud; sent to dancing-school; there met my ruin like thousands of others; disowned when the terrible truth leaked out; with no trade, profession, or income, was driven to the streets, where I found multitudes of poor girls in the same boat. The dancing libertine who, with sweet promises of marriage, led me to the brink of eternal ruin, deserted me for new victims, and continued in society, unrebuked, the magnet for many an anxious cap. An angel of mercy from the Salvation Army barracks or the Florence Crittenton Home, I've forgotten which, spoke words of cheer to my downcast soul. One day, I prayed; gave my heart to Jesus; found peace—sweet peace, the gift of God's love (God bless Peter Bilhorn for that song); joined a church; tried to get into the higher walks of life, among better companions; but one who knew **my past**

whispered the facts to others; result: heaven only knows!

The most bitter enemy to fallen woman is woman "unfallen." It ought not to be so. Let us get out of that rut. Let us call for sympathy everywhere for anybody and everybody who honestly tries to reform.

I commend the principles of the White Cross Pledge to all true men everywhere. If its five rules were faithfully observed by all men, an end would soon be put to the modern dance:

"I, _____, promise by the help of God:

"1. To treat all women with respect, and endeavor to protect them from wrong and degradation.

"2. To endeavor to put down all indecent language and coarse jests.

"3. To maintain the law of purity as equally binding upon men and women.

“4. To endeavor to spread these principles among my companions, and to try and help my younger brothers.

“5. To use every possible means to fulfil the command, ‘Keep thyself pure.’”

CHAPTER XV.

TEN FATAL BLOWS.

By way of summing up the facts, fancies and philosophy of the foregoing chapters, I wish now to strike ten blows against the dance which I hope will prove fatal, so far as any affection for the iniquity is concerned on the part of the reader who has been patient enough to follow me thus far. At the risk of the critics' charge of needless repetition, I will go, in this chapter, over much of the ground that has already been covered, for I believe the old scriptural way, "Line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little," is yet the most effective way of promulgating and inculcating truth. I am anxious to make a clean sweep of this. When this book is read and digested, my prayer is that no reader will ever

again feel like upholding the filthy institution against which its pages are directed.

I shall aim to make the ten blows I am about to strike cumulative in their power and effect—shall begin with what I consider the less vital arguments against dancing, and conclude with what I deeply feel to be the most crushing.

STRIKE No. I. The modern dance violates the laws of health.

The sacred writer speaks of our bodies as “temples of the Holy Ghost.” They were given us, not to defile or to destroy, but to keep strong, pure, holy. The ancients lived a much longer time than people of this age, because they lived more simply and naturally. Sickness in some degree is almost universal today in all so-called civilized lands. Very few men and women can be found who will admit that they are in perfect health—“the pink of condition.” They will say they have been

working too hard, or that they have been up too late, or that they have suffered some exposure, and have a cold, or, in short, that they are "under the weather a little." I have no doubt in my own mind that this state of affairs accounts largely for the multitudes of mistakes and failures we meet with every day in business and intellectual life. No man can do his best when "out of sorts" physically. For this reason no practice should be engaged in that has a tendency to vitiate human stock. The old Grecian adage, "A strong mind in a strong body," would be a good motto for the men and women of to-day who would be happy and useful. I am glad that more attention is being paid to physical culture than formerly. Medical science is advancing. The average age of human life is increasing. But the modern dance has no part nor parcel with these triumphs, for

it is inherently set against everything of the kind.

It has been argued that dancing is good exercise, and therefore healthful. This sounds well, but let us look into the matter a little. So far as the mere act of dancing is concerned, if it could be carried on under proper restrictions, it would doubtless be conducive to physical well-being. Any exercise that brings the various muscles of the body into vigorous action is healthful, provided there are no adverse accompaniments. Dancing, in order to be healthful, should be engaged in under the following regulations: Every person should dance alone; he should dance in the open air, or in some place equivalent to a well-ventilated gymnasium; he should dance at seasonable hours; he should take no wines, ices, or other murderous concoctions into his stomach; he should wear a sensible costume; he should not continue the

“exercise” longer than one hour; he should then take a shower bath, or a plunge in a swimming tank, or both, as might be directed by a competent physical instructor. But how long would the modern dance last if pared down to such dimensions?

“Proverbially, the dance seeks the cover of the night,” says Dr. H. C. Haydn. “Dancing assemblies are seldom under way till it is time they were dispersed, and often do not end till the small hours of the morning. The simple fact that dancing assemblies seek, not recreation, with a due regard to freshness and vigor the next day, but satiety, ignoring the laws of health and rest ordained for us by the Creator, ranks dancing, as ordinarily pursued, among dissipations which both the moralist and the physician are bound to proscribe. They have no choice in the premises. They are bound to do so.”

The modern dance annually brings its thousands of victims to an untimely grave. The lightness of the clothing, sudden changes from heated rooms to outside chill, over-exercise and gluttony—all these and concomitant evils make the ball-room of the present day a place to be shunned by all who prize good health. “Whatever destroys health and life, whether poison, gun-shot, or unnatural bodily exercises,” says Dr. Vernon in his admirable work on “Amusements,” “is at war with God’s law and with human welfare. There is no doubt that the dance might be so conducted as to be beneficial to health. But as now conducted, it violates all the conditions of health, and by its work of death has merited condemnation.”

STRIKE No. II. The modern dance fosters frivolity, selfishness, aimlessness, and emptiness generally.

In one of his discourses to the Pharisees, our Savior said: "A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." (Matt. 12 : 36.) What a warning to the average ball-room habitue, whose conversation is usually made up of simple, simpering, silly twaddle! If we could have a stenographic report of all the talk at a modern ball, from the time of the first arrival until the last guest had departed, it would prove a literary and ethical curiosity, to say the least. Bombast instead of bon mots, sarcasm instead of sense, jealous thrusts instead of helpful converse, is the rule. Generally the best dancers exhibit the least

brains. The New York Journal of Education puts the matter succinctly when it says: "It requires neither brains nor good morals to be a good dancer." The practice of this fascinating amusement nearly always develops a fatal fondness for it, especially with the young, and the result is neglect of books, the slighting of serious duties, and a lapsing into carelessness that is very demoralizing. The love of solid study, good reading, intelligent conversation, and all the varied forms of a higher social intercourse are supplanted for the time, if not entirely rooted out, by a passionate affection for this sin. An intelligent New York lady is reported to have exclaimed, upon being urged to withdraw her support from the dance: "But what can I do with my company? The people of fashionable society do not read, they are not capable of sustaining an interesting conversation, and there is no way of entertaining them

but by letting them dance!" There is too much truth in this statement. It is generally supposed that "people find their highest joy in the exercise of their strongest faculty." If this is so, no wonder the average novel-reading, theatre-going, card-playing, dancing, frivolous, insipid "sassiety" crowd always jump at the chance to use their heels instead of their heads.

It is a pity that the term "social life" has so low a meaning to many men. With thousands who move in what is called "good society," the term means merely a gratification of the senses, an opportunity to feed the flames of passion, and satisfy the demands of the appetites. With thousands of women, "social life" means an opportunity to fill out a programme at the next ball, or to flirt at the next party, or to be a "first nighter" at the next play. With this class, life seems to be one continual round of pleasure. No serious aims, no sacrifices for

others, no principle of action becoming to an intelligent human being in this golden age. But oh, how often bitter dregs are found in the bottom of such a cup!

“In a world full of activities, full of intricate economies, throbbing with interests that reach out to every hand capable of work, and to every mind capable of thought, who dares fritter away life in a whirl of sportive pleasure?” asks a thoughtful writer. And yet multitudes are guilty. Multitudes are drifting with society’s tide out to perilous seas. If I were the father of one hundred boys, I should not wish to see one of them what is called a “leader in society.” The phrase is too suggestive of emptiness, heartlessness, and sap-headedness. The “swell fellows” about town usually turn a deaf ear to every appeal calculated to develop sympathy, and harden their hearts against every noble impulse. Selfishness is one of the greatest curses

of the age. It seems to find its key-note in the modern ball, where the "exclusive set" holds sway. If one is too conscientious to dance, he is promptly dropped from the list of availables. The result is that a cruel caste is being developed in many quarters. "If we exclude sympathy," says Sir John Lubbock, "and wrap ourselves round in a cold chain armour of selfishness, we exclude ourselves from many of the greatest and purest joys of life." And this is exactly what dancers are continually doing, more particularly among what is called the fashionable set than among others. I plead for common sense in amusements, for the spirit of brotherhood everywhere, for purpose, for purity, for power in every human life!

STRIKE No. III. The modern dance circumvents true dignity of bearing.

Shakespeare, in the "Merchant of Venice," says:

"Let none presume
To wear an undeserved dignity."

And the Apostle Paul says: "Let no man think of himself more highly than he ought to think."

The modern dancer breaks both of these commandments, and yet fails to score when it comes to the true dignity of bearing which neither Shakespeare nor Paul would condemn.

The world admires a manly man, and a womanly woman, but detests the "dude" and "dudine." The cane-sucking idiot, whose chief accomplishments consist of dancing, posing as a society favorite, and spending his father's money, is rightly an object of disgust to sound-thinking people. And the mincing-stepped, gurgling, powdered, bespangled butterfly

woman, whose chief accomplishments consist of an ability to whirl five straight hours on a waxed floor without growing dizzy, pose as a social queen, and wear out three maids keeping herself pretty, is rightly an object to be laughed at by every sensible individual who likes a joke now and then.

The dancing master is supposed to be a teacher of gracefulness, a coach in matters of dignity of bearing. But of all the insipid nothingness that ever disgraced training for social life, I think the dancing master holds first place. His instructions are purely artificial and superficial, whereas young men and young women should be trained in character, true courtesy, and common sense generally. President Fairchild, of the Kansas State Agricultural College, used to speak of *horse sense* as "that native quality of common decency, goodness of heart, and vigor of life," which is not at all germane

to the dance. The dancer is a mere poseur. The thoughtful men and women of the age prefer a true dignity of bearing, not the hot-house variety which is developed in ball-rooms.

It is said that General Robert E. Lee was never known to assume an undignified posture. He was a gentleman always, graceful, dignified, manly. Whether on his horse at the head of his regiment, in the councils of state, in the fields superintending improvements, or in the drawing-rooms of the cultured, he was always the same dignified, manly man. How incongruous it would have been for this true son of nobility to have studied etiquette under a dancing master!

In preserving a dignified bearing one need not be dry, stiff, and uninteresting. Good nature, a rollicking spirit, and a life of sunshine are not at all incompatible with true dignity. Dancing develops a shallow, sickening, and ef-

feminate type of manners that make life seem like a mere play,—a scene of tinsel, trumpery, and fandango. When men become great they do not dance, even though they may have done so in their unsophisticated days. When we think of Gladstone, Bismarck, Garibaldi; of Washington, Franklin, Sumner; of Lincoln, Garfield, Clay; of Clara Barton, Frances Willard, Stowe,—we do not think of gilded ball-rooms, be-ribboned slippers, simpering converse, and hopping forms, but we think of manhood, womanhood, true dignity, glory!

STRIKE No. IV. The modern dance requires a wasteful expenditure of money.

In an age when the rich seem to be growing richer, and the poor poorer, the right use of money becomes a question of vast importance. To waste money is a sin. Dr. Vernon truly says: "Money is a gift of God, a sacred trust committed to man for his good and for the

glory of the giver, and it cannot be abused with impunity. Its misuse in luxurious living, and in maintaining shows, theatrical exhibitions, dances, and enervating diversions has been in all history one of the most prolific sources of the evils which undermine private virtue, corrupt public morals, and destroy individual and national life. The Roman empire, the most colossal and powerful national structure ever reared by human hands, was in this way 'honey-combed,' its substance eaten out, till there was not strength enough left to hold the vast fabric together, and it fell apart into many fragments from internal moral decay. The dance has a large place in history, in the work of individual, family, and national degeneracy and bankruptcy. It is in close alliance with the goddess of fashion, and worships at her shrine. It must have costumes, equipages, splendid apartments, and feastings of an elaborate and expensive

scale, as necessary conditions to securing its consent to serve the public. It is imperious, and demands unquestioning, instant obedience as the condition of averting the anger of its patron deity, the goddess of fashion. The grocer must hold his bill a little longer, the landlord must wait for his rent or look in vain for the bird that has flown, the tailor may collect his accounts as best he may, and the church must look elsewhere for someone more able to give, while Society wrings its demands from its helpless victims. This matter of expense may seem to be a minor consideration to bring forward against an institution so popular and hoary as the dance, but when we turn the clear light of indisputable facts upon the ruins of bankrupt homes, dishonored reputations, the long list of unsettled accounts held by hard-working, honest people, and the discredit cast upon common honesty in the every day affairs

of life, it assumes a magnitude and importance justifying any emphasis we can give it."

The lavish waste of money at the notorious Bradley-Martin ball in New York City a few years ago is still remembered. But the principals in this instance were doubtless rich enough to lose several times as much without feeling the poorer. Not so, however, in thousands of lesser functions, where the desire to be "swell" assumes almost the character of a frenzy, wrecks the purse, and inaugurates a chain of humiliating experiences in eluding creditors.

Every four years, Americans witness a presidential inaugural ball that costs, including special costumes, hundreds of thousands of dollars. No wonder the coal miner sometimes grows restless, and the plodding farmer, or day-laborer, "cusses" the rich and indolent for their foolishness and extravagance. If the money,

many a young man and young lady spend upon balls were spent in cultivating the mind and heart through the medium of good books, lectures, concerts, and other inspiring diversions, the sum total of human progress and happiness would be mightily augmented.

STRIKE No. V. The modern dance causes a sinful waste of time.

Longfellow, in "Hyperion," says: "What is time? The shadow on the dial—the striking of the clock,—the running of the sand,—day and night,—summer and winter,—months, years, centuries;—these are but arbitrary and outward signs, the measure of Time, not Time itself. Time is the life of the soul."

If this be true, then it is a sin to waste time. Suicide is universally regarded, in all well-organized society, as a crime. For one to put a bullet in his brain, or sever the jugular vein, is

bodily suicide. But for one to waste time "with malice aforethought" is soul-suicide.

Young, in his "Night Thoughts," says: "Time wasted is existence; used is life."

The dancer exists; nobody will deny that. But does he live?

During the "season," it takes the average dancer of the gentler sex weeks and weeks in the aggregate to prepare her gowns, to say nothing of the time spent at hair-dressing, powdering and painting, posing and primping generally. She must attend one reception after another, and what time has she left, pray, for mind-culture, heart-development, or soul-repose, without all three of which no woman is what she should be.

By mind culture I mean the reading of good books and periodicals, attendance upon lectures, sermons, concerts, etc. Life is too precious to fritter it away on mere froth, and what

else has the ball-room to offer so far as mental pabulum is concerned?

By heart-development, I mean a broadening and sweetening of the sympathies. Too many people live a narrow and self-centered life. This is especially true of dancers. What do they care for the sin-sick and suffering about them? What moots it to them that a child is dying in the next block, or a fond wife's heart is breaking over the sorry home-coming of a drunken husband?

"When Youth and Pleasure meet
To chase the glowing Hours with flying feet,"
all serious thoughts must give way. If this happened only once or twice in a winter, perhaps it might be overlooked; but when the shortcoming, not to use a harsher term, becomes a custom, it seems time to cry out against it. If the time wasted by dancers, not simply while in the act, but during all the hours

and days spent in looking forward to coming parties and receptions, parlor functions and public balls, could be occupied with useful and happy endeavor, how many sighs and regrets might be unrecorded! When Whittier sang,
“Backward, turn backward, Oh Time in your flight,
Make me a child again, just for to-night,”

he voiced the secret feelings of more hardened old dancers, I suppose, than the brightest school ma'am could count in a week,—hardened old dancers, who have grown tired of the foibles and frailties of fashionable life, and yet who are unfit for any other sort.

Beware, young man and young woman, how you waste time! It is a dangerous thing to do. “Passing the time away,” is poor business. For, as Meredith says in “The Dead Pope,”
“However we pass Time, he passes still,
Passing away whatever the pastime.
And, whether we use him well or ill,
Some day he gives us the slip for the last time.”

We should live every day as if it were the last day we should ever live—spend our time as we would spend it if we had direct information from the Creator that another day would end our earthly career. Few would care to spend it on the dance floor I imagine.

The Earl of Chesterfield, in his celebrated "Letters to His Son," wisely says: "Know the true value of time; snatch, seize, and enjoy every moment of it. No idleness, no laziness, no procrastination; never put off till to-morrow what you can do to-day."

STRIKE No. VI. The modern dance keeps sinners out of the church.

I believe that it is God's will that every human being, when he or she arrives at the age of accountability, should accept Christ and unite with His church. Anything therefore that stands between a human soul and this

divinely appointed course, is wrong, very wrong, and ought to be frowned down and out.

For several years past Christian workers everywhere have been alarmed at the growth of indifference with regard to the claims of the church upon the world. In several communions, the membership shows an annual decrease in the number of members, and in many others it has required the combined power of pulpit and religious press to keep even. Thousands of leading lights in the various denominations have written and spoken on the subject, and many have gone so far as to prophesy that the beginning of a general apostasy is at hand. Personally I am not seriously worried. The "gates of the unseen" have never yet prevailed against the holy institution that our Lord sanctified with his sacrificial blood, and they never shall. But the situation calls for deep study just the same. It is the duty of ministers and

laymen alike to inquire into things, and learn if possible where the trouble lies. If this is done thoughtfully and thoroughly, I believe that the discovery will be made that the modern dance has played a very prominent part in bringing about the state of affairs that is causing the godly of all faiths so much anxiety today. The amusement keeps sinners out of the church. There is no question about it in the minds of those who have had any experience in trying to win the masses to the Christian life.

As an evangelist I have come in contact with all classes and conditions of people, and met with all sorts of excuses on the part of "outsiders" whom I have tried to reach with the Gospel invitation. Among these excuses, the love of dancing is one of the most common. Thousands of young people of both sexes, young people who have been brought up in the Sunday School, and surrounded with good

influences, have sooner or later learned to dance, and through the seductive charms of the sin, have been led farther and farther away from the church, until finally all desire to take upon themselves the Christian vows fades entirely. How often have I had persons ask me if I thought there were any harm in dancing, and assure me that if my church would permit a continuance in the practice they would cheerfully take membership. Every loyal minister of the Word has had similar experiences I suppose. And when the inquiring ones are assured that the church does not countenance dancing, how often they turn away, unwilling to give up their pet sin for the Divine One who gave his life for them.

“A number of cases have fallen under our own observation,” says the Rev. Perry Wayland Sinks, in his work on “Popular Amusements,” “in which the thought of the Christian

life, involving the surrender of the dance as an amusement, restrained from entering upon it. There are many persons in every Christian community or congregation to whom the question of their entrance upon the religious life or the service of God has been definitely negatived or indefinitely postponed by a determination to seek the life of pleasure in which they believe the dance is a leading attraction. We presume that this indictment may not be regarded as a very serious one, the correctness or incorrectness of which being unworthy of sober contention. But from a Christian standpoint no arraignment of the modern dance can be stronger than this. For, from a Christian point of view, no interest of this world can compare for a moment to that which centers in the attainment of a Christian character through a yielding to the voice of the Spirit of God calling to repentance and to the religious life."

Anything that keeps sinners out of the church is to be regarded with keen suspicion, to say the least, and that the modern dance does this, and does it very extensively, cannot be successfully denied.

STRIKE No. VII. The modern dance hinders the spiritual development of the individual Christian, corrupts the church, and "wounds Christ in the house of his friends."

Dancing and praying are not compatible exercises. Dancing and Bible reading do not often go hand in hand. Dancers do not carry their Sunday School papers to the ball room. There are hardly enough exceptions to this rule to prove it. Evangelist Willimas, in his striking little book, "Where Satan Sows His Seed," gives one however. He says: "In a Georgia town the other day a young pastor resolved that where his people went, there he would be also. And when they arranged a

dance, to their surprise he was found in their midst. Of course it occasioned some embarrassment; and when he asked the privilege to lead in prayer, it occasioned something more than embarrassment. But in the South a great respect for the ministry of Christ prevails, and on the second call, even at a dance, they consented, and knelt in prayer. When he had made a fervent, earnest appeal to the Almighty, he arose, thanked them for their courtesy, and went out. They managed to step through a cotillion, and then, with evident disapproval, broke up and went home. The dance never mixes well with prayer. Good preaching on the subject in the pulpit, followed up by good praying in the ball-room, would soon eliminate the dance,—at least from church society.”

Jesus said: “No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the

other; or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." (Matt. 6 : 24.) The modern dance is a jealous institution. It requires unalloyed fealty. It is absolutely impossible for a Christian to dance and grow spiritually at the same time. One evening at the ball is generally sufficient to destroy all the good resolutions of a whole Lenten season.

A dancing church is always a corrupt church. A dancing church has no revivals. Its increase in the number of members, if any, is measured by the influx of new arrivals, who are "saved by letter."

Dr. Herrick Johnson, one of the brightest lights of Presbyterianism, utters solemn facts in the following words: "Christians are to be unlike the world and distinguishable from it. This idea of separateness runs through all the

warp and woof of Scripture. And it clearly does not imply a separation from the grossly evil of the world. This is specifically and positively commanded. Christians are pledged and sworn to obedience from their profession. The separation involved in non-conformity is from worldliness,—from the worldly spirit. It is a demand that the whole tone and bent and current and spirit of the Christian life shall be different from that of the worldly life—so different that it shall be manifest to the world that the people of God are pilgrims and strangers on the earth; that they are walking with God; that they are a peculiar people, called out of the world while still remaining in it—God's witnesses, living epistles, the salt of the earth, distinctive, chosen, set apart, recognizable everywhere as having been with Jesus, and as holy in all manner of conversation." No Bible

student can question the correctness of these deductions. Who, then, dare defend the dance, which violates every single requirement in these specifications of holiness?

The uniform testimony of all religious specialists is that as the love of dancing increases the love of the Lord and His work decreases. The spirit of the dance is not the spirit of the Master. If the one be harbored, the other will not remain. Where the experiment is tried of retaining both, a horrible muddle is the result, a corruption which disgraces the holy "vocation wherewith we are called." (Eph. 4 : 1.) The dance is a deadly poison to the higher life, and he, who professing Christianity, takes it into his spiritual system, wounds our Lord afresh, and by the act classes himself with the traitors of old who killed the world's only hope by nailing the Son of Mary to the cruel cross.

STRIKE No. VIII. The modern dance causes the Christian to set a bad example.

If Christians are the "light of the world," how careful we should be that we do not, by an unholy example, lead others astray! Even if it is possible for me to dance without lowering the tone of my Christian life (which I surely doubt), I might, by my example, lead some weaker disciple, who looked to me as a pattern of good works, into sin. The Bible is very explicit in its teachings on these matters, and Christians cannot afford to blunder in a way so plain.

In his earnest little brochure, "Shall I?", Harold F. Sayles covers admirably the point I wish to make here. He says: "But some ask, what harm is there in my having a little dance? Especially with those I know, and in a private way, shutting out bad company, and keeping good hours? This is always the question to

which this subject leads. Why does not the Christian ask, after seeing that he is called out of the world, with a separation equal to that of Christ's; and when he sees that his Lord and Master has exhorted him not to make friends with, and love the world, and so make provision for the flesh. 'What good will it do me to dance? Shall I be stronger spiritually, and be better fitted for life and its work?'

"You have heard of the lady who advertised for a coachman. Three men applied for the position, and to these she put the question, 'If we were going out for a drive, how near would you dare drive to the edge of a cliff and feel no danger?' The first said, 'One yard.' The second, 'One foot.' But the third said, 'I would not care to drive any nearer than was necessary.' The lady took the man giving the last answer. Let us say concerning this amusement that has slain its hundreds of thousands, not

How near can I go to it and suffer no danger?
but I will not go any nearer than is necessary.

“The question has been asked, “What harm is there in a parlor dance? ‘In answering I will suppose that I am invited with a number of young people to the residence of a friend for a pleasant time. During the evening someone sits at the piano and begins playing some of the popular airs of the day. At once one suggests a dance, a square dance (that is old-fashioned now, you know, and not considered as bad as the waltz or german). A set is quickly formed. I am sitting with a young lady noted for her consistent life and faithful service. We are talking pleasantly when I am solicited to help form the set. The young lady knowing nothing of the dance excuses me and the dance begins. At once the party in the other room begin forming a set and the young lady with

whom I was talking is asked to join it. Not knowing how to dance she asks to be excused, but she is urged, and is assured that she can easily learn, and will enjoy it. She yields reluctantly, her conscience smiting her. She asks herself the question, 'Ought I to dance?' and immediately the devil says, 'Mr. Sayles is dancing and he is a Christian; if he dances you can.' The young lady is thus urged on against the voice of her conscience by my example. She enjoys it, is fascinated by it,—in fact is carried away by the fascination. Soon she is seen often at the dance, and through the friendships formed at the various balls she attends, is led to neglect her Christian duties. She is not seen at the prayer meeting. She gives up her class at Sunday School, and goes the way of the world. Seeing her peril I go to her and remonstrate with her and insist that it is not right. What does she say? She turns upon me and

strikes me with my own stick,—‘Mr. Sayles, you set me the example. I was led to dance because you did. I thought if you danced, I could. I began through your example and could not stop after once beginning. You have no special fondness for it and it does not hurt you. But I have been swept off my feet.’ This supposed case pictures what has taken place again and again,—**A young Christian led astray through the example of an older one.** How many are stumbling and falling over the example of the Christian in the parlor?”

Paul, in the Roman letter, says: “It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.” And again he says: “If eating meat causeth my brother to offend, I will eat no more meat while the world standeth.” I grant that it is possible for many a

lady, for instance, to dance without serious results so far as her own morality goes. But how about some weaker sister, who, by her example, is led on and on to ruin?

Evangelist Williams, speaking on this point, uses some startling words. Addressing the lofty, self-contained class who turn up their righteous noses at the suggestion of an evil resulting from the example, he asks: "If you in your cold, chaste nature, or your stately self-possession, escape the usual temptations of the ball-room, what about your little roly-poly, fat, voluptuous sister that attempts to follow you? A man touches you, and you repel him with a glance, his hand touches her, a bundle of nerves, and she shakes and trembles like a bowl of jelly. A few honeyed words, whispered in her greedy ear, under the influence of soft, enticing strains of music, and she is his willing slave, and many a man frequents the dance only

to find these willing cases. Emboldened as the days go by, he assumes more difficult conquests. In many an instance the result is never known, save by the two guilty ones, unless in wine or treachery, he boasts his deeds in some choice circle or club. In case the discovery is made, the poor girl, in flight, seeks to hide the story of her shame in some dark plague-spot of our cities. The houses of the fallen are ever kept full, and the inmates of the same will never fail to be recruited while the dance goes on."

God forbid that any child of light who reads these pages should ever have to answer for the fall of another!

STRIKE No. IX. The modern dance leads one into evil associations.

I am still talking about the dance as it is, not as it might be, or as its defenders claim it to be. If brothers danced only with their sisters, and husbands with their wives, then this objection

would not hold. But the dance as it is leads its votaries into evil associations, and it is as true to-day as it ever has been, that evil associations destroy character, wreck human happiness, and damn the soul forever.

A dance-environment is not conducive to any sort of right development. A dance-environment cankers character, hardens the heart, seduces the soul, and drives its devotees to the devil.

An institution, as well as a man, is known by the company it keeps. Look at the dance! Dr. Vernon truly says: "It was nursed in the lap of the wine-god, Bacchus; has kept company with the theatre since they were children together two thousand years ago, and is a favorite in houses of shame; while it is never seen in church, objects to sacred music, and leaves the house if prayer is proposed. You may almost always find it in the loitering places of the nov-

el-reading, the wine and beer drinking, the profane, and the licentious classes, but rarely may it be seen in the assemblies of earnest students, great thinkers, and devout Christians. If we judge it by the company it keeps, we shall hardly feel like introducing our sons and daughters to its acquaintance. It is not asserted that no good people dance, but I may say that those who, by common consent, are considered the best people in society, do not dance, and for the reason that they think it unworthy of them. This is a matter of fact about which there is little room for difference of opinion. In the lowest and vilest grades of society the dance is most popular and most common; as you rise in the grade of intelligence and moral excellence its popularity and use decline, till you reach a point where it disappears altogether, and above which it is not found. These facts of moral affinity and association lie

on the surface of things, may be observed by any one, and seem to justify the condemnation which careful writers generally pronounce upon the dance."

If we do not like good books, we should read them anyhow, and cultivate a liking for them. If we do not like good music, we should listen to it anyhow, and cultivate a liking for it. We should not lower our tastes by reading literary chaff, or listening to rude, though romping, music. This seems to be a well-established principle with all educators. So it should be in life. If we do not really like to attend church, Sunday School, prayer-meeting, etc., we should do so anyhow, and form a liking for that which all good men admit as being helpful. We should not revel in a lower form of activity, simply because our tastes lead that way.

There are persons who feel ill at ease among scholarly, clean, upright people. They feel

more "at home" with a lower breed. But they should stifle this feeling, and cultivate the better one. By constant intercourse with the good they should finally drive out all taste for the evil.

Let this rule be applied in this dance question, and how long would high-minded, ambitious persons continue the practice?

In the parlor dance it may happen that only good, respectable people are present. But who that enjoys a parlor dance will ever stop there? And when the ball-room is reached, the company is hardly ever so select. As has been shown very clearly some of the worst libertines on earth, veritable demons in human form, are among the best dancers. They are magnetic, handsome, elegantly attired, perfect dancers, heirs perhaps to immense fortunes, but lecherous scoundrels of the most dangerous type. Think of a Christian father allowing his

daughter to be embraced in the waltz by such a human cur as that! Think of a patient, trustful Christian gentleman allowing his wife to lean upon the breast of such a serpent, his arm about her yielding waist, his hot breath upon her flushed cheek, his eyes darting thoughts to hers that lips dare not speak, and which, if spoken, would shock "society!" For shame! Is it not high time decently inclined people were forming their associations among a class which taboos the modern dance?

STRIKE No. X. The modern dance is essentially sensual, and corrupts the moral nature by arousing the passions.

If this proposition be true, then no argument is necessary to cause the amusement to vanish from the things permissible among respectable people. That it is true, it seems to me that I have already proven, but wishing to "make assurance double sure," I will endeavor to fill

up in these concluding paragraphs any chinks or crevices I may have overlooked heretofore. I believe the objection outlined in this tenth proposition is the most important of any that can be offered,—it is the blow of all blows most smashing, crushing, demoralizing. No gentleman or lady likes to be considered impure. Thousands claim to be pure when they are not, because it is not considered good form to be otherwise. When, therefore, it is affirmed that no gentleman or lady can habitually dance and remain pure, we have an argument which ought forever to settle the question with all sensible people.

The New York Journal of Education says: "In ancient times the sexes danced separately. Alcohol is the spirit of beverages. So sex is the spirit of the dance. Take it away and let the sexes dance separately, and dancing would go out of fashion very soon. Parlor dancing is

dangerous. Tippling leads to drunkenness, and parlor dancing leads to ungodly balls. Tippling and parlor dancing sow to the wind, and both reap the whirl-wind. Put dancing in the crucible, apply the acids, weigh it, and the verdict of reason, morality, and religion is, 'Weighed in the balance and found wanting.' "

• The Rev. Dr. W. C. Wilkinson, whose purity of life and purpose has never been in question, with a resoluteness most commendable, though quite unusual, in this age of white-washing golden truths, says, in his famous little work, "The Dance of Modern Society:" "With the sincerest reluctance, I bring myself to subjoin a remark once overheard on car-board by a friend of mine, in a conversation that was passing between two young men about their lady acquaintances. The horrible concreteness of the fellows' expression may give a wholesome recoil from their danger to some minds that

would be little affected by a speculative statement of the same idea. Said one: 'I would not give a straw to dance with Miss Blank. You can't excite any more passion in her than you can in a stick of wood.' Pure young women of a warmer temperament, that innocently abandon themselves to enthusiastic proclamations of their delight in the dance in the presence of gentlemen, should but barely once have a male intuition of the meaning of the involuntary glance that will often shoot across from eye to eye among their auditors. Or they should overhear the comments exchanged among them afterwards. For when young men meet after an evening of the dance to talk it over together, it is not points of dress they discuss. Their only demand, and it is generally conceded, is that the ladies' dress shall not needlessly embarrass suggestion. Believe me, however women escape without the smell of fire upon their garments,

men often do not get out of the furnace, save with a flame devouring them, that they seek strange fountains, and willingly damn their souls, to quench."

Dr. Wilkinson's remark with reference to the style of dress demanded in the ball-room, reminds me of what Sam P. Jones says in one of his lectures. Speaking of the decollete costume so common in "swell" society, he says, one unaccustomed to such exhibitions of the nude once remarked that he had never seen the like since he was weaned! The Georgia evangelist says that nowadays the women are cutting their skirts so high for the bicycle and so low for the ball-room that he is positively alarmed. And well he may be, for the custom is so different from the inborn modesty with which our mothers and grandmothers were wont to bedeck themselves, that one cannot

prophecy very exactly where the present course will end.

I read somewhere recently an amusing incident bearing on this point of abbreviated costume. A colored maid in the South was dressing her mistress for a ball. When she had banded and frizzled the hair, powdered the cheeks and pencilled the eyebrows, and put on what she supposed in her charming unsophistication was but the beginning of a suitable covering for the occasion, her mistress arose, and, throwing a light scarf about her bare shoulders and bosom, said, "That will do."

"Yo' isn't ready, is yo'?" inquired the astonished maid.

"Yes, Prudence," replied the young dancer.

"Why, Missus, yo' ain't gwine to go out wid all yo' skin a-showin' dat away, is yo'?" exclaimed the horrified black girl.

"More innocent young girls have fallen by

the opportunities afforded for approaching them improperly in the dance than from any other cause," says Dr. Vernon. "The skillful rake considers his work half done when he has accustomed his intended victim to the touch and pressure of his hand; he may then advance by insensible degrees till his purposes are accomplished. It is one of the unsolved social enigmas, how our pure wives, mothers, and daughters can submit to such contact, attitudes, and movements as the dance requires, with men of whose characters they know nothing, and often with men of known bad character. It is no answer to say that only the vile think of evil. God so constituted human nature, with such batteries and telegraph lines of nerves, that the contact secured in the common dance is sure to send flashing along the lines to the office of passion and appetite just such messages of doubtful character as I have been

speaking of. It is a question of human nature, and I must hold that a fair share of knowledge on this important subject will lead anyone to the approval of what I have here said. The rude 'kissing plays,' and such like freedom between men and women often found in the rural districts, are condemned on the same principle. I take it as unlawful to do anything to awaken passions or emotions that are themselves unlawful. A dignified freedom of social intercourse between men and women is unquestionably for the highest good of both. Whatever tends to lower the character of their association, to undignified familiarity, attitude, touch, or posture, however garnished and concealed by art, music, and public ceremonials, must be regarded as nothing less than the 'old serpent,' reappearing in our earthly Eden to poison, blight, and destroy. The proper relation of the sexes in society is one of the greatest

sources of earthly happiness, just as their improper relation is one of the most prolific sources of crime and misery. The dance of modern society is based upon, and finds its attraction in the fact that the sexes unite in it, and are brought into such relations and positions as they would not assume but for the required formula—positions that awaken and excite emotions aroused only by the opposite sex.”

These are strong, clear, well-balanced words, and no sane man or woman, who has had any experience or observation worthy of the name, can deny them with any hope of maintaining an adverse view.

Surely enough has been said. If there is any one who has read this far carefully, and digested what he has read, and still can see no harm in dancing, I would just say that I presume that, for him, there is no harm, for the

Bible teaches us that "where little is given little is required." God will not hold fools accountable for what in others would be sin. But after the splendid array of testimony here presented from many of the ablest pens of Christendom, sensible, well-balanced people, people who wish to serve God acceptably, and do good to their fellow men, people who love the church, delight in righteousness, and appreciate purity, will cease to dance, or to countenance this sinful pastime. They will seek other and better ways of entertaining themselves and their friends, and, by so doing, they will render to their own souls and the souls of those who look up to them for example, one of the greatest services in their power.

CHAPTER XVI.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS.

“Well,” I imagine some one says, “after all, it is no worse to dance than to slander one’s neighbor.”

This is a very common ending to a discussion on dancing on the part of its advocates. Worsted at every point, utterly routed from every false premise, and smitten hip and thigh in every effort to defend that which is unclean and pernicious, the apologist for this illegitimate child of Hades flies finally to this last dying wail of the vanquished—no worse than other things.

Commenting on this subterfuge, Dr. William Cleaver Wilkinson in his incisive little work against dancing, says:

“True, but so perhaps it is better to steal

than to commit murder. But those who refrain from stealing are not therefore obliged to commit murder. And those who refrain from dancing are not obliged to slander their neighbors! There is conversation which neither abuses the absent nor yet injures the participants in it. But the art of such conversation is indeed far gone toward being lost to a generation that will frisk like Donatello, and fly into the dance, to dodge a fair and friendly encounter of mind with mind."

The young, and old too, demand amusement of some sort. It is an element in human nature that must be satisfied in some way. But there are a thousand legitimate ways in which this demand can be met without injury to the moral well-being of the individual. I do not believe in a melancholy life. God wants His children to be happy. But the purest and high-

est happiness does not require that the race should roll itself in the dusts of sensuality.

See those children! As they romp upon the green, or chase the winged butterfly through field and hedge, every element of their nature, physical, mental, and spiritual is enlivened without the shadow of impurity so much as crossing their sunny foreheads. Grown-up children of course cannot find pleasure in the simple things that interest the little folks. But in the same guileless spirit let them seek for that which will be exhilarating without being degrading, and they will please their Maker. In this search the dance must be cast aside, and with it a cluster of ugly accessories which suggest themselves, and need no mention here.

Have you blundered in the past, brother, sister? Has the dance besmirched your fair garments? Look to Christ. His blood has cleansing power. It is the sure antidote for all

sin. Come to Him! Believe in Him! Obey His simple, yet all-important, commandments, and all will be well with your soul, now and forever.

Praying the blessing of High Heaven on this little book as it goes out on its mission of love—hoping that it may startle but to save—I close with another song from the pen of that sweet singer, Ella Wheeler Wilcox, which I trust may prove a balm to many a bleeding heart, a kiss of forgiveness to many who have gone wrong in the past, but hope to do better in the present and future:

“Keep out of the Past, for its highways
Are dark with malarial gloom;
Its gardens are sear and its forests are drear,
And everywhere molders a tomb.
Who seeks to regain its lost pleasures,
Finds only a rose turned to dust;
And its store-house of wonderful treasures
Is covered and coated with rust.

"Keep out of the Past. It is haunted.

He who in its avenues gropes,
Shall find there the ghost of a joy prized the most,
And a skeleton throng of dead hopes.

In place of its beautiful rivers,
Are pools that are stagnant with slime;
And these graves gleaming in a phosphoric light,
Hide dreams that were slain in their prime.

"Keep out of the Past. It is lonely,

And barren, and bleak to the view;
Its fires have grown cold, and its stories are old—
Turn, turn to the Present—the New;
To-day leads you up to the hill-tops
That are kissed by the radiant sun;
To-day shows no tomb; Life's hopes are in bloom,
And To-day holds a prize to be won!"

Go forth, then, dear heart, to thy conquest!
Go in the love and strength of a noble purpose,
born from close contact with the Friend
of Sinners, the Support of Sorrow, the Author
of Salvation, and the Finisher of Faith—
Jesus, the God-man—Jesus the Lover of Mary,
Martha and Lazarus—Jesus, the Last Hope of
a Lost World and the chief Note of the Glad
Anthem of Redemption! Go thus, neighbor,
and the Dangers of the Dance will never lead
you From the Ball-Room to Ruin.

THE END.

Ms. A. 9. 2. 21. 1

THE KAMIN BOOKSHOP
THE BARBIZON PLAZA
123 SIXTH AVE., N.Y.C.

