

Home and School.

MY EXPERIENCE IN DANCING.

As the season for all kinds of revelry and merry-making is now with us, and the young people of the churches are subject to many temptations, I have thought that a little of my experience might tend to put some on their guard against the fasionable amusement of the present day.

I have several times been asked, "Why do you object to young people dancing? Is it not a healthful, innocent recreation? What can be more harmless than a social dance, in our own parlours, among our particular friends, all civil, respectable people? Young people must have some amusement," &c.

Now, although there are many reasons why dancing is not harmless, and many arguments might be given why Christians should not indulge in it, I simply wish to give a little sketch of my early life, and let readers draw their own inferences as to the result of dancing in my case.

At the age of fourteen I was converted, and with many other young converts united with the church, and for a time lived in the enjoyment of communion with God and a happy fellowship with His church on earth. After some six months of this quiet, peaceful life had passed, my father's family moved from the State of New York, where we then lived, to Ohio. I received a letter from the church, and fully intended to present it to some church wherever we should locate. We arrived in Ohio in July, and remained with friends until the February following, when we again removed to a new home, some 25 miles from the town we first stopped in. I did not present my letter, as I thought best to wait until we were settled in our new home.

Meantime I became acquainted with the young people of the village, and found them pleasant and social in their habits, and that most of them were professing Christians. I saw nothing that shocked my sense of propriety in their

behaviour, and we very soon became intimate associates. Time passed on pleasantly, and soon winter came, and I found to my astonishment that these same quiet, consistent Christian people were in the habit of dancing at their social gatherings. At first I was greatly troubled, and knew not what to do. To withdraw from their society was to cut myself off from all social enjoyments, and to mingle with them was to be like them. I reasoned: They are older than I am; they have been Christians longer. Is it not presumptuous in one so young to set up opinions against theirs? Perhaps I have been too rigid. In short, my objections were soon silenced, my scruples overcome, and before the winter passed I was the gayest of all the giddy throng of professing Christians! But how fared my spiritual life? At first I continued the outward observances of the means of grace, and for a time I prayed in secret; but very soon my taste for all these things began to fade away. My communion with God was cut off. I had no power in prayer, and no enjoyment in religion. My letter lay undisturbed in the bureau-drawer, and when our new home was reached, no one of all the new acquaintances I had formed knew I had ever been a Christian. Long years I lived a most miserable back-sliding. A feverish unrest drove me on from one scene of gaiety to another, an accusing conscience ever dropping poison into every gilded cup, until, after many wasted years, God in mercy won me back to his service. "Saved as by fire."

But who can tell the loss to myself and others caused by that terrible back-sliding? The best years of my life given to the service of Satan; the example to others, especially my children, who can say to all my arguments "You used to dance"—all these things prove to me it is unwise, unsafe and at imminent peril that Christians indulge in dancing.—ELLEN M. BISHOP, in *Telescope*.